

## Tabled Petition Response

**Petition No:** 520

**Petition Sponsored by:** Dr MANSFIELD

**Tabled on:** 13 August 2024

**Title:** Unite Point Lonsdale into one local government area

### **Petition Grievance:**

The petition of certain citizens of the State of Victoria draws to the attention of the Legislative Council the unresolved issue of the township of Point Lonsdale at The Heads of Port Phillip Bay falling into two shire councils - the Borough of Queenscliffe (BOQ) and the City of Greater Geelong (COGG).

This petition aims to resolve this issue by uniting the town in one shire. The issue at hand is that the democratic right to representation is being undermined by a border through the town. This gives those in the BOQ diluted local representation, less equity in the division of rates and gives them less political influence in the direction their home takes if they live in Point Lonsdale. Similarly those in the COGG also have diminished say in the direction their home takes. A unification would allow greater and more comprehensive planning and a significantly more efficient allocation and function of scarce resources. Currently there are residents of Point Lonsdale whose kids attend the school, who visit the local doctor and shop in the local supermarket and their rates are spent on grants to soccer clubs 40 kilometres away. A politically united town is a fairer, efficient solution.

The petitioners therefore request that the Legislative Council call on the Government to investigate and remove the local government border running through Point Lonsdale and unite the whole town into one of the adjacent local government areas.

### **Response:**

I note the views expressed in this petition that the township of Point Lonsdale should not be split between the Borough of Queenscliffe and Greater Geelong City Council.

Boundary changes are significant undertakings that involve costs and disruptions to councils and the community and are not implemented lightly.

Section 239 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) enables me, as Minister for Local Government, to constitute a restructuring advisory panel to conduct a review into a restructure proposal such as the boundary alteration advocated by the council. Before considering exercising this power, however, I would need be satisfied that there is sufficient support for this proposal from both councils involved and those who would be directly impacted.

Consideration to constitute a panel under section 239 of the Act is contingent on the Borough of Queenscliffe and Greater Geelong City Council to demonstrate that they are fully supportive of this proposal and that initial consultations undertaken by the two councils demonstrates that the affected community is also supportive.

This petition is a positive indicator that there is support for this change within the community and I encourage you to raise this with the two councils.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Melissa Horne', with a stylized, flowing script.

**The Hon Melissa Horne MP**

Minister for Casino, Gaming and Liquor Regulation

Minister for Local Government

Minister for Roads and Road Safety

Minister for Ports and Freight