

15 February 2023

Mr Rob Donaldson
Chair
South Australian Local Government Boundaries Commission

Via email: boundaries.commission@sa.gov.au

Dear Rob

Thank you for your correspondence of 11 April 2023.

The Barossa Council does not want to proceed with a stage 2 proposal. The Barossa Council did make this decision in February 2020, it was our error in understanding that we could simply stop the process and it would just lapse. The Chief Executive Officer and I notified all Councils of this decision but clearly in hindsight we should have notified the Commission, we both apologise for this oversight.

The Barossa Council has instead continued to quietly engage with community, stakeholders, industry and the like and overtime a vision and direction will no doubt emerge. We have taken the position that successful reform of the nature being discussed (as is the way we are proceed now) or imposed and sought (by the Town of Gawler) needs to be driven by the people and supported by independence not driven by Councils. The current legislative model as it is being used by some simply creates distrust and barriers.

It is timely therefore to outline the fundamental reasons behind this decision to the Commission and trust the Commission can partner with the sector in the future to find a better way of reform. The Barossa Council has recognised these matters since its stage 1 proposal both through our own community conversations and engagement and the actions of the Town of Gawler, even in the face of their poor processes and lack of proper proposes. The reasons are threefold:

1. The current reform model will never achieve a sound and reasonably accepted solution by the most relevant stakeholders, the people.
2. Unilateral actions of a Council, which we acknowledge we commenced but stopped to listen to our colleagues and community, will never work, they may achieve an outcome but they, will in my opinion never achieve real change.
3. The cost.

I and my Chief Executive Officer, Mr Martin McCarthy, would be happy to speak with you or the commission to provide further context and hope that in future we can all find a model that achieves real reform for the betterment of the people, at much lower cost.

Yours sincerely,



Bim Lange OAM
Mayor, The Barossa Council

