

23 July 2018

Dear Committee Secretary,

Please accept my submission to the Inquiry into the Draft Local Government (Dissolution of Ipswich City Council) Bill 2018.

This bill is extremely important as it allows the minister to enforce the local government act, and bring certainty to Ipswich citizens that our city will have proper governance under an administrator.

The Ipswich City Council needs to be removed as it has failed to represent the current and future interests of the residents of Ipswich and its policy development and decision-making has not been beneficial to Ipswich.

Aside from any alleged criminal activities, the council's organisational culture enables systemic problems which may put it and its staff at risk of not being compliant with acts covering areas such as workplace health and safety, discrimination, and the public service act.

The letters and supporting documents submitted by Ipswich City Councillors in response to the Minister's Show Cause demonstrate why this bill is necessary. The responses were not self-reflective and did not outline any plans for ongoing systemic improvement. They expressed a lack of understanding of their role and responsibilities under the act, and of what the public interest is.

The supporting documents were recommendations based on personal relationships, and mentioned inappropriate personal interventions into council processes. No supporting documents gave reference to any programs, strategy or policy initiated by Council, or commended council's success in achieving improved public infrastructure, services or amenity.

It is not acceptable that the government of Queensland should permit the current situation to continue, when it has been informed about the ruinous financial, cultural and economic consequences that the council's conduct is having on our community.

This bill is the preferred option for dismissing the council. Dissolution of the whole Ipswich City Council as a municipality and amalgamation of its parts with adjacent councils is the other option.

Kind regards,
Kirsty O'Brien.


