

## TOWNSVILLE CITY COUNCIL INQUIRY

The present Townsville City Council is not divided into divisions, yet the Council saw fit to artificially divide the area into 12 divisions and allocated those divisions to the councillors who live in them. The advantage in allowing as many people nominate for Council is democratic as it allows anybody who wish to have a go to do so. Should the Council be divided into wards it is likely many people would not nominate as the ward system allows for councillors to become entrenched usually politically and people would feel it is a waste of time trying for that ward? This is not a democratic way to run a Council.

I, myself, like the idea of choosing the best candidates for the whole Council and allowing the mayor to provide areas of responsibility, not only for the whole area but a specific area and who I believe they have the qualifications to sit on the Council.

My choice of councillor to have the expertise to run a Council should have, if possible providing they have nominated, the following professions and skills:

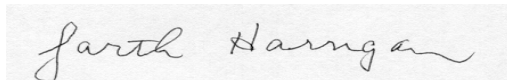
- A deputy who has Council experience
- An accountant
- A civil engineer
- A social worker
- A youth worker
- A senior
- An indigenous person
- A transport person with transport experience
- A candidate from the northern beaches
- A sports person
- An environment with good ideas
- A business person.

The Mayor should always be elected by its citizens and not by other councillors. She/he should have extensive experience in Council duties.

Provided the Council budget can be prepared by the present Council the timing of the elections should be every 4 years but because March is still part of the wet season in North Queensland they should be held in May. People who can vote are those who live here not somebody who has property in Townsville but live elsewhere. Voting should be compulsory and electioneering should cease 24 hours before the opening of the voting centres and first past the post. I prefer that candidates be nominated by at least three electors and not by a single political party officer.

The method of financing of Councils should be considered as the burden on rate payers has become burdensome as more duties are passed on to Councils from both State and Federal Governments. Perhaps Federal Government can change the Constitution .so they can legally provide 10% or more of the Council budget to meet the ever increasing duties being imposed on them.

Now that Councils in Queensland have been fixed there is still a requirement to alter boundaries to suit its residents.



Garth Harrigan