

REVIEW OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTORAL SYSTEM

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1) Are the procedures for the division of councils adequate?

Yes

2) If the procedures for the division of councils are not adequate, what changes are required?

Not applicable

3) Are the error margins of 10% in local government areas with more than 10,000 electors and 20% in all other cases sufficient?

Consideration to be given with respect to large rural areas with low population and the serviceability of these areas. Alignment of boundaries should be reviewed to ensure consistency and areas not being disjointed.

4) Should the mix of divided and undivided councils remain? If so, should the decision to divide a local government area remain with individual councils?

Submission 1

No, the mix of divided and undivided Council's should not remain and no the decision to divide a local government area should not remain with the individual Councils.

Submission 2

Yes, the mix of divided and undivided Council's should remain and yes the decision to divide a local government area should not remain with the individual Councils.

5) Are there other matters the Committee should consider in regard to local government divisions?

N/A

6) Should the Electoral Commission of Queensland be responsible for the administration of the quadrennial local government elections or should this responsibility remain with Council CEOs?

The ECQ should be responsible, subject to much improved performance and costs being reasonable.

7) If the ECQ is to be responsible for local government elections should the new Act allow more flexibility in regard to the conduct of the quadrennial elections than the current Act does? If so, how?

The current Act provisions are satisfactory.

8) Is the time for the close of the rolls and the date of the elections appropriate?

Yes

9) What changes, if any, should be made to the timing of local government elections?

The Local Government elections should be held in October.

10) Is the nomination process adequate? Why?

Yes, however, the returning officer should be situated in a more central location within the region and nominees should be required to disclose if they are running on a party ticket or team.

11) Does the current system encourage a diverse range of candidates to stand?

Yes.

12) Should a candidate be required to live in the local government area in which they stand for election?

Yes.

13) Should a councillor be required to live in the local government area for their whole four year term?

Yes

14) Should a person be able to stand as a dual candidate for both mayor and councillor?

Yes

15) Should the new Act allow mayors to be appointed by their fellow councillors?

No

16) Are the requirements for disclosure of campaign funding sufficient?

Yes

17) Should candidates make disclosures before, progressively during, and after an election period?

Yes

18) Should all disclosure requirements, such as values, disclosure periods and who must comply, be standardised?

Yes

19) Should particular fundraising activities for local government elections be prohibited?

No

20) Should how-to-vote cards be free from promotional content?

Yes

21) Should how-to-vote cards be standard for all candidates? If so, should these be provided in all polling booths and postal vote packs by the Electoral Commission of Queensland?

Yes

22) What promotional material, such as bunting (continuous signage) and coreflutes, should be allowed during the campaign period and at polling booths on election day?

Promotional material such as coreflutes (900mm x 600mm), shirts, advertising and flyers should be allowed during the campaign period and at the polling booths on election day.

23) Should the placement and amount of election campaign material be standard across all local government areas?

Yes

24) Should a 'media blackout' period apply for local government elections? Why? For how long?

Yes, a 24 hour 'media blackout' period should apply prior to the election.

25) Should voting remain compulsory for local government elections in Queensland?

Yes

26) Should the option of a postal vote be extended to all voters in every area?

Submission 1

No, the option of a postal vote should not be extended to all voters in every area, however the ability to define certain areas for postal votes should be available.

Submission 2

Yes, the option of a postal vote should be extended to all voters in every area.

27) Should a full postal ballot be automatic for some local government areas? If so, why and for which areas?

Submission 1

Yes, a full postal vote should be automatic for some local government areas when electors live more than say 30 kilometres from a polling booth.

Submission 2

No, a full postal vote should not be automatic but Councils should have the ability to decide a postal vote is necessary for certain rural remote areas.

28) Should the criteria for pre-polling and postal voting be abolished?

No

29) Does the restriction on voters to attend only polling booths in a division in which they are enrolled adversely affect voters? If this were altered what impact would that have on the administration of the elections in that local government?

Yes, the restrictions on voters to attend only polling booths in a division in which they are enrolled does adversely affect voters. If this was altered it would create less inconveniences for voters and thus electoral officers will receive less complaints.

30) Should the new Act allow absent voting? If so, should this be restricted to absent voting within a local government area only?

Yes

31) Should the right to vote in Queensland local government elections be extended to non-resident property owners within an area? If so, should this apply to overseas investors?

No

32) Should voting rights be extended to non-resident occupiers (e.g. commercial lessees such as business owners who lease premises within an area but live outside of it)?

No

33) Should multiple persons be able to claim non-resident voter eligibility for one property (e.g. two or more non-resident owners or lessees of a property)?

No

34) Should people, based on the number of properties they own, be entitled to more than one vote per division?

No

35) Who should be responsible for the creation, verification and maintenance of a non-residents' electoral roll?

The Electoral Commission should be responsible for the creation, verification and maintenance of a non-residents' electoral roll

36) Which voting system is most appropriate for local government elections - Optional Preferential voting, Compulsory Preferential voting, First-Past-The-Post or Proportional Representation? Why?

Submission 1

Optional Preferential voting

Submission 2

First-Past-The-Post

37) Would different voting systems work better for different sized local governments? Why?

No, different voting systems would not work better for different sized local governments.

38) Should Proportional Representation be introduced for Queensland local government elections?

If so, why and

(a) which model/s should be implemented?

(b) how would this be implemented in divided and undivided councils?

(c) should it apply for all councils? If not, which councils should proportional representation apply to?

No, Proportional Representation should not be introduced for Queensland Local Government elections because we are rural remote regional and believe this option would only work in cities.

39) What other issues should the Committee consider in relation to this inquiry?

One size does not fit all taking in rural remote regional areas.