

Submission 128

From: webmaster@parliament.qld.gov.au
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To: Law, Justice and Safety Committee
Subject: ONLINE SUBMISSION - Inquiry into a new Local Government Electoral Act
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Name: Cr Kathy Duff
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Divisions (Question 1 to 5):

- 1) Yes they are in the Council that I am representing. The South Burnett Regional Council has 6 Divisions with one Councillor representing each one. The system is working well as the feedback that I receive is that the ratepayers feel that they have a voice unlike the complaints I hear from ratepayers in non divisional neighbouring Councils that feel they are not getting heard and no-one cares about their particular area.
- 2) The procedures are adequate where there are divisions.
- 3) I believe they are sufficient
- 4) No I think all Councils should have divisions and the boundaries decided by the Electoral Commission using the current system. I am sure that if you had a referendum that electors would vote for divisions to ensure their area is represented particularly now the Councils are so large
- 5) Yes Divisions make Councillors answerable to the ratepayer. Without Divisions the non performing Councillors can hide behind the success of the performing Councillors. If they are answerable to the electors in their Division they will be kept honest by the pressure from those ratepayers. The Council areas are so large now that in non Divisional the ratepayers are often voting for people that they haven't even met. The cost of running a campaign in a non Divisional Council is almost prohibitive. It will get that way that the best candidates will not necessarily be elected but instead the ones with the most money to run the best Presidential style campaign.

Conduct of elections (Question 6 and 7):

- 6) The current system is satisfactory
- 7) N/A

Conduct of elections (Question 8 and 9):

- 8) I believe it is appropriate. I think that the complaint about preparing the budgets is not founded. There is enough time after March to prepare a budget particularly now that the new amalgamated Councils are well established
- 9) The timing is fine

Candidates - requirements and conduct (Questions 10 to 15):

- 10) Yes it is adequate because the Mayor is elected by the people as they should be. It could cause divisiveness if a defeated Mayor automatically became a Councillor. The Deputy Mayor being chosen by the Councillors is fine as they play a much lesser role. A Councillor should only be able to stand for one Division to keep the system simple for the voters as they are confused enough as it is.
- 11) In the Regions with Divisions yes but in the others no because it prohibits people on a lesser income because of the costs of campaigning over such large areas.
- 12) Yes I think they need to live where they stand to avoid confusion for the ratepayer and also to ensure that the area is represented by someone with local knowledge.
- 13) Yes because that would be an expectation from the voters and they deserve that loyalty from their Councillor
- 14) No this could lead to an unhealthy and divisive Council with defeated Mayors trying to work with the elected Mayor. It

would also be confusing for the voter.

15) No that should be the entitlement of the voter to pick who they want. It also solids up your Council because it eliminates undermining of the chosen Mayor by other "Wanta be" Mayors.

Candidates - requirements and conduct (Questions 16 to 19):

16) Yes

17) The current system is adequate

18) Yes

19) I haven't seen any activities that should be prohibited

Candidates - requirements and conduct (Questions 20 to 24):

20) If it remains in Divisions it is simply healthy competition that candidates should be able to afford

21) No I think the current system is fine

22) Limit of two corflutes at each booth per candidate and a standard size space allowed for each candidate and positions drawn.

23) Yes as above

24) No it is simply healthy competition provided it is Divisonal and therefore affordable

Voting (Question 25):

25) Absolutely otherwise no one will bother

Voting (Questions 26 to 30):

26) It should be an option for everyone

27) Perhaps in the really large isolated regions it may be appropriate because of the cost of travelling for voters

28) No I think it is fine the way it is

29) I think it does. I think they should be able to vote at any booth in their region for the candidate in their division because people are often at events and functions in other areas on polling day

30) It should allow for absent voting restricted to that local government area

Voting (Questions 31 to 35):

31) No absolutely not

32) No

33) Absolutely not

34) No it should remain as it is

35) There shouldn;t be one

Voting systems (Questions 36 to 38):

36) The current system is adequate

37) I don't think they would.

38) The current system is adequate

Other (Question 39):

Other) The most important outcome in all of this is that the ratepayer gets the best deal. Ratepayers deserve to at least have met the people that they are asked to vote for and so it is essential that Divisions remain and candidates are elected not because of the dollars they have in their hip pocket but because of the integrity and committment that they have proven in their respective communities.