

From: noreply@ecq.qld.gov.au
To: [LG CC Submissions](#)
Subject: (56901) Livingstone Shire Council and Rockhampton Regional Council - External Boundary Review - Cherie Rutherford
Date: Monday, 4 July 2022 4:50:57 PM
Attachments: [Northern-Boundary-Re-alignment.docx](#)

**Online submission for Livingstone Shire Council and Rockhampton Regional Council
- External Boundary Review from Cherie Rutherford**

Submission Details

Name: Cherie Rutherford

Privacy preferences: Publishing your submission and your name

Submission text:

File upload: Northern Boundary Re-alignment.docx (19.0 KB)

Submission ID: 56901

Time of Submission: 04 Jul 2022 4:50pm

Submission IP Address: [REDACTED]

Referral URL: <https://www.ecq.qld.gov.au/electoral-boundaries/local-government-boundary-reviews/external-boundary-and-electoral-arrangement-reviews/livingstone-shire-council-and-rockhampton-regional-council-external-boundary-review>

The Local Government Change Commission
LGCCsubmissions@ecq.qld.gov.au
GPO Box 1393, Brisbane QLD 4001

Dear Pat,

I submit the following submission in favour of the northern boundary realignment between Rockhampton Regional Council and Livingstone Shire Council. I also lend my wholehearted support to the submission by the Rockhampton Regional Council.

I have been involved in discussions regarding the suburbs of Glenlee, Glendale and Rockyview becoming part of the Rockhampton LGA since then-Mayor Margaret Strelow raised the issue in 2006. I have walked with the community through amalgamation, de-amalgamation and the protracted issue of the northern boundary realignment. Over the past couple of months, I have attended numerous community consultation sessions around the region including shopping centres, agricultural shows, ratepayers' meetings and other events as well as canvassing my community. I believe I can speak with a sense of confidence on community opinion.

The northern boundary realignment is an issue that has simmered below the surface for more than 20 years and unless addressed will continue to cause disharmony well into the future. While resolution of this issue is about looking to the future much of it is entwined in past decisions that were unpopular, unjust and inequitable.

There is still an underlying anger and resentment in both the Livingstone and Rockhampton Region communities which is tainting the discussion around the northern suburbs and hindering open and impartial consideration of the issue. The Livingstone community feel aggrieved by the cost of de-amalgamation and the Rockhampton region community are still feeling the financial burden of de-amalgamation and remember that they were denied their democratic right to have a voice in a decision that would ultimately have significant ongoing impacts.

There is considerable distrust of the system and process as the Newman Government, against the advice of the Boundary Commissioner and the QTC, made the decision to go ahead with the de-amalgamation vote regardless of QTC's advice that doing so would leave Rockhampton financially unsustainable within two years. Then-Minister Crisafulli went on to make the extraordinary decision to deny the Rockhampton region residents a say. With only former Livingstone Shire residents allowed to vote and on a mere 56% win the Newman Government directed the de-amalgamation to take place.

At the time of the de-amalgamation debate, long-term Livingstone Shire Councillor Glenda Mather acknowledged the close ties and community of interest between Rockhampton and

the northern suburbs. She personally helped fund and advocated for the 'vote no to de-amalgamation' campaign.

Former Mayor Cr Bill Ludwig acknowledged that the de-amalgamation vote was carried predominately by Yeppoon, Taranganba and Emu Park residents and that the northern suburbs had voted resoundingly to stay with Rockhampton. Cr Ludwig said that those suburbs had clearly indicated they wanted to stay with Rockhampton and their wishes should be respected and acted on.

In December 2014, then-Mayor Ludwig, said a vote by residents of the outer suburbs to go back to the Rockhampton Regional Council is common sense. "This is just correcting that anomaly and giving Rockhampton city the room to grow for the next 30 or 40 years."

The residents of the northern suburbs have been polled and straw-polled numerous times and every time the results have come back in favour of a return to Rockhampton. These results have been consistent and around 75%; considerably more than the 56% that allowed the de-amalgamation. I have received feedback that these communities are fed up with being polled, they believe they have made their wishes abundantly clear on numerous occasions and they are not being listened to.

For a time, there was a genuine recognition by the Livingstone Shire Council that a northern boundary re-alignment was the right and fair thing to do. Terms of reference for the boundary review were agreed upon and these combined actions along with Mayor Ludwig's public statements gave Rockhampton Regional Council, and the residents of the northern suburbs hope there would be a favourable outcome.

A commitment was given to the communities of Glenlee, Glendale and Rockyview that Livingstone Shire Council would go down the path of returning these suburbs to Rockhampton and that Rockhampton would continue to advocate to ensure this happened.

I appeal to you to please ensure the commitment to those communities is honoured on behalf of both Councils.

Throughout this entire debate I have not come across anyone who disputes the community of interest or strong links between Rockhampton and the northern suburbs, even Livingstone Shire's submission acknowledges this.

Of the residents that live in the 3 northern suburbs, 95% of them work or go to school in Rockhampton. They are members of our sporting clubs, churches, service clubs, cultural groups, libraries, etc. They live their lives in Rockhampton and visit the coast just like other Rockhampton residents. They come to Rockhampton to vote and are turned away because they have to drive to Yeppoon to vote. Livingstone Shire Council's customer service centre is between 34km and 39km away from these suburbs.

They use our facilities and our services and under a fair scenario their rates would contribute to the provision of such. They recognise this and want to contribute to the area they feel they belong.

Livingstone Shire Council has countered this argument by saying Rockhampton residents use Livingstone's facilities and reciprocal arrangements are common practice. However, there is a significant difference between visiting on a weekend as opposed to living your life in an adjoining LGA. There is also a considerable disparity in the facilities provided by each Council for reciprocal use and it is likely to be many years before this is more equitable.

Livingstone Mayor has made the comparison to LGAs in the southeast but once again there is a marked difference between our northern suburbs and the commuter suburbs of the southeast. People often commute between LGAs for work, but they still live their lives and use the facilities and services within the LGA where they reside and pay rates. This is very different from the reality of the northern suburbs.

Historically Rockhampton has been the good big sister city, the service centre for the greater CQ region. We have provided support and assistance and played a part in the growth and development of our neighbours. We provide some amazing facilities (as identified in LSC submission) that ensures a desirable lifestyle, this in turn ensures that Central Queensland is competitive for the attraction and retention of residents.

However, now our long-term future is at stake and we are asking for support to ensure we can continue to grow. We have three communities to our north that identify as Rockhampton people, who want to come back to us and in between them and Parkhurst is enough land to accommodate growth for the next 50 years.

This area is not Livingstone's growth area, nor do they have any plans for the development of the area. It is Rockhampton City's natural growth corridor as we are constrained by mountains to the east and flood prone land to the south and west. Rockhampton Regional Council has budgeted a \$31 million investment into these suburbs to provide infrastructure that enables future development in comparison LSC is budgeting just \$1.9 million.

Should the boundary re-alignment be approved RRC would make the necessary investment in the northern suburbs allowing LSC to continue to prioritise coastal development. That's a win, win for everyone. RRC can also ensure that development is undertaken in a sequential and master-planned manner with adequate facilities and infrastructure to cater for this growth.

If the boundary re-alignment is not supported this area will continue to grow but will do so in an unplanned and adhoc manner. LSC is currently considering a number of smaller lot developments and they have referred the developer to RRC to discuss the provision of sewerage infrastructure. This type of development will create long term issues with connectivity of roads and infrastructure, stormwater issues and risk the delivery of quality parks and sporting fields just to name a few.

As these northern suburbs continue to grow the inequity of large numbers of people using RRC facilities without contributing also grows. RRC ratepayers cannot afford, nor should they continue to pay for infrastructure that services users from our neighbouring shire. I reiterate this is not about people commuting to work, this is about growing populations who are technically Livingstone Shire ratepayers but who live their daily lives in Rockhampton.

I would encourage the Boundary Change Commission to review carefully the financial information submitted by Livingstone Shire as there appears to be some discrepancies between information they've provided to support their case and other financial documents.

It has been difficult to motivate the broader Rockhampton Region to have their say as much of the feedback suggests our community believe it should be up to the residents of the 3 northern suburbs to decide. Whereas Livingstone Shire Council has motivated their residents with the threat of significant rate rises if the re-alignment goes ahead. That said, of those people we have spoken to, by far most acknowledge that it just makes sense that these areas are part of RRC. Of course, our greater region will thrive when both Council's work together, but this cannot happen if one area prospers at the expense and detriment of the other.

Thank you to the Local Government Change Commission for the opportunity to have my say. Our region's future and our children's and grandchildren's future relies on Rockhampton's capacity to grow. Please help us ensure that this great City has every opportunity to continue to thrive and support the wishes of the northern suburbs to come home to Rockhampton.

Sincerely,

Cherie Rutherford