

APPENDIX C

Proposed Determination Report

Electoral Arrangement & Divisional Boundary Review

2019 PROPOSED DETERMINATION
IPSWICH CITY COUNCIL

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INTRODUCTION

The *Local Government Act 2009 (Qld)* (the Act) provides for a Local Government Change Commission (Change Commission). The Change Commission is an independent body that assesses whether proposed changes to Queensland's local councils are in the public interest.

On 7 May 2019, the Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs, The Honourable Stirling Hinchliffe MP referred an electoral arrangement and divisional boundary review of the Ipswich City Council (the Council). The Minister's referral is available to view at Appendix A.

The Minister referred the *City of Ipswich Divisional Boundary Review Report* (the *Report*), commissioned by the Council's Interim Administrator, and requested the Change Commission review the recommended option from the *Report* (see Appendix B).

The change proposed was for the Council to have four multi-member divisions, instead of the current 10 single-member divisional arrangement. A single-member division has one councillor representing it, whereas a multi-member division can have more than one councillor per division.

The Change Commission for this review consists of:

- Mr Pat Vidgen, Electoral Commissioner; and
- Mr Wade Lewis, Casual Commissioner.

The Casual Commissioner was appointed by the Governor in Council on 1 November 2018.

Endorsement of report

This report outlines the Change Commission's electoral arrangement determination and the proposed boundaries for the electoral divisions of the Ipswich City Council.



Pat Vidgen PSM
Electoral Commissioner



Wade Lewis
Casual Commissioner

ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENT DECISION

The Change Commission has conducted an independent review of whether the Council's electoral arrangements should be changed from single-member to multi-member divisions. Following its assessment, the Change Commission considers the proposed change to multi-member divisions to be in the public interest.

The Change Commission recommends the Ipswich City Council be redivided into four (4) multi-member divisions with two (2) councillors representing each division. This means Ipswich would have nine (9) councillors in total (eight (8) councillors and a mayor).

Under current legislation, the voting system for this electoral arrangement is first-past-the-post. For information about this voting system, please see the Electoral Commission of Queensland's (ECQ) website.

Reasoning

In reviewing the proposed change for the Ipswich City Council, the Change Commission was cognisant that it would represent a significant alteration to long-standing electoral arrangements. It was therefore of the view that there would need to be compelling reasons to assess such a change as being in the public interest.

In this regard, the Change Commission generally looked for evidence that:

- there was demonstrated community support for the proposed change;
- the proposed arrangement would be more workable than the existing one, especially when considering Council's current and projected enrolment, and the likely need to accommodate rapid growth in some areas; and/or
- the proposed change was consistent with the 'local government principles' set out in section 4 of the Act, such as decision-making in the public interest, and ensuring democratic representation, social inclusion and meaningful community engagement.

The Change Commission determined that while both single-member and multi-member divisions will provide the community-specific representation that is important to Ipswich residents, multi-member divisions are more likely to meet the criteria outlined above.

On the strength of the evidence presented in the *Report*, including the results from extensive public consultation, multi-member divisions were found to be the preferred option. While there was clearly support shown for both single-member and undivided electoral arrangements, there was also strong opposition to both systems. On the other hand, multi-member divisions were found to be supported by a greater number of people:

- nearly 90% of respondents ranked multi-member divisions as either their first or second preference;
- 75% of respondents who preferred undivided arrangements, voted multi-member divisions second; and
- nearly 90% of respondents who preferred single-member divisions, voted multi-member divisions second.

The Change Commission also noted that multi-member divisions provide greater scope to have more councillors representing rural areas within the Council area, offering the opportunity for more inclusive representation and engagement with the community. The Change Commission considers this relevant given its awareness that a key community concern in the region is a perceived lack of rural representation under current arrangements. The following points about rural representation paraphrase public comments in the *Report*:

- rural areas need their own representation;
- people living in urban areas, have little understanding of the reality of life in rural or semi-rural areas;
- small towns need a voice, if they do not have someone allocated to them that lives in the area, they will be forgotten;
- without divisional councillors, it's less likely that a councillor will be elected from the smaller communities and the urban councillors will not understand the needs of the rural sector; and
- Ipswich has a mix of country and city and needs divisions to meet everyone's needs.

Having fewer divisions enables the Change Commission to place larger amounts of rural areas within them and means that residents in these areas are being directly represented by more councillors. Indeed, under the Change Commission's proposed boundaries, rural communities in Ipswich will have half the divisional councillors directly representing their areas.

The Change Commission deliberated on whether four or five multi-member divisions would be in the public interest for the Ipswich local government area. It was decided that four divisions, with two councillors each, would cater for the current council size, while providing scope to add additional councillor/s to all or some of the divisions as communities expand and elector numbers increase.

DIVISIONAL BOUNDARY REVIEW

The Change Commission must ensure each division of the Council has a reasonable proportion of enrolled voters, herein referred to as 'quota'. Where possible, community interests, such as uniting entire suburbs within divisions and selecting easy-to-identify boundaries, have also been considered.

Assessments are conducted in any way the Change Commission deems appropriate, unless the Minister has provided specific directions.

The process for this review is as follows:

1. Publish the Change Commission's proposal
2. Invite comments on the proposal
3. Publish the Change Commission's final determination report
4. Final determination report provided to the Minister for Local Government, for implementation by the Governor in Council
5. New boundaries come into effect at the 2020 Local Government Quadrennial Election

Determining the quota

A quota is determined by dividing the total number of enrolled voters by the number of councillors (other than the mayor), plus or minus 10%. The Change Commission also considers projected enrolment, so the divisions remain in quota for as long as possible.

Current enrolment data has been sourced from Queensland's electoral roll and projected enrolment data from the Queensland Government Statistician's Office of Queensland Treasury. Projections are based on the timing of future local government quadrennial elections.

Enrolment information is organised around 'Statistical Areas Level 1 (SA1)'. SA1s are geographical units used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) for the release of census data. According to the ABS most SA1s have a population of between 200 to 800 persons with an average population of approximately 400 people.

Current and projected enrolment data are available for download on the ECQ website.

THE PROPOSED BOUNDARIES

The Ipswich City Council has 128,049 voters and will be divided into four multi-member divisions, with two councillors per division and a mayor.

Table 1 shows the Council's current enrolment quota as at 31 January 2019 and the quota projected for 31 March 2024 under a four division multi-member arrangement.

Table 1 – Current and Projected Quota for Four Multi-Member Divisions		
	31 January 2019	31 March 2024
Number of divisions	4	4
Councillors per division	2	2
Enrolment	128,049	165,213
Quota per division	32,012 <i>(16,006 voters per councillor)</i>	41,303 <i>(20,652 voters per councillor)</i>
Quota (+10%) per division	35,213	45,433
Quota (-10%) per division	28,811	37,173

Table 2 shows the current and projected enrolment for the proposed multi-member divisions. Maps are available to view in Appendix C and interactive maps are on the ECQ website.

Table 2 – Current and Projected Enrolment for the Proposed Electoral Divisions				
Division	Enrolment as at 31/01/2019	(%) Deviation from Quota	Projected Enrolment as at 31/03/2024	(%) Deviation from Quota
Division 1	28,854	-9.87	44,796	8.46
Division 2	33,189	3.68	43,297	4.83
Division 3	35,070	9.55	38,790	-6.08
Division 4	30,936	-3.36	38,330	-7.2

The Change Commission modelled several options and liaised with the Council regarding these scenarios, helping to develop a better understanding of community concerns and local experiences before settling on the proposed model.

The proposed boundaries bring enrolment in each division into quota for the 2020 Local Government Quadrennial Election, while also catering for the significant growth projected in certain parts of the region. The Change Commission has made a concerted effort to unite suburbs and their communities of interest within individual divisions and has used clearly discernible boundaries where practicable.

One of the key community concerns identified by the Council and in the *Report* was that rural communities did not believe they had the representation they required. The proposal has sought to address these concerns, with the proposed Divisions 1 and 4 including a mix of urban and significant portions of rural areas. In doing so, rural residents will have four councillors, or half of the divisional councillors, with some responsibility for rural suburbs.

Division 1

Division 1 is the largest of the four divisions and amalgamates both rural and urban suburbs. It contains areas with significant projected growth, such as the Ripley and surrounding localities. The Change Commission has deliberately brought the current enrolment as close to the lower limit of the quota as possible, thereby creating boundaries that unite suburbs and that are more likely to support more than a single election cycle.

The Division is oriented in a west-east direction and includes the following suburbs: Grandchester, Mount Mort, Mount Walker West, Lower Mount Walker, Calvert, Ebenezer, Mount Forbes, Jeebropilly, Willowbank, Mutdapilly, Purga, Peak Crossing, Goolman, Deebling Heights, Raceview, Flinders View, Ripley, South Ripley, White Rock, Swanbank, Blackstone, and Redbank Plains.

Division 2

Division 2 is a mostly urban electorate that includes those suburbs towards the eastern end of the Council. The proposed boundary contains several well-established suburbs, so that both the current and projected enrolment is close to the quota. The Division has united all the suburbs in the area, except for Goodna and Redbank. It was not possible from an enrolment perspective to have Goodna or Redbank entirely contained in either Division 2 or Division 3, and therefore, prominent roads including the Ipswich Motorway, Stuart Street, Redbank Reserve / greenspace area and Kruger Parade have been selected as a boundary.

The Division is oriented in a north-south direction and includes the following suburbs: Spring Mountain, Springfield Lakes, Springfield Central, Springfield, Brookwater, Augustine Heights, Bellbird Park, Camira, Carole Park, Gales and some of Goodna and Redbank.

Division 3

Division 3 contains many of the central Ipswich suburbs. As suburbs are mostly well-established, the amount of growth projected is limited when compared to Division 1. The Change Commission has therefore deliberately brought the current enrolment as close to the upper limit of the quota as possible. In doing so, the boundaries unite suburbs and are more likely to support more than a single election cycle.

The Division is oriented in a west-east direction and includes the following suburbs: One Mile, Leichhardt, Coalfalls, Sadliers Crossing, West Ipswich, Woodend, Ipswich, Basin Pocket, East Ipswich, Newtown, Eastern Heights, Silkstone, Booval, North Booval, Bundamba, Ebbw Vale, New Chum, Dinmore, Riverview and Collingwood Park. It also includes a part of Wulkuraka that lies south of the railway line, most of Redbank excluding those houses situated east of Kruger Parade and includes part of Goodna that falls west of Stuart Street.

Division 4

As with Division 1, this Division amalgamates both rural and urban suburbs. It contains areas with significant projected growth, such as the Rosewood and Marburg suburbs.

The Division is oriented in a west-east direction and includes the following suburbs: Woolshed, The Bluff, Ashwell, Lanefield, Rosewood, Tallegalla, Marburg, Mount Marrow, Thagoona, Walloon, Haigslea, Ironbark, Pine Mountain, Blacksoil, Karrabin, Amberley, Yamanto, Churchill, Brassall, Muirlea, North Ipswich, Tivoli, Moores Pocket, North Tivoli, Chuwar, Karalee, Barellean Point and most of Wulkuraka that lies north of the railway line.

COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSAL INVITED

Comments on the proposed boundaries for the four multi-member divisions are invited until 30 July 2019 and can be lodged through:

Online Form

<https://ecq.qld.gov.au/lgr/ipswich>

Email

LGCCsubmissions@ecq.qld.gov.au

Personal Delivery (*Mon-Fri 9am – 5pm*)

Electoral Commission of Queensland
Level 20, 1 Eagle Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Post

Local Government Change Commission
GPO Box 1393
BRISBANE QLD 4001

Please note, the decision to change to four multi-member divisions is final and the Change Commission is not seeking comment regarding the Council's electoral arrangements.

Comments should focus on the boundaries being proposed for these divisions and it is recommended that those submitting comments:

- consider the enrolment requirements outlined in the Act and in this report;
- clearly state which division/s your comment relates to;
- provide supporting information for why you support or oppose the proposed change;
or
- if you oppose the change, provide alternative boundary suggestions and reasoning.

FINALISING THE REVIEW

After reviewing the public comments on the proposal, the Change Commission will make a final determination on the Council's divisional boundaries.

The results of a Change Commission review must be provided to the Minister for Local Government. A notice of results is published in a local newspaper, the Queensland Government Gazette and on the ECQ website.

A decision of the Change Commission is not subject to appeal.

IMPLEMENTATION

A local government change can only be implemented by the Governor in Council under a regulation.

The regulation may provide for anything that is necessary or convenient to facilitate the change.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT CHANGE COMMISSION

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