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Sent: Wednesday, 16 November 2022 5:42 PM
To: LG CC Submissions
Subject: (57987) Ipswich City Council - electoral arrangements review - Ken Alderton
Attachments: SUBMISSION-TO-THE-Local-Government-Change-Commission.docx

Online submission for **Ipswich City Council - electoral arrangements review** from **Ken Alderton**

Submission Details

Name: Ken Alderton

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Submission text:

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SUBMISSION TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CHANGE COMMISSION IPSWICH CITY COUNCIL'S CURRENT MULTI-MEMBER ARRANGEMENTS.

1. INTRODUCTION

This submission will demonstrate that:

1. There is no evidence that the current arrangement of 4 divisions, each of two Councillors, has not worked satisfactorily.
2. There is no evidence that the current arrangement gives the people of Ipswich City Council less effective representation than surrounding Local government Areas (LGAs).

Further it provides suggestions of additional public consultation that would clarify the views of Ipswich residents about the need for change

On 18 October 2021 Ipswich City Council (ICC) wrote to the Minister for Local Government seeking a review of the current the multi-member Divisions and divisional boundaries. On 13 October 2022, ICC sent to the Change Commission a submission claim amongst other things that "having dual member divisions with fewer councillors does not present the efficiency gains anticipated.", in other words they had not worked.

2. THE CURRENT ARRANGMENT HAS NOT WORKED SATISFACTORILY

In several places in their submission ICC claims that the multi-councillor division model has not achieved the "expected efficiencies" viz.

"Particularly in the divisions which consist of large rural and lower density areas, the multi-councillor model with fewer overall councillors is not achieving the efficiencies that were intended of this model."
(page 8)

"The general view of how this is operating is that having dual member divisions with fewer councillors does not present the efficiency gains anticipated." (page 11)

Nowhere in the document does ICC present evidence that this is accurate.

On page 8 of their submission, ICC claim that:

“ With lower Councillor representation to resident ratios to comparable local government areas, the ability for residents to access representation is at risk of compromise.”

This is not true. Figure 1 demonstrates that for LGAs with a substantial urban population, ICC has the lowest number of persons per councillor.

Figure 1

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA	POPULATION 2021***	COUNCILLORS	PERSONS PER COUNCILLOR
IPSWICH CITY**	229,208	8	28,651
LOGAN CITY	345,098	12	28,758
GOLD COAST CITY	625,087	14	44,649
BRISBANE CITY	1,242,825	27	46,031
TOOWOOMBA REGIONAL *	173,204	11	15,746
SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL	342,541	10	34,254
MORETON BAY REGIONAL COUNCIL	476,340	12	39,695

NOTES

*This Council is a single electorate; There are no divisions

** If ICC went to 10 councillors it would drop to the lowest ratio of any urban council i.e 23,330 persons per councillor

*** Source 2021 Census

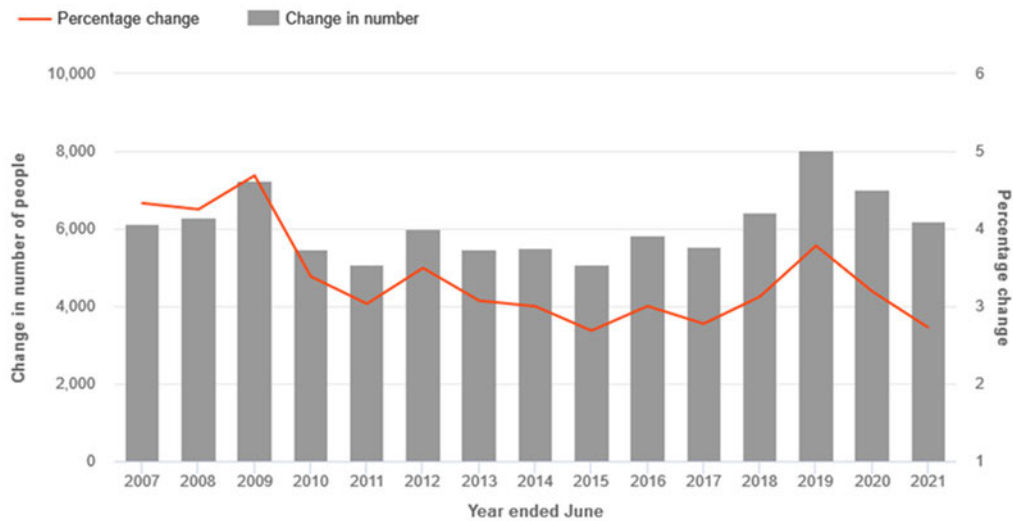
ICC also claim (on page 11) that by 2026 the number of persons per councillor would grow to 40,000 which implies a population of 320,000. That equates to a 7.5% annual growth rate. Figure 2, taken from the ICC website <https://profile.id.com.au/ipswich/population-estimate>, shows that the annual population growth rate has dropped from 4.7% in 2009 to 2.7% in 2021, well below the figure used by Council.

On page 2 ICC also claim that the population will grow to over 558,000 by 2041. This is an annual growth rate of 4.4%, a level not reached since 2010.

Figure 2

Annual change in Estimated Resident Population (ERP)

City of Ipswich



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population Growth, Australia (3218.0). Compiled and presented by id (informed decisions)

3. SUGGESTED METHOD OF COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

The Change Commission's assessment of the Ipswich City Council's electoral arrangements and divisions in October 2019 relied on a public consultation survey conducted by ICC. The method used by ICC is summarised on page 19 of their report "Ipswich - Help Shape Your Future Council - Divisional Boundary Review, Community Discussion Paper, March 2019" viz:

"HAVE YOUR SAY

To have your say, all you have to do is answer a few simple questions, starting with a request to rank the three divisional models you've just reviewed from most preferred (1) to least preferred (3).

Find the survey form by:

__ Visiting council's **website** at
[Ipswich.qld.gov.au/shapeyourcouncil](https://ipswich.qld.gov.au/shapeyourcouncil).

_ Visiting council's **central administration office** or any community office to collect a hard copy version of the survey or online access.

_ Visiting any of council's **libraries** to collect a hard copy version.

_ Telephoning council's **call centre** on **(07) 3810 6666** for a survey form to be mailed or emailed to you."

Firstly, this form of survey clearly depends on residents taking the initiative and there are no safeguards preventing multiple replies from a single person.

Secondly, the assessment of the result was complicated by the requirement to give three preferences on three options.

ICC Mayor, Teresa Harding has drawn attention to the small number of responses and has expressed the hope that there will be a larger number for this review (Ordinary Council meeting 27 October 2022).

The assessment of the survey results has been criticised in the media (Ipswich Tribune "Editorial: Council model must reflect community", Oct 26 2022, Brian Bennion <https://www.ipswichtribune.com.au/editorial-council-model-must-reflect-community>)

To overcome these difficulties the following procedure is suggested.

Have a professional survey organisation conduct a survey across the four divisions using the electoral roll as the basis.

1. Mail numbered forms out to registered voters. The number should not be connected to an individual but are merely to ensure that there is only one response per person.
2. Conduct a telephone poll.

The dual poll method is designed to overcome the problems that people will not respond to mail and answer telephone calls for surveys.

Ken Alderton