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Online submission for **Ipswich City Council - electoral arrangements review from Ian Kenneth Fraser**

Submission Details

Name: Ian Kenneth Fraser

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SUBMISSION TO THE
ELECTORAL COMMISSION QUEENSLAND
CITY OF IPSWICH DIVISIONAL
BOUNDARIES REVIEW



Submitted by Ms Pye Augustine, Mr Ian Fraser and Mr Peter Duffy residents of Ipswich

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PREAMBLE

On the 14th of November 2022, the Deputy Premier, Minister for State development, Infrastructure, Planning and Local Government have asked the Local Government Change Commission (Change Commission) to conduct a mid-term review of the Ipswich City Council's current multi-member arrangements which will include the views of Ipswich Residentsⁱ. The Press release stated the following statement:ⁱⁱ

'Currently, the Ipswich City Council is divided into four multi-member divisions, with two councillors representing each division, plus a mayor.

The current and anticipated level of growth in the Ipswich region, is a key consideration in ensuring electoral arrangements in the region are meeting the needs and expectations of residents.

The Change Commission will be accepting written submissions from anyone who wants to have their say about the arrangements.

Electoral Commissioner Pat Vidgen said public feedback would be an important part of the Change Commission's assessment.

"Local knowledge can be really helpful, and we know a lot of people feel strongly about the arrangements and boundaries in their local area," Mr Vidgen said.

"People can provide their view or feedback on their current experience with the existing arrangements as well as the number of councillors representing the Ipswich community."

Consequently, this submission prepared by three Ipswich residents who not only live in three different suburbs (Redbank Plains, Augustine Heights and Silkstone) but also three different divisions (Divisions 1, 2 and 3) for consideration by the Change Commission.

Annex A details the author's background and their contact details.

Current Ipswich City Council

Currently the City of Ipswich is represented by a Mayor and eight Councillors (two per division) who were elected to a four-year term in 2020. The next elections will occur in March 2024. The following are the current member of Ipswich City Council

Mayor – Teresa Harding

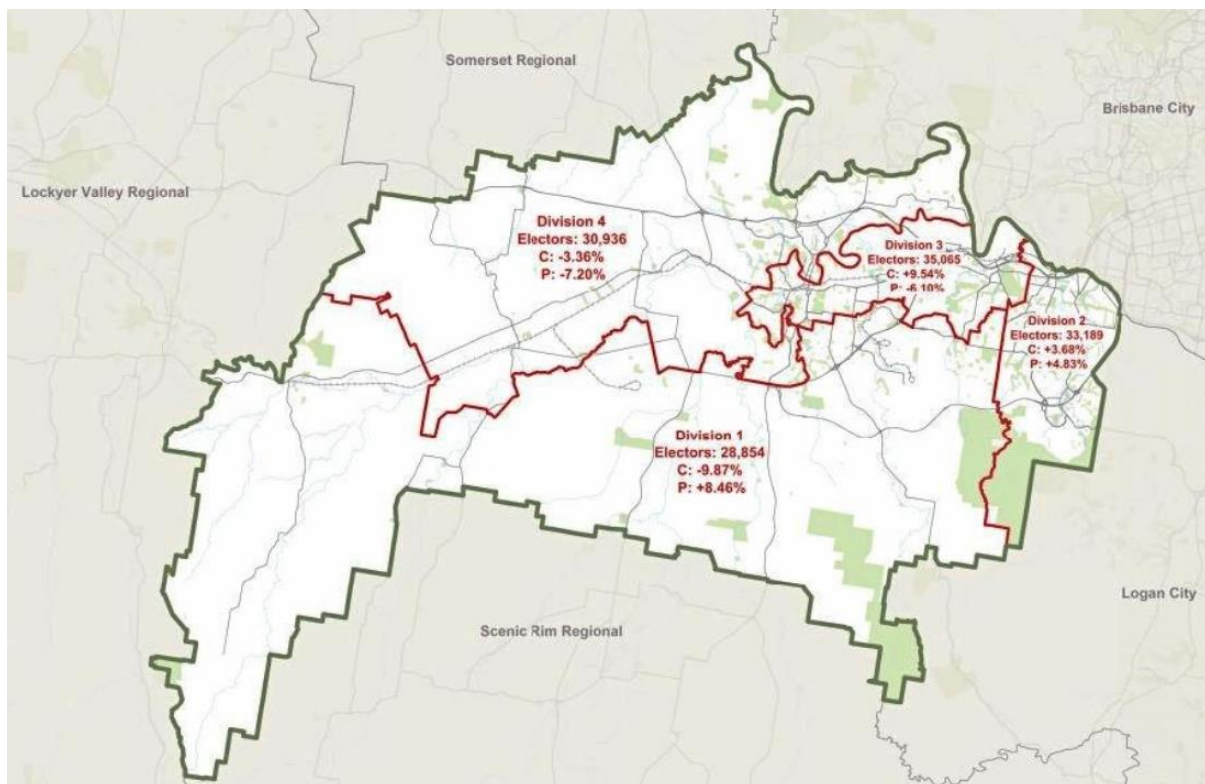
Division 1 – Councillor Sheila Ireland and Councillor Jacob Madsen

Division 2 – Councillor Nicole Jonic and Councillor Paul Tully

Division 3 – Councillor Marnie Doyle and Councillor Andrew Fechner

Division 4 – Councillor Kate Kunzelmann and councillor Russell Milligan

Map One Current Divisional Boundaries



Note: Annex B is an expanded map of the Ipswich Local Government area and divisional boundaries.

History of Current Boundaries

The 2019 Final determination Ipswich City Council set the current boundaries of the Council – Electoral Arrangement & Divisional Boundary Reviewⁱⁱⁱ. The final report divided the council into four divisions with two councillors based on a report from the Ipswich City Council titled “The City of Ipswich Divisional boundary Report” dated 30 April 2019.^{iv}

In their background section the Commissioners stated the following:

‘The change proposed was for the Council to have multi-member divisions, instead of the current 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 Minister recommended four (4) divisions with two (2) councillors per division to allow for future population growth and to offer greater flexibility to increase the number of Councillors as population requires without requiring frequent boundary changes.

The Ipswich City Council and its electors are in a unique situation given recent political circumstances, including the Council’s dissolution and subsequent management by an Interim Administrator and Interim Management Committee. While acknowledging the recommended electoral arrangements and quo, the Change Commission also notes that the current Council Administration has no perceived benefit regardless of the outcome of this review.’

However, the Change Commission noted, that the proposed changes, “represents a significant alteration to the long-standing electoral arrangements.”^v

We do not wish to revisit the history of the events leading up to the report, however in our opinion most Ipswich residents still prefer single councillor divisions.

Ipswich Population Trends

This submission does not seek to expand on the history or current details of Ipswich. In Ipswich City Council's Submission to the Change Commission details this very well in the section titled "About Ipswich"^{vi}.

However, it is worth noting from the submission the strong annual growth rate of 4 % over five years and the projected growth of rate of 4.5 % over the next fifteen years as against 1.6 % for Queensland and 1 % for Australia. Furthermore, the report noted the median age of the population was thirty-two^{vii}.

From Annex C, the projected growth of the population of Ipswich will be 557,649 as of 30 June 2041.

Population V Electors

In 2019 saw the establishment of new boundaries. This resulted in a change from ten single divisions with single member representative to four dual councillor representatives. The elections prior to 2020 which occurred in 2016, Ipswich City Council had a population of 200,103 with ten councillors and 1 Mayor.

In 2019 with the establishment of new boundaries, Ipswich had a population of 210,000 with the council representation decreased to eight councillors.

We believe that when the administrator made the decision to change the boundaries and proportioning the divisions an error occurred by instead of using population numbers, the total number of electors on the roll.

An elected councillor is chosen by voters who are on the electoral commission voting role, but represent all people that reside in their division.

Consequently, we strongly believe that population numbers should be applied when dividing the boundaries in the future.

How are the Divisional boundaries decided?

All decisions in Local Government must adhere to the Local Government Principles as outlined in Section 4 of the Local Government Act 2009. These principles are detailed below

- Transparent and effective processes, and decision making in the public interest.
- Sustainable development and management of assets and infrastructure, and the delivery of effective services.
- Democratic representation, social inclusion and meaningful community engagement.
- Good governance of, and, by local government.
- Ethical and legal behaviour of councillors, local government employees and councillor advisors.

As well, the ECQ must give due consideration to:

- area and physical features of terrain
- means of travel, traffic arteries and communications
- community or diversity of interests
- the likelihood of changes in the number of electors in the various localities.

Also, the Change Commission must ensure that enrolments for all the divisions are within 10% of the other with elector numbers.

Determination of the boundaries of Ipswich City Council electoral divisions

Any revision of electoral boundaries is not simply a matter of adjusting divisions or the number of councillors per division. Inevitably there is a 'domino' effect. Required adjustments to district 'A' may not simply be a matter of adding electors to, or taking them from, the adjoining district 'B'. There are quite likely to be flow on effects for 'C', 'D', and so on. Also, there divisions where the enrolment level was barely within the permissible limits, it may be prudent to make some adjustment to take into account future changes in elector numbers

With current population at 250,000 and equal split of boundaries for 12 divisions would be either 20833 residents per single member division. In saying that, with Ipswich City currently being the fastest growing LGA there is cause to have uneven divisions especially divisions that have Ripley, South Ripley, White Rock and Spring Mountain.

From a resident's point of viewpoint when redistributing the divisions, three of the local government principles are important. After discussion with local residents, confusion sets in when suburbs are divided into two different divisions. It is felt that no suburb should be sub-divided as it adds to the confusion of who the constituent's local member actually is. Because it makes sense on a map, residents identify with their suburb and consequently where possible whole suburbs should only be in the one division.

Furthermore, the major growth in Ipswich is occurring in the Eastern end of Division One and the southern end of Division 2.

The major growth areas in Division one are in Redbank Plains, White Rock, Debbing Heights and the Ripley development area.

In Division two, the major growth area is Spring Mountain. In addition there is the continuing expansion of other suburbs in the Springfield location.

Division Three represents the older, established suburbs of Ipswich and therefore will experience little growth going forward and certainly not to the extent of Divisions 1 & 2.

Finally, whilst Division Four will see some future development in the Walloon to Rosewood area, this will not match the growth in Division One and Two.

Problems with Current Divisions

In their submission, Ipswich City Council detailed the breakdown of current divisions outlining the area of the divisions, the suburbs covered and the population.^{viii}

The following key points are worth noting.

- Division one has a population of 63633 and covers an area of which equals 55% of the municipality (611km²).
- Division Two has the highest population of 70494 and an area of 74klm².

- Division Three has a population of 59079 and an area of 68Klm2.
- Division Four has the smallest population of 49164 and a corresponding area of 242Klm2

In 2019, the size of Division one and four were a design feature of the original redistribution to include urban and rural areas together. We believe this is major flaw in that redistribution and has caused significant problems for the councillors in those divisions and the residents they serve.

Resizing the current Divisions will not address the problems created by the current Divisional structure.

As stated on page 8 of their submission Ipswich City Council refers to the inherit challenges of rural vs urban representation.

‘There are inherit challenges of rural v’s urban representation with the needs of each group often being different. Rural populations are frequently more dispersed, harder to contact and have representation needs that are more complex than those of urban areas’^{ix}

Residents of the community decide to run for Council in areas that they know and can best represent. This comes with knowledge of the area, having common interest of their constituents which allows the elected councillor to build a strong rapport. When divisions are the size of the current LGA of Ipswich, true representation cannot be given, even with dual councillors.

Added to this is the needs of new suburbs where a councillor needs to help new residents find their way and play a vital role in establishing the sense of community. This is especially true when non-Australian residents move into and area.

Consequently, any redistribution and expansion of the current boundaries need to be able meet the above principles.

Therefore, we fully support the Council submission on Community Expectations in Section 6 of their submission^x

Size of representation of Ipswich City Council

Annex D contains a table detailing the break down of other Queensland Councils.

Apart from the fact that Ipswich is the only Local Government Area with dual divisions, the population numbers within the Ipswich LGA is the smallest of the selected councils in the table. The LGA of Toowoomba being the closest, having half the population of Ipswich and an area of 498.1 KIm², while Ipswich has an area of 1094 KIm².

Furthermore, it is noted that the current population per councillor representation of Ipswich LGA is 29,162 whilst the LGA of Logan having 12 councillors represent 28,758. The rationale behind the 2019 decision of divisional structure has failed to foresee the diverse need of the fastest growing LGA. After 30 months of operations, the rapid growth has far out stripped the representation per constituent. As stated in the Ipswich City Council submission:

' it is essential that the divisional arrangement are correctly set to best deal with the needs the needs of the community over the next decade'.^{xi}

Proposed divisional arrangements

It is the strong view of the authors, that the decision to have multi-member divisions does not suit the history and expectations of Ipswich residents.

We also fully support the community expectations points raised in the Ipswich City Council's submission on page 9 under the Section titled Community Expectations.

These are as follows.

- Direct representation for the area where they live.
- Clear line of sight to Councillors achieving for the community.
- Advocacy and cooperation—both within Ipswich and with other councils and levels of government.
- Fostering cooperation between local community organisations, business and industries. And

- Local knowledge.

Given the diverse and enormous size of Ipswich, combining well established suburbs with a sizable rural area and rapidly expanding population in the Eastern part of the municipality requires the establishment of a new divisional structure.

Given, that the dual membership model has not met the expectations or the efficiencies that the community was promised in the original redistribution. We recommend that the current divisional structure be abolished.

Therefore, to cater for the rapid growth in the City of Ipswich we proposed to move back to single member divisions and increase the number of councillors from eight to twelve.

The increased number of councillors will allow the Elected element of the city administration to cater for the expected population growth of 558000 people by 2041. Logan and Moreton have twelve councillors for populations of 345000 and 484428, respectively.

The increase in councillors will meet the needs of not only the rural and established suburbs but also the growth areas in Springfield, Redbank Plains, Deebing Heights, Ripley and the Rosewood area.

Based on the budget estimates in the Ipswich City Council submission, the cost for the redistribution to the budget would be \$626000. However, in a budget of \$314m in 2022 Financial year with an expected increase in income in Financial Year 2025 to \$356m^{xii} From the same document Total Assets of \$3.7 billion rising to an estimated \$4.060 billion in the same period.^{xiii}

We feel with the increase of population and growth of assets, this added expense to budget would be justified as means the community of Ipswich is better serviced.

Conclusion

We believe that we have demonstrated that the current system of divisional representation is not fit for purpose under the current conditions. The last thirty months has clearly demonstrated the drawback of the current arrangement to serve the growing and diverse needs of one of the fastest growing Local Government areas in Australia and certainly in Queensland,

In conclusion, we recommend the Commission look past the local election set for March 2024, but further into the decade and set the divisional representation to match future growth of the LGA of the City of Ipswich.

Ms Pye Augustine

Ian Fraser Bec

Peter Duffy BBus

Ipswich

27 November

Annexes

- A. Details of the authors
- B. Current Divisional Map of Ipswich city Council
- C. Population statics for Ipswich
- D. Sample of LGA Break up of Council representation

Notes

- ⁱ Electoral Commission Queensland Press release 14 November 20220
- ⁱⁱ Electoral Commission Queensland Press release 14 November 20220 paragraph 3 to 7
- ⁱⁱⁱ Electoral arrangement & Divisional Boundary Review 2019 Final determination Ipswich City Council
- ^{iv} City Of Ipswich Divisional Boundary Review Report 30 April 2019 Ipswich City Council
- ^v op.cit., page 3
- ^{vi} City of Ipswich Submission to the Change Commission review of Divisional Arrangements October 2022 page 3
- ^{vii} op.cit., page3
- ^{viii} op.cit., pages 4 to 7
- ^{ix} Op.cit. page 8
- ^x Op.cit. page 9
- ^{xi} Op.cit. page 8
- ^{xii} Ipswich City Council 2021–2022 Budget Statement of Financial Position, page 4
- ^{xiii} Op.cit. page 5

Author's Details

Pye Augustine

Pye Augustine has been a resident of Ipswich since 2008. She lives in Redbank Plains and works in the area. She migrated with her family from South Africa in the 1960s.

Her children were educated in Ipswich

She stood as a candidate in Division One in the 2020 Ipswich City Council election.

Her main community involvement has been in sporting organisations including President of the Springfield United Football Club and as the Operations Manager of the Western Pride Football Club.

She is an active member of the Australian Labor Party and has campaigned in State and Federal Elections.

Profile Peter Duffy

Resident of Ipswich LGA since 1987.

40 years broad experience in Queensland Electricity Supply Industry having worked throughout the state.

Bachelor of Business degree from the Capricornia Institute of Advanced Education (now the University of Central Queensland) with double major in economics and data processing.

Diploma of project Management – Chifley Business School

Treasurer of The Services Union, Qld from 2013 until August 2017

Trustee Director Energy Super, 2016 to August 2017 (\$8Bn FUM) until retirement

Worked on local member campaigns at local, state and federal levels since 2016. (6 campaigns)

Key Skills:

- Change management
- Logistics management
- Contract management

- Project management
- Business process design
- Implementation methodologies and governance
- Stakeholder management
- Disaster management

Ian Fraser

First moved to Ipswich in 1969 with the Royal Australian Air Force. In 2012 in returned to settle in Ipswich and lives in Augustine Heights.

Served in the Royal Australian Air Force for twenty years with postings to South Australia, Queensland, South Vietnam, Queensland, New South Wales, Canberra and Darwin.

In RAAF served as and Airfield Defence Guard, Logistics Clerk and Logistics Officer.

After discharged from the RAAF was a Certified Practising Accountant for thirty years owning his business in Darwin and Ipswich.

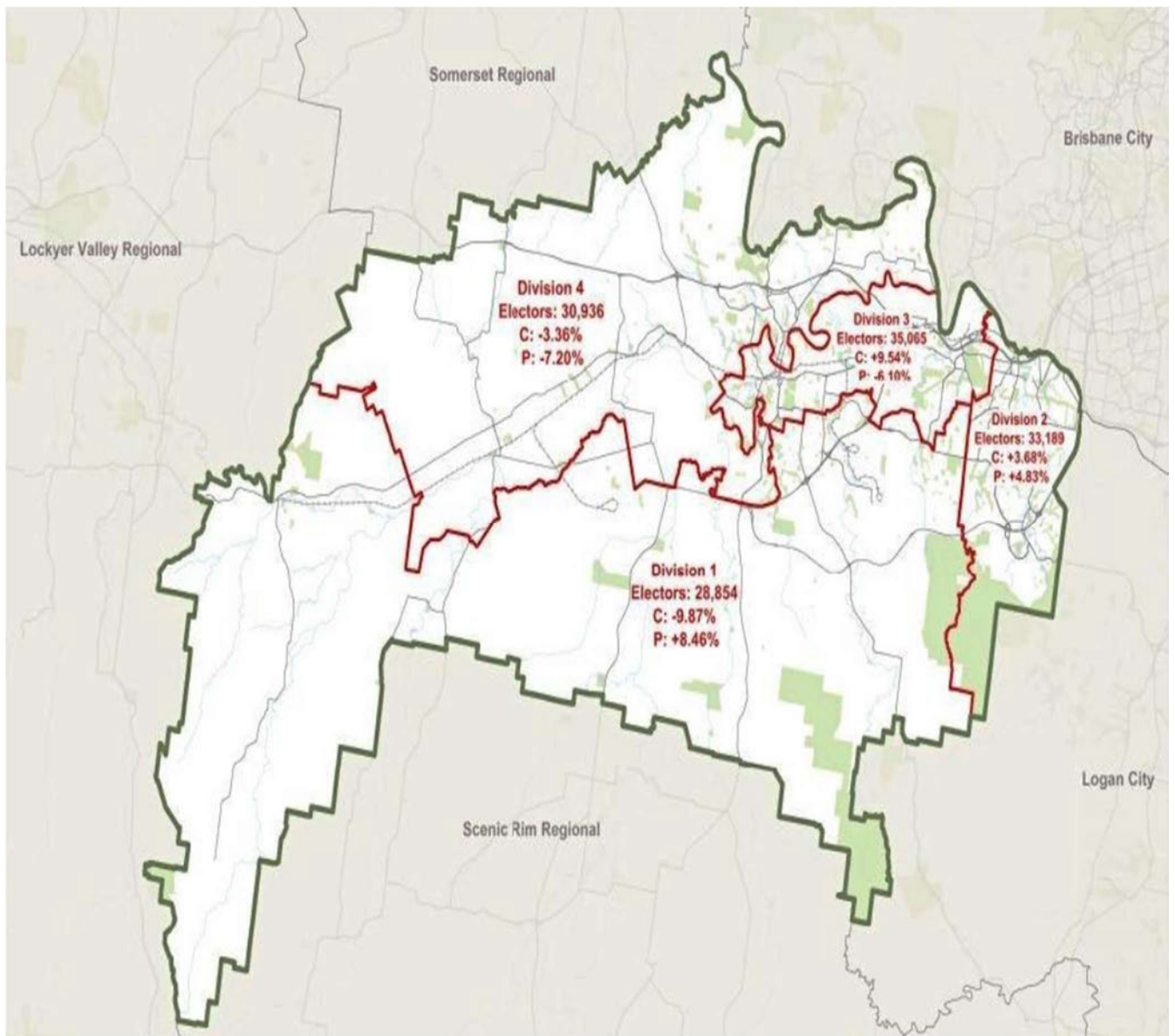
Is a member of the Australian Labor Party since 1974 and extensively campaigned on local, state and Federal election in all states where he has lived.

Served as an Alderman on Darwin City Council from 1998 to 2004.

Has a Bachelor of Economics from the Australian National University.

Map One

Divisional Boundaries Ipswich city Council



Population Statistics for Ipswich

Estimated resident population

The estimated resident population (ERP) figure is the official population estimate. For sub-state geographies, ERP figures are updated annually using a model which includes administrative data that indicate population change, such as registered births and deaths, dwelling approvals, Medicare enrolments and electoral enrolments. Data are updated annually with a release approximately 9 months after the reporting period. The next planned update is in April 2023.

persons Ipswich (C) LGA

- Average annual growth rate of 3.4% over five years
- Average annual growth rate of 3.2% over ten years Queensland
- ERP of 5,221,233 persons as at 30 June 2021
- Average annual growth rate of 1.5% over five years
- Average annual growth rate of 1.6% over ten years

As at 30 June 2021, the estimated resident population for Ipswich (C) LGA was **236,708**

Table 1 Estimated resident population

LGA / STATE	As at 30 June			Average annual growth rate	
	2011	2016	2021p	2011-2021p	2016-2021p
	NUMBER			%	
Ipswich ©	172,200	200,103	236,708	3.2	3.4
Queensland	4,476,778	4,845,152	5,221,233	1.6	1.5

Source: ABS 3218.0, Regional Population Growth, Australia, various editions

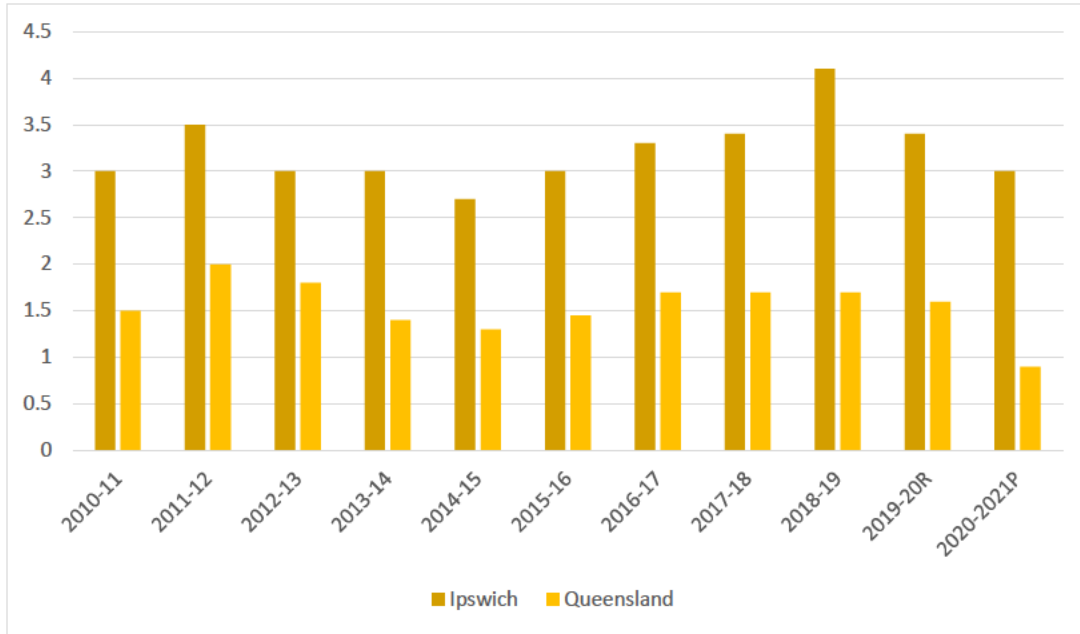


Figure 2 Estimated resident population growth, Ipswich (C) LGA and Queensland Source: ABS 3218.0, Regional Population Growth, Australia, various edition

Population projections

The 2018 edition of the Queensland Government population projections are generated by applying assumptions regarding future trends in the components of population change (fertility, mortality and migration) and the latest planning and development intelligence available. Data are based on the medium series and are updated twice every five years, from 200,123 persons to persons Ipswich (C) LGA

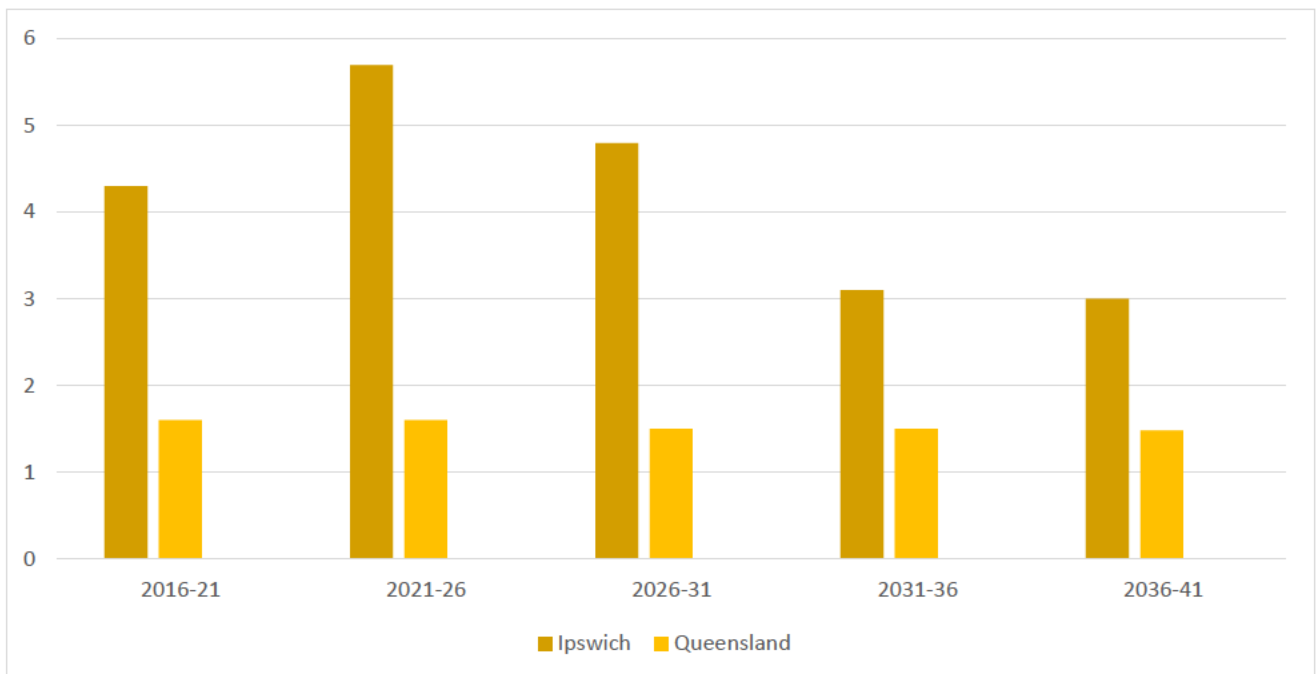
- Population projected to be 557,649 persons as at 30 June 2041
- Increase of 4.2% per year over 25 years Queensland
- Queensland's Population projected to be 7,161,661 persons as at 30 June 2041
- Increase of 1.6% per year over 25

From 2016 to 2041, the population for Ipswich (C) LGA is
 projected to increase to **557,649**

Table 4 Projected population, Ipswich (C) LGA and Queensland

LGA / STATE	As at 30 June					Average annual growth rate
	2016a	2021	2026	2036	2041	2016-2041
	NUMBER					%
Ipswich ©	200,123	246,090	325,092	480,339	557,649	4.2
Queensland	4,848,877	5,261,567	5,722,780	6,686,604	7,161,661	1.6

Figure 5 Projected population change, Ipswich (C) LGA and Queensland



Annex B to
Submission to Change Commission on Ipswich
City Council Divisional Boundaries
P. Augustine, I Fraser, P Duffy

Other LGA break up of Councillor representation

		Division s	Councillor s	Populatio n per Councillor	Single
Brisbane City Council	1,260,000	26	26	48,461	Single
Gold Coast City Council	633,764	14	14	45,268	Single
Moreton Bay	484,428	12	12	40,369	Single
Sunshine Coast	389,840	10	10	38,984	Single
Logan city Council	345,100	12	12	28,758	Single
Ipswich City Council	233,302	4	8	58,325	Dual
Townsville	195,515	10	10	19,551	Single
Toowoomba	122,444	11	1	12,244	Open
Redland	161,730	10	10	16,173	Single