

**Submission
No 24**

2012 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

Name: Clr Ian Scandrett

Date Received: 7/02/2013

Submission from Clr Ian Scandrett:

I would like to see the banning of political parties in local government and the banning of party advertising and paid 'endorsements' with that. In other words, candidates should spend what they raise and only take capped donations, only by individuals.

It is time for Councils to specify the time commitments Councillors need to make so as to carry out the role. Candidates should lodge a declaration at nomination that they are able to contribute the time and also to declare all their pecuniary information. A cooling off period would allow public examination of this prior to nominations becoming formal. Persons with roles in property sales and property development should face a higher level of pre-poll scrutiny.

I don't support Councillors seeking to become full time nor the lobbying for commercial rates of pay. Serving your community is just that, service. If Councillors think the role is underpaid, then don't nominate. Any arguments about Councils needing Councillors with specific qualifications ignores the reason for election, trust in you by your community. Any argument for specific expertise overlooks why Councils have highly paid executive and employ consultants to provide just that. The elimination of Party Tickets in Local Government Elections will ensure the most popular candidates are elected, rather than brands.

Electronic Voting [EV] should have been more carefully considered by the GM and Council for 2012 for a number of reasons.

I would like to see election reform to include Electronic Voting, some benefits are as follows:

1. EV is far more cost effective.
2. At \$150,000 it represents a substantial saving on the final cost to WSC of ~\$260,000.
3. EV comes in a variety of forms EV is a proven system and is secure. The NRMA [2.2m members, 3rd biggest election in Australia], Associations and Unions have used EV for over a decade.
4. Online EV is more accessible than ballot box voting.
5. Modern EV is physically easier for all voters as it can be accessed online anywhere from any suitable PC or device.
6. EV may encourage higher participation by the 18-25 year old members of our community.
7. Online EV is far more accessible for the elderly and hospitalised etc as they can vote at home etc.
8. EV is accessible to all who don't have a computer simply by attending Council's facilities [eg Libraries] at a time to suit themselves. There would still be a local returning officer and office.
9. Environmentally, EV is paperless and will massively reduce the paper waste from ballot papers and "how to votes" etc.
10. Issues such as duplicate voting and errors in counting are eliminated. The roll is accurately marked off.
11. Online Polls on local issues are easily undertaken at election time.
12. EV is more accessible than a single ballot day – it can open 2 weeks prior as pre-poll does and voters can vote online or come into Town to attend the Libraries when it suits. The

“absent elsewhere” is no longer an excuse for not voting. A higher participation rate is possible especially amongst the young and the elderly.

Thankyou,

Clr Ian Scandrett
Wingecarribee Shire Council