

2012 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

Organisation: Murray Shire Council
Name: Mr Greg Murdoch
Position: General Manager
Date Received: 24/01/2013

9 January 2013

Mr Colin Barry
Electoral Commissioner
NSWEC
Level 25, 201 Kent Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Mr Barry

In relation to the running of the recent Local Government elections, the Council would like to make some general comments and suggestions about the way the elections were run.

Whilst the Council was generally happy with the manner in which the elections were run, there is always room for improvement in any process. In particular Council was happy with the level of service received from your staff, particularly from the local Returning Officer.

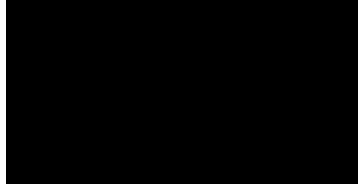
The areas that the Council believes that could be improved are:-

- Location – the polling place for Moama was the Moama Public School. It is Council's belief that the Moama Community Centre is a better location, as it provides for better parking, more spacious and a more open facility;
- Postal Voting – Victorian Local Government elections are conducted by postal vote and as we are on the border we see that their elections run smoothly with a reduced level of administrative effort. We are also experiencing an increased reliance on Pre poll voting, which tends to suggest that there is an increased "shop front" customer service requirements to cater for people to vote over the period leading up to polling day. By running the elections under a Postal voting system would negate some costs and help the election process run better;
- Vacancies in Office – If a Councillor ceases to hold office for any reason, in Victoria the Councillor is replaced by the candidate in the previous elections with the next highest votes. Thus preventing the necessity to conduct a by election. Our Council believes that this option should be pursued in New South Wales;
- Website – The feedback from some of the candidates was that your website could have been more user friendly. Some of the information was difficult to obtain and find in the format that was in operation at the elections.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to make these suggestions about how the elections are run could be improved..

Should you require any further information, please contact Mr Phil Higgins or myself on 03 5884 3302.

Yours sincerely



Greg Murdoch
General Manager

PJH