

**Submission
No 42**

2012 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

Organisation: Strathfield Municipal Council
Name: Ms Kim Appleby
Date Received: 8/02/2013

8 February 2013

Mr Jai Rowell MP
Chairperson
Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Mr Rowell

RE: NSW Parliamentary Committee on Electoral Matters Enquiry into the 2012 Local Government Elections

I refer to the current parliamentary enquiry into the 2012 Local Government Elections in New South Wales and provide the following comments for your consideration.

I note the Terms of Reference for the Enquiry includes particular reference to:

- a) the costs of the elections;
- b) the experience of Councils that conducted their own elections;
- c) possible legislative changes to improve the efficiency of and participation in Local Government elections;
- d) non-residential voting in Local Government elections; and
- e) the impact of requirements under the *Election Funding, Expenditure and Disclosures Act 1981* on participation by candidates in Local Government elections and possible legislative changes to remove any barriers to participation; and
- f) any other related matter.

Strathfield Municipal Council sought assistance from the New South Wales Electoral Commission to conduct the Ordinary Local Government Election in September 2012. As advised by the Electoral Commission NSW, it is noted that the overall cost of conducting the elections State-wide was approximately four (4) percent below the estimated budget.

The indicative costs to Council based on invoices received from the Electoral Commission NSW were approximately \$164,000. It should be noted though, that additional in-kind contributions such as Council staff time and utility costs were also borne by the Council. Therefore, the aforementioned amount should be considered conservative.

In relation to possible changes to improve the efficiency of and participation in Local Government elections, Council supports the motion put by Kiama Council and the unanimous decision carried at the 2012 Local Government Association of NSW Conference "*That the Local Government Association call on the State Government to change legislation to allow Councils to reduce the two week pre-poll for Local Government election to a maximum of one week prior to polling day*". This possible amendment would significantly reduce costs, whilst still providing voters with alternative voting days.

Should you require clarification or further information, please do not hesitate to contact me on Ph: 9748 9999 or neale.redman@strathfield.nsw.gov.au

Yours sincerely



NEALE REDMAN
DIRECTOR CORPORATE SERVICES