

**Submission
No 48**

2012 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

Organisation: Camden Council
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Position: Executive Services Co-Ordinator
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Attn: The Chair
Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Sir,

RE: 2012 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS – COMMITTEE ON ELECTORAL MATTERS INQUIRY

Further to the NSW Parliaments Joint Standing Committee's request for submissions by 8 February 2013, we note the following issues:

Costings

Whilst an indicative budget of \$242,540 plus GST was provided to Council prior to the conduct of the Local Government Elections, Council is still yet to receive final costings. The Electoral Commission NSW has indicated that final figures should be received by the end of January 2013.

The 2008 Local Government Election saw expenditure double from the 2004 Local Government Election to approximately \$211,000. At that time, Council resolved to lodge a submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters based on the unreasonable cost increases made by the Electoral Commission of NSW.

Given that costings continue to increase, Council is concerned in regards to cost shifting and disproportionate expenditure to number of electors to the Committee at this time.

Non-residential voting

Section 270 & 271 of the *Local Government Act* allows for non-resident owners, occupiers and ratepaying lessees of rateable land to enrol on a non-residential roll, thus enabling participation in the Local Government Elections for the area in which they "own" or "occupy" rateable land.

Under section 299 of the *Local Government Act*, each Council is responsible for the preparation of the non-residential rolls for their local government area.

Whilst the Electoral Commission NSW made generic claim for inclusion form templates available to Councils and an electronic lodgement process was introduced this year, the preparation of the non-residential rolls is complex, onerous, and somewhat confusing, particularly for those making a claim to enrol.



Further, the responsibility of the coordination, preparation, validation and approval of the non-residential roll should be administered by the Electoral Commission NSW, with input from Council where required.

Additionally, several Councillors have suggested amendments be made to the *Local Government Act 1993* so that only applicants who are residents, owners of a local business or owners of an investment property, are able to be nominated as candidates and hold civic office.

Should you require further information or assistance in this regard, please contact the undersigned on 02 46547990 during normal business hours.

Yours sincerely,



Samantha Sharkey
EXECUTIVE SERVICES CO-ORDINATOR