

**Submission  
No 7**

**INQUIRY INTO PUBLIC FUNDING OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
ELECTION CAMPAIGNS**

**Organisation:** Clarence Valley Council

**Name:** Mr Stuart McPherson

**Position:** General Manager

**Date Received:** 17/09/2010

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VALLEY COUNCIL

17 September 2010

Reference: 605544  
Contact: Stuart McPherson

The Chair  
Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters  
Parliament House  
Macquarie St  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Sir

**Submission on the public funding of local government electoral campaigns.**

I wish to make the following submission, on behalf of Clarence Valley Council, in relation to matters canvassed in your Issues Paper.

1. Clarence Valley Council is opposed to any form of public funding of local government electoral campaigns. Council is of the view that campaign funding is a matter for each individual candidate and that such campaigns should not be funded from the public purse. At the last Clarence Valley Council elections no candidate spent more than \$1000 on his/her campaign expenses and this has been the trend over the years, with most spending considerably less. Doubtless, this experience is one that is shared by the vast majority of regional and rural local government areas.
2. Public funding of electoral campaigns will only encourage candidates to spend more on their campaigns. Past experience in the Clarence Valley, however, shows that successful campaigns can be, and generally are, run on minimal campaign costs.
3. Council is adamant that, if your Committee in its findings recommends public funding, then local government should not be responsible for, or contribute to, that funding. At the last elections councils were hit with considerably increased electoral expenses as a result of the Electoral Commission taking over responsibility for those elections and few would have funds available to finance candidates' expenses.
4. While Council has not had the opportunity to canvass its ratepayers on this matter, it would be surprising if many of them considered the funding of electoral campaigns to be prudent use of their rate payments.

Yours faithfully

**Stuart McPherson**  
General Manager