

**INQUIRY INTO THE IMPACT OF EXPENDITURE CAPS FOR LOCAL
GOVERNMENT ELECTION CAMPAIGNS**

Organisation: Willoughby City Council

Date Received: 14 September 2018

12 September, 2018

The Hon. Dr Peter Phelps MLC
Chairperson
Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear The Hon. Dr Phelps

RE: INQUIRY INTO THE IMPACT OF EXPENDITURE CAPS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

I write to you in relation to your recent announcement that the NSW Parliament's Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters has adopted a new inquiry into the impact of expenditure caps for local government election campaigns

I note that the Committee is seeking submissions on the impact of the expenditure caps for local government election campaigns on local government areas and wards with different populations, with particular reference to:

- a) Whether the current expenditure caps are adequate;
- b) Whether the number of enrolled electors in a ward or local government area is the best method to calculate expenditure caps; and
- c) Whether the current divisions around the number of enrolled electors on which the expenditure cap is calculated are adequate

At its meeting held on 10 September, 2018 Council considered this matter and resolved to make a submission to the inquiry to request that amendments are made to the *Electoral Funding Act 2018* to resolve the significant flaws in this legislation, including inconsistent expenditure caps on local government candidates, parties and third-party campaigners.

The inconsistency is demonstrated by analysis by Local Government NSW which shows that for example, a candidate for Orange City Council would be allowed to spend \$0.17 per voter, compared with \$0.69 per voter by a candidate for Dubbo Regional Council. In rural Walcha, the allowable spend is \$8.71 per voter. Meanwhile in metropolitan areas, a Campbelltown City Council candidate would be allowed to spend \$0.05 per voter, compared with the \$0.44 per voter allowed in Waverley.

Council is also concerned that the Electoral Funding Act 2018 became law in May without any consultation with local government.

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Council does not have a position on adoption of any particular formula or method for calculating candidate expenditure caps however it believes that any formula in the legislation should work to set reasonable and equitable caps on campaign spending for local government elections. Any caps on electoral funding must be fair and transparent and result in consistent caps across all local government areas.

If you require any further information on this submission please contact Council's Governance Risk and Corporate Planning Manager, [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely

Gail Giles-Gidney
MAYOR

Reference: <OurRef>

Phone: [REDACTED]

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