

[REDACTED]

From: Sommer Metske [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 23 September 2019 2:50 PM
To: Local Government Legislation Review (DPaC)
Subject: Review submission

To whom it may concern,

I am an elected member for the Latrobe municipality. I wish to provide the following feedback regarding the legislation review:

Reform #1-4: agree

Reform #5: I don't agree that a person must be an Australian Citizen to vote, but rather a permanent resident. There are many permanent residents who pay tax, rates, own property and businesses who deserve to have a vote. I agree with Criteria 2 and 3 otherwise.

Further to this, there needs to be better advertising/education around local government elections put out by LGAT. Especially around reminding people to ensure their address details are correct, as ballot papers are mailed out, as opposed to being an in person vote. Many people (especially young people who often move house more frequently) think that it is linked to just being on the state and federal electoral roll. The date that this needs to be updated by also needs to be advertised, as by the time the public gets wind that a council election is coming up, the date to ensure you are registered at the right address has already passed.

Reform #6: strongly agree

Reform #7: I predominantly support Reform 7C, but with the provision that the most popularly elected candidate be "offered" the role of mayor, they can then choose whether to accept the role, as not all candidates necessarily want to be mayor (due to inexperience, commitments outside council, personality type etc.). Not wanting to be mayor shouldn't dissuade people for running for councillor, it also shouldn't impact on a candidates ability or desire to generate votes. Then, if the position is passed up, it is offered to the next place getter etc. I think this should be how the deputy mayor is elected also.

Reform #8: strongly agree

Reform #9-12: agree

Reform #13: strongly disagree. Placing a fee will do little to encourage appropriate or deter inappropriate candidates.

Reform #14-16: agree

Reform #17: I agree with this general strategy, that the community should be consulted as to how they want to be engaged, but I disagree with them deciding exactly what matters the council will engage the community on, I think this should be prescriptive. All municipalities have minority groups that are very engaged with council matters and groups (usually the majority) that aren't. It's the engaged group that will participate in the forming of the strategy and will demand council engage with the community on ALL matters, while the disengaged won't have any input into the strategy as they don't particularly need or care about being consulted about every matter. The council will then have to consult the community on every matter, for the benefit of the minority, while the majority would be happy to let the people they elected to represent them make the decisions. This excessive consultation will be costly for councils and slow down otherwise simple processes.

Reform#18-21: agree

Reform #22-23: strongly agree. This needs to also recognise PD other than courses provided by LGAT so as to not put undue financial pressure on smaller councils to fund elected member participation, as well as recognise that there are other ways to improve core capabilities. Or LGAT need to offer subsidies to smaller councils to offset additional costs.

Reform #24-32: agree

Reform #33: strongly agree

Reform #34-47: agree

Reform #48: disagree

Reform #49-51: agree

Regards,

Sommer Metske

