



# Local Government Reforms

## Key changes to proposed reforms

April 2019



## Introduction

In March 2019 the Queensland Government released an information paper on proposed reforms to local government.

Following significant consultation with Mayors, Councillors and stakeholders, key changes to the reforms contained in the information paper are proposed as outlined below. This document is not intended to reflect all drafting changes proposed.

## Proposed changes

Reform proposed	Details of the reform originally proposed (March 2019 information paper)	Changes to the reform proposed
Dual candidacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Divided Councils cannot have dual candidacy.</li> <li>• Undivided Councils can nominate for Mayor and Councillor.</li> </ul> <p>If successful as Mayor, votes received in Councillor election will be distributed according to preferences.</p>	Following stakeholder consultation the Government is not currently proposing to introduce dual candidacy.
Election expenditure caps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The following caps will be introduced on electoral expenditure at local government elections:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Councillor candidates in local government areas/divisions —                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ with fewer than 20,000 electors - \$10,000;</li> <li>➤ with 20,000 electors or more – sliding cap of 50¢ per elector</li> <li>➤ with 40,000 electors or more - \$20,000.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Mayoral candidate in Local Government areas —                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ with fewer than 60,000 electors - \$30,000;</li> <li>➤ with more than 60,000 electors – a sliding cap of 50¢ per elector</li> <li>➤ with 200,000 electors or more - \$100,000.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Third parties: same cap that applies for Mayoral candidates.</li> <li>○ Groups of candidates and political parties that endorse candidates: sum of individual</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Following stakeholder consultation the Government is not currently proposing to introduce expenditure caps as part of the current reforms proposed to apply to the 2020 local government elections.</p> <p>The Government proposes to consult further with stakeholders on this issue, with the aim for expenditure caps to be in place immediately following the March 2020 local government election.</p>



	<p>members expenditure caps up to the maximum for positions to be filled in lieu of candidate caps.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caps are per four-year term.</li> </ul> <p>Aggregation and collaboration limits on candidates and groups of candidates using third parties to exceed expenditure caps.</p>	
<p>Voter's experience/Counting of votes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction of compulsory preferential voting.</li> <li>• Full preferential voting for Mayors and single Councillor divisions.</li> <li>• Full preferential proportional representation for Councillors in undivided councils.</li> </ul> <p>All ballot papers will be filled in the same way by placing a 1 for first preference candidate and recording a preference vote for all other candidates in ascending order.</p>	<p>Following stakeholder consultation the Government is not currently proposing to introduce full preferential proportional representation in undivided councils as part of the current reforms proposed to apply to the 2020 local government elections.</p> <p>The Government proposes to consult further with stakeholders on this issue with a view to introducing partial preferential proportional voting for undivided Councils in time for the 2024 election.</p> <p>The Government still proposes to proceed with full preferential voting for Mayors and single Councillor divisions.</p>
<p>Public campaign funding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Candidates, groups of candidates and political parties that receive more than 4% of first preference votes are entitled to \$1.57 per first preference vote up to the amount of electoral expenditure.</li> <li>• Dual candidates entitled to public funding for the higher of the amount entitled to receive, not both.</li> <li>• Payment into dedicated campaign account and may be withdrawn to reimburse personal campaign contributions and loans taken out to cover electoral expenditure.</li> </ul> <p>Councils to fund by way of annual payments to ECQ except for 2020</p>	<p>Following stakeholder consultation the Government is not currently proposing to introduce public campaign funding as part of the current reforms proposed to apply to the 2020 local government elections.</p> <p>The Government proposes to consult further with stakeholders on this issue, with the aim for public funding to be in place immediately following the March 2020 local government election.</p>



	quadrennial local government elections.	
Councillor vacancies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mayors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ In first 36 months – filled by way of by-election</li> <li>○ Last 12 months – filled by Councillors appointing one of their own to fill vacancy.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Councillors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ In first 36 months: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ For single-Councillor division - filled by way of by-election</li> <li>▪ For multi-member or undivided council – filled by appointing next candidate after allocating preferences.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Last 12 months – filled by appointment.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Last 3 months – may leave vacant.</p>	As this issue arose due to the proposed changes to proportional representation, these proposals will not be immediately progressed and will be considered as part of the further stakeholder engagement.

## Engagement opportunities

The Queensland Government is committed to ensuring stakeholders are aware of these proposed changes and their impacts.

The Department of Local Government, Racing and Multicultural Affairs is available to answer questions on a dedicated phone hotline 07 3452 6747 and email [lgreforms@dlgrma.qld.gov.au](mailto:lgreforms@dlgrma.qld.gov.au). Copies can be downloaded at <http://www.dlgrma.qld.gov.au/local-government-reform.html>

**Department of Local Government, Racing and Multicultural Affairs**

1 William Street, Brisbane

**tel** (07) 3452 6747

**e** [lgreform@dlgrma.qld.gov.au](mailto:lgreform@dlgrma.qld.gov.au)

**[www.dlgrma.qld.gov.au](http://www.dlgrma.qld.gov.au)**