



GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

9th August 2005

GM6

COUNCILLOR NUMBERS

FILE: * AVB

{ Folio No. * }

SUMMARY:

To advise Council that legislation has been enacted that enables Councils to reduce the number of Councillors without having to conduct a referendum.



DESCRIPTION:

The Local Government Amendment Act 2005 has now passed through both Houses of parliament and was assented to on 1 July 2005. One of the Amendments will allow Councils a one-off opportunity to resolve to apply to the Minister for Local Government for approval to reduce the number of Councillors on the Council without the holding of a constitutional referendum.

There are a number of restrictions:

- The opportunity is only available for 12 months
- No Council may have less than 5 Councillors

A Council must give not less than 21 days public notice of its proposal to resolve to apply to the Minister for approval to reduce its Councillor numbers.

The public notice must state the place at which, the dates on which, and the times during which the public may inspect the proposed resolution. The Council must bring the notice to the attention of as many people in its area as possible. This is commonly done by way of advertisement in a newspaper regularly circulating in the Council area. The notice may also be posted in public areas such as community centres and public notice boards.

The notice must invite public submissions on the proposal.

The Council will be required to submit a summary of any submission received and any comments on those submissions to the Minister, along with the application seeking approval to reduce the number of Councillors.

Where a Council has received approval to reduce the number of Councillors, the reduction will not take place until the next ordinary election. Casual vacancies that occur during that period will not be required to be filled unless the number of Councillors on the Council would become less than the reduced number approved by the Minister.

Council needs to decide prior to 30 June 2006 whether it wishes to take advantage of this amendment to the legislation.

REPORT IMPLICATIONS:

- *Environmental*

Nil

- *Social*

A reduction in the number of Councillors would increase the workload of the remaining Councillors. An even number of Councillors could invoke the use of the casting vote by the Mayor on a more regular basis.

- *Economic (Financial)*

Council's elected members costs would be reduced.

- *Policy or Statutory*

Nil

RECOMMENDATION:

For Council's determination.

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A V Burgess
GENERAL MANAGER