



Minister for Local Government,
Minister for Racing and
Minister for Multicultural Affairs

Our ref: MC18/5666

Your ref: A361791

28 SEP 2018

1 William Street
Brisbane Queensland 4000
PO Box 15009
City East Queensland 4002
Telephone +61 7 3719 7560
Email lgrma@ministerial.qld.gov.au
Website www.dlgrma.qld.gov.au

ABN 65 959 415 158

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Queensland Parliamentary Service
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Neil

Thank you for your letter of 10 September 2018 about petition number 2961-18 received by the Queensland Legislative Assembly on 5 September 2018 concerning a request for the introduction of binding citizen-initiated referenda for Council areas.

The request would appear to be based on concerns about the 'ward' system and that local Councillors are only interested in their ward or division.

It should be noted that only 23 of the 77 Council areas in Queensland are divided for electoral purposes into wards or divisions. All Councillors, regardless of whether a Council is divided for electoral purposes or not, are required under section 12 the *Local Government Act 2009* (LGA) and section 14 of the *City of Brisbane Act 2010* (CoBA) respectively, to:

- represent the current and future interest of residents of the Council area
- when performing a responsibility must serve the overall public interest of the whole Council area.

Under section 4 of the LGA and section 4 of the CoBA respectively, Councillors are required when performing a responsibility under the legislation to do so in accordance with the 'Local Government principles'. The Local Government principles are:

- transparent and effective processes and decision-making in the public interest
- sustainable development and management of assets and infrastructure, and delivery of effective services
- democratic representation, social inclusion and meaningful community engagement
- good governance of, and by, Local Government
- ethical and legal behaviour of Councillors and Local Government employees.

Also, under section 268A of the LGA and section 250A of the CoBA respectively, Councils have the discretion to conduct a voluntary poll of electors in its area or part of its area on any issue or concern to the area or part.

Given the existing provisions of the Local Government legislation as outlined above, an amendment to facilitate binding, citizen-initiated referenda is not being considered at this time.

The Palaszczuk Government is, however, delivering a range of ongoing electoral and integrity reforms to improve transparency and accountability in Local Government.

I would like to thank the petitioners for raising this matter with me and I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely



STIRLING HINCHLIFFE MP
Minister for Local Government,
Minister for Racing and
Minister for Multicultural Affairs