

State Development and Regional Industries Committee

Statement regarding predecessor committee report into the feasibility of introducing expenditure caps for Queensland local government elections

It has come to the attention of the State Development and Regional Industries Committee that information contained in a report tabled by a predecessor committee contained several inaccuracies. As this committee is responsible for the portfolio area of local government, and to the committee makes the following statement to correct information contained in that report.

On 27 November 2020, the Economics and Governance Committee of the 56th Parliament tabled *Report No. 47, 56th Parliament – Inquiry into the feasibility of introducing expenditure caps for Queensland local government elections*. Pages 26 to 29 and 33 to 36 of that report contained errors in the reporting of electoral expenditure incurred by election participants in relation to the March 2020 Queensland local government elections. This committee understands that this was the result of misinterpretation of data reported in the electronic disclosure system of the Electoral Commission of Queensland.

CORRECTIONS

1. That paragraph 2 on page 26 of the report, commencing ‘The committee reviewed the summary’ to paragraph 2 on page 29 of the report, ending with ‘the considerable variation in spending across local government areas’, be omitted.
2. That paragraph 4 on page 31 of the report, commencing ‘The recorded expenditure figures’ to ‘(Table 6, next page)’ be omitted and the following paragraph inserted:

‘The recorded expenditure figures for each of these electoral participants were compared to the nominal values of the relevant model caps [Foot note: Based on the number of electors and the relevant cap formula] (irrespective of the differing lengths of time for which expenditure is capped under those models), using the aggregation method proposed by DLGRMA and employed in the NSW model (eg combining the individual spending allowances for all endorsed candidates or group members respectively) (see Table 6, next page).’

3. That all content on pages 32 to 34 be omitted and the following information inserted:

Table 6: Spending disclosed by registered political parties in expenditure summary returns for the campaign disclosure period, compared to model cap allowances (aggregation of endorsed candidate allowances)

| Political party and expenditure | No. of candidates | Elections contested | Elected candidates | Expenditure cap allowance for all respective party candidates combined, by expenditure model | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|---|--------------------|--|--------------|-------------|-----------|
| | | | | LGAQ | DLGRMA | NSW | NZ* |
| Animal Justice Party (Queensland) Party campaign expenditure = \$19,222.03 Separate expenditure incurred by endorsed candidates ¹ = \$413.40 ² Total = \$19,635.43 | 7 (1 mayoral, 6 councillor) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brisbane City Council • Gold Coast City Council • Noosa Shire Council • Sunshine Coast Regional Council • Townsville City Council | 0 | \$951,073 | \$183,997 | \$435,250 | \$177,258 |
| | | | | under cap | under cap | under cap | under cap |
| Australian Labor Party (State of Queensland) Party campaign expenditure = \$2,065,980.47 Separate expenditure incurred by endorsed candidates = \$61.00 ³ Total = \$2,066,041.47 | 27 (1 mayoral, 26 councillor) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brisbane City Council | 5 | \$1,577,378 | \$494,344.50 | \$1,293,750 | \$539,083 |
| | | | | over cap | over cap | over cap | over cap |
| Liberal National Party of Queensland Party campaign expenditure = \$1,474,208.74 Separate expenditure incurred by endorsed candidates = \$12,433.98 ⁴ Total = \$1,486,642.72 | 27 (1 mayoral, 26 councillor) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brisbane City Council | 20 | \$1,577,378 | \$494,344.50 | \$1,293,750 | \$539,083 |
| | | | | under cap | over cap | over cap | over cap |
| Queensland Greens Party campaign expenditure = \$154,559.06 Total = \$154,559.06 | 36 (2 mayoral, 34 councillor) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gold Coast City Council • Ipswich City Council • Moreton Bay Regional Council • Scenic Rim Regional Council • Sunshine Coast Regional Council • Toowoomba Regional Council | 1 | \$1,985,511 | \$665,834.50 | \$1,618,500 | \$755,630 |
| | | | | under cap | under cap | under cap | under cap |

Note: The Motorists Party contested 3 mayoral elections and 1 councillor election in Brisbane City Council, Gold Coast City Council and Logan City Council. However, the party had not submitted a party expenditure summary return for the campaign disclosure period as at 20 August 2020.

*Based on currency adjusted NZ model cap figure, using the exchange rate as at 20 August 2020 (NZ\$1 = AU\$0.9317).

As outlined in Table 6, electoral expenditure incurred by the Australian Labor Party (State of Queensland) (ALP) during the campaign disclosure period would have exceeded the applicable caps

¹ Under a typical aggregation approach, electoral expenditure incurred by endorsed candidates must fall within the party cap when taken together with electoral expenditure incurred by the party.

² Incurred by endorsed candidates Darryl Prout (\$91.85) and Mackenzie Severns (\$321.55).

³ Incurred by endorsed candidates Leah Malzard (\$1.00) and Trent McTiernan (\$60.00).

⁴ Incurred by endorsed candidates Lisa Atwood (\$100.00), Tracy Davis (\$7,356.75), Roger Hooper (\$542.70), James Mackay (\$399.00), Ryan Murphy (\$861.67) and Andrew Wines (\$3,173.86).

under all four expenditure cap models, while expenditure by the LNP would have exceeded the applicable caps for all but the LGAQ model.

Notably, using the aggregation approach to determine the relevant party cap under the LGAQ model allows for a significantly larger amount of spending by parties than under the other three models. This is primarily due to the LGAQ model's provision for a mayoral candidate in the BCC election to incur expenditure of up to \$788,689 (\$1 per elector). This is considerably higher than would be allowed for this single candidate position under the other expenditure cap models. There may be merit in considering an upper limit on party caps should this model and aggregation method be employed concurrently.

In terms of the 19 groups of candidates who contested local government elections, the recorded expenditure figures in summary returns for the campaign disclosure period, as compared to the relevant model caps (again, using the aggregation method proposed by DLGRMA and employed in the NSW model), are set out in Table 7 below.

Table 7: Spending disclosed by registered groups of candidates in expenditure summary returns for the campaign disclosure period, compared to model cap allowances (aggregation of group member candidate allowances)

| | | | Expenditure cap model allowance for all respective party candidates combined | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Registered Group of Candidates (Local government area) | No. of candidates | Elected candidates | LGAQ | DLGRMA | NSW | NZ* |
| Cairns N.Q.S.A Team (Cairns Regional Council) Group campaign expenditure = \$12,862.96 | 8 (1 mayoral, 7 councillor) | 0 | \$185,503 under cap | \$122,335 under cap | \$261,500 under cap | \$177,258 under cap |
| Cairns Unity Team (Cairns Regional Council) Group campaign expenditure = \$70,750.22 | 8 (1 mayoral, 7 councillor) | 7 (1 mayor, 6 councillors) | \$185,665 under cap | \$122,335 under cap | \$261,500 under cap | \$539,083 under cap |
| CHRISTENSEN & KEIOSKIE (Mackay Regional Council) Group campaign expenditure = \$17,541.59 | 2 (2 councillor) | 0 | \$160,560 under cap | \$40,000 under cap | \$126,000 under cap | \$539,083 under cap |
| Future Noosa (Noosa Regional Council) Group campaign expenditure = \$24,201.50 | 3 (3 councillor) | 1 | \$122,172 under cap | \$60,000 under cap | \$108,000 under cap | \$90,000 under cap |
| Greg Williamson Alliance (Mackay Regional Council) Group campaign expenditure = \$77,199.50 | 11 (1 mayoral, 10 councillor) | 7 (1 mayor, 6 councillors) | \$883,080 under cap | \$240,140 under cap | \$873,125 under cap | \$550,000 under cap |
| It's Time for Townsville (Townsville City Council) Group campaign expenditure = \$534,914.90 | 6 (1 mayoral, 5 councillor) | 0 | \$195,082 over cap | \$114,300.50 over cap | \$229,500 over cap | \$125,000 over cap |
| Liberal Democrats Ipswich (Ipswich City Council) Group campaign expenditure = \$6,817.20 | 2 (2 councillor) | 0 | \$70,764 | \$35,382 | \$72,000 | \$36,548 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Logan Needs Moore (Logan City Council) Group campaign expenditure = \$4,554.03 | 2 (2 councillor) | 0 | \$33,492 under cap | \$20,000 under cap | \$36,000 under cap | \$25,583 under cap |
| | | | | | | |
| Mount Isa Community Team (Mount Isa Regional Council) Group campaign expenditure = \$15,310.06 | 7 (1 mayoral, 6 councillor) | 1 (1 mayor) | \$110,000 under cap | \$90,000 under cap | \$157,500 under cap | \$89,542 under cap |
| | | | | | | |
| Our Team 4 Your Shire (Mareeba Shire Council) Group campaign expenditure = \$14,708.93 | 5 (1 mayoral, 4 councillor) | 3 (3 councillors) | \$80,000 under cap | \$70,000 under cap | \$112,500 under cap | \$63,959 under cap |
| | | | | | | |
| Our Voice (Moreton Bay Regional Council) Group campaign expenditure = \$11,133.32 | 3 (3 councillor) | 0 | \$77,662 under cap | \$38,831 under cap | \$75,000 under cap | \$54,822 under cap |
| | | | | | | |
| PROGRESS Mt Isa (Mount Isa Regional Council) Group campaign expenditure = \$19,858.07 | 7 (1 mayoral, 6 councillor) | 5 (5 councillors) | \$110,000 under cap | \$90,000 under cap | \$157,500 under cap | \$89,543 under cap |
| | | | | | | |
| Team Jenny Hill (Townsville City Council) Group campaign expenditure = \$165,359.06 | 11 (1 mayoral, 10 councillor) | 10 (1 mayor, 9 councillors) | \$256,655 under cap | \$164,300.50 over cap | \$342,000 under cap | \$178,171 under cap |
| | | | | | | |
| Team Josh Weazel (Woorabinda Aboriginal Shire Council) Group campaign expenditure = \$0.00 | 4 (1 mayoral, 3 councillor) | 3 (1 mayor, 2 councillors) | \$65,000 under cap | \$60,000 under cap | \$30,000 under cap | \$12,782 under cap |
| | | | | | | |
| TSV Team NQ State Alliance (Townsville City Council) Group campaign expenditure = \$38,779.99 | 7 (1 mayoral, 6 councillor) | 0 | \$205,269 under cap | \$124,300.50 under cap | \$252,000 under cap | \$127,004 under cap |
| | | | | | | |
| Unity Maranoa (Maranoa Regional Council) Group campaign expenditure = \$37,721.59 | 5 (1 mayoral, 4 councillor) | 5 (1 mayor, 4 councillors) | \$80,000 under cap | \$70,000 under cap | \$62,500 under cap | \$31,979 over cap |
| | | | | | | |
| Your Voice of Experience (Ipswich City Council) Group campaign expenditure = \$29,617.18 | 2 (2 councillor) | 2 (2 councillors) | \$70,082 under cap | \$35,041 under cap | \$72,000 under cap | \$36,548 under cap |
| | | | | | | |
| Note: team WORK (Ipswich City Council – 2 councillor candidates) and Locals UNITED – Back to Basics (Mount Isa City Council – 1 mayoral and 3 councillor candidates) had not submitted an expenditure summary return for the campaign disclosure period as at 20 August 2020. | | | | | | |

*Based on currency adjusted NZ model cap figure, using the exchange rate as at 20 August 2020 (NZ\$1 = AU\$0.9317)



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