



OUR REF: AMD038

Ministerial Expert Committee on  
Electoral Reform  
11<sup>th</sup> Floor Dumas House  
2 Havelock Street  
WEST PERTH WA 6005

Via email [submissions@waelectoralreform.wa.gov.au](mailto:submissions@waelectoralreform.wa.gov.au)

### **Submission on electoral reform discussion paper**

On behalf of the Council of the Shire of Narembeen, please accept this submission in response to the discussion paper released by the Ministerial Expert Committee on Electoral Reform.

As a summary, the Council's view on electoral reform is as follows.

1. The current region-based model of electing upper house representation should be retained.
2. Group voting tickets should be retained.

### **Voting Model**

The Council considers that a mathematical approach to electoral reform is too simplistic and is not appropriate in a state as large and diverse as Western Australia.

Regional areas of WA contribute a disproportionate amount of wealth for both state and nation while those living in the regions are significantly disadvantaged with access to services and infrastructure in comparison to metropolitan counterparts. This disadvantage is reflected in lower health, education, and social outcomes for many regional communities.

Any change in voting system which shifts representation to a more centralised model will increase the lack of understanding of rural issues and widen the gap relating to standard of living and quality of life between metropolitan and rural communities.

Issues facing rural and remote communities can vary significantly and can be complex and diverse in nature. Local issues in the metropolitan area effect a greater number of people but are more likely to be homogenous in nature and can therefore be adequately considered with less representation.

The Shire of Narembeen considers that despite the recent anomaly with the 2021 State election result, the current system is adequate and should be retained.

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**Distribution of Preferences**

Given the history of informal voting when voters preference all legislative council nominations (below the line voting), the time it takes to complete the voting process and the level of research and understating of individual policies the continuation of group voting tickets is supported by the shire of Narembreen.

However, the Council is of the view that a greater degree of transparency should be demonstrated by each political party regarding their preference distribution prior to the elections.

Yours Sincerely,

**David Blurton**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**  
8 June 2021