

WOODLANDS ACTION GROUP



Woodlands Action Group
c/- Leo Ottiger
4 Clematis Road
Woodlands WA 6018

Department of Local Government and Communities
140 William Street
PERTH WA 6000

Local Government Review 2018 Submission

Dear Sir

I write on behalf of the *Woodlands Action Group*, which represents concerned citizens who reside in the Woodlands / Doubleview area who wish to lodge the following comments with regard to the proposed submission for the **Local Government Review 2018**, to hopefully benefit staff, Elected Members, Ratepayers and the Community now and in the future.

1. Under Regulation 7 of the Local Government Act, the Code of Conduct, should be applicable to all local government staff and elected members to ensure procedural fairness and guard against misuse of ratepayers money to attack and bully elected members and other staff
2. All municipalities should have wards to ensure fairness in the representation of people within each area
3. Elected members should reside in the ward in which they wish to nominate for Council, to ensure local understanding
4. Nominations by candidates to be Elected Members to Council must include telephone and residential address (WAEC electoral roll address)on the application form and the information form that is sent out to residents and any other material and not post office box number, as it is misleading and confusing the voter as to term local
5. Elected members should be ineligible to be Elected Member candidates if they are: developers, builders, planners, real estate agents and public servants who work in State Government Departments concerned with land matters as they could have a perceived conflict of interest in the eyes of the public
6. Elected members shall be ineligible to be Elected Member candidates if they are a declared bankrupt or have a criminal conviction
7. Elected members should not be permitted to be scrutineers in the counting of votes for local government elections as it could be perceived as an alignment
8. Council employees should not be in charge of counting votes at local government elections. It should be done by WAEC staff as bullying and decision making and nepotism could affect the outcome

9. The appeal process for anomalies at local government elections should be changed to internal complaints to WAEC Director and then if not satisfied with the outcome, then to SAT for determination as that is fairer system
10. Local Government election date should change to the first week end in September as the current date is in conflict with school holidays; public holidays and the State wide mail out for the RAC election
11. Local Government election voting should be compulsory and be subjected to fines for not voting, similar to State Government elections process
12. Although nepotism is recorded in the Local Government Act, it is not policed and offers no penalty is prescribed. It should be policed to prevent possible alignment leading to the formation of cliques leading to possible harassment of individuals
13. Elected members should have the power to approve or not renew employee contracts from manager upwards as these people need to deal with elected members and could prevent any nepotism by the CEO
14. Any gift over \$50 to all employees and elected members should be recorded and displayed on the council website for the public to view
15. Any travel to; meetings, conferences, forums, dinners and other official representation by both staff and elected members should be recorded and displayed on the council website for the public to view as part of transparency
16. Every Local Government should provide a summary report twice a year to council and a yearly summary in the annual report listing the number of OSH issues such as: unfair dismissal claims; bullying claims; exit forms; staff leaving; cost of legal dispute settling; deeds of settlement etc.
17. Every Local Government should report twice a year on the number of delegations, what has been actioned by these delegations and by whom, at whatever level to the Council and yearly in the Council annual report as part of accountability and transparency
18. There should be a system in place whereby vexatious staff and elected members who repeatedly charge, bully and intimidate elected members are to be liable for the associated costs and there should be a statutory penalty
19. The Premier should Not have the power to sack any specific elected member as that is the role of SAT after due process and this could be used as political tool and by staff to eliminate elected members unfairly
20. The LGSP and SAT both need to be reviewed as their original intention has been compromised by politics and has been implemented on an ad hoc and biased basis, with no consultation and consistency and questionable decision making
21. An enquiry needs to be carried out on WALGA (similar to process carried out by the Auditor General in Victoria), especially in view of LGIS and the panels and tender and the questionable cost to ratepayers in being members
22. The whole DAP process needs to be reviewed especially as there are no Third Party Appeal Rights; the members are biased and should have an independent chair; consultation with the community who have to live with whatever is approved is ignored, especially with regard to State Government owned land

Yours sincerely

Leo Ottiger

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On behalf of the Woodlands Action Group 9 March 2018