



State Council Agenda

**Budget Adoption and Electoral
Reform Submission**

2 June 2021

NOTICE OF MEETING

Meeting No. 3 of 2021 of the Western Australian Local Government Association State Council to be held at WALGA, ONE70, LV1, 170 Railway Parade, West Leederville on Wednesday, 2 June 2021 commencing at 4:00pm.

1. ATTENDANCE, APOLOGIES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

1.1 Attendance

Members	President of WALGA - Chair	Mayor Tracey Roberts JP
	Deputy President of WALGA, Northern Country Zone	President Cr Karen Chappel JP
	Avon-Midland Country Zone	Cr Ken Seymour
	Central Country Zone	President Cr Phillip Blight
	Central Metropolitan Zone	Cr Paul Kelly
	Central Metropolitan Zone	Cr Jenna Ledgerwood
	East Metropolitan Zone	Cr Catherine Ehrhardt
	East Metropolitan Zone	Cr Cate McCullough
	Goldfields Esperance Country Zone	President Cr Malcolm Cullen
	Great Eastern Country Zone	President Cr Stephen Strange
	Great Southern Country Zone	Cr Ronnie Fleay
	Kimberley Country Zone	Cr Chris Mitchell JP
	Murchison Country Zone	Cr Les Price
	North Metropolitan Zone	Cr Frank Cvitan JP
	North Metropolitan Zone	Mayor Mark Irwin
	North Metropolitan Zone	Cr Russ Fishwick JP
	Peel Country Zone	President Cr Michelle Rich
	Pilbara Country Zone	Mayor Peter Long
	South East Metropolitan Zone	Cr Julie Brown
	South East Metropolitan Zone	Mayor Ruth Butterfield
	South Metropolitan Zone	Cr Doug Thompson
	South Metropolitan Zone	Mayor Carol Adams OAM
	South Metropolitan Zone	Mayor Logan Howlett JP
	South West Country Zone	President Cr Tony Dean
Ex Officio	Lord Mayor – City of Perth	Lord Mayor Basil Zempilas
Secretariat	Chief Executive Officer	Mr Nick Sloan
	EM Commercial & Communications	Mr Zac Donovan
	EM Governance & Organisational Services	Mr Tony Brown
	EM Infrastructure	Mr Ian Duncan
	A/EM Strategy, Policy & Planning	Ms Nicole Matthews
	Manager Strategy & Association Governance	Mr Tim Lane
	Intergovernmental Relations & Risk	Ms Joanne Burges
	Chief Financial Officer	Mr Rick Murray
	Principal, Policy and Advocacy	Ms Kelly McManus
	Manager Governance	Mr James McGovern
	Executive Officer Governance	Ms Katherine Robertson

1.2 Apologies

Gascoyne Country Zone	President Cr Cheryl Cowell
Local Government Professionals WA	Mr Jamie Parry

1.3 Announcements

- 1.3.1** WALGA acknowledges the Whadjuk Nyoongar people who are the Traditional Custodians of this land we meet on today and pays respects to their Elders past, present and future.

2. PREVIOUS MINUTES

2.1 Minutes of Meeting Held 5 May 2021

Recommendation

Moved:

Seconded:

That the Minutes of the Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA) State Council Meeting held on [Wednesday, 5 May 2021](#) be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Pursuant to our Code of Conduct, State Councillors must declare to the Chair any potential conflict of interest they have in a matter before State Council as soon as they become aware of it.

4. MATTERS FOR DECISION

- 4.1 – Finance and Services Committee Minutes incorporating the 2021-22 Budget
- 4.2 – Draft Submission to Ministerial Expert Committee on Electoral Reform

5. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

That the next meeting of the Western Australian Local Government Association State Council be held at City of Cockburn, 9 Coleville Crescent, Spearwood on Wednesday, **7 July 2021** beginning at 12:30pm.

6. CLOSURE

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at _____.

5. MATTERS FOR DECISION

4.1 Finance and Services Committee Minutes incorporating the 2021-22 Budget (01-006-03-0006 TB)

Recommendation

Moved:

Seconded:

That:

1. The Minutes of the Finance and Services Committee special meeting of 19 May 2021 be endorsed.
2. The 2021-22 Governance Budget for the Association as recommended by the Finance and Services Committee be endorsed.

Voting Requirement: **ABSOLUTE MAJORITY**

Executive Summary

- A special meeting of the Finance and Services Committee was held on 19 May 2021;
- The Budget 2021-22 being for the full year ending 30 June 2022 was endorsed by the Committee;
- The Minutes of the meeting, together with the 2021-22 Budget have been distributed to all members of State Council.

Attachments

- Finance and Services Committee Minutes – 19 May 2021
- Attachment 1: Governance Budget Pack 2021-22
- Attachment 2: Management Budget Pack 2021-22

Background

The WALGA Governance Budget 2021-22 was prepared for final consideration and endorsement by the Finance and Services Committee ahead of presentation to State Council at this special meeting.

A Draft Budget was presented to the Finance and Services Committee on 28 April 2021 for discussion and feedback on the draft Budget, the zero based budget process and the intended presentation.

The final Governance Budget 2021-22 was endorsed by the Finance and Services Committee on 19 May 2021.

Comment

The Minutes of the Finance and Services Committee and the 2021-22 Governance Budget are presented for State Council consideration.

4.2 Draft Submission to Ministerial Expert Committee on Electoral Reform

By Tim Lane, Manager Strategy and Association Governance

Recommendation

Moved:

Seconded:

That the draft submission to the Ministerial Expert Committee on Electoral Reform be endorsed.

Voting Requirement: **ABSOLUTE MAJORITY**

Executive Summary

- The Minister for Electoral Affairs, Hon John Quigley MLA, has announced the formation of a Ministerial Expert Committee to take submissions and make recommendations to Government to reform the Legislative Council electoral system.
- To facilitate the development of a WALGA submission to the Ministerial Expert Committee, the WALGA President established a Policy Forum of State Councillors that met twice during May 2021.
- The Policy Forum:
 1. Considered a [background paper](#) and the Expert Committee's [discussion paper](#),
 2. Discussed key issues with ABC Election Analyst, Antony Green,
 3. Considered a range of models, ultimately recommending a model as per this report, and
 4. Shaped the draft submission and the arguments presented therein.
- Following the Policy Forum's deliberative process, a draft submission is put forward for State Council consideration.

Attachments

- Draft Submission for State Council consideration
- [Background Paper](#) (informed the first meeting of the Policy Forum)
- Preferred Model Options paper (comprising options considered at the second Policy Forum meeting)

Background

Hon. John Quigley MLA, Attorney General; Minister for Electoral Affairs, announced on Friday, 30 April 2021 the [establishment of a Ministerial Expert Committee](#) to advise the Government on electoral reform.

The Committee's Terms of Reference are as follows:

The Government now asks the Committee to review the electoral system for the Legislative Council and provide:

1. *Recommendations as to how electoral equality might be achieved for all citizens entitled to vote for the Legislative Council, and*
2. *Recommendations for the distribution of preferences in the Legislative Council's proportional representation system.*

The Ministerial Panel comprises the following members:

- Hon. Malcolm McCusker QC AO (Chair)
- Professor John Phillipmore
- Professor Martin Drum
- Dr Sarah Murray

The Ministerial Panel's website is available here: <https://www.wa.gov.au/government/wa-electoral-reform>

To consider and develop a submission on the issues to be addressed by the Ministerial Panel's Terms of Reference, the WALGA President, Mayor Tracey Roberts, convened a Policy Forum, comprised of the following State Councillors:

- Mayor Tracey Roberts (Chair)
- President Cr Karen Chappel
- Mayor Carol Adams
- President Cr Phil Blight
- Cr Ronnie Fleay
- Mayor Albert Jacob
- Cr Les Price
- President Cr Michelle Rich
- President Cr Stephen Strange

The Policy Forum held two meetings, as follows, to deliberate on the issues associated with Legislative Council electoral reform and to shape a draft submission for State Council consideration:

1. 1:00pm-3:00pm, Wednesday, 19 May
2. 9:30am-11:30am, Tuesday, 25 May

At the first meeting, the Policy Forum considered the [Background Paper](#) (attached) and the [discussion paper prepared by the Ministerial Expert Committee](#).

Antony Green, ABC Elections Analyst, presented to the first meeting of the Policy Forum and discussed key issues. Antony Green's brief was to:

- Outline key issues, including the issues identified by the Government such as malapportionment and group ticket voting, and
- Discuss options for reform.

Following Antony Green's presentation, discussions focused on the need for maintenance of political representation for rural and remote Western Australia, and arguments in support of this position, which are enunciated in the draft submission.

At this meeting, the Policy Forum also agreed to the first two recommendations put forward in the draft submission, being:

1. That Group Ticket Voting be removed from the Legislative Council electoral system, and reforms be adopted modelled on the Senate reforms of 2016; and,
2. That a regional system be retained, and the whole state electorate option be rejected.

The second meeting of the Policy Forum focused on strengthening the arguments in the submission and agreeing on a region-based model to put forward for State Council to consider submitting to the Ministerial Expert Committee. To facilitate the Policy Forums' discussions, a paper (attached) with eight options for consideration was prepared.

The options contained in the paper were:

- Put forward as options only, carrying no weight or endorsement,
- Not definitive, as any of the models could be amended or adjusted,
- Not exhaustive, as there are countless combinations of possible options, and

- Varied in their approach, as some used existing regions, and some created new regions; some approached electoral equality on a ‘number of electors basis’, and some maintained rural weighting on a ‘number of electors basis’.

The Policy Forum reiterated the need for political representation of rural and remote Western Australia. Following deliberations, the Policy Forum agreed to recommend an amended version of “Option 2a” for State Council consideration.

Representation in the Legislative Council under the Policy Forum’s preferred model would be as follows:

Regions	Number of Electors	Number of Council Members	Number of electors per representative
East metro	423,759	7	60,537
North metro	427,779	7	61,111
South metro	449,182	7	64,169
South West	242,983	6	40,497
Agricultural	103,378	5	20,676
Mining and Pastoral	69,651	5	13,930
Total	1,716,732	37	

In this model, the three metropolitan regions would each elect seven representatives. The South West region would elect six representatives and the existing agricultural region and mining and pastoral region would each elect five representatives. This would increase the number of Legislative Council members by one to a total of 37 members.

The Policy Forum’s second preferred option is the model as above, but with five members in the South West region instead of the proposed six members. This would maintain the total number of representatives in the Legislative Council at 36 instead of increasing the Council to 37 members.

If the models presented above are not palatable to State Council, the Policy Forum’s next preference is to argue in the submission, in lieu of putting forward a preferred model, in favour of the status quo. This option is represented by “Option 6” in the Preferred Options Model Paper (attached), however the view of the Policy Forum is that the wording and recommendation put forward in the paper would need to be reframed in support of the status quo.

Comment

Following the Policy Forum deliberations summarised above, a draft submission is put forward for State Council consideration.

The submission contains the following sections:

- **Background** – including establishment of the panel and the State Council Policy Forum.

- **Group Ticket Voting** – recommending that group ticket voting be removed from the electoral system.
- **Rural and Remote Representation** – arguing the importance of political representation, highlighting the increased role for Local Government if Parliamentary representation is reduced, pointing out the economic contribution of regional Western Australia, and noting lower levels of government services relative to more populous regions.
- **Whole State Electorate** – rejecting the option of electing the Legislative Council from an electorate comprising the whole state of WA.
- **Preferred Regional Model** – enunciating the Policy Forum’s preferred model, as outlined above.
- **Conclusion** – emphasising the importance of rural and remote political representation, and restating the recommendations put forward in the submission.

The deadline for submissions to be received by the Ministerial Expert Committee is 5:00pm, Tuesday, 8 June 2021.