

Innaloo Community Group



Mario Valenti

Department of Local Government WA
140 William Street Perth WA 6000

REF: Local Government Act - Reform Submission

Dear Sir

We wish to make the following comments with regard to the proposed changes to the Local Government Act on behalf of the concerned Innaloo residents.

We welcome the review of the Local Government Act especially in regard to the Stirling City Centre project and the issues that have arisen with the City of Stirling preventing the project moving forward and the perceived alignment to various organizations and persons.

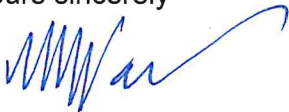
As most of our members have lived in this community in excess of Fifty years we believe we have the right to make the following statements and believe that our statements should be given consideration

1. A better system is needed to address complaints especially regarding vexatious and bullying. It needs to be applicable to both staff and councillors alike. Current process is selective and is used inappropriately by CEO and Mayors to advantage and disadvantage councillors and the community if they choose. The Inspector should be a public service appointment and not by the politics of a minister, along with panel members who should be independent. The red card system would be just as bad as the LGSP system that was used inappropriately. If you put in a complaint to the council complaint's officer, then they are selective as to whether they take the complaint to the department, actions it or ignores it, which is not fair at all and is tactic used to silence ratepayers and councillors
2. All meetings should be live streamed and all names of councillors should be recorded on how they vote in the minutes. The CEO should ensure that items are spread out over the month and not push loads of items into one agenda, especially as neither the councillors or the public have time to address or ask questions before the meeting. Public question time is important for the residents especially on big local issues and allows councillors to hear what the residents are saying and how the item affects them and is important for transparency. No point on having Standard meeting procedures if they are ad hoc used by Mayors and CEO, depending on who you and no one checks their behaviour and there is nowhere to complain about their behaviour.
3. All meetings should be recorded and available to councillors and the public to review. All confidential meetings need to be recorded and the department should have a better definition of confidential and not leave it up to the CEO to decide as that is often biased. There should be an online register of both staff and councillors, conflicts of interests, conferences, gifts etc. There should also be on line register of council motions, as they are deciding what the actions council staff is going to take. The motions should have a link to the report and the items and should be there forever and should be searchable by word and date etc.
4. There needs to be a better system to communicate with residents with regard to developments and activities and big financial obligations in the area and not just think we are all on Facebook etc. We don't want preferential voting as that just makes it political and doesn't reflect what person the community wants and the mostly voted for. We need compulsory voting and a better postal voting system like state government has to stop the corruption and stealing of ballot papers etc. especially when the vote is close and is documented in the newspaper. The Mayor

should be elected by the people and the deputy mayor should be elected every year by the councillors, to share the role and see what sort of person they are in a leadership role. All big councils should have wards to make it fair for the community representation. Should be automatic recount of votes if less than 100 votes difference. Candidate profile should include their address and phone number as if they are going to be in public office then they can tell us where they live, to see if they are really local.

5. Educational training for staff and councillors is important, however prior learning credits should be accepted for at least ten year intervals, with just short term refreshers, as it costs a lot of money from the ratepayer for these courses etc. every year. The caretaker period should be mandatory throughout the state, however nothing happens if they are breached, as WAEC and the CEO and the Mayor are often in collusion. For example, if the Mayor uses his position as Mayor and the council resources to entertain and advertise certain candidates against other candidates, nothing happens to him and WAEC and state government ignore it and its only after the election can you take court action which is costly and unfair as they did not follow the rules. There needs to be audit completed of what happens and what's is going on and state government needs to step up as Local government councils are out of control. There is too much now delegated to the CEO, so it gets buried from the ratepayer's eyes and we don't think councillors know anything that is going on any more, as there is less to vote on and most say nothing at all and probably don't even read the agendas
6. There is no reason why a big council has to have rates going up every year and the cost of staff is around \$100 Million, what do they do ? In the annual reports its stated 20 staff earned over \$200,000 a year but the CEO would not tell us who and why and no one can make him. Why is it so expensive for kids to play sport ? they pay insurance on a council owned building and the council pays insurance on the same building, need to get Auditor General actually looking a staffing and cost blow outs. The financial reporting tables in the agenda is too hard to follow and needs to be better presented, also how much is politically donated and the owners of the companies that get regularly work from the council needs to be tabled for transparency. Anything to do with our ratepayer's money should be seen in the minutes and not kept confidential under the CEO and audit committee control. There should be some sort of reconciliation every ten years, so the ratepayers can see where their money has gone especially if it is gone into projects in only one of two suburbs as it's not fair and there is no one to complain to about this either and these projects and the costings of large projects should be on the internet forever. The Stirling city centre projects has been waiting to be completed since 2007, which would have brought in revenue and created jobs and yet loads of other projects have bypass it, why? And why aren't business cases put up for everything as a mandatory requirement across WA local governments.

Yours sincerely



Mario Valenti

On behalf of the Innaloo Community Group

OUR LIVES BEGIN TO END THE DAY WE BECOME SILENT ABOUT THINGS THAT MATTER

Martin Luther King Junior

