

Local Government Remuneration Commission

Annual Report 2021-22



Queensland
Government

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Local Government Remuneration Commission

12 December 2022

The Honourable Steven Miles MP
Deputy Premier
Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning
1 William Street
Brisbane QLD 4000

Dear Minister

On 30 November 2022, the Local Government Remuneration Commission (Commission) concluded its determination of the levels of remuneration for mayors, deputy mayors and councillors of Queensland local governments (excluding Brisbane City Council) as required by section 177(c) of the *Local Government Act 2009* and Chapter 8, Division 1 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*.

Our determinations on these matters, together with the Remuneration Schedule to apply from 1 July 2023 are included in the enclosed Report, which we commend to you.

Yours sincerely



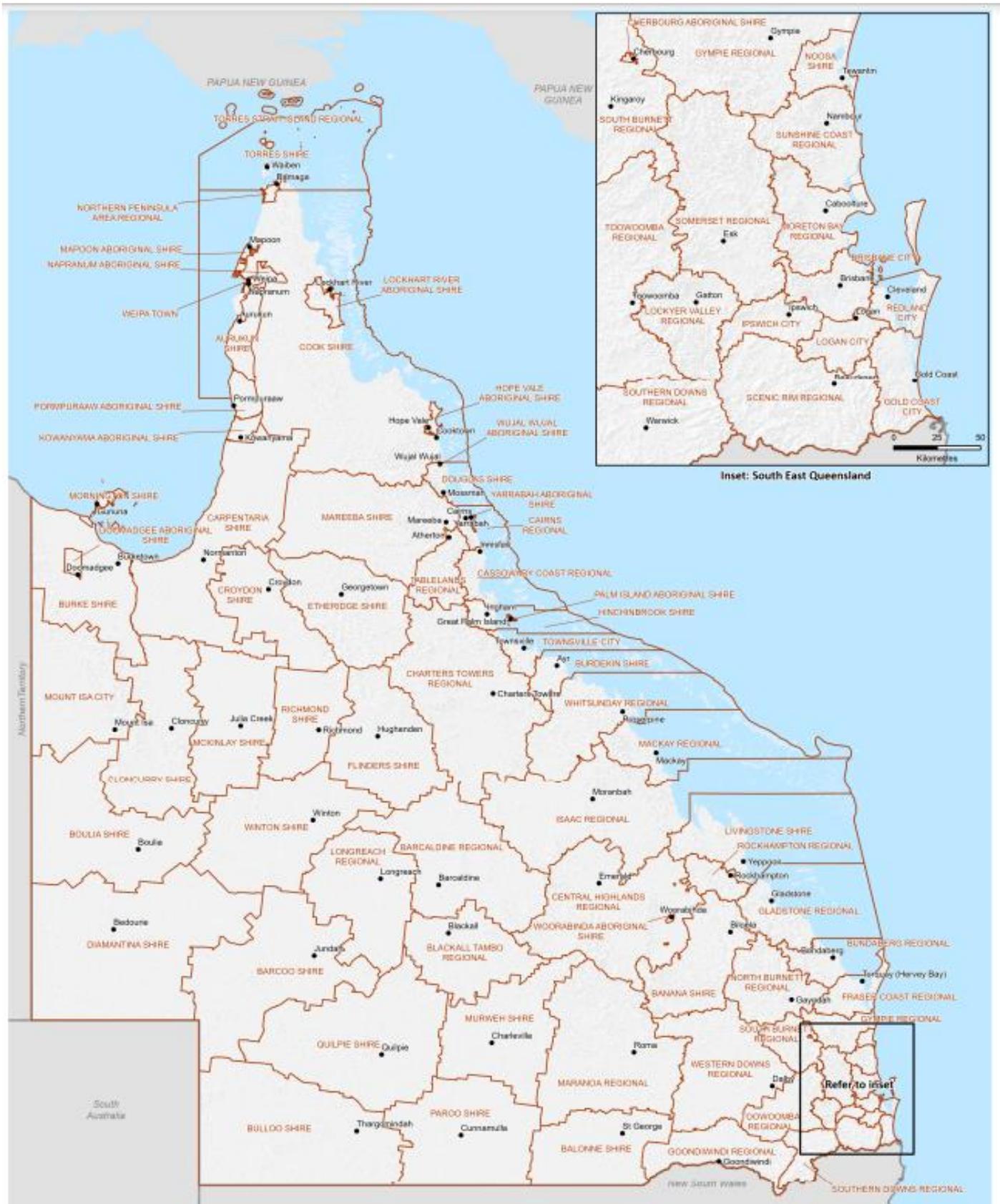
Robert (Bob) Abbot OAM
Chair Commissioner



Andrea Ranson
Commissioner



Reimen Hii
Commissioner



Local Government Areas and Council chamber locations

Map produced by the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning Spatial Services Unit, 12/07/2021

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2022 Report key determinations

Determination of maximum remuneration levels

The Commission has decided to increase the maximum remuneration levels for mayors, deputy mayors and councillors as follows:

Categories 1, 2 and 3	increase by 4% from 1 July 2023
Categories 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8	increase by 3% from 1 July 2023

In making its determination, the Commission considered the following:

- Increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI)¹:
 - for the period September 2022 Quarter:
 - Weighted average of the eight capital cities: 1.8%; Brisbane: 1.8%
 - for the 12 months to the September quarter 2022:
 - Weighted average of the eight capital cities: 7.3%; Brisbane: 7.9%
 - for the period June 2022 Quarter:
 - Weighted average of the eight capital cities: 1.8% per cent; Brisbane: 2.1%
 - for the 12 months to the June quarter 2022:
 - Weighted average of the eight capital cities: 6.1%; Brisbane: 7.3%
- Increases in the Wage Price Index (WPI) for the financial year ended 30 June 2022 as compared to the financial year ending 30 June 2021²:
 - (All Industries) Australia: 2.6%; Queensland: 2.9%
 - (Public Sector) Australia: 2.1%; Queensland: 2.7%
- Average Weekly Earnings for the period of May 2021 to May 2022³:
 - (All Industries) Australia: 2.0%; Queensland: 3.5%
 - (Public Sector) Australia: 3.0% Queensland: 5.6%
- As in previous years, the Commission considered the Brisbane City Council's Independent Councillor Remuneration Tribunal (ICRT) remuneration determination as a potentially relevant factor. In March 2022, the ICRT determined that the base rate for a Brisbane City Council Councillor be increased by 2.5% effective from 1 June 2022.

¹ Source: *Consumer Price Index (report), September quarter 2022, Consumer Price Index (report), March quarter 2022*, Queensland Government Statisticians Office, Queensland Treasury.

² Source: *Wage Price Index, Australia, June 2022*, Australian Bureau of Statistics (previously cat 6345.0)

³ Source: *Average Weekly Earnings, Australia, May 2022*, Australian Bureau of Statistics (previously cat 6302.0); *Average weekly earnings, Queensland and Australia, 1981–82 to 2021–22 (table)*, 19 August 2022, Queensland Government Statisticians Office, Queensland Treasury.

- The determination of the Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal (QIRT) on 31 May 2021 to increase the Base and Additional Salary rates for members of the legislative assembly by:
 - 0% with effect on and from 1 September 2019;
 - 2.0% with effect on and from 1 September 2021;
 - 2.25% with effect on and from 1 March 2022; and
 - 2.5% with effect on and from 1 September 2022.

- On 1 March 2021, the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission (QIRC) made Wages Determination: Certification of Salary Schedules (Wages Determination) which varied the State Government Entities Certified Agreement 2019 (the 2019 Certified Agreement) to:
 - set the salary rate for public service employees under the core agreement at 1 September 2021 as the award rate current at that time (this will be the rate upon which annual increases will be made);
 - align the salary increase dates for public service employees as follows:
 - 2.5% wage increase from 1 September 2019;
 - 2.5% wage increase from 1 September 2021;
 - 2.5% wage increase from 1 March 2022; and
 - 2.5% wage increase from 1 September 2022.

- Determination of the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal of Western Australia dated 7 April 2022: that remuneration, fees, and annual allowance ranges provided to CEOs and elected members be increased by 2.5%.

- Decision of the New South Wales Local Government Remuneration Tribunal Determination and Annual Report dated 20 April 2022: to apply a 2.0% increase in the minimum and maximum fees applicable in each category and that the current allocation of councils into the current categories of councils is appropriate.

- Decision of the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal dated 7 March 2022: new base levels and increases for 5 years from 18 December 2021, for mayors, deputy mayors and councillors, as set out in tables 1-13 of Allowance payable to Mayors, Deputy Mayors, and Councillors (Victoria) Determination No. 01/2022.

- In Tasmania, the remuneration for local government councillors is automatically increased under the provisions of the Local Government (General) Regulations 2015. The increase, effective 1 November 2022, is an automatic indexation of local government allowances provided for under the Local Government Act 1993 (Tas) by multiplying the allowances for the previous year by the inflationary factor (determined by calculating the current year's June quarter Wage Price Index divided by the previous years' June Wage Price Index).

- In the Northern Territory, the allowances for local government council members are indexed by CPI (Darwin) at 1 July each year.

- The Commission also considered the impact of inflation and relative volatility of CPI in the past twelve (12) months, along with:
 - the Commission’s inability to predict changes in CPI in the short or long term;
 - the potential differential impact of CPI changes across various parts of Queensland (including rural and remote regions); and
 - whether in a significantly inflationary environment remuneration should match inflation, and the potentially differential impact on sustainability in different parts of the State.
- The application of principles of consistency and austerity, when reviewing wages in the public sector.
- The continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, global trade tensions, and the ongoing impact and disruption caused by extreme or natural weather events impacting many parts of the State.
- The impact on communities of global supply chain shortages and disruption.
- The impact on communities of global transition to renewable energy sources, climate change and sustainability.
- Anecdotal evidence of:
 - ‘communities in transition’, changing demographics and population movement, resilience and sustainability challenges and opportunities;
 - rapid trade and infrastructure diversification, and the potential for disproportionate impact throughout communities;
 - uncertainty and the cost to communities of ensuring sustainability, trade diversification and investment in infrastructure and innovation; and
 - the Commission’s observation of a generally increasing call for role recognition through remuneration, particularly with regard to attracting and retaining reasonable and diverse mayoral and councillor candidates, along with the desire to foster and keep local talent, by creating competitive career path opportunities.
- The disparity in actual dollar terms between the remuneration paid to Mayors and councillors from the smaller rural, regional, and remote communities versus those residing in the larger or more metropolitan communities as was highlighted for the Commission through written and oral depositions this year.
- The gap between the remuneration (in real dollar/wage terms) payable to Mayors and Councillors in Categories 1 to 3, compared to those Mayors and Councillors in Categories 4 to 8, notwithstanding the work being carried out by local governments generally in Categories 1 to 3 is no less important as those in Categories 4 to 8. This is an issue the Commission will continue to consider as part of its general and category review in 2023.

- The impact of the unforeseen significant rise in inflation, interest rates and CPI, and the disproportionately greater impact it has had on the communities in rural, remote, and regional areas since the start of the 2022 calendar year, as observed and reported to the Commission.
- The current observed volatility and uncertainty regarding inflation, and the impact of this on councils and their constituents.
- The importance of maintaining wages growth in a sustainable and fiscally responsible manner, while measures are being taken by other government authorities to combat inflation.
- The need to ensure financial sustainability of local governments and the diverse communities they serve.
- Local governments' role in Queensland's economic development and innovation.

The Commission gratefully acknowledges the increased number of submissions it received this year which have assisted in its discharge of its statutory obligations.

Councillor advisors

The Commission did not receive any direction or request to make recommendations relating to councillor advisors in the period between 1 December 2021 to 30 November 2022.

Category review and future actions

The Act requires the Commission to review the categories of local governments once every four years, in the year prior to each quadrennial election. The next review of the categories is due in 2023.

In its 2019 report, the Commission determined not to make any category changes to the categories of local government.

In its 2019 and subsequent reports, the Commission stated its intention to undertake an analysis of the categories and category system in the period 2021-2023, with the intention of commencing after the 2021 quadrennial Queensland Local Government Elections. This anticipated analysis was delayed due to the impact of the COVID-19 global pandemic. COVID-19 inevitably resulted in an increased focus on other priorities for Queensland local government. The Commission commends all local government members for their on-going contribution to their communities and the State of Queensland in the recent and consecutively challenging years,

The Commission has advised of its intention to proceed with a general review of categories and the category system during 2023, and will engage with, and invite submissions from, councils and stakeholders commencing in early 2023. The

Commission expects that in addition to the category review due in December 2023, that the Commission will conduct a general review of its methodology in determining its maximum remuneration and categories in early 2023. After the scope of the general review has been formulated, the Commission will also invite submissions from councils and stakeholders to assist it in its general review.

To that end, the Commission intends to issue practice directions to assist councils and stakeholders to engage with, and make relevant submissions, to the Commission to inform and assist in the discharge of the Commission's statutory functions.

2. The Commission

Formation and composition

The Local Government Remuneration Commission (the Commission) is an independent entity established under the *Local Government Act 2009* (the Act). On 1 October 2019, His Excellency the Governor, acting by and with the advice of the Executive Council, approved three new appointees to the Commission for a term of four years.

This is the fourth report of the new Commission, and the sixteenth report including the reports of the former Local Government Remuneration and Discipline Tribunal and the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal.

The current Chair and Commissioners of the Commission are:

Mr. Robert (Bob) Abbot OAM

Chair

Mr. Abbot has extensive experience in the local government sector with 32 years as an elected councillor and mayor. Mr. Abbot has experience working at state and national local government organizations and has held board and panel positions, including Deputy Chair of the South East Queensland Council of Mayors, Director of the Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ), and Director of the Australian Local Government Association. Mr. Abbot has been a mentor for newly elected mayors on behalf of the LGAQ, with a particular focus on mentoring Queensland Indigenous mayors.

In the Australia Day 2021 Honours List, Mr. Abbot was the recipient of an Order of Australia (OAM) for his service to local government and to the communities of Noosa and the Sunshine Coast.

Ms. Andrea Ranson

Commissioner

Ms. Ranson is a lawyer experienced in public and private sector business and governance. Ms. Ranson brings substantial legal experience in business and commercial law, industrial relations, dispute resolution, justice, and ethics. Ms Ranson is also passionate about regional development, communities, and sustainability. Ms. Ranson is a Nationally Accredited Mediator currently working with the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT) and is a member of the Queensland Department of Justice & Attorney-General Dispute Resolution Panel. Ms. Ranson is also now in her second term as a Non-Executive Director appointed to the Board of North Queensland Bulk Ports Corporation, a government owned corporation. Ms. Ranson is Chair of the Corporate Governance & Planning Committee and a Member of the Audit & Financial Risk Management Committee of that Board. Ms. Ranson holds a Master of Laws (LLM), Bachelor of Laws (Hons) and Bachelor of Arts from Monash University. She is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Directors (GAICD) and a Fellow of the Governance Institute of Australia (FGIA).

Mr. Reimen Hii

Commissioner

Mr. Hii is a barrister and Nationally Accredited Mediator. He holds the degrees of Bachelor of Laws and Bachelor of Arts. He is a practicing lawyer with extensive knowledge in public administration and community affairs, and a particular interest in civil and commercial law. Mr. Hii is experienced in professional discipline matters, including investigations, public administration, corporate and public governance, public sector ethics and finance. Mr. Hii has a culturally and linguistically diverse background and experience working with diverse communities. Mr. Hii has previously been recognized as Australian Young Lawyer of the Year by the Law Council of Australia, in recognition of his significant contribution to access to justice and diversity advocacy. Mr Hii provides a deep understanding of diversity and brings well respected analytic skill, together with legal and business acumen to the role.

Remuneration responsibilities

Chapter 6, Part 3 of the Act, proclaimed into force on 3 December 2018, established the Local Government Remuneration Commission to assume the remuneration functions of the former Local Government Remuneration and Discipline Tribunal which ceased to exist on 3 December 2018.

Section 177 of the Act provides the functions of the Commission are:

- to establish the categories of local governments, and
- to decide the category to which each local government belongs, and
- to decide the maximum amount of remuneration payable to the councillors in each of the categories, and
- to consider and make recommendations to the Minister about the following matters relating to councillor advisors—
 - (i) whether or not to prescribe a local government under section 197D(1)(a);
 - (ii) the number of councillor advisors each councillor of a local government may appoint;
 - (iii) the number of councillor advisors a councillor of the council under the City of Brisbane Act 2010 may appoint; and
- another function related to the remuneration of councillors if directed, in writing, by the Minister.

Chapter 8, Part 1, Division 1 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* (Regulation) sets out the processes of the Commission in deciding the remuneration that is payable to councillors.

The Regulation requires the Commission to review the categories of local governments once every four years, in the year prior to each quadrennial election, to determine whether the categories and the assignment of local governments to those categories require amendment.

After determining the categories of local governments, the Regulation also requires the Commission to decide annually, before 1 December each year, the maximum amount of remuneration to be paid to mayors, deputy mayors and councillors in each category from 1 July of the following year.

In addition, section 248 of the Regulation allows a local government to make a submission to the Commission to vary the remuneration for a councillor, or councillors, to a level higher than that stated in the remuneration schedule where the local government considers exceptional circumstances apply. The Commission may, but is not required to, consider any such submission. If the Commission is satisfied that exceptional circumstances exist, the Commission may approve payment of a higher amount of remuneration.

On 12 October 2021, the *Electoral and Other Legislation (Accountability, Integrity and Other Matters) Amendment Act 2021* and section 197A of the *Local Government Act 2009* came into force. These changes formed part of the Queensland Government rolling reform agenda in the local government sector to further strengthen transparency, accountability and integrity measures that apply to the system of local government in Queensland.

Section 197A of the Act established requirements for councils that wish to employ councillor advisors and councillor administrative support staff to assist councillors complete their duties. The role of councillor advisors is currently restricted to Brisbane City Council and to those councils within category 4 to 8 as prescribed by this Commission.

The requirements in relation to the appointment of councillor advisors include the following:

- must vote to pass a resolution to create councillor advisor positions (except Brisbane City Council)
- appoint advisor, at the discretion of councillors and only until the councillor's term ends, unless re-appointed by a new councillor
- must report the costs of councillor advisors to the community, for example through the council's annual report.

Requirements for councillor advisors include the following:

- they must submit registers of interests and keep them up-to-date
- they must follow a new Code of conduct for councillor advisors in Queensland
- they must comply with the local government principles and can be found guilty of integrity offences.

A dedicated telephone hotline (07 3452 6747) has been established by the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning to respond to any questions regarding councillor advisors. The hotline is available between the hours of 8.30am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.

Alternatively, email enquiries can be forwarded to lgreforms@dildp.qld.gov.au.

The Commission is yet to receive any submissions or enquiries in relation to councillor advisors as at the date of its determination.

3. Remuneration determination

Remuneration determination for councillors

As required by section 246 of the Regulation the Commission has prepared a remuneration schedule for the 2022-2023 financial year, applicable from 1 July 2023 (the Schedule), which appears below.

Arrangements have been made to publish the Schedule in the Queensland Government Gazette and for this Report to be printed and presented to the Minister for Local Government.

Methodology

The Commission had regard to the matters in section 244 and 247 (2), (5) of the Regulation in determining the Schedule. The Commission also noted and had regard to the matters listed on pages 6 to 10 of this Report to determine the appropriate maximum remuneration in each category of local government.

Matters not included in the remuneration schedule

During the 2022 consultation period, the Whitsunday Regional Council sought clarification in relation to whether a mechanism may be implemented to ensure that Mayors and Councillors remuneration is suspended when campaigning for Federal political office, similar to the provisions which are provided for in s.160B of the Act for Mayors and Councillors campaigning for State political office.

Whitsunday Regional Council also requested the introduction of additional remuneration rates for Acting Mayors and Acting Deputy Mayors for prolonged relief arrangements (e.g., paid at 80% of the scheduled rate for periods in excess of a four-week vacancy or absence).

The Commission notes that the submission is not a request for approval for a specific councillor to remunerated at a level more than the maximum amount payable under the Schedule, or in relation to categories of local government generally. The Commission considers that it is unable to issue any determination about the remuneration payable to sitting Mayors or Councillors who are running for office in Federal elections as this is a matter that is outside the Commission's statutory functions. The Commission also does not have the power to approve remuneration at an amount lower than in the Schedule.

The Commission nevertheless notes the submission regarding potential inconsistency between candidates for State elections and Federal elections, and will refer this matter back to the Department for further consideration.

The Commission has informed Whitsunday Regional Council of this determination.

Pro rata payment

Should an elected representative hold a councillor position for only part of a financial year, they are only entitled to remuneration to reflect the portion of the year served.

Remuneration schedule to apply from 1 July 2023

		Remuneration determined (from 1 July 2023)		
		(\$ per annum; see Note 1)		
Category	Local governments assigned to categories	Mayor	Deputy mayor	Councillor
Category 1 (see Note 2)	Aurukun Shire Council Balonne Shire Council Banana Shire Council Barcaldine Regional Council Barcoo Shire Council Blackall-Tambo Regional Council Boulia Shire Council Bulloo Shire Council Burdekin Shire Council Burke Shire Council Carpentaria Shire Council Charters Towers Regional Council Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council Cloncurry Shire Council Cook Shire Council Croydon Shire Council Diamantina Shire Council Doomadgee Aboriginal Shire Council Douglas Shire Council Etheridge Shire Council Flinders Shire Council Goondiwindi Regional Council Hinchinbrook Shire Council Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council Kowanyama Aboriginal Shire Council Lockhart River Aboriginal Shire Council Longreach Regional Council Mapoon Aboriginal Shire Council McKinlay Shire Council Mornington Shire Council Murweh Shire Council Napranum Aboriginal Shire Council North Burnett Regional Council Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council Paroo Shire Council	\$114,801	\$66,231	\$57,400

	Pormpuraaw Aboriginal Shire Council Quilpie Shire Council Richmond Shire Council Torres Shire Council Torres Strait Island Regional Council Winton Shire Council Woorabinda Aboriginal Shire Council Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council			
Category 2	Mareeba Shire Council Mount Isa City Council Somerset Regional Council	\$132,461	\$79,478	\$66,231
Category 3	Cassowary Coast Regional Council Central Highlands Regional Council Gympie Regional Council Isaac Regional Council Livingstone Shire Council Lockyer Valley Regional Council Maranoa Regional Council Noosa Shire Council Scenic Rim Regional Council South Burnett Regional Council Southern Downs Regional Council Tablelands Regional Council Western Downs Regional Council Whitsunday Regional Council	\$141,294	\$88,308	\$75,061
Category 4	Bundaberg Regional Council Fraser Coast Regional Council Gladstone Regional Council Rockhampton Regional Council	\$166,171	\$109,324	\$96,204
Category 5	Cairns Regional Council Mackay Regional Council Redland City Council Toowoomba Regional Council	\$192,410	\$131,187	\$113,698
Category 6	Ipswich City Council Townsville City Council	\$218,647	\$148,681	\$131,187
Category 7	Logan City Council Moreton Bay Regional Council Sunshine Coast Regional Council	\$244,886	\$169,671	\$148,681
Category 8	Gold Coast City Council	\$271,124	\$188,038	\$161,799

Notes to the remuneration schedule

In its 2014 report the then Tribunal explained the rationale behind the adoption of a system of remuneration which comprised a base payment (of two thirds of the annual remuneration) and a monthly payment based upon attendance at, and participation in, the 12 mandated council meetings.

Note 1 The monetary amounts shown are the per annum figures to apply from 1 July 2023. If an elected representative only serves for part of a full financial year (that is, 1 July to 30 June) they are only entitled to a pro rata payment to reflect the portion of the year served.

Note 2 For councillors in category 1 councils, a base payment of \$38,266.67 is payable for the 12 months commencing on 1 July 2023. A meeting fee of \$1,594.44 per calendar month (or fortnightly equivalent) is payable for attendance at, and participation in, scheduled meetings of council subject to certification by the mayor and/or chief executive officer of the council. Mayors and deputy mayors in category 1 councils are to receive the full annual remuneration level shown.

4. Matters raised with the Commission during the remuneration review program

A summary table of submissions made to the Commission during the review period and the Commission's determination is provided below.

Meetings and deputations

Local governments were provided with the opportunity to engage with the Commission at the Annual Conference of the LGAQ at the Cairns Convention Centre held from 17 to 19 October 2022.

Central Highlands, Gladstone, Isaac, Somerset, Western Downs and Whitsunday Regional Councils, and Douglas Shire Council, provided the Commission with oral deputations during the 2022 LGAQ Conference in Cairns.

Local governments were also given an opportunity to provide written submissions to the Commission. The Commission determined and advised councils that the date for written submissions would close on 4 November 2022.

Nine written submissions were received by 4 November 2022: from the Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council, Toowoomba Regional Council, Whitsunday Regional Council, Western Downs Regional Council, Fraser Coast Regional Council, Mackay Regional Council, Central Highlands Regional Council, and Somerset Regional Council.

In making its determination, the Commission had regard to all submissions it received, together with the matters on pages 6 to 10 of this report.

Key points raised with the Commission during the 2022 review period included:

- increasing demands on councils in relation to innovation and sustainability;
- increasing demands on councils in relation to trade diversification and industry engagement, particularly in light of the global move towards renewable energy sources;
- role and career recognition, through remuneration, particularly in attracting and retaining diverse and reasonable mayoral and councillor candidates;
- role and career recognition, through remuneration, in order to attract greater diversity in age, and to support regional communities in developing and keeping local talent
- potential recognition of innovation;
- the impact of the sudden increase in inflation over the last 12 months on all local governments, and the disproportionate effect on those on lower wages, as well as those from rural, regional and remote communities.
- the current observed volatility and uncertainty regarding inflation, and the impact of this on councils and their constituents.
- continuing concerns for the future and sustainability of their communities and community constituents, economic growth, development, and sustainability.

especially with global transition to renewables in mind and significant uncertainty around future large infrastructure changes required to meet new demands.

Table – Summary of 2022 submissions

1	Date received	<p>Written Submission on 10 October 2022 Oral Submission on 17 October 2022 LGAQ Conference</p>
	Received from	<p>Western Downs Regional Council: CEO Jodie Taylor Councillor Paul McVeigh Deputy Mayor Andrew Smith</p>
	Summary of submission	<p>Council is currently identified by the LGRC as a category 3 council. Council submitted that it be elevated to Category 4. The following factors were relied upon in Council’s submission:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Size, Geographical & Environmental terrain of Western Downs RC is extensive and Council covers >38,000km² and comprises six principal towns – Chinchilla, Dalby, Jandowae, Miles, Tara and Wandoan – with 23 smaller towns and 99 communities. Significant travel is required in order for Councillors to fulfill their duties, and provide Representation across the region, particularly at community and business events. 2. Councillors hold additional portfolio responsibilities linked to key council business functions and the corporate plan, carrying additional responsibilities and constraints on Councillor’s time. 3. Population, demographics, spread of population & extent of services provided are important considerations for Council. Council submitted that its population unlike many other regional areas, has expanded rapidly with 56% growth in migration from urban areas in last 12 months. The Region was one of top 5 LGAs in Australia (and only LGA in Qld) achieving this level of migration increase. Managing 6 principle towns, 23 smaller towns and 99 communities creates significant challenges in service delivery, additional budget and financial management complexity, as well as significant asset and infrastructure management outside of the scope of a Category 3 Council, in particularly highlighting that Council has the Largest road network in Qld – 7,500km of local roads and 2,500km of state/federal roads managed by council; 20 water schemes; 7 sewerage schemes; 18 transfer stations and landfills; gas reticulation network; over 1000 buildings; 116,000 hectares of stock routes; large network of parks & open spaces; 8 airport facilities; saleyards business - throughput over 230,000 head per annum. Council submitted these factors require significant time spent on strategic development, building skills, knowledge and understanding the diversity of

services delivered by council in region. Diverse range of business activities unique for council size.

4. **Strong regional economic growth, investment and consistently high employment** - GRP (region) grown 34% in 5 years - \$4.31B.
5. **High confidence in regional development** having approval for 23 solar farms (6 operational and 1 under construction), 3 wind farms (1 operational and 3 approved), approved renewable-based hydrogen plant; and the largest battery plant in Qld (more proposed).
6. **Existing and growing trade** –coal mines, gas or coal powered plants, strong and growing gas resources sector; intensive agriculture growth (42% of national feed lot capacity; 57 feedlots operating; highly developed and productive agricultural base); 123 manufacturing businesses with total sales volume of \$696M in 2021 = 100% increase in 5 years. Council submitted that continued economic growth places greater responsibilities upon mayor and councillors to understand and manage the diverse development occurring withing region and strategic needs of community.
7. **Financial sustainability** - Council operates on a financially sustainable basis despite five (5) significant flooding events expected to equate to \$170M in regional flood damage funding to be delivered in 18 months.

Request

Change from category 3 to Category 4.

Determination

The Commission will commence its review of categories and the category system in 2023 and take into consideration the matters raised. Council is invited to participate in the 2023 review. No change to the current category pending the Commission’s 2023 review.

The matters raised specifically in the submissions have also been considered by the Commission as part of the 2022 annual review of the maximum remuneration payable to mayors and councillors.

2	Date received	<u>Written Submission</u> on 10 October 2022
	Received from	<u>Individual submission:</u> Cr Tim McMahon, Toowoomba Regional Council
	Summary of submission	Council is currently identified by the LGRC as a category 5 council. Council submitted that it be elevated to Category 6. The following factors were relied upon in Council’s submission:

Request	Change from Category 5 to Category 6.
Determination	The Commission will commence its review of categories and the category system in 2023 and take into consideration the matters raised. Council is invited to participate in the 2023 review. No change to the current category pending the Commission's 2023 review.
3	<p data-bbox="231 1223 400 1256">Date received</p> <p data-bbox="620 1223 1094 1256"><u>Written Submission</u> on 10 October 2022</p> <p data-bbox="231 1292 408 1326">Received from</p> <p data-bbox="620 1292 1099 1359"><u>Individual submission:</u> Cr Alison Jones, Mackay Regional Council</p> <p data-bbox="231 1433 526 1467">Summary of submission</p> <p data-bbox="620 1433 1348 1606">Local Government councillors are the closest to the community and put in long hours that are no different to a state or federal politician. As a third term councillor, concern that the true value of councillors' work is not being considered. The factors relied upon in Councillor Jones' submission included:</p> <ol data-bbox="668 1644 1348 2033" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="668 1644 1348 1854">1. Councillor income of \$108,000, while performing an average of 50-80 hours per week. Average 50 hour per week post-tax salary equates to approximately \$66,000 per annum or \$24 per hour. Councillor roles are 24/7, with evening calls, weekend work and no overtime to recompense Councillors for their time. <li data-bbox="668 1861 1348 2033">2. Remuneration should fairly reflect role and responsibilities – using the analogy of Council as a company, Councillors are effectively members of a company board with responsibility for budgets exceeding \$100 million per year.

	Request	Consideration be given to these matters when considering Councillor remuneration.
	Determination	The Commission will give consideration to the matters raised when it commences its review of categories and the category system in 2023. The Council is invited to participate in the 2023 review. The matters raised specifically in Cr Jones' submissions have been considered by the Commission as part of its annual review of the maximum remuneration payable to mayors and councillors.
4	Date received	<u>Written Submission</u> on 13 October 2022
	Received from	<u>Individual submission:</u> Cr Jade Wellings, Fraser Coast Regional Council
	Summary of submission	Remuneration for a category 4 Deputy Mayor does not fairly compensate or incentivise Councillors for the additional workload of a Deputy Mayor. Category 4 Mayoral roles have full time assistant support, while Councillors (including the Deputy Mayor) share one assistant.
	Request	An increase in the remuneration for the role of Deputy Mayor.
	Determination	The Commission will commence its review of categories and the category system in 2023 and take into consideration the matters raised. Council is invited to participate in the 2023 review. The matters raised specifically in Cr Jones' submissions have been considered by the Commission as part of its annual review of the maximum remuneration payable to mayors and councillors. The matters raised specifically in Cr Jones' submissions have been considered by the Commission as part of its annual review of the maximum remuneration payable to mayors and councillors.
5	Date received	<u>Written Submission</u> on 14 October 2022 <u>Oral Submission</u> on 17 October 2022 LGAQ conference
	Received from	<u>Central Highlands Regional Council:</u> Deputy Mayor Christine Rolfe CEO Sharon Houlihan
	Summary of submission	Remuneration is considered too low to attract high calibre councillor candidates, this ultimately limits the pool of councillor candidates. Query whether remuneration should be based on council categories - mayor and councillors of small councils have just

	<p>as complex a job and similar workload as those in medium councils.</p> <p>Remuneration is not the complete picture for explaining what a councillor role entails and other aspects for example leave entitlements should be taken into consideration.</p> <p>Taxation treatment differs depending on how the role of Councillor is defined.</p> <p>The impact of taking leaves of absence is not currently addressed in setting remuneration, this is a complex area for councils.</p> <p>Councillor roles / criteria should be defined in a similar way to a normal position description, including duties description, remuneration, skills required to undertake role and conditions (for example, leave entitlements, coverage of expenses, access to child-care, vehicle and so on).</p> <p>Request</p> <p>Consideration be given by the Commission to the matters raised.</p> <p>Determination</p> <p>The Commission will commence its review of categories and the category system in 2023 and take into consideration the matters raised. All Councils are invited to participate in the 2023 review.</p> <p>The matters raised specifically in the submission have also been considered by the Commission as part of the 2022 annual review of the maximum remuneration payable to mayors and councillors.</p>
<p>6</p> <p>Date received</p> <p>Received from</p> <p>Summary of submission</p>	<p><u>Written Submission</u> on 14 October 2022 <u>Oral Submission</u> on 17 October 2022 LGAQ conference</p> <p><u>Somerset Regional Council:</u> Mayor Graeme Lehmann Cr Bob Whalley, Cr Sean Choat, Cr Cheryl Gaedtke, Cr Jason Wendt</p> <p>Pre amalgamation Somerset RC was a Category 3 Council. Somerset RC is now a Category 2 Council and should be reinstated to Category 3.</p> <p>The following factors were relied upon:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Membership to SEQ Council of Mayors - Somerset is the only Local Government in the South East Queensland (SEQ) area which is also a member of the SEQ Council of Mayors, and categorised as a category two (2) Council.

2. **Comparison to neighbouring LGR** – Councillor participation and workload in fulfilling SEQ duties are the same as neighbouring rural-based councils, for example, Scenic Rim and Lockyer Valley Regional Councils, each of which are category three (3).
3. **Existing remuneration metrics** require change to reflect effort and participation.
4. **Community expectation** - there is a high level of community expectation as communities benchmark Council against adjoining densely populated communities, resulting in an increased workload.
5. **Councillor remuneration in Somerset has reduced** since amalgamation, while Somerset continues to grow, is located in SEQ, and the representation (and workload increased),
6. **Changes in legislation** have increased scrutiny and burden on elected members. This increased burden needs to be considered.

Request

Reinstate Council from Category two (2) to Category (3).

Determination

The Commission will commence its review of categories and the category system in 2023 and take into consideration the matters raised. All Councils are invited to participate in the 2023 review. No change to the current category pending the Commission’s 2023 review.

The matters raised specifically in the submissions have been also considered by the Commission as part of its annual review of the maximum remuneration payable to mayors and councillors.

7 Date received

Written Submission on 14 October 2022
Oral Submission on 17 October 2022 LGAQ Conference

Received from

Whitsunday Regional Council:
 CEO Rod Ferguson
 Mayor Julie Hall, Deputy Mayor Gary Simpson

Summary of submission

Consideration is requested to introducing additional remuneration rates for Acting Mayor and Acting Deputy Mayor for prolonged relief arrangements (e.g., paid at 80% of the scheduled rate for periods in excess of a four-week vacancy or absence).

Council identified discrepancy in current pay structures with reliance upon the following factors:

1. **Acting Mayoral or Acting Deputy Mayoral roles** do not currently receive compensation for the higher duties. Acting roles have been for extended periods of time to cover leave of absence, for example, a former Deputy

Mayor recently performed duties as Acting Mayor for period of four (4) months without additional remuneration.

2. **Retention** former Mayor and Deputy Mayor resigned to contest Federal and State roles.
3. **Local Government Act 2009** – drafted in a way to cater for acting periods of short duration and does not adequately consider longer term acting roles. The current remuneration structure requires flexibility to allow for unplanned and prolonged vacancies and absences.
4. **Remuneration consistency during Federal and State election campaigns** – there is currently no mechanism to suspend Mayoral or Deputy Mayor remuneration when contesting Federal elections. This appears to be an anomaly. There should be a mechanism that allows for the removal of access to remuneration as per section 16oB of the Act that relates to candidates running for office at a State election.

Request

Council seeks clarification as to the remuneration payable to Councillors running Federal election campaigns, and that consideration be given to these matters in the Commission’s review.

Determination

The Commission notes that the submission is not a request for approval for a specific councillor to remunerated at a level more than the maximum amount payable under the Schedule, or in relation to categories of local government generally. The Commission considers that it is unable to issue any determination about the remuneration payable to sitting Mayors or Councillors who are running for office in Federal elections as this is a matter that is outside the Commission’s statutory functions. The Commission also does not have the power to approve remuneration at an amount lower than in the Schedule.

The Commission nevertheless notes the submission regarding potential inconsistency between candidates for State elections and Federal elections and will refer this matter back to the Department for consideration.

As to increasing the amount of compensation payable to councillors in acting Mayoral and Acting Deputy Mayoral roles and long term acting roles generally, the Commission notes that it has the power to consider specific request to remunerate a specific councillor at an amount more than the maximum payable under the Schedule if there are exceptional circumstances that exist in relation to such request.

8 Date received

Oral Submission on 17 October 2022 LGAQ Conference

Received from	<p><u>Gladstone Regional Council:</u> Mayor Matt Burnett Deputy Mayor Kahn Goodluck Councillor Natalia Muszkat CEO Leisa Dowling</p>	
Summary of submission	<p>The focus of council’s oral submission was recognition of Council roles as full-time, and fair remuneration for full time workload and responsibilities.</p> <p>Councillors advocated the importance of fair remuneration for full time councillor roles and consider there is no long term financial security, including in relation to superannuation or long-service benefits.</p>	
Request	<p>Council seeks consideration be given to how remuneration best supports matters such as progression, career recognition and longevity; as well as arrangements for unpaid leave, sick leave, which at the moment it is at the discretion of councillors by resolution</p>	
Determination	<p>The Commission will commence its review of categories and the category system in 2023 and take into consideration the matters raised. All Councils are invited to participate in the 2023 review.</p> <p>The matters raised have been also considered by the Commission as part of its annual review of the maximum remuneration payable to mayors and councillors.</p>	
9	Date received	<u>Oral Submission</u> on 17 October 2022 LGAQ Conference
	Received from	<p><u>Isaac Regional Council:</u> Deputy Mayor Kellie Veava Mary-Anne Uren CEO Jeff Stewart-Harris</p>
	Summary of submission	<p>Council provided suggestions for changes to the remuneration categories which would explore innovation or amendments. Council representatives relayed the current experience of serving in a councillor role in their local government area. This includes high expectations from the community, industry and other tiers of government to carry out the role. Councillors play a key role in local economic development and yet the role is neither remunerated as a full time role nor at a competitive level with local industry. Added to this is the pressures of lengthy travel time in a dispersed area and the pressures and time commitment of social media as a public figure. There is a distinct lack of incentive for younger community members to enter local government and it is not perceived as a viable career path.</p>

Request	Council requests the Commission instigate change to remuneration categories with new criteria that encourage councillor role as career path and recognise that the role is no longer a part-time vocation.	
Determination	<p>The Commission will commence its review of categories and the category system in 2023 and take into consideration the matters raised. All Councils are invited to participate in the 2023 review.</p> <p>The matters raised have been also considered by the Commission as part of its annual review of the maximum remuneration payable to mayors and councillors.</p>	
10	Date received	Oral Submission on 17 October 2022 LGAQ Conference
	Received from	Douglas Shire Council: Mayor Michael Kerr
	Summary of submission	<p>Council advocated that category 1 is not the appropriate classification for council.</p> <p>There are a number of reasons why council feels that the role can no longer be treated or remunerated as part-time:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. COVID era resulted in council having to manage vaccinations, requirements for businesses, council operations/arrangements. 2. Tackling the increased crime rates in the local government area. 3. The population is increasing to above 13,000 and growing rapidly. 4. Impact of social media and digital access and scrutiny on the role of local government. 5. Increasing threat of legal implications on the role of local government. 6. Increasingly broad skill set required for role in modern local government.
	Request	The Mayor requested that Council be reclassified as category 3 rather than category 1.
	Determination	<p>The Commission will commence its review of categories and the category system in 2023 and take into consideration the matters raised. All Councils are invited to participate in the 2023 review. No change to the current category pending the Commission's 2023 review.</p> <p>The matters raised have been also considered by the Commission as part of its annual review of the maximum remuneration payable to mayors and councillors.</p>

11	Date received	<u>Written Submission</u> on 31 October 2022
	Received from	<u>Toowoomba Regional Council:</u>
		CEO Brian Pidgeon
	Summary of submission	Toowoomba Regional Council is currently a Category 5 Council and Council observes that the characteristics of Toowoomba RC are currently deemed consistent with Cairns, Mackay and Redland Regional / City councils. Council proposes that Toowoomba is in fact more closely aligned to Ipswich and Townsville City Councils which are both in Category 6.
		Council relied upon the following factors:
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Principal Regional Activity Centre - Toowoomba City is vibrant regional capital and regional hub; designated in the South East Queensland Regional Plan 2017 as a Principal Regional Activity Centre. 2. Population Growth - In the next 30 years the population is anticipated to grow by 55,000 with 36,000 new jobs expected to be created. 3. Western Gateway - Toowoomba also functions as the western gateway – with inland port services trade in and out of agricultural areas of Darling Down and South West QLD. 4. Supply Chain significance - Council submitted that the Wellcamp Airport & Toowoomba Bypass has a unique character, role & function. These both service freight to Asian markets; and in the future Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail connections to Port of Brisbane. 5. Geographical Area – large area with dispersed population – specifically one city, and 31 independent towns spread across 12,937km². 6. Longer than Average Road Network - Council maintains a road network which is 3 times longer than the average road network compared to other category 5 and 6 councils. 7. Councillor Travel - Councillors are expected to travel extensive distances to meet community expectation. Within its local government area there is approximately 3,350km sealed roads, 3,248km unsealed roads, 162 major structures including 54 ridges; 644km stormwater network, 5,225 cross drains; and 577km of footpaths. 8. Contribution to State Economy - Its work is also diverse and has a significant impact on the State economy. 9. Inland Rail Project - Toowoomba RC will be reviewing many large infrastructure projects in the coming decade (of about \$15M - \$200M). While the full impacts of the Inland Rail project are yet to be determined, it is anticipated to be significant. 10. Annual Capital Expenditure - Council’s average annual capital expenditure over the past five years approximately \$163.2M per annum.

	<p>11. Financial Responsibility - it has a significant comparative level of financial responsibility compared to other category 6 councils. Details are contained within Council's written submission.</p> <p>12. Spillway Improvements - Two of Council's three dams have been identified as requiring a large investment over the coming years at projected cost of over \$200M to improve spillways.</p> <p>Council advocated that these comparisons warrant the Commission's favourable consideration as factors relevant to reclassification of the currently allocated Category 5 level of remuneration. Considerable information and provided comparative data is available in Council's written submission.</p> <p>Request Toowoomba Regional Council be reclassified from category 5 to a category 6 council.</p> <p>Determination The Commission will commence its review of categories and the category system in 2023 and take into consideration the matters raised. All Councils are invited to participate in the 2023 review. No change to the current category pending the Commission's 2023 review.</p>
<p>12</p> <p>Date received</p> <p>Received from</p> <p>Summary of submission</p>	<p>Written Submission on 31 October 2022</p> <p>Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council: Acting Chief Executive Officer Kate Gallaway</p> <p>The current remuneration structure does not recognise the additional responsibilities of divisional councillors of amalgamated indigenous councils.</p> <p>Council observed that in 2008, five (5) surrounding Indigenous Community Councils, Seisia Island Council, New Mapoon Aboriginal Shire Council, Bamaga Island Council, Umagico Aboriginal Shire Council and Injinoo Aboriginal Shire council, were amalgamated to form Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council (NPARC), with NPARC being only one of two councils in the region to be amalgamated <u>and</u> hold Deed of Grant in Trust (DOGIT) land.</p> <p>Council submitted that prior to amalgamation, each of the five (5) community councils had a council structure where they had their own chair, deputy and 3 councillors (with the exception of Seisia Island Council, which had a chair and 2 councillors), to make trust and council decisions.</p>

Council advocated that the structure has been reduced to 1 person to hold the responsibility of these previous 5 communities, leading to a high workload and pressure.

Council stated that under the *Local Government Act 2009*, divisional councillors hold veto rights for decisions relating to trust matters, as the trustee of DOGIT Land. While community forums are established in the legislation for the governance of veto, this has not been practical as it would require a secretary to be funded by NPARC and community members would need to be compensated for their time if expected to be involved in community forums, leading an increased workload on divisional councillors compared to councillors within other Indigenous shire councils.

Additionally, Council stated that the current remuneration structure does not empower community members into career pathways into the stream of elected members. Further that there are limited opportunities for the younger population to have career pathways in the space of governance of local government. Council argued that the community used to look forward to the leadership and opportunities that were available.

Request

The Commission review the current remuneration structure to ensure that:

- (a) Local Government can remain a viable career pathway for the future sustainability of our councils; and
- (b) the remuneration structure recognises the additional responsibilities of divisional councillors of amalgamated indigenous councils.

Determination

The Commission will commence its review of categories and the category system in 2023 and take into consideration the matters raised. All Councils are invited to participate in the 2023 review. No change to the current category pending the Commission's 2023 review.

The matters raised have been also considered by the Commission as part of its annual review of the maximum remuneration payable to mayors and councillors.

5. Other activities of the Commission

Exceptional circumstances submissions (matters raised under Local Government Regulation 2012, section 248):

Nil.

6. Commission's future priorities

The Commission will invite further submissions from all Councils in early 2023 as part of its general review of categories and the category system. The Commission encourages local government to participate and looks forward to engaging with local government and its stakeholders over the next 12 months.

Further information about the Commission can be located at www.statedevelopment.qld.gov.au.

Local Government Remuneration Commission

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