From: Ally Dench
Sent: Wednesday, 23 July 2025 1:30 PM
To: State Development
Subject: CM: Re: Local Government Amendment (Elections) Bill 2025 - Post hearing responses - 15 July 2025

Dear Rhea,

Thank you for the discussion on the phone this morning and the clarification for confirming the process for submitting responses.

Please find below my answers to the 3 questions on notice highlighted in the transcript.

Based on the information available to me and advice provided by Council I submit the following answers:

1. Did Wollondilly Shire Council ever consider using anyone other than the NSW Electoral Commission to conduct its election?

I have been informed that Wollondilly Shire Council did seek a quote from a provider other than the NSW Electoral Commission (NSWEC) for the 2024 elections.

As per the Council report of 21st February 2023 ***16.2 Administration of 2024 Local Government Elections of Mayor and Councillors***. A request for quote was sent out to the Australian Electoral Company (AEC) in late 2022. An indicative quote and ancillary commercial in confidence advice was received on 30 December 2022, (*this forms confidential Attachment 1 to this Council report.*) The NSWEC provided their estimate to Council on the 30th January 2023, (*which also forms confidential Attachment 2 to this Council report*.) As the report states, the grand total for a fully outsourced service provided by the AEC was significantly higher than that provided by the NSWEC.

In determining which provider to engage, the Council report states in addition to costs, the Council considered the following in their decision:

- If Council did not resolve to engage the NSWEC to administer its 2024 elections by 13 March 2023 they would not be able to engage the NSWEC and be forced to make their own arrangements with another electoral services provider.
- A new tender process would be required, as the estimated cost of the administration of the elections would exceed the tender value threshold of $250,000 as prescribed by the Act.
- The direct engagement of the NSWEC to administer Council elections is included in the Act as one of the exemptions to the tender process requirements.
- Research suggests that the AEC is the only electoral services provider that has demonstrated experience at offering an end-to-end electoral service comparable to that offered by the NSWEC.
- When engaging the NSWEC, the election arrangement is a standardised contract for all councils with variations made to tailor services to specific council needs in consultation with each council.
- Further, where the contract included the administration of elections, polls and referenda, this determination applied to the 2024 ordinary election and every election, poll and referendum including any byelection or countback election until the contract is automatically terminated 18 months before the following ordinary election of councillors being 13 June 2027.

2. Do you recall how much the NSW Electoral Commission charged the Council for the conduct of the election?
I have been informed the Council is currently in discussion with the NSW Electoral Commission on finalising the final

invoice for the 2024 elections. As I understand, the total cost to be charged by the NSW Electoral Commission for the conduct of the 2024 local government elections is still being negotiated.

3. Do you have any insight as to whether the Council obtained a quote from the NSW Electoral Commission prior to the election?
To my knowledge and as per the 21st February 2023 Council report, Council received an indicative cost estimate from the NSW Electoral Commission prior to the 2024 elections on 30th January 2023. I have been informed these estimates informed the Council's election planning.

I trust the above addresses the Committee's questions.

I do not propose any transcript corrections, but please don't hesitate to contact me on if further clarification is required.

Kind regards,
Cr Ally Dench
Councillor | Wollondilly Shire Council