

ENCL: ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING/CONF
NO

AGENDA ITEM: C27.1.6

2017 LOCAL GOVERNMENT GENERAL ELECTION - NON-VOTERS

REPORT No.: 18CE0003 MR:ph COMMON No.: 3193634

DATE: 30/01/2018

Presenter: Executive Manager, Melissa Reiter

Approved: Chief Executive Officer, Brendan Dowd

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's direction on the follow up of non-voters from the 2017 Local Government General Election.

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN

The issues addressed in this Report are in accordance with the following Goals/Strategies as outlined in the 'Evolving Darwin Towards 2020 Strategic Plan':-

Goal

5 Effective and Responsible Governance

Outcome

5.3 Good governance

Key Strategies

5.3.2 Display contemporary leadership and management practices

KEY ISSUES

- The Northern Territory Electoral Commission (NTEC) conducted the 2017 Local Government General Election and provided a report on the outcomes in October 2017.
- Approximately 14,100 (28%) of electors were identified as failing to vote in the 2017 NT Council elections for the City of Darwin.
- As part of its role, the NT Electoral Commission provides a service to undertake non-voting follow up action on the instruction of Council.
- Council determined that the NTEC undertake non-voter follow up.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. THAT Report Number 18CE0003 MR:ph entitled 2017 Local Government General Election - Non-voters, be received and noted.
- B. THAT Council instruct the Northern Territory Electoral Commission to issue the second infringement notices to non-voters from the 2017 Local Government General Election.
- C. THAT this decision be moved into Open.

BACKGROUND

PREVIOUS DECISION

DECISION NO.22\0133 (31/10/17)

Outcomes of the 2017 Local Government General Election

Report No. 17CE0025 MR:ph (31/10/17) Common No. 3193634

- A. *THAT Report Number 17CE0025 MR:ph entitled Outcomes of the 2017 Local Government General Election, be received and noted.*
- B. *THAT Council instruct the Northern Territory Electoral Commission to undertake non-voting follow up following the 2017 Local Government General Election.*
- C. *THAT Council write to the Northern Territory Electoral Commission requesting a shorter early voting period for future elections, including shorter hours.*

The NT Electoral Commission Report identified approximately 14,100 (or 28%) of electors as failing to vote in the 2017 NT Council election for the City of Darwin. A further 1,678 electors (or 3%) provided valid and sufficient reasons as to why there unable to vote.

As part of its role, the NT Electoral Commission provides a service to undertake non-voting follow up action on the instruction of Council.

DISCUSSION

Council agreed to extend the service of the NTEC to send out infringement notices for non-voters at the Local Government General Election to reinforce the requirement of compulsory voting in City of Darwin elections.

There are currently 10,300 non-voter responses outstanding and the NTEC has flagged a second round follow up to encourage compliance.

CONSULTATION PROCESS

In preparing this report, the following City of Darwin officers were consulted:

- Committee Administrator

In preparing this report, the following External Parties were consulted:

- Northern Territory Electoral Commission

BUDGET AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The costs associated with the NTEC undertaking 14,100 potential non-voters for the 2017 NT Council elections would be approximately \$40,490.00 (GST inclusive).

To date, total infringement revenue is around \$19,500. The non-voter fee is \$50.00.

Pursuing the remaining 10,300 non-voters, will add an additional \$3,500 to the cost of administration by NTEC, however this is consistent with Council's Decision.

RISK/LEGAL/LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

This item is considered 'Confidential' pursuant to Section 65(2) of the Local Government Act and 8(c)(iv) of the Local Government Administration Regulations, whereby the public may be excluded while business of a kind classified as information that would, if publicly disclosed, be likely to prejudice the interests of the council or some other person is discussed.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil

COUNCIL OFFICER CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

We the Author and Approving Officers declare that we do not have a Conflict of Interest in relation to this matter.

MELISSA REITER
EXECUTIVE MANAGER

BRENDAN DOWD
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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