

# Local Government Elections Participation Review - submission

Strategic Alignment - Our Corporation

Thursday, 21 March 2024

Special City Finance and Governance Committee

**Program Contact:**  
Manager Governance

Public

**Approving Officer:**  
Anthony Spartalis, Acting Chief Operating Officer

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Office of Local Government is conducting a state-wide consultation to give the community an opportunity to provide ideas and suggestions on how communities can better engage with their councils throughout a council term, and particularly at election time.

Council feedback is sought in order to finalise the submission by the due date of 28 March 2024. This agenda item will focus on agreeing a response to questions where Councillors flagged substantive disagreement (or provided no clear direction) with the draft Administration response.

A draft City of Adelaide (COA) submission was presented to the City Finance and Governance Committee on 20 February 2024 [Link One](#). The Committee resolved that the matter be deferred to a workshop at a future City Finance and Governance Committee meeting, and a survey of Council Members level of agreement with the City of Adelaide's proposed response to the four consultation topics was undertaken.

The survey received 4 responses. On presentation of the findings on 19 March 2024 the Committee requested a further workshop to finalise the Council's position on the draft submission. The survey was extended and a total of 10 responses have now been received.

**Attachment A** presents the current proposed City of Adelaide submission and the survey's indication of Councillor agreement with its responses. Responses to the survey as they stood when the survey initially closed on 10 March is **Attachment B**. The final survey responses at 21 March 2024 are **Attachment C**.

A report on Council's final submission will be presented to Council at its meeting on 26 March 2024.

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## RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendation will be presented to Council on 26 March 2024 for consideration

THAT THE CITY FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS TO COUNCIL

THAT COUNCIL

1. Notes results from the survey that closed on 10 March 2024 as shown in Attachment B and the results from the survey that closed on 21 March 2024 as shown in Attachment C on the Agenda for the Special meeting of the City Finance and Governance Committee held on 21 March 2024.
  2. Endorses the draft submission to the Local Government Participation and Elections Review provided as Attachment A to Item 4.1 on the Agenda for the Special Meeting of the City Finance and Governance Committee held on 21 March 2024, including the changes agreed by the Committee during that meeting.
  3. Authorises the Acting Chief Executive Officer or delegate to make minor editorial and formatting changes as required to finalise the draft submission to the Local Government Participation and Elections Review by 28 March 2024.
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# IMPLICATIONS AND FINANCIALS

City of Adelaide 2024-2028 Strategic Plan	Our Corporation
Policy	Not as a result of this report
Consultation	Not as a result of this report
Resource	Not as a result of this report
Risk / Legal / Legislative	Not as a result of this report
Opportunities	Not as a result of this report
23/24 Budget Allocation	Not as a result of this report
Proposed 24/25 Budget Allocation	Not as a result of this report
Life of Project, Service, Initiative or (Expectancy of) Asset	Not as a result of this report
23/24 Budget Reconsideration (if applicable)	Not as a result of this report
Ongoing Costs (eg maintenance cost)	Not as a result of this report
Other Funding Sources	Not as a result of this report

## DISCUSSION

1. The Office of Local Government is conducting a state-wide consultation to give the community an opportunity to provide ideas and suggestions on how communities can better engage with their councils throughout a council term, and particularly at election time.
2. Council feedback is sought in order to finalise the submission by the due date of 28 March 2024. The City Finance and Governance Committee Special Meeting of 21 March will focus on agreeing a response to questions where Councillors flagged substantive disagreement with the draft submission prepared by Administration (or provided no clear direction) and presented to the City Finance and Governance Committee on 20 February 2024 [Link One](#).
3. A draft submission was presented to the City Finance and Governance on 20 February 2024, but the Committee resolved that the matter be deferred to a future Committee workshop. A survey of Council Members' level of agreement with the City of Adelaide's proposed response to the four consultation topics was undertaken.
4. The survey closed on 10 March 2024, and received 4 responses. On 19 March 2024 the Committee requested the survey be extended until midday on 21 March 2024, and a further Special Committee Meeting be convened to finalise the draft submission. The survey was extended and a total of 10 responses have now been received, representing the majority of Councillor views.
5. Agreement or otherwise with the Administration's proposed submission response is indicated in the table below, and in a colour coded version of the submission (**Attachment A**).
6. Councillors' intentions in some survey responses are unclear. This meeting will seek clarity in the responses highlighted blue below, to enable Administration to finalise the submission.
7. Responses to the survey as they stood when the survey initially closed on 10 March is **Attachment B** (presented to the Committee 19 March 2024). The final survey responses at 21 March 2024 are **Attachment C**.

### Survey of Councillor agreement with draft submission

<i>Topic 1</i>	<i>Consultation survey question</i>	<i>Member agreement?</i>
<b>Q.1 Strong Agreement</b>	What requirements should be set for community engagement for what decisions?	Yes 9 No 1
<b>Q.2 Strong Agreement</b>	What should be included in the Charter and what should be left for councils' own community engagement policies?	Yes 10 No 0
<b>Q.3 Strong Agreement</b>	Should councils have the capacity to determine how they will engage with their communities, or should the Charter be more directive in its approach?	Yes 8 No 0
<b>Q.4 Strong Agreement</b>	What other ideas do you have for councils' community engagement?	Yes 8 No 1
<b>Q.5 Strong Agreement</b>	<i>Question for members of the public - How would you like to see councils engage with you?</i>	Yes 9 No 1
<b>Q.6 Strong Agreement</b>	Should councils be required to livestream their meetings and make recordings available?	Yes 10 No 0
<b>Q.7 Strong Agreement</b>	All metropolitan councils hold their council meetings during the evenings, but councils in regional areas often hold their meetings during business hours.	Yes 10 No 0
<b>Q.8 Strong Agreement</b>	Should councils be required to hold their meetings at a particular time to maximise community participation?	Yes 10 No 0
<b>Q.9 Strong Agreement</b>	How should members be supported to engage directly with their communities?	Yes 9 No 1
<b>Q.10 Majority Agreement</b>	Should all council members be provided with a specific allowance to support constituent work, similar to the allowance that is provided to Members of Parliament?	Yes 7 No 3
<b>Q.11 Strong Agreement</b>	What other ideas do you have to strengthen the relationship between council members and their local community members?	Yes 8 No 2
<i>Topic 2</i>	<i>Consultation survey question</i>	<i>Member agreement?</i>

<b>Q.1 Majority Agreement</b>	Would more, and a more diverse range of, people be attracted to the role if allowances were increased?	Yes 6 No 4
<b>Q.2 Unclear</b>	Should council members be able to attend some council meetings electronically?	Yes 3 No 7
<b>Q.3 Majority Agreement</b>	Are there other efforts that councils could make to increase interest in standing over a council term, for example, by working with ratepayers other community organisations?	Yes 6 No 4
<b>Q.4 Disagree</b>	Should term limits for council members be introduced?	Yes 4 No 6
<b>Q.5 Strong Agreement</b>	Should people be required to complete an online course before nominating?	Yes 9 No 1
<b>Q.6</b>	Text comments	
<b>Q.7 Unclear</b>	Should councils have a role in the nomination process?	Yes 3 No 6 <b>(disagreement?)</b>
<b>Q.8 Strong Agreement</b>	If ECSA continues to receive nominations directly, should there be a requirement for nominations to be published throughout the nomination process, not just at the end?	Yes 8 No 2
<b>Q.9 No consensus</b>	Should councils continue to have wards? If so, why? And if not, what would be the benefits of removing them? Should wards only be kept in councils where the council's size warrants their retention?	Yes 4 No 4
<b>Q.10 Unclear</b>	Should potential boundary changes be referred to the South Australian Boundaries Commission when a council receives significantly nominations than it has vacancies?	Yes 3 No 7 <b>(disagreement?)</b>
<b>Q.11 Strong Agreement</b>	What are other factors that might encourage—or dissuade—people to stand for election to their councils?	Yes 10 No 0
<b>Q.12 Strong Agreement</b>	What ideas do you have to increase nominations?	Yes 9 No 1
<i>Topic 3</i>	<i>Consultation survey question</i>	<i>Member agreement?</i>
<b>Q.1 Strong Agreement</b>	Is there any particular reason why councils do not warrant compulsory voting when the two other spheres of Australian governments do? Should voting for councils be compulsory in South Australian council elections?	Yes 9 No 1
<b>Q.2 Strong Agreement</b>	How should people vote for their councils?	Yes 9 No 0
<b>Q.3 Majority Agreement</b>	Should the franchise for council elections be changed in any way?	Yes 7 No 3
<b>Q.4 Strong Agreement</b>	Should council elections be moved to a different year from South Australian Government elections?	Yes 8 No 2
<b>Q.5 Strong Agreement</b>	Should councils have a stronger role in promoting elections locally to increase voter turnout?	Yes 8 No 2
<b>Q.6 Unclear</b>	Would removing wards provide voters with greater choice, and produce fairer results?	Yes 6 No 3 <b>(agreement?)</b>
<b>Q.7 Strong Agreement</b>	Is it fair for someone who has 'served their time' to have to release this information?	Yes 7 No 2
<b>Q.8 Strong Agreement</b>	What information should candidates be required to include with their nominations?	Yes 10 No 0
<b>Q.9 Majority Agreement</b>	Is there a role for councils to play in enabling all candidates to reach potential voters?	Yes 6 No 4
<b>Q.10 Strong Agreement</b>	What are other factors that might encourage—or dissuade—people to stand for election to their councils?	Yes 7 No 0
<i>Topic 4</i>	<i>Consultation survey question</i>	<i>Member agreement?</i>
<b>Q.1 Strong Agreement</b>	All residential enrolments to be managed by AEC?	Yes 6 No 1
<b>Q.2 Majority Agreement</b>	Are Statute Amendments significantly problematic?	Yes 5 No 2

<b>Q.3</b> <b>Majority</b> <b>Agreement</b>	Suggested change to existing voting eligibility for Head Leaseholder?	Yes 4 No 3
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8. A report seeking Council’s endorsement of the final submission will be presented to Council at its meeting on 26 March 2024.

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## DATA AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

**Link 1** – Draft Submission – City Finance and Governance Committee – 20 February 2024

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## ATTACHMENTS

**Attachment A** – Draft City of Adelaide submission – colour coded with survey responses

**Attachment B** – Survey results – 10 March 2024

**Attachment C** – Survey results – 21 March 2024

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- END OF REPORT -