



Hawkesbury City Council

supplementary ordinary meeting business paper

date of meeting: 10 August 2004

location: council chambers

time: 7.00 p.m.

ORDINARY MEETING - Supplementary

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SECTION 4 - Reports for Determination

Item: 101 **ORG B - Electoral District Commissioners - Proposed Alterations of Electoral Districts - (107, 79337)**

Previous Item: 190, Ordinary (4 November 2003)

REPORT:

Background:

In November 2003 the Premier announced the appointment of 3 (three) Commissioners to review the state electoral districts prior to the 2007 state elections. Subsequently, interested persons and organisations were invited to make submissions to the Commissioners concerning the redistribution of electoral districts with the closing date for receipt of submissions being 28 November 2003.

When the Council at its Ordinary meeting held on 4 November 2003 considered this matter it was resolved that:

“The Hawkesbury City Council determine its position in relation to the 2007 boundary redistribution to enable a response on behalf of Council to be prepared prior to the closing date of submissions being 28 November 2003.”

Subsequently, an informal briefing session of Council was held having regard to this matter where it was agreed that a submission should be made based on specific and relevant criteria.

In particular the criteria on which Hawkesbury City Council’s representation was made were as follows:

- “i. community of interest within the electoral district, including economic, social and regional interests,*
- ii. means of communication and travel within the electoral district,*
- iii. the physical features and area of the electoral district,”*

The Council’s submission then addressed these points as follows:

The Local Government area of the City of Hawkesbury sees a long and strong community of interest focused at the neighbourhood level on the series of towns and villages and at the district level on the towns of Windsor and Richmond. This focus would have existed since European settlement first established in the Windsor/Richmond areas and the district was the granary to the then infant Sydney colony.

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The Local Government area as it exists today, comprises former Local Government areas of the Municipality of Windsor, the Municipality of Richmond and the Shire of Colo. These were all created to provide services and facilities based on the then development but when transport and access were limited. Today, with greater access and transport, the community of interest is the current Hawkesbury City Local Government area.

It is appreciated that in establishing the electoral boundaries you are required to consider a range of equity issues. It is suggested that there is a strong case to have one of those issues, being that of community of interest, particularly where this exists outside the direct metropolitan area.

In the Hawkesbury district there has been this strong community of interest developed over a long period of time and still exists today, and to the extent where it should be considered as part of the criteria for establishing State Electoral boundaries.

Having regard to the criteria for the size of the Hawkesbury Local Government area and its population, it is acknowledged that the Hawkesbury Local Government area would be at the lower end of the estimated electorates in 2007. The 1999 State Electoral Roll used for the previous Local Government election in the Hawkesbury Local Government area, had a voting population of 37,942 and with an extrapolation of only 1 per cent growth between 1999 and 2007, the estimated voting population of the Hawkesbury Local Government area would be 41,085. This compares to the lowest estimated electorates for 2007 of Murray Darling 40,303, Barwon 42,400 and Lismore 42,490. (Information extracted from SOE website 28 November 2003)

If the quotient of voting population in the Hawkesbury Local Government area is not within the acceptable deviation from the set criteria, then it would be Hawkesbury Council's submission having regard to the above mentioned community of interest etc, that an additional voting population could be obtained from areas such as Castlereagh or Riverstone to make up the quotient required rather than having the current situation where far reaching parts of the Baulkham Hills Shire are included in the seat of Hawkesbury.

In having this regard, the community interest argument in the Hawkesbury would see a return of areas such as Richmond, Bligh Park, Windsor Downs and South Windsor to a more rightful position in the seat of Hawkesbury. As recently as 25 November 2003 in the Penrith Press, the Hawkesbury City Council's Mayor, Councillor (Dr) Rex Stubbs said, "Council in the past had wanted all the Hawkesbury Council area included in one State electorate. There is much more commonality between Bligh Park (currently part of the Londonderry electorate) and Glenorie than Bligh Park and Mount Druitt, which is in the seat of Londonderry".

It would be appreciated if the Commissioner would take this matter into consideration together with other submissions in relation to the current proposed boundaries.

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Current Position:

By letter dated 27 July 2004, received by Council on 3 August 2004, the Electoral District Commissioners have now advised that they have determined the proposed boundaries for electoral districts in accordance with the *Constitution Act 1902* and the *Parliamentary Electorates and Elections Act 1912*. The proposals are now to be place on public display and submissions on the proposals are invited until the close of the display period on Friday, 3 September 2004.

Council has also been requested to place the report and maps of the proposed electoral districts on display and arrangements have now been made the documents to be placed on display in the Council offices and library and for an appropriate advertisement to be place advising of this.

As can be seen from the background of this matter the Council's submission on the proposed new electoral boundaries was based on the premise that due to the significant community of interest that exists and other related matters the future state electoral district of Hawkesbury should comprise the entire Hawkesbury City Council area. In addition, it was also suggested that some electors from areas such as Castlereagh or Riverstone being included if additional numbers were required for the new electorate.

A review of the proposals by the Commissioners shows that rather than amalgamating the Hawkesbury electoral district around the corresponding local government area there are significant changes proposed that further divide the area over a number of electoral districts in the south of the Council's area.

The distribution and number of electors in the proposed seat of Hawkesbury are summarized in the Commissioners report as follows:

PROPOSED DISTRICT 33 - HAWKESBURY

<i>How Constituted</i>	Area Sq Km	Predicted Number of Electors	Current Number of Electors
From the existing District of:			
Baulkham Hills	7.84	1640	1423
Hawkesbury	3127.76	34901	33109
The Hills	13.38	11967	9812
Electorate Total	3148.98	48508	44344
Parts of the existing District of Hawkesbury are transferred as follows to the proposed District of:			
Hornsby	31.25	3584	3494
Riverstone	19.57	4775	4495
Londonderry	115.39	8905	8430
Blue Mountains	27.02	0	0

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The areas affected by these changes are also shown on the following extracts from maps provided by the Commissioners in respect of the proposed electoral district boundaries in the south-west and south-east of Council's area. (On these maps the proposed boundaries are shown in dark colouring and the existing boundaries in a lighter colouring.)

Map Extract – South-west Area



Map Extract – South-East Area



As indicated previously, the current proposal further divides the Council's area rather than acting to promote and enhance the "community of interest" that already exists. As such, it is suggested that Council should make a further submission to the Commissioners in support of this most important concept.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council make a further submission to the Electoral District Commissioners in relation to the currently proposed alterations of electoral district boundaries as they affect the Council's area supporting the development of an electoral district, which corresponds with the Council's area, based upon "community of interest" and other related matters, as distinct from the current proposals, which further divide the area over a number of electoral districts.

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ATTACHMENTS:

There are no supporting documents for this report.

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meeting

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paper

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