

Barton Deakin Brief: Queensland Local Government Elections

24 March 2016

Local government elections were held in Queensland on Saturday 19 March. Local government elections are held across the state on a fixed date, every four years. Like the system used for Queensland State Elections, mayors and councillors are elected using optional preferential voting.

Despite large swings at last year's State Election, the local government elections have seen a large number of incumbent mayors and councillors across the state retain their positions.

Brisbane City Council is the only local government in Queensland that is contested by the major political parties. The LNP will retain control over City Hall, with Lord Mayor Graham Quirk re-elected and the LNP likely to secure 20 of 26 Council wards when results are declared.

This Barton Deakin Brief provides a summary of the 2016 Local Government Election results.

Background

On Saturday 19 March 2016, elections were held in all of Queensland's 77 local government areas. Electors voted for mayoral and councillor candidates, except in the Lockyer Valley Region.

For the Lockyer Valley Regional Council the election of the mayor and councillors was postponed due to the sudden death of Lockyer Valley Mayor Cr Steve Jones after the close of nominations. A new election date of Saturday 16 April has been set.

A referendum was also held in conjunction with council elections. The referendum asked whether Queenslanders support adopting four-year fixed terms for State Parliament, to replace the current non-fixed three-year terms. The referendum was introduced by Opposition legal affairs spokesman, Ian Walker MP, with bi-partisan support.

Results

Brisbane City Council

Brisbane City Council has 26 local wards, with a councillor elected for each ward. The Lord Mayor is elected at large from voters in all 26 wards.

Preliminary results indicate:

- Lord Mayor Grahame Quirk will be returned;
- All 18 incumbent LNP Councillors will likely be returned;
- LNP retains Pullenvale Ward, with the retiring councillor replaced by the LNP candidate;
- The wards of Northgate and The Gabba are too close to call. In The Gabba Ward, the Greens candidate is in contention to become Brisbane's first ever Greens councillor;
- Labor will win at least four wards;
- One Independent will be re-elected.



South-East Queensland councils

In the City of the Gold Coast, Mayor Tom Tate will be returned for a second term. Eight of 14 incumbent Councillors will likely be re-elected. Five retiring councillors will be replaced.

In Ipswich City Council, Mayor Paul Pisasale will be returned for his fourth term. In the Moreton Bay Region and in Toowoomba, incumbent mayors will be safely returned.

On the Sunshine Coast, Mayor Mark Jamieson will be returned for a second term. Incumbent councillors look likely to be returned in 9 of 10 local Divisions. In Division 4, former Australian Rugby Union 'Wallabies' coach, John Connolly, is ahead on primary votes.

In Logan City, Councillor Luke Smith will likely be elected the new mayor, following the retirement of Pam Parker.

Mayor Karen Williams will likely be re-elected to represent Redland City, along with 7 of 10 incumbent councillors.

Major regional councils

A number of incumbent mayors of large councils will be re-elected:

- In Townsville, Mayor Jenny Hill will be returned;
- In Cairns, Mayor Bob Manning will be returned;
- In Rockhampton, Mayor Margaret Strelow will be returned for a fourth term.

Current Mackay Regional Council mayor, Deirdre Comerford, has been defeated by Greg Williamson. Williamson was previously the local mayor prior to council amalgamations in 2008.

On the Fraser Coast, incumbent Gerard O'Connell is trailing current Division 3 Councillor Chris Loft in the mayoral race.

Retiring Bundaberg Mayor, Mal Forman, will be replaced by former Police Minister and LNP Member of Parliament, Jack Dempsey.

In Gladstone, incumbent Mayor Gail Sellers has been defeated by her Deputy Mayor, Matt Burnett.

Referendum

With 67% of the vote counted, it appears the 'Yes' vote will win. Queensland will adopt four-year fixed terms for its State Parliament.

Further Information

Up-to-date results are available on the Electoral Commission Queensland (ECQ) [website](#).

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