

# Reintroduction of a **COUNCIL ELECTORAL DIVISION**



## **Cook Shire community consultation**

Local council elections are held every four years on the last Saturday in March, unless changed by regulation. The next election is due on 28 March 2020.

There are 77 local council areas within Queensland. A council with divisions (e.g. Cairns Regional Council) is separated into divisional areas and whilst councillors have a legislative duty to make decisions in the interests of the whole council, councillors are voters elected to represent their divisional area. In an undivided council (e.g., Cook Shire Council) voters elect all of the councillors for the whole area.

Cook Shire is currently an undivided Council for electoral purposes. The Council is made up of 6 councillors and mayor, whose responsibilities cover the whole Shire. Prior to the 2012 elections, the Shire had 4 divisions, including a northern area where Coen is the main centre and a dedicated councillor was elected by the people of that region.

Coen is the second largest town in our Shire and is a regional centre in the North for supply, education, health, sport and recreation. With the continued sealing of the Peninsular Development Road, the area is experiencing high levels of demand and growth in business, tourism and residential housing. This region also contains a number of large pastoral properties, national parks, and mining and tourism operations. A large portion of the land is owned under the trusteeship of Indigenous Land Trusts and Prescribed Body Corporate entities.

In 2016, following the Local Government elections, where I was reelected as Mayor, I made a commitment to the people of the Coen/northern region that I would

investigate the potential reestablishment of a separate electoral division for the northern and western parts of our Shire. Over the current term of Council, we have informally trialled having 2 councillors to represent the interests of residents in the north of the Shire and, based on community feedback, this has proved to be highly successful. Residents are already seeing the impact on the ground, for example, with the development of a sporting facilities in Lakeland and Coen.

It is proposed to seek to formalise this arrangement by progressing of one of the following options:

- Creation of a new Northern Division to include communities from Musgrave north with one councillor, or
- Creation of a new North Western Division to include communities to the North and West of the Shire, including Palmer River, Lakeland, Laura and Coen with two councillors.

Suitable office, communication, transport facilities and services will be put in place to ensure that effective representation and meeting needs are met. Council will work to ensure that these costs are met from existing revenue sources and will be cost neutral to ratepayers. We are currently in dialogue with both the State Government (Department of Local Government, Racing and Multicultural Affairs) and the Queensland Electoral Commission. Part of the process involves consultation with the residents of the Shire.

As a member of the Cook Shire community, you are invited to complete a short survey regarding the proposed changes to Council's electoral divisions.

# Reintroduction of a **COUNCIL ELECTORAL DIVISION** Community Survey

Please choose **one** of the following options **only**:

1.	Cook Shire Council to retain its current undivided status	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Cook Shire Council to create a new Northern Division to include communities from Musgrave north with one councillor	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Cook Shire Council to create a new North Western Division to include communities to the North and West of the Shire, including Palmer River, Lakeland, Laura and Coen with two councillors	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please return completed community surveys by  
**FRIDAY, MARCH 1** to:

## **BY POST**

Cr Peter Scott  
Mayor, Cook Shire Council  
10 Furneaux Street  
COOKTOWN QLD 4895

## **BY EMAIL**

[mail@cook.qld.gov.au](mailto:mail@cook.qld.gov.au)

## **ENQUIRIES**

(07) 4069 5444

Electronic copies are available on Council's  
website at [www.cook.qld.gov.au](http://www.cook.qld.gov.au)

