



Deputy Premier  
Minister for Transport, Minister for Infrastructure,  
Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade

Our ref: MC15/2436

Your ref: 10.4 Petitions

Level 12 Executive Building  
100 George Street  
PO Box 15009 City East  
Queensland 4002 Australia  
Telephone +61 7 3719 7100  
Email deputy.premier@ministerial.qld.gov.au

**3 JUN 2015**

Mr Neil Laurie  
The Clerk of the Parliament  
Parliament House  
Corner Alice and George Streets  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie *Neil,*

Thank you for your letter of 6 May 2015 about petition 2378-15 received by the Queensland Legislative Assembly.

I acknowledge the issues raised by the petitioners, including the number of current councillors in the Central Highlands Regional Council, and the proposal to de-amalgamate the former Peak Downs Shire.

For the petitioners' information, the *Local Government Act 2009* (the Act) provides the legislative framework for the making of local government changes, and also establishes the Local Government Change Commission (Change Commission). The Change Commission is responsible for the review and assessment of any local government change, including changes to local government boundaries that I, as the Minister for Local Government, refer to the Change Commission.

In relation to councillor representation, which is currently the Mayor and eight councillors, I would require a request to change the number of councillors from the Central Highlands Regional Council itself to consider such a change. However, the Act is also very specific in identifying that all councillors have the responsibility to represent the current and future interests of residents of the whole local government area.

The Government's policy position for significant changes to local government boundaries, including de-amalgamation, requires each of the following criteria to be met before a referral to the Change Commission will be considered:

- a request from the local communities affected by the proposed change
- a resolution supporting the proposed change from the affected local government, in this case, the Central Highlands Regional Council
- an assessment demonstrating the future financial sustainability of both the Central Highlands Regional Council, and the proposed new local government, including an agreement on the transfer of assets, liabilities and the impacts on existing Central Highlands Regional Council employees, if the proposal was to go ahead.

In addition, the Government will only consider a recommendation to the Change Commission after a successful referendum of all residents affected by the proposed change.

While I acknowledge the signatories' efforts in demonstrating their support for the proposed changes, the above criteria need to be met before the changes to the Central Highlands Regional Council can be referred to the Change Commission.

However, I realise this matter is very important to the petitioners and advise they can raise their concerns about representation directly with the Mayor, Councillor Peter Maguire on 0438 828 335 or by email at [mayor@chrc.qld.gov.au](mailto:mayor@chrc.qld.gov.au).

Yours sincerely



**JACKIE TRAD MP**  
**DEPUTY PREMIER**  
**Minister for Transport, Minister for Infrastructure,**  
**Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade**