



Minister for Local Government,  
Minister for Racing and  
Minister for Multicultural Affairs

Our ref: MC19/4701

Your ref: A481075

12 SEP 2019

Mr Neil Laurie  
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Dear Neil

Thank you for your letter of 22 August 2019 about petition numbers 3180-19 and 3143-19 received by the Queensland Legislative Assembly on 20 August 2019 concerning the de-amalgamation of the Granite Belt from Southern Downs Regional Council (SDRC).

The process for considering the de-amalgamation of the Granite Belt from SDRC requires that only I, as the Minister, have the power to refer a proposal to the Local Government Change Commission (Change Commission) for consideration and recommendation.

The Queensland Government's policy for significant boundary change proposals is that each of the following criteria must be met before a referral to the Change Commission can be considered:

- a request from the local communities affected by the proposed change
- resolutions supporting the proposed change from any affected Local Governments (in this case SDRC)
- assessments demonstrating the future financial sustainability of the proposed new Local Government areas, including an agreement on transfer of assets and liabilities, and the impacts on existing Council employees if such a proposal was to proceed.

The Granite Belt Community Association's (GBCA) proposal to de-amalgamate the Granite Belt from the SDRC has been thoroughly considered and I have decided not to refer the matter to the Change Commission for its consideration.

Throughout the process of considering the de-amalgamation proposal:

- I met with representatives of the GBCA, and on 10 December 2018 was presented with the GBCA proposal.
- The Department of Local Government, Racing and Multicultural Affairs, jointly with SDRC engaged the Queensland Treasury Corporation (QTC) to review the GBCA report. This process was undertaken to ensure both the Department and QTC were able to verify information provided to GBCA in preparing the proposal.
- SDRC undertook an internal Management Review of the GBCA proposal and further engaged an independent consultant, Grassroots Connections Australia, to prepare an assessment of both the proposal and SDRC's Management Review.
- On 30 April 2019, I was advised of SDRC's decision at its general meeting to not support the de-amalgamation.

In making my decision, I carefully considered all of the above information including the GBCA analysis. After consideration of all of the information, I was not satisfied that the future financial sustainability of the proposed new Local Government areas had been demonstrated.

I would like to thank the petitioners for raising these matters with me and I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely



**STIRLING HINCHLIFFE MP**  
**Minister for Local Government,**  
**Minister for Racing and**  
**Minister for Multicultural Affairs**