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Contact: Bradley Cutts on 9725 0123

7 February 2025

Minister for Local Government  
The Hon Ron Hoenig MP  
GPO Box 5341  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Minister

## 2024 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

I am writing to advise that Fairfield City Council has completed its report on the conduct of the local government elections held in September 2024.

Section 393A(2) of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 requires that councils who had their elections administered by an electoral services provider, must submit a report to the Minister for Local Government within 6 months after the election has been declared.

Fairfield City Council was one of those councils and the attached report covers in detail, all the requirements prescribed under Section 393A(2) of the Regulation.

As a component of completing this report, Council has also published the election report on its website.

Should you require any further information, please contact me via email at [bcutts@fairfieldcity.nsw.gov.au](mailto:bcutts@fairfieldcity.nsw.gov.au) or telephone 9725 0123.

Yours sincerely



Bradley Cutts  
**GENERAL MANAGER**

Encl.

### 393A General manager to report on election

- (1) This section applies to an election administered by an electoral services provider.
- (2) After an election, the general manager must provide the Minister with a written report setting out details of the election, including (but not limited to) the following information—
  - (a) time spent on the election by the general manager as a proportion of the general manager's remuneration,

It is estimated that the General Manager spent about 1% of his time on the election which has been estimated to about \$4,061.54.

- (b) time spent on the election by council staff as a proportion of council staff remuneration,

#### 2022/2023 FY

Position	%	Cost	Cost Type
Procurement Co-ordinator	1	\$1,111.00	Direct
Executive Manager	1	\$1,339.00	Indirect

#### 2023/2024 FY

Position	%	Cost	Cost Type
Executive Manager	5	\$6,698.00	Direct
Deputy General Manager	2	\$3,059.00	Indirect
Director City Planning	2	\$3,059.00	Indirect

#### 2024/2025 FY

Position	%	Cost	Cost
Director City Planning	5	\$7,648.00	Indirect
Executive Manager	10	\$13,397.00	Indirect
Manager Showground & Leisure Centres	0.33	\$1,529.00	Indirect

**Total \$37,840.00**

- (c) the remuneration of council staff employed specifically for the purpose of the election,

No Fairfield City Council staff were employed specifically for the elections however, a contractor was engaged, as per contract with the Australian Election Company.

- (d) the remuneration, recruitment and training costs of election officials,

Remuneration, recruitment and training costs of election officials including casuals was included in the contract with Australian Election Company for the amount of \$586,676.29 excluding GST.

Returning Officer & Substitute Returning Officer	\$71,745.00
Polling Officials including casuals	\$514,931.29



Address	2024 Dates	Hours Open to Vote
Cabravale Leisure Centre Programs Room 30 Broomfield Street Cabramatta	Saturday 7 September Sunday 8 September Monday 9 September - Friday 13 September Thursday 12 September Saturday 14 September	9.00am – 4.00pm 10.00am – 4.00pm 9.00am - 6.00pm 9.00am – 6.00pm 8.00am - 6.00pm
Fairfield Council Administration Centre Rooms 5 and 6 civic wing Avoca Road Wakeley	Saturday 7 September Sunday 8 September Monday 9 September - Friday 13 September Thursday 12 September Saturday 14 September	9.00am – 4.00pm 10.00am – 4.00pm 9.00am - 6.00pm 9.00am – 6.00pm 8.00am - 6.00pm
Fairfield Community Centre Hall 25 Barbara Street Fairfield	Saturday 7 September Sunday 8 September Monday 9 September - Friday 13 September Thursday 12 September Saturday 14 September	9.00am – 4.00pm 10.00am – 4.00pm 9.00am - 6.00pm 9.00am – 6.00pm 8.00am - 6.00pm
Fairfield Showground Waratah Room Smithfield Road Prairiewood	Saturday 7 September Sunday 8 September Monday 9 September - Friday 13 September Thursday 12 September Saturday 14 September	9.00am – 4.00pm 10.00am – 4.00pm 9.00am - 6.00pm 9.00am – 6.00pm 8.00am - 6.00pm

The cost to hire these Council facilities over 8 days are as follows:

Address	Cost including GST
Cabravale Leisure Centre Programs Room 30 Broomfield Street Cabramatta	\$3,476.00
Fairfield Council Administration Centre Rooms 5 and 6 civic wing Avoca Road Wakeley	\$1,876.00
Fairfield Community Centre Hall 25 Barbara Street Fairfield	\$4,920.00
Fairfield Showground Waratah Room Smithfield Road Prairiewood	\$8,480.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$18,752.00</b>

The cottage at the Fairfield Showground was used as the Election Office. The hire costs were based on:

15 July to 4 October 2024 (12 weeks) **\$4,560.00 including GST**

The provision of all election materials and equipment was included in the contract with the Australian Election Company.

Further costs incurred by Council were:

Item	Cost including GST
Postage – letter to residents affected by ward boundary change	\$5,280.00
Advertising – information session candidates, non-residential roll	\$2,600.00
Advertising – polling places flyer with City Life	\$5,280.00
Election Office – clean	\$3,420.00
Election Office – equipment (Wi-fi, internet, phone handsets, copier)	\$1,145.73
Election Office - stationery supplies eg. toner	\$145.50
Election Office – printing including posters, ward maps, street list	\$119.85
All venues set-up from July – furniture, staff, repairs, clean	\$7,702.00
Building Trades – ramps at Waratah Room and Cabravale Leisure Centre entry	\$1,660.24
Rubber matting – Cabravale Leisure Centre	\$4,522.00
Locksmith – Waratah Room	\$436.36
Council website – staff maintaining information	\$1,800.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$34,111.68</b>

Therefore, the total cost of hiring venues and equipment for the election including council venues and equipment and any associated costs is:

Australian Election Company	\$194,500.00 excluding GST
Fairfield City Council	\$34,111.68 including GST
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$228,611.68</b>

- (g) the cost of any technological support, including the development of any counting software,

The cost of the vote counting software was included in the Australian Election Company contract.

- (h) the cost of preparing a written report under this section,

This report was prepared by the Executive Manager. It took one week to compile the numbers and write the report at a cost of \$2,576.00. This cost has not been included in the election costs provided in this report.

- (i) any electoral services provided to electors,

The electoral services provided to electors was included in the Australian Election Company contract.

- (j) any electoral services provided to candidates,

The electoral services provided to candidates was included in the Australian Election Company contract.

- (k) operational details of the election,

The operational details are included in the Australian Election Company contract.

- (l) an overall evaluation of the conduct of the election, including feedback from stakeholders,

Fairfield City Council, in partnership with the Australian Election Company considers that it conducted the Fairfield City Council elections accurately, equitably and professionally.

Based on Council’s experience, for the foreseeable future, different voters will want to use different voting channels - ordinary voting on election day, pre-poll voting or postal voting. The voting method cited as the superior experience, was postal voting.

It is noted that Australia Post has changed its service levels and applied a new timeframe for the collection and distribution of mail. These timeframes impact the dispatch of postal votes. The legislation was amended to allow more time after election day to receive completed ballot papers via post however, additional time was not applied at the start of the voting, for electors to apply for a postal vote and receive the ballot papers.

All feedback received by Fairfield City Council was forwarded to the Returning Officer or the Election Manager, Richard Kidd. This feedback consisted of:

- enquiries in response to the change of ward boundaries – southern side
- postal vote applications and error of same household receiving different ballot papers
- absentee voting
- issuing of election material by party workers during the regulated period including a matter relating to unauthorised use of Fairfield City Council logo
- polling locations
- queue at Fairfield Community Centre – pre-poll and election day
- uncertainty as to where to advertise election notices etc. as the printed local newspapers, no longer exist. The question remains if the requirement to advertise should be legislated, to reflect the online presence of electors

The evaluation of the conduct of the election is included in the report by the Australian Election Company.

- (m) the number of electors entitled to vote at the election and the number of electors who voted, specifying the number of electors who voted personally or by post,

Ward	Polling Day	Postal Votes	Pre-Poll	Total Votes	Total Voters enrolled as at 5/08/2024
Fairfield/Cabravale	21,276	3326	32,394	56,996	66,837
Parks	29,925	3372	27,833	61,130	70,912
Total	51,201	6698	60,227	118,126	137,749

Mayoral Election	Polling Day	Postal Votes	Pre-Poll	Total Votes	Total Voters enrolled as at 5/08/2024
Mayoral Election	50,989	6,698	60,345	115,779	137,749

It is noted that the duration of Pre-poll voting was reduced from 12 to 7 days being from Saturday 7 to Friday 13 September 2024. Pre-poll included the Sunday prior to election day. A total of 5,359 votes were recorded across the 4 pre-poll locations on this day, with a good turnout.

The Election Manager also appointed 4 Declared Institutions at the 2024 elections. A total of 96 votes were recorded across the 4 Declared Institutions - 72 with Fairfield/Cabravale Ward and 24 in Parks Ward.

- (n) the cost to the council of engaging the electoral services provider to administer the election.

The cost to engage the Australian Election Company as Council's electoral services provider was \$1,404,165.19 including GST.

- (3) The report must be provided to the Minister and displayed on the council's website within 6 months after the declaration of the election.

This election report has been published on Council's website.