

Council adopts referendum question on popularly elected mayor

Kyogle Council electors will be asked in a referendum whether or not they want a popularly elected mayor.

The referendum will be held in conjunction with State-wide Local Government elections on Saturday, 14 September.

A popularly elected mayor is elected by voters and serves a four-year term. Currently, Kyogle Councillors elect the mayor from amongst themselves and the mayor serves a two-year term.

Council resolved in April 2022 to conduct a referendum on having a popularly elected mayor, with Councillors indicating at the time they wanted to maintain a system of wards and the current number of Councillors (nine).

With the local government election to be held this year, the Council at its 11 March 2024 meeting decided the question voters will be asked at the referendum. It will be:

Do you favour the election of the Mayor by electors for a four-year term with the number of wards reduced from three to two, each ward comprising of four councillors, plus a popularly elected Mayor?

Currently, Council has three wards, with three Councillors in each ward and the mayor elected by Councillors from among themselves -- making a total of nine councillors.

However, if the council is to have a popularly elected mayor and still have a total of nine councillors, voters will have to elect a mayor and eight councillors (making a total of nine).

As there must be an even representation of Councillors in each ward, Council is proposing to reduce the number of wards to two and have four councillors elected from each ward.

As well as deciding on the referendum question, the Council at the March meeting endorsed an information pamphlet to be made available to voters which outlines the pros and cons of a popularly elected Mayor.

The information pamphlet is available on Council's website or from Council's administration centre.

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