



MEETING DETAILS	
<b>Councillor name:</b>	Mark Croxford
<b>Council meeting date:</b>	August 15, 2023
<b>Note:</b> As per the Code of Meeting Practice – clause 3.11 A councillor may give notice of any business they wish to be considered by the council at its next ordinary meeting by way of a notice of motion. To be included on the agenda of the meeting, the notice of motion must be <i>in writing</i> and must be submitted to the chief executive officer or the public officer not later than <b>12 noon on Monday in the week preceding the meeting</b> (ie one (1) week and one (1) day prior to the meeting).	
MOTION:	
<b>Motion:</b>	That Council:  a. resolves to reduce the number of councillors elected at the 2028 local government elections from nine to seven councillors.  b. instruct the CEO to formally advise the Minister for Local Government of the resolution of Council, along with a summary of any submissions received during the 42-day public notice/consultation period in accordance with Section 224 of the Local Government Act 1993.
<b>Purpose:</b>	To enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of decision-making within Kiama Council while optimising representation and achieving cost savings. By reducing the number of councillors from nine to seven, we aim to streamline governance processes, maintain reasonable representation ratios, and allocate resources more efficiently.
<b>Background:</b>	See attachment 1.
<b>Link to Council Plans:</b>	Does the motion link to: Operational Plan Community Strategic Plan Capital Works Program
<b>Note:</b> As per the Code of Meeting Practice – clause 3.14 A notice of motion for the expenditure of funds on works and/or services other than those already provided for in the council's current adopted operational plan must identify the source of funding for the expenditure that is the subject of the notice of motion.	

<b>Costing/budget:</b>	A successful resolution will require a 2024/25 budget allocation to meet the referendum question costings.	
<b>AUTHORISATION</b>		
<b>Councillor signature:</b>		<b>Date:</b> 28 June 2023

Please email your completed form to [cathieb@kiama.nsw.gov.au](mailto:cathieb@kiama.nsw.gov.au) and [emilyv@kiama.nsw.gov.au](mailto:emilyv@kiama.nsw.gov.au)

Attachment 1:

Background:

At the June 2023 meeting of Council, the Chief Executive Officer presented, in response to a report for future meeting request from me, a cost benefit analysis report addressing the representation ratios, governance efficiency, and cost considerations within Kiama Council. In order to satisfy the legislative requirements of the Local Government Act 1993, Council needs to resolve this matter at its scheduled August 2023 meeting, given that the 2024 NSW Local Government elections are scheduled for 15 September 2024.

Considering the analysis provided in the Chief Executive Officer's report, it is evident that the current representation ratio of approximately 2,598 residents per councillor in Kiama is relatively lower compared to neighbouring councils in OLG Group 5.

In the realm of elected representation and population, it is important to explore how Kiama, as an OLG Group 4 council, compares to other councils within the OLG Group 4 as well as its neighbouring OLG Group 5 councils.

Kiama Municipal Council encompasses an area of 257.7 square kilometres, is home to a population of 23,685, resulting in a population density of approximately 91.9 individuals per square kilometre. Kiama currently operates with nine councillors, leading to a representation ratio of approximately 2,598 residents per councillor.

To gain a broader understanding of the representation ratios within the OLG Group 4 councils, let's examine Office of Local Government data reported for the financial year from July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2021. The comparison includes the 25 OLG Group 4 councils, their council areas, population sizes, population densities, and the number of councillors for each council.

In Richmond Valley, spread across 3,047.4 square kilometres, a population of 23,490 resides, giving rise to a relatively lower population density of 7.7 individuals per square kilometre. This council area boasts 7 councillors, creating a representation ratio of approximately 3,352 residents per councillor.

Lithgow, spanning 4,512.3 square kilometres, inhabited by 21,516 individuals. Lithgow's population density is relatively lower at 4.8 individuals per square kilometre. Similar to Kiama, Lithgow has 9 councillors, resulting in a representation ratio of approximately 2,401 residents per councillor.

Considering the other OLG Group 4 councils; Albury, Armidale, Ballina, Bathurst Regional, Bega Valley, Broken Hill, Byron, Cessnock, Clarence Valley, Dubbo Regional, Eurobodalla, Goulburn Mulwaree, Griffith, Kempsey, Lismore, Mid-Western Regional, Orange, Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional, Singleton, Snowy Monaro Regional, Tamworth Regional, Wagga Wagga, Wingecarribee.. Each of the latter local government areas is served by 9 to 13 councillors, with varying population densities

and representation ratios (see Figure 1 table below).

Compared to other councils within the OLG Group 4, Kiama has a higher population density and a slightly higher representation ratio of approximately 2,598 residents per councillor. This indicates that Kiama may be considered overrepresented compared to other councils in the same OLG group.

When comparing Kiama with its neighbouring OLG Group 5 councils, namely Wollongong, Shellharbour, and Shoalhaven: Wollongong, essentially a part of the Greater Sydney, covers 684 square kilometres, has a population of approximately 219,798 and 13 councillors, resulting in a representation ratio of approximately 16,637 residents per councillor. Shellharbour, spans 147.4 square kilometres, has a population of approximately 78,256 and 9 councillors, with a representation ratio of approximately 8,695 residents per councillor. Shoalhaven, takes in an expanded area of 4,566.7 square kilometres, has a population of approximately 109,418 and 13 councillors, yielding a representation ratio of approximately 8,417 residents per councillor.

Comparing the figures of those neighbouring council's with Kiama's data, we can see that Kiama has a higher population density of approximately 91.9 individuals per square kilometre. However, in terms of representation ratio, Kiama's figure of approximately 2,598 residents per councillor is significantly lower than those of Wollongong, Shellharbour, and Shoalhaven. This indicates that Kiama councillors have a relatively smaller number of constituents to engage with and represent compared to the neighbouring councils.

When considering both population density and representation ratios, it is evident that Kiama's figures differ from those of both OLG Group 4 and OLG Group 5 councils due to variations in population size and council area. These factors influence the dynamics of each council and the number of councillors required to effectively represent their respective communities.

By examining these comparisons and understanding the unique characteristics and challenges faced by each council, we gain valuable insights. Kiama's slightly higher representation ratio compared to other OLG Group 4 councils suggests that it may be overrepresented in relation to its population size.

To address the need for efficient decision-making, reasonable representation ratios, and responsible resource allocation, two options have been considered: reducing the number of councillors from nine to seven, or from nine to five at the 2028 Council election.

**Option 1: Reduce the number of councillors from nine to seven**

By reducing the number of councillors to seven, we can strike a balance between efficient decision-making and reasonable representation ratios of approximately 3,384 residents per councillor. This reduction aligns with the analysis of neighbouring councils, both within OLG Group 4 and OLG Group 5, and reflects the unique dynamics of Kiama. It ensures that councillors can effectively engage with and represent their constituents while optimising the allocation of resources.

**Option 2: Reduce the number of councillors from nine to five**

While reducing the number of councillors to five may further streamline decision-making processes, it may result in a higher representation ratio and potentially limit effective representation with a ratio of 4,737 residents per councillor. This option may not adequately capture the diverse needs and aspirations of our community.

It is therefore recommended to proceed with Option 1, reducing the number of councillors from nine to seven.

By reducing the number of councillors from nine to seven, we can strike a balance between efficient decision-making, reasonable representation ratios, and responsible allocation of resources. This reduction would enhance the effectiveness of our council's governance processes and maintain a representation ratio of approximately 3,384 residents per councillor.

According to the CEO's cost-benefit-analysis, reducing the number of councillors from nine to seven would result in cost savings for Kiama Council. Based on the information provided to Council in June 2023, it is estimated that this reduction would generate annual savings of \$43,460. These savings can be redirected to fund important community services, infrastructure projects, and initiatives that directly benefit the residents of Kiama. By optimising the allocation of resources, reducing councillor numbers contributes to achieving cost efficiencies within the council's operations.

Considering the data from both OLG Group 4 and OLG Group 5 councils, the reduction to seven councillors in Kiama aligns with the representation ratios observed in other councils while optimising decision-making efficiency and generating significant cost savings.

It is important to note that the resolution to reduce the number of councillors will require a referendum question to be put to voters at the 2024 council election, in compliance with the legal requirements of the Local Government Act 1993.

In conclusion, reducing the number of councillors from nine to seven provides the best approach to enhance governance efficiency, maintain reasonable representation ratios, and achieve cost savings. This motion is based on a comprehensive analysis of representation ratios within OLG Group 4 and neighbouring OLG Group 5 councils, considering the unique characteristics and requirements of Kiama.

Figure 1.

<b>Council Name</b>	<b>Council Area (km2)</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Population Density per capita/km2</b>	<b>Number of Councillors - Election Return**</b>	<b>Population/ Number of Councillors* *</b>
Albury	305.9	55,055	180.0	9	6,039
Armidale Regional	8,620.7	29,704	3.4	11	2,798
Ballina	484.9	45,217	93.3	10	4,463
Bathurst Regional	3,817.9	43,996	11.5	9	4,846
Bega Valley	6,278.9	34,727	5.5	9	3,831
Broken Hill	170.1	17,269	101.5	10	1,748
Byron	565.8	35,773	63.2	9	3,898
Cessnock	1,965.2	61,256	31.2	13	4,614
Clarence Valley	10,428.7	51,730	5.0	9	5,740
Dubbo Regional	7,534.5	54,044	7.2	10	5,372
Eurobodalla	3,428.2	38,952	11.4	9	4,275
Goulburn Mulwaree	3,220.1	31,554	9.8	9	3,459
Griffith	1,639.2	27,155	16.6	12	2,252
Kempsey	3,375.7	29,921	8.9	9	3,305
Kiama	257.7	23,685	91.9	9	2,598
Lismore	1,287.7	43,667	33.9	11	3,972
Lithgow	4,512.3	21,516	4.8	9	2,401
Mid-Western Regional	8,752.3	25,367	2.9	9	2,806
Orange	284.2	42,503	149.6	12	3,538
Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional	5,318.9	62,239	11.7	11	5,555
Richmond Valley	3,047.4	23,490	7.7	7	3,352
Singleton	4,892.7	23,380	4.8	10	2,346

<b>Council Name</b>	<b>Council Area (km2)</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Population Density per capita/km2</b>	<b>Number of Councillors - Election Return**</b>	<b>Population/ Number of Councillors* *</b>
Snowy Monaro Regional	15,163.5	20,997	2.14	11	1,890
Tamworth Regional	9,884.4	62,545	6.3	9	6,949
Wagga Wagga	4,824.5	65,770	13.6	9	7,251
Wingecarribee	2,689.3	51,760	19.2	9	5,682

END