

ROBBIE KATTER

Member for Traeger



MEDIA RELEASE

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MINSTER CALLED IN ON CLONCURRY DECISION DELAY

State KAP Leader and Traeger MP Robbie Katter has implored Minister for Local Government Stirling Hinchliffe to speed up the Electoral Commission of Queensland's (ECQ) assessment into increasing the number of councillors elected to the Cloncurry Shire Council from four to six.

In May the ECQ gave notice that it was too busy to assess the Cloncurry Shire's current electoral arrangements until after the next local election in 2020.

This means the earliest Cloncurry will see any increase in councillors would be 2024.

Mr Katter said he did not accept the review could not be completed before the end of the year, in time for the 2020 Cloncurry Shire Council Election.

He said delaying an increase for at least five years was negligent and against the interests of the Cloncurry community, which was still struggling to recover following this year's floods.

"I don't doubt the ECQ's workload but I do question how hard it can be to come to a decision on this, when there is overwhelming support for it," he said.

"It's not about awarding extra councillors to Cloncurry or anything like that, it's about bringing this part of the state into line with what other comparable areas get.

"This has been a real issue since amalgamation and we want to see it rectified as soon as possible."

Mr Katter said the North West floods had challenged the Cloncurry community and was a good example why it's crucial rural shires are fairly represented and that elected officials weren't spread too thin.

"If we had those two extra councillors on the ground earlier this year, that could have bolstered what the council could do and could certainly have increased morale amongst everyone," he said.

"I am not saying this will fix all our problems out here, but it's a no brainer.

"We want a decision on this and we don't want it in five years' time – I am expecting the Minister will take this issue seriously."

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Mr Katter's electorate includes 11 different local government areas, each using a different electoral arrangement with varied numbers of councillors.

Both the Flinders and Etheridge Shire councils, which are comparable in size, demographic and landscape to Cloncurry, have six councillors and a mayor.

—ENDS—

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