

**Report on the Conduct of the
Urana Shire Council (C Ward)
By-election
23 August 2014**

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Election Timetable*

| Activity | Date |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Close of authorised rolls** | 6:00pm Monday, 14 July 2014 |
| Close of nominations | 12:00 noon Wednesday, 23 July 2014 |
| Declaration of uncontested poll | 12:00 noon Wednesday, 23 July 2014 |

* The planned date of this By-election was Saturday, 23 August 2014. As only one candidate was nominated the poll was declared uncontested and the candidate elected at the close of nominations on Wednesday, 23 July 2014.

** For nominations and roll printing purposes.

Foreword

I am pleased to present to the NSW Government, the NSW Electoral Commission's report on the conduct of the Urana Shire By-election.

The planned date of this By-election was Saturday, 23 August 2014. As only one candidate was nominated, the poll was declared uncontested and the sole candidate, John Doyle, was elected at the close of nominations on Wednesday, 23 July 2014.

I would like to thank Urana Shire Council for choosing to use the NSW Electoral Commission to conduct the election. Despite it being uncontested, it is still important to report on the election of public officials to represent their communities.

I look forward to building on our achievements and carrying these forward into the 2016 Local Government Elections.



Linda Franklin
Acting Electoral Commissioner

Election at a Glance

Date of Election 23 August 2014

Returning Officer David Sarah

Who was Elected?

| Councillor Election | |
|----------------------|------------|
| Successful Candidate | John DOYLE |
| Female Candidates | 0 |
| Male Candidates | 1 |
| Total Candidates | 1 |

How did Electors Vote?

| Voting Methods Electors Used | |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| Ordinary | N/A |
| Postal | N/A |
| Pre-poll/Declared Institution | N/A |
| Section/Silent | N/A |
| Enrol and Vote | N/A |
| Total Votes | N/A |

Your Vote is Your Voice!

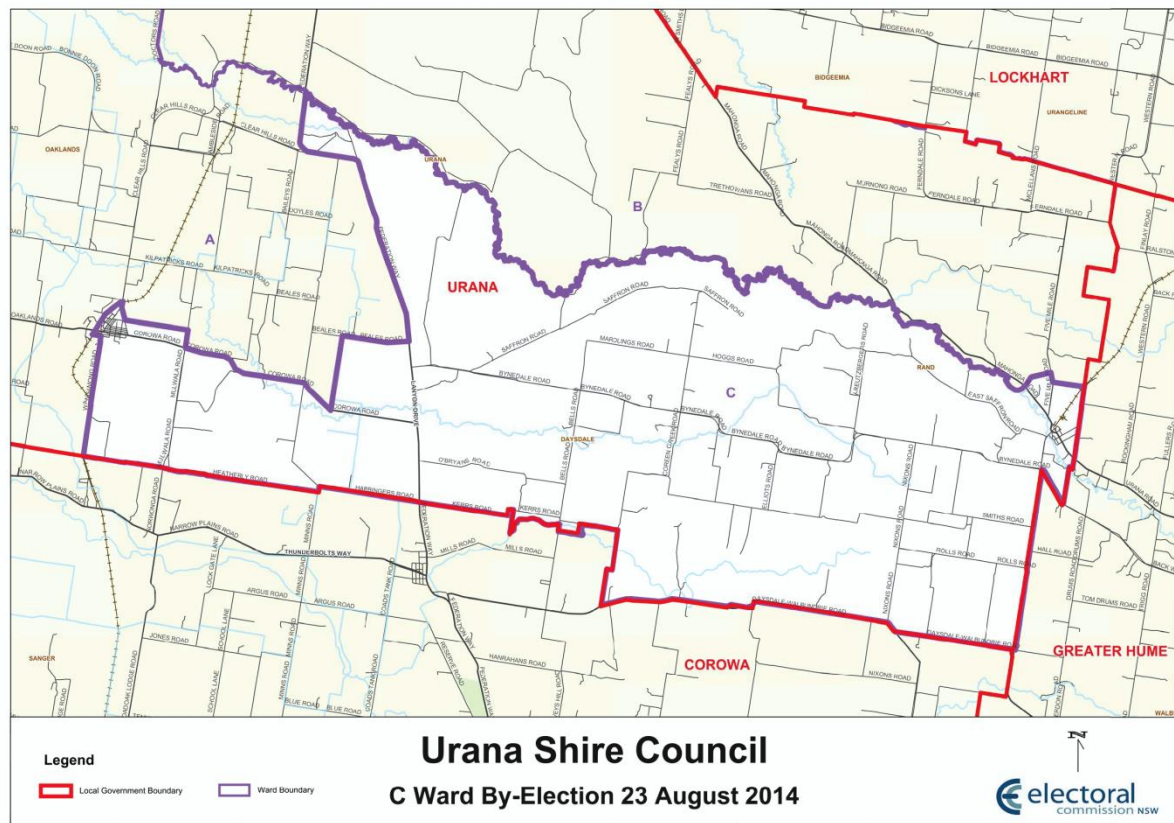
| Voter Participation | |
|---------------------|-----|
| Total Electors | 279 |
| Formal Votes | N/A |
| Informal Votes | N/A |
| Total Votes | N/A |
| Voter Turnout | N/A |
| Rate of Informality | N/A |

Polling Places, Election Officials and Cost

| Election Details | |
|------------------------------|---------|
| Pre-poll Voting Centres* | N/A |
| Polling Places* | N/A |
| Total No. of Election Staff* | N/A |
| Cost of By-election | \$2,320 |

* Not applicable as this election was uncontested

Urana Shire Council



Urana Shire Council includes the following suburbs:

Boree Creek, Morundah, Oaklands, Rand, Urana

Conduct of the Election

Background

Urana Shire Council is a divided council with nine councillors.

Councillors are usually elected for a period of four years, commencing their role on the day that the election is declared and holding the

position until the next ordinary election in September 2016.

Performance

The service standards in the Local Government Elections 2012 Service Charter were applied to the 2014 Council By-election.

Comparative data on key indicators for the Urana Shire Council in the 2014 By-election and the 2012 Local Government Elections are not available as both elections were uncontested.

Communications

Advertising

The 2014 Local Government By-election advertising campaign for Urana Shire Council consisted of council specific statutory advertisements.

Statutory Campaign

Prior to the election the NSWEC consulted Urana Shire Council to determine in which local newspapers the statutory advertisements, required under the legislation, were to be placed. The NSWEC also requested that council provided information about the number of times the advertisements were to appear in the newspapers.

Items covered in the statutory advertisements included:

- enrolment on residential and non-residential rolls;
- nomination information;
- candidates information; and
- election results.

Reproductions of the Newspaper Advertisements are at Appendices A-B.

Website

The NSWEC's website provided all the information that stakeholders generally, not just electors, needed to participate in the By-election. It provided information on the election timetable, enrolment, candidates and results.

The NSWEC had a specific Urana Shire Council By-election page from which stakeholders could source information on:

- election timetable;
- enrolment requirements and online enrolment confirmation;
- methods for voting;
- Local Government political parties;
- candidates; and
- election results.

An enrolment search facility on the NSWEC website was available to assist electors in verifying their enrolment information, including their council and, where applicable, ward information.

To ensure availability of election information, the NSWEC requested Urana Shire Council to provide a link on their website to the NSWEC site.

Nominations

Nominations closed at 12:00 noon on 23 July 2014.

A total of one nomination was received by close of nominations. This meant that the election was uncontested.

Rolls

In NSW, enrolment and voting are compulsory at all Federal, State and Local Government elections.

Legislation provides that for Local Government elections the electoral roll closes on the fortieth day before the day of the election. Any person who was on the roll at the close of roll date, 6:00pm 14 July 2014, was required to vote. As this election was uncontested this requirement was not enforced.

Voting

Method of Voting

Section 285 *Local Government Act 1993* prescribes that the voting system in a contested election of a councillor or councillors is to be:

- optional preferential if the number of councillors to be elected is one or two; or
- proportional representation if the number of councillors to be elected is three or more.

Absent Voting

Unlike State and Federal elections, absent voting is not available at NSW Local Government elections for electors who are outside their council area or ward on election day.

Counting the Votes

The successful candidate was declared elected by the Returning Officer on Wednesday, 23 July 2014, following receipt of only one nomination. The nominee was elected unopposed.

Once the declaration paperwork had been signed by the Returning Officer, copies of the declaration were provided to the Electoral Commissioner, the Council's General Manager, the Director General, Division of Local Government NSW and Department of Premier and Cabinet. Election results were available on the NSWEC website. Election results were also published in local press.

Services to Electors

Elector Information Brochure

Urana Council opted not to use an elector brochure for its enrolled electors.

Equal Access to Democracy/ Electors with a Disability

The NSWEC's Equal Access to Democracy Plan focuses on ways to improve services to, and participation in, the democratic process for people with a disability.

The approach laid out in the plan was applied to this by-election.

Services to Candidates and Political Parties

Candidate Information Seminars

A candidate information seminar was conducted by the NSWEC on Thursday, 17 July 2014, to assist prospective candidates in their preparation for the election.

The seminar provided prospective candidates with the opportunity to clarify any issues. Major topics covered in the seminar included:

- the election timetable;
- candidate eligibility criteria and how to nominate;
- groups of candidates and political party names on ballot papers;
- campaigning (election advertising, 'how-to-vote' material and public scrutiny of candidates);
- complaints handling by NSWEC;
- voting and counting ballot papers;
- scrutineers; and
- election funding obligations.

The seminar was advertised in local newspapers covering the council area.

The NSWEC's handbook "*Information for Candidates and Scrutineers in Local Government Elections*" was made available as was the "*Election Funding Handbook*" which explains candidates' obligations under the *Election Funding, Expenditure and Disclosures Act 1981*.

There was one prospective candidate who attended this seminar.

Electoral Staffing

Returning Officer

The Electoral Commissioner appointed David Sarah as Returning Officer for the Urana Shire Council By-election. Appointment was for one day, as a consequence of only one candidate being nominated and therefore elected unopposed.

Returning Officer's Duties

The Returning Officer had a number of responsibilities which were central to the running of the election. Operational duties included:

- set up and decommissioning of a temporary office;
- dealing with enquiries and complaints from candidates and the public;
- processing candidate nominations; and
- declaring the result of the election.

The Returning Officer's office for the Urana Shire Council By-election was located at:

30-32 William Street
Urana NSW 2645

Returning Officer Support Officer

A Returning Officer Support Officer (ROSO) was appointed in order to provide support on electoral matters and procedures in the conduct of the election. The appointed ROSO was Mr Ross Symons.

Staffing

This election was uncontested, as a consequence, minimal staffing costs were incurred.

Election Costs

As prescribed in the Act the Electoral Commissioner conducts Local Government elections on a full cost recovery basis. The NSWEC is not funded by the NSW Government for the conduct of Local Government elections.

The final cost of NSWEC conducting the election was \$2,320 (GST exclusive). The cost per elector was \$8.32.

As this election was uncontested costs for other items, such as venues, cardboard materials, ballot papers and electoral rolls, were not incurred.

Appendices

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Appendix A: Urana Shire Council - Enrolment/Non-residential Roll Advertisement



URANA SHIRE COUNCIL - C WARD BY-ELECTION SATURDAY, 23 AUGUST 2014 Enrol To Vote

A by-election will be held in Urana Shire Council – C Ward on Saturday, 23 August 2014 to elect one councillor.

Non-residential Rolls

If you are an owner, rate-paying lessee or occupier of rateable land which is not your primary residence, you or a nominee may be entitled to be enrolled on the roll of non-residential owners of rateable land or the roll of occupiers and rate-paying lessees for this election.

Details of the eligibility criteria and enrolment claim forms may be obtained from the Urana Shire Council Office at 30 - 32 William Street, Urana, Phone (02) 6930 9100, Fax (02) 6930 9101, Website: www.mail@urana.nsw.gov.au or will be forwarded to you upon request to the council.

The claim must be completed and lodged with the General Manager of Urana Shire Council by **6pm Monday, 14 July 2014**.

If a claim for non-residential enrolment was made for a previous election, and you wish to claim enrolment for this election, you must re-apply.

Residential Roll

All electors enrolled on the Commonwealth/State electoral roll as at **6pm Monday, 14 July 2014** residing in Urana Shire Council - C Ward local government area will be included on the roll for the election.

To check your enrolment details or to obtain a residential enrolment form visit www.elections.nsw.gov.au or call 1300 135 736. Enrolment forms are also available from any Australia Post office. Enrolment forms must be received by **6pm Monday, 14 July 2014**.

Voting is compulsory for all electors included on the residential roll for C Ward.

Candidate Information Seminar

A candidate information seminar will be held at Oaklands Hall, Milthorpe Street, Oaklands from 5pm to 7pm Thursday, 17 July 2014.

As a candidate you will have legal obligations and responsibilities. The seminar will include presentations by the NSW Electoral Commission and the Election Funding Authority of NSW and will cover:

- the election timetable, candidate nominations, election advertising and how-to-vote material, voting and formality, vote counting, scrutineering; and
- registration, appointment of official agents, campaign accounts, political donations, campaign expenditure and disclosure obligations.

Information: www.elections.nsw.gov.au or 1300 135 736

For enquiries in languages other than English call our interpreting service on 13 14 50

For hearing and speech impaired enquiries, call us via
the National Relay Service on 13 36 77

Colin Barry, Electoral Commissioner

AW1426195



**URANA SHIRE COUNCIL
- C WARD BY-ELECTION
SATURDAY, 23 AUGUST 2014**

Declaration of Uncontested Election

Election of one Councillor

As the number of candidates nominated for election as councillor is not greater than the number of councillors to be elected, I declare that

John Doyle

Is taken to be elected on and from Wednesday, 23rd July 2014 as councillor until the next ordinary election of the Council in September 2016.

David Sarah,
Returning Officer
Wednesday, 23 July 2014

AW1454498

References

http://www.elections.nsw.gov.au/profiles/new_council_profiles/urana

Australian Bureau of Statistics '2011 Census QuickStats'; Australia, New South Wales, Local Government Areas, Urana .