

The Gold Coast City Council Inquiry
CME, Brisbane.

CRIME AND MISCONDUCT
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COMMISSION

Disclosure laws in the U.S.A, particularly in the light of happenings in the Tweed Shire & the situation which has arisen in the Gold Coast where many were funded by developers, needs to be improved.

The existing laws concerning false statements shld be lightened, possibly in line with the S.A. Act. Disclosure periods for a new candidate should be 6 months before nomination & post-poll donations be disclosed up to 6 months after an election. All monies raised @ any function should be deemed donations.

Voters have the right to know who is supporting prospective candidates before the election. The recommendation from the Tweed Shire Council Public Inquiry that election returns be lodged 5 days prior to an election and a 12 month ban on the acceptance of donations after an election appears sound.

Candidates sharing funding should register as a Group & the UGA needs to ensure disclosure where any candidate solicits & distributes funds to other Solicitors/Accountants Trust Funds should be treated by the UGA as any other Trust Fund.

There is no good reason for candidates to accept donations from associations which have sourced monies from either individuals or Companies; all candidates should be able to account for the sources of their Campaign Funds.

Regarding anonymous donations, if a candidate breaches Section 438 of the LGA, it should be an indictable offence.

Third parties should have to disclose both funding sources & expenditure before an election, & be identified on any publications.

Limits should be placed on expenditure similar to the U.K model; just like candidates could be allowed a higher limit but all should have to report expenditure. The LGA should be amended to require disclosure of loans.

It could be better to have the Returning Officers appointed by the Electoral Commission & the powers of the CMC widened to allow investigation of allegations against unsuccessful candidates & third parties.

The penalty for failing to lodge an electoral return could be increased to \$5,000. Penalties for false or misleading information appear ~~adequate~~ adequate.

The Code of Conduct to be introduced on 1st March appears an improvement. Councillors should exclude themselves from meetings where they have a personal material interest.

Although few candidates are endorsed by a Political Party, in the interests of a level playing field they should have to declare donations over \$200, just as an independent must do.

Thank you for giving members of the Public a chance to make comments.

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