Impact Analysis Statement

A Summary Impact Analysis Statement (IAS) must be completed for all regulatory proposals. A Full IAS (see Box 1) must also be completed and attached for proposals that have significant impacts. Once completed, the IAS must be published.

Summary IAS

Details

Lead department	Department of Local Government, Water and Volunteers
Name of the proposal	*Local Government (Townsville City Council—Suspension of Mayor) Amendment Regulation 2024*
Submission type *(Summary IAS / Consultation IAS / Decision IAS)*	Summary IAS
Title of related legislative or regulatory instrument	*Local Government Act 2009* *Local Government Regulation 2012*
Date	November 2024

What is the nature, size and scope of the problem? What are the objectives of government action?

Councillor Troy Thompson is the Mayor of the Townsville City Council.

The Minister for Local Government and Water and Minister for Fire, Disaster Recovery and Volunteers weighed the public interest considerations in relation to suspending Councillor Thompson and, under section 122 of the *Local Government Act 2009* (LGA), recommended to the Governor in Council to suspend Councillor Thompson as mayor and councillor of the Townsville City Council, with pay, for a period of 12 months.

Therefore, the objective is to suspend Councillor Thompson as mayor and councillor of the Townsville City Council, with pay, in accordance with the Minister's recommendation.

What options were considered?

Section 122 of the LGA provides that the Minister may either suspend or dismiss a councillor if the Minister reasonably believes it is 'otherwise in the public interest' that a councillor be suspended or dismissed.

Therefore, one option was to dismiss Councillor Thompson. However, suspending Councillor Thompson was deemed the more proportionate option, as it would enable relevant integrity agencies to finalise their investigations of allegations made against Councillor Thompson, prior to any definitive action being taken against him.

Another option was to suspend Councillor Thompson for a shorter period. However, 12 months was deemed an appropriate suspension period, as it would enable integrity agencies to complete their investigations.

What are the impacts?

In terms of positive impacts, suspending the Mayor from his role will uphold the public interest, in accordance with the Minister's consideration that it is in the public interest to suspend Councillor Thompson.

In terms of costs, there may be a minor financial impact on Townsville City Council. The suspension of Councillor Thompson from the office of Mayor will mean that the Deputy Mayor will act as the acting Mayor. The acting Mayor would potentially receive increased remuneration of approximately $72,061 (based on the Mayor's remuneration of $225,206 and Deputy Mayor's remuneration of $153,145)[1]. Councillor Thompson would also continue to receive his full pay during the term of the suspension. Human rights impacts under the *Human Rights Act 2019* were also addressed in the Human Rights Certificate accompanying the *Local Government (Townsville City Council—Suspension of Mayor) Amendment Regulation 2024*, which concludes the rights limited are limited only to the extent that is reasonable and demonstrably justifiable in a free and democratic society based on human dignity, equality and freedom.
Who was consulted?
Councillor Thompson was provided a show cause notice under section 120 of the LGA.
What is the recommended option and why?
It is recommended to suspend Councillor Thompson of the Townsville City Council, with pay, for a period of 12 months. This option is the least restrictive way to address the impacts identified, in accordance with the Minister's recommendation.

Impact assessment

All proposals – complete:

	First full year	First 10 years**
Direct costs – *Compliance costs**	**$72,061**	**$72,061**
Direct costs – *Government costs*	**$0**	**$0**

* The *direct costs calculator tool* (available at www.treasury.qld.gov.au/betterregulation) should be used to calculate direct costs of regulatory burden. If the proposal has no costs, report as zero. **Agency to note where a longer or different timeframe may be more appropriate.

Signed

Linda Dobe
Director-General

Date: 21/11/2024

Ann Leahy MP
Minister for Local Government and Water and Minister for Fire, Disaster Recovery and Volunteers

Date: 21/11/2024

[1] Local Government Remuneration Commission, Annual Report 2022-23, p. 16.