



3 July 2011

Ms Jennifer Smith
Team Leader Human Resources
Kempsey Shire Council

Dear Jennifer

Consultative Committee

I'm replying to your letter of today's date received by e-mail requesting our input on the proposed composition of the Council's Consultative Committee.

depa is philosophically opposed to the provision of representation on the Consultative Committee for employees who have chosen not to belong to the unions. We have a policy to discourage our local representatives from agreeing to proposals allowing this representation.

It does seem odd, doesn't it, the rugged individualists who don't believe in collectivism and therefore won't join the union, then collectivise with other rugged individualists who don't believe in collectivism, to be represented as if they have their own union of people who are opposed to unions.

We would have no objections to you introducing staff elected positions where all members of staff, whether they are union members or not are entitled to stand and vote, but we do oppose non-union representation.

Joining a union is a voluntary action and the people who do decide to join the union pay money to the union to do all the things that we do in local government - like making sure the State Award is up-to-date and looks after people's entitlements, protecting people at work on a whole range of issues and, for us, some professional issues too. Unionism is not compulsory and people who choose not to join still receive all the benefits of the Award as if they were members. I wonder how they can do that in good conscience. They should try ringing up AAMI and making a claim for insurance cover on their car when they don't have a policy.

Under clause 28B(i) of the Local Government (State) Award the Council can seek the agreement of "local representatives" of the three unions to expand the composition to include other people, even freeloaders. We think the freeloaders get enough for free already and don't think it is reasonable that they also get access to the Consultative Committee. After all, if it wasn't for the unions, there would be no provision in the State Award requiring that there be consultative committees in the first place.

You are welcome to try and obtain the local representatives agreement, but you needed to know that we have a philosophical opposition. Enough, is enough.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ian Robertson", with a stylized, flowing script.

Ian Robertson
Secretary