

# Report on the conduct of the Cobar Shire Council by-election

26 February 2022



The NSW Electoral Commission acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout New South Wales and their continuing connection to the land, sea and community. Our head office is located on Gadigal land. We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

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# Foreword from the Electoral Commissioner

The Cobar Shire Council by-election was conducted on Saturday, 26 February 2022 to fill a councillor vacancy outstanding from the 2021 NSW Local Government elections.

Mr Michael Prince (Independent) was declared elected on Tuesday, 15 March 2022.

The conduct of the Cobar Shire Council by-election proceeded smoothly, with turnout and formality rates of 71.92 per cent and 98.42 per cent, respectively.

A by-election for Tenterfield Shire council – Ward C was also conducted on Saturday, 26 February 2022 along with the by-election for Cobar Shire Council. As permitted by amendments to the *Electoral Regulation 2018*, I declared the Cobar Shire Council and Tenterfield Shire Council local government areas as 'COVID-19 affected'. Postal vote packs were subsequently issued to all electors enrolled in these council areas without the need for a postal vote application.

As Electoral Commissioner for New South Wales I have conducted a review of the administration of the Cobar Shire Council by-election. This report reflects the outcomes of that review.

The delivery of efficient, accurate and trusted elections, in accordance with New South Wales electoral legislation, relies on the capability of NSW Electoral Commission staff. I extend my gratitude to everyone at the NSW Electoral Commission as well as the temporary election workforce, suppliers and contractors for the successful conduct of this by-election.



John Schmidt

Electoral Commissioner for New South Wales

# Legislative change

The *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* (the Regulation), which commenced on 1 September 2021, provided that the eligibility for postal vote includes those electors who:

- are self-isolating because of COVID-19 related reasons (s.313(k2))
- reasonably believe that attending a voting centre on election day would pose a risk to their health or safety, or the health or safety of another person, because of the COVID-19 pandemic (s.313(k3))
- are a permanent or temporary resident in a hospital, nursing home, retirement village or similar facility (s.313(k1)).

From 22 October 2021, the Regulation also provided:

- The election manager may, if satisfied it is necessary to comply with a public health order or to reduce the risk of infection from COVID-19, declare, by order published on the election manager's website, that electors of a specified ward or area are COVID-19 affected electors (s.314A(1)). The election manager may also publish a copy of this declaration in other ways that the election manager considers necessary to bring the declaration to the attention of the COVID-19 affected electors (s. 314A(2)).
- On the making of a declaration of COVID-19 affected electors under section 314A, the election manager is to send a postal vote pack to each affected elector (unless they have already applied for a postal vote) (s.317(1A)).

In relation to by-elections held before 1 September 2024, all electors are eligible for early voting (s.321(2)).

The Electoral Commissioner subsequently declared the Cobar Shire Council and Tenterfield Shire Council – Ward C local government areas as being 'COVID-19 affected' and the NSW Electoral Commission sent postal vote packs to every voter enrolled in these council areas.

In 2022 the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* was amended to provide that technology-assisted voting was not to be used at a by-election held before 1 September 2024 other than by way of telephone voting for electors who are blind or have low vision.

# Election overview

## Background

At the NSW Local Government elections conducted on Saturday, 4 December 2021, 11 candidates nominated for Cobar Shire Council's 12 councillor vacancies. All 11 were declared elected without the need for voting. A by-election was scheduled for Saturday, 26 February 2022 to fill the final vacancy. At the close of nominations for the by-election on Thursday, 27 January, two candidates had nominated to fill the vacancy.

## Cobar Shire Council by-election results

Mr Michael Prince (Independent) was elected at the Cobar Shire Council by-election held on Saturday, 26 February 2022.

**Table 1: Cobar Shire Council by-election 26 February 2022 – first preference votes**

Candidate	Affiliation	Votes	Percentage of first preference votes
COCHRANE ADOLFSON Jesse	No affiliation	452	22.72%
<b>PRINCE Michael</b>	<b>Independent</b>	<b>1,537</b>	<b>77.28%</b>

Note: The order of candidates in the above table is the order in which the candidates' names appeared on the ballot paper as per the ballot paper draw (see [Appendix C](#)). Detailed information on the result counts is available at [elections.nsw.gov.au](https://elections.nsw.gov.au)

## By-election summary

Table 2: Cobar Shire Council by-election 26 February 2022 – election summary

Enrolment	
Total electors	2,810
Venues and staff	
Pre-poll (early voting) venues	1
Polling places (voting centres on election day)	2
Staff employed	25
Voter turnout	
Formal votes	1,989
Informal votes	32
Total votes	2,021
Voter turnout rate	71.92%
Formality rate	98.42%
Non-voting penalty notices issued	593
Voting options used (includes informal votes)	
Ordinary (election day)	238
Pre-poll	387
Postal	1,370
Enrolment/provisional	26
Candidates	
Candidates contesting the election	2
Candidates registered for electoral funding purposes	2

## By-election key dates

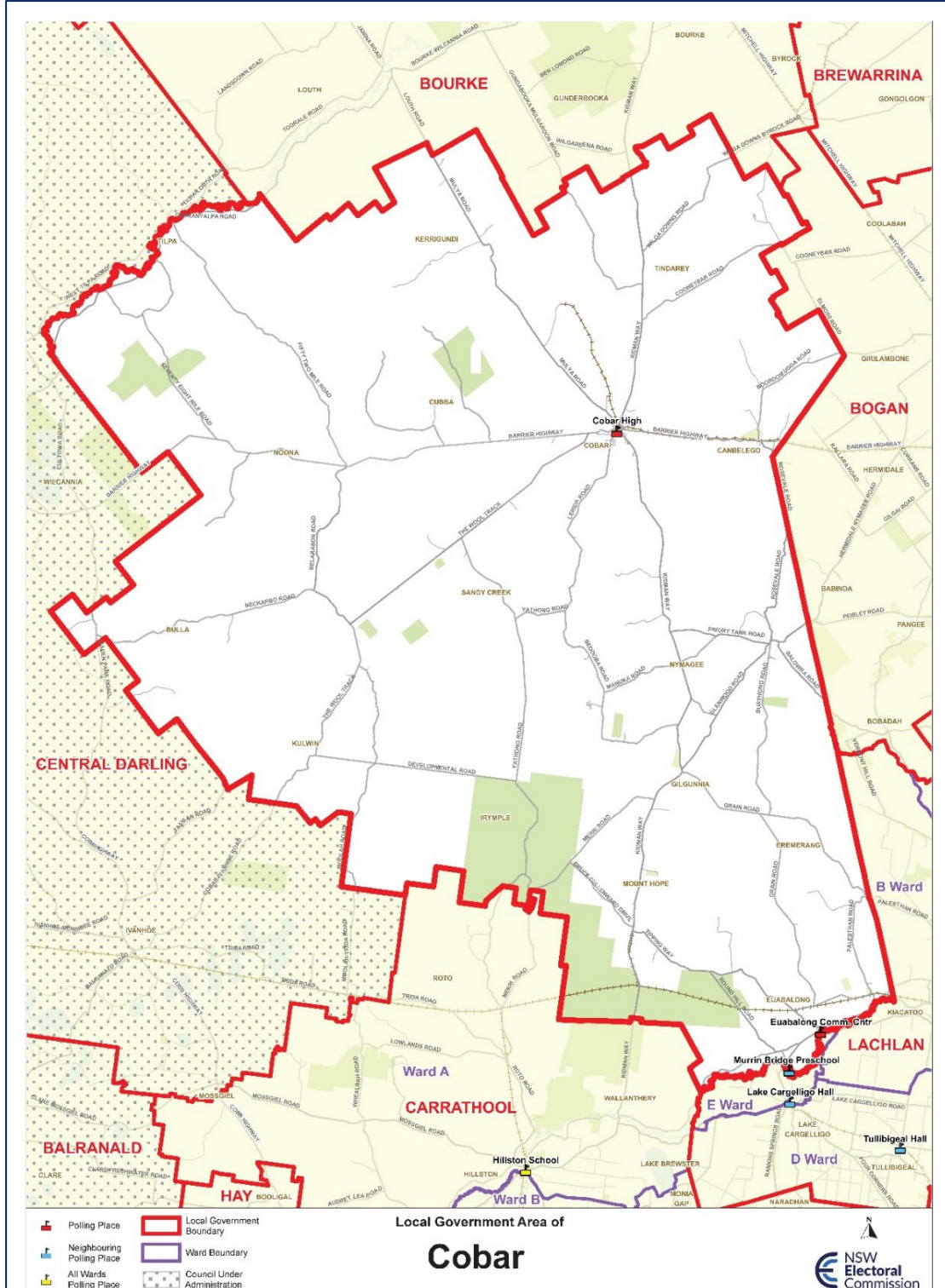
Table 3: Cobar Shire Council by-election 26 February 2022 – timeline

Date	Matter
Tuesday, 11 January 2022	Start of capped expenditure period for candidates and third-party campaigners
Monday, 17 January 2022	Nominations open 6pm: Close of rolls
Thursday, 27 January 2022	Start of registration of electoral materials 12 noon: Close of nominations 12 noon: Close of registration of candidates
Friday, 28 January 2022	2pm: Ballot paper draw
Monday, 14 February 2022	Open of pre-poll voting
Friday, 18 February 2022	5pm: Close of registration of electoral materials
Monday, 21 February 2022	Close of registration for third-party campaigners
Friday, 25 February 2022	Close of pre-poll voting
Saturday, 26 February 2022	<b>ELECTION DAY polls open 8am–6pm</b> End of capped expenditure period
Friday, 11 March 2022	6pm: Close of return of postal votes to the NSW Electoral Commission
Monday, 14 March 2022	Distribution of preferences to determine elected candidates
Tuesday, 15 March 2022	Declaration of results by returning officer
Monday, 23 May 2022	'Apparent failure to vote' notices issued
Thursday, 28 July 2022	Disclosures of political donations for the half-yearly period 1 January to 30 June 2022 due
Thursday, 22 September 2022	Disclosures of electoral expenditure for the annual period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022



# The election in detail

## Cobar Shire Council area



## Safety measures introduced due to COVID-19

Due to the continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in January and February 2022, the NSW Electoral Commission's *COVID-19 Safety Plan* was implemented for the Cobar Shire Council by-election to safeguard the health, safety and wellbeing of voters, election staff, political participants and the public. Key measures included:

- encouraging electors, election staff and political participants to check-in at all election-related premises using the Service NSW QR code
- encouraging electors to bring their own pen, or use the single-use pens provided at all voting venues, to mark their ballot papers
- maintaining physical distancing at voting venues by managing elector numbers and ensuring sufficient space between voting screens and ballot paper issuing tables
- employing additional election staff to assist in managing physical distancing and implement hygiene measures
- regularly cleaning surfaces, including voting screens and ballot paper issuing tables
- providing hand sanitiser and other personal protection equipment for use by election staff, electors and political participants.

Training covering COVID-19 infection control practices was undertaken by all staff. The NSW Electoral Commission also produced a series of videos explaining the key health protection measures and displayed posters in voting and count centres as a safety reminder. The Cobar Shire Council by-election *COVID-19 Safety Plan* was published on the NSW Electoral Commission [website](#).

## Electoral rolls

### Residential roll

The New South Wales electoral roll is jointly managed by the NSW Electoral Commission and the Australian Electoral Commission.

Legislation provides that the electoral roll closes for local government elections on the 40<sup>th</sup> day before the day of an election. For the Cobar Shire Council by-election, any person who was on the roll when it closed at 6pm on Monday, 17 January 2022 was required to vote. Rolls are closed to allow sufficient time to print and distribute the authorised rolls and for nomination purposes. Eligible Australian citizens can still enrol and vote on election day.

There were 2,807 electors on the residential electoral roll for the Cobar Shire Council by-election.

### Non-residential roll

Inclusion on the non-residential roll of electors is available to electors who pay rates to the council on property they own but do not occupy, as well as people who occupy or lease property. Under the *Local Government Act 1993*, the council's general manager is responsible for compiling and maintaining the non-residential roll of electors. The non-residential roll lapses after each election.

There were three electors on the non-residential roll for the Cobar Shire Council by-election.

## Voting services

The following voting options were available for the Cobar Shire Council by-election:

- postal voting – a postal vote pack was sent to all electors enrolled in Cobar Shire Council
- pre-poll (in-person early voting) – all electors were eligible to vote during the pre-poll period
- telephone voting – available to electors who are blind or have low vision
- in-person voting on election day Saturday, 26 February 2022.

### Postal voting

To help reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission, a postal pack was issued to all electors enrolled in Cobar Shire Council, without the need for a postal vote application. Postal pack distribution commenced on Monday, 7 February and was completed by Wednesday, 9 February 2022.

**Table 4: Cobar Shire Council by-election 26 February 2022 – postal vote key dates**

Date	Process
Monday, 7 February 2022	Commenced distribution of postal vote packs
Election day Saturday, 26 February 2022	6pm: Elector to complete their postal vote ballot paper and postal vote certificate
Friday, 11 March 2022	6pm: Close of return of completed postal votes to the NSW Electoral Commission

### Pre-poll (early voting, in person)

All electors were eligible to vote in person during the pre-poll period Monday, 14 February to Friday, 25 February (including Saturday, 19 February 2022; excluding Sunday, 20 February).

Pre-poll voting was available at the returning officer's office (see [Appendix B](#)) for the Cobar Shire Council by-election. This location was published on the NSW Electoral Commission's website, including information about accessibility, opening hours and the COVID-19 safety measures in place.

Based on public health guidelines in place at the time of the election, onsite voting in declared facilities<sup>1</sup> was not offered at the Cobar Shire Council by-election due to public health and safety concerns relating to the COVID-19 pandemic.

<sup>1</sup> Declared facilities include hospitals, nursing homes, retirement villages or similar facilities that are appointed by the Electoral Commissioner to receive mobile voting services to enable onsite in-person voting.

## Telephone voting

Telephone voting was available for electors who are blind or have low vision. To use this service, eligible electors called the NSW Electoral Commission's Elector Enquiry Centre. Telephone voting was available from Monday, 21 February to Friday, 25 February (9am–5pm for registration and voting) and on election day Saturday, 26 February (registration closed at 1pm, voting closed at 1:30pm).

To maintain the secrecy of a telephone vote the NSW Electoral Commission established a two-step process: i) registration and ii) voting. An application operator confirms the elector's eligibility and personal details and issues a unique registration number. A second operator records the elector's vote, using only the unique registration number to ensure the caller is eligible to vote in the election. This separation ensures that the voting operator cannot personally identify the elector. The voting operator verifies the accuracy of the preferences recorded by reading them back to the elector before placing the ballot paper in the ballot box. The voting step is monitored from end-to-end by another election official to support the overall integrity of the process.

## Voting in-person on election day

Polling places (voting centres) were open on election day from 8am to 6pm (see [Appendix B](#) for a list of the voting centres). As with pre-poll locations, election day voting centres were published on the NSW Electoral Commission's website.

## Advertising and communications campaign

The NSW Electoral Commission conducted a campaign to raise awareness of the Cobar Shire Council by-election and provide information to electors and political participants. All communications and advertising activities directed people to the Electoral Commission's website. Examples of advertisements and social media posts are reproduced at [Appendix D](#).

### Print and digital advertising

- Print advertising in the Sydney Morning Herald and Daily Telegraph covering enrolment, nominations, voting options and candidates.
- Social media posts were rolled out across the NSW Electoral Commission's channels to raise awareness of the by-election and the support available for electors including Auslan interpreters and translated information.

### Council stakeholder communication support

The Cobar Shire Council was provided with advertising templates for use in local newspapers, and a 'media kit' including advertising assets and templates for posters and flyers for use within the local community.

## Concurrent communications campaigns

The following communications campaigns were delivered to NSW Electoral Commission key audiences concurrently with the Cobar Shire Council by-election voter awareness campaign:

- workforce recruitment (for the by-elections being held in February 2022)
- political donations awareness and education campaign.

All electors enrolled in Cobar Shire Council local government areas were sent:

- an elector brochure with key dates, and information about how, when and where to vote; and
- a postal vote pack.

## Media liaison

Proactive media engagement through targeted media releases supported the various phases of the election from the open of nominations through to the declaration of results (see [Appendix D](#)).

## Assistance for voters

### Elector brochure

An election brochure was sent to all enrolled electors with information about the by-election including voting options, voting locations and an example of the ballot paper. The brochure is reproduced at [Appendix A](#).

### Election reminder service

The election reminder service enables voters to subscribe to receive free SMS and/or email reminders about New South Wales state and local government elections relevant to their enrolled address.

For the Cobar Shire Council by-election, 391 early voting reminders were sent by email and 599 by SMS on Tuesday, 15 February.

On Thursday, 24 February, 387 subscribers were sent a reminder email about voting on election day, and 570 SMS reminders were issued.

### In-language resources and assistance for CALD electors

The NSW Electoral Commission provided in-language support for electors whose primary language is not English.

- Translated voting information, including instructions on completing a postal vote, was available on the NSW Electoral Commission's [website](#) in the seven main languages of NSW electors who are not also proficient in English: Arabic, Chinese (Simplified), Chinese (Traditional), Greek, Italian, Korean and Vietnamese.
- Translation and interpreting services were available by phone via the National Translation and Interpreting Service (TIS National, on 131 450).

In-language services and information to support culturally and linguistically diverse electors were promoted via digital advertising, displayed on posters at all polling places and shared with the NSW Electoral Commission's Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) reference group members for distribution to their members and networks.

## Other support available for electors

The NSW Electoral Commission offers support for electors who may need help completing their vote.

- All voting centres had accessible voting screens, maxi pens and magnifying sheets available for use by electors.
- Braille ballot papers were offered for this election.
- All electors could contact the NSW Electoral Commission via the National Relay Service.
- Auslan interpreters were available on pre-poll Saturday (19 February) and election day (26 February) to connect with electors remotely via Skype.

These services and information to support electors were promoted via digital advertising, displayed on posters at all polling places and shared with the NSW Electoral Commission's Equal Access to Democracy Disability reference group members for distribution to their members and networks.

## Candidates, political parties and other political participants

### Registration for electoral funding purposes

Candidates were required to be registered for the by-election before accepting political donations or making payment for electoral expenditure. It is an offence for a candidate to accept a political donation or make a payment for electoral expenditure without being registered.

Registration is a separate process to being nominated as a candidate. All candidates who do not accept political donations or make payments for electoral expenditure before being nominated are taken to be (deemed) registered by the returning officer when they are nominated for the election. This is usually the day after the close of nominations. From that time, all nominated candidates can lawfully accept political donations and make payments for electoral expenditure for the by-election.

A person or entity (not being a party, associated entity, elected member or candidate) who incurs electoral expenditure of more than \$2,000 during the capped expenditure period is a third-party campaigner. The third-party campaigner must be registered before making payments for that expenditure. It is an offence for a person or entity to make such payments or accept political donations for that purpose without being registered.

For the Cobar Shire Council by-election, electoral funding registration forms were available on the NSW Electoral Commission's website and could be lodged with the Electoral Commission from Friday, 14 January 2022. The registration period for candidates closed on Thursday, 27 January 2022 and Monday, 21 February 2022 for third-party campaigners.

Two candidates were registered for the by-election, both of whom were deemed to be registered upon nomination. No third-party campaigners registered for the by-election. Registers are published on the NSW Electoral Commission's [website](#).

## Nominations

Nomination forms were available on the NSW Electoral Commission's website and could be lodged from Monday, 17 January 2022 to 12 noon Thursday, 27 January 2022.

Following the close of nominations, the ballot paper draw was conducted on Friday, 28 January 2022 to determine the order that the two candidates would appear on the ballot paper.

## Electoral material

The period for registration of electoral material commenced on Thursday, 27 January 2022 and closed at 5pm on Friday, 18 February 2022.

- Electoral material produced, published, distributed or displayed during the regulated period for the by-election must comply with the requirements of the *Electoral Act 2017*.
- Electoral material distributed on election day must be registered with, and approved by, the NSW Electoral Commission. It is an offence to distribute electoral material on election day unless the material has been registered and approved.

"Distribution" of electoral material includes the placement of electoral material in a public place that can be collected by voters. Posters are not required to be registered but they must comply with the requirements detailed in the *Candidate handbook* published for each election by the NSW Electoral Commission.

## Information bulletin

The NSW Electoral Commission distributed an information bulletin to provide political participants with key information about the election and their obligations and entitlements.

## Website information and updates

The NSW Electoral Commission's website provided a range of information about the by-election including the election timetable, candidate requirements, employment opportunities, enrolment, how to vote, when to vote, where to vote, names of candidates, information about COVID-19 safety measures at venues, and election results.

The Cobar Shire Council by-election web pages received more than 3,700 views during the election period.

The Electoral Commission published daily pre-election metrics for this by-election, including the number of postal vote applications received, postal votes returned and early voting totals.

## Election staff

The NSW Electoral Commission employed 25 people to work at the Cobar Shire Council by-election. Recruitment of election staff took place via the Electoral Commission's online registration system.

The majority of casual staff were employed to work on election day in voting centres, or during the two weeks prior to election day in pre-poll centres. Some roles were based in the election manager's office to help recruit staff, pack and prepare materials for the voting centres, count votes and pack materials after the election.

**Table 5: Number of staff in each role for the Cobar Shire Council by-election**

Role	Number employed	Tasks
Polling place managers	2	The election official responsible for managing a pre-poll venue (early voting centre), or a polling place (voting centre) on election day.
Deputy polling place managers	2	Supports the polling place manager. Undertakes key election operational activities under the guidance of the polling place manager.
Election officials	8	The task of election officials is to issue ordinary votes, respond to elector enquires and manage queues (internal and external to polling places). In response to COVID-19, additional election officials were employed to manage physical distancing requirements and conduct safe hygiene practices.
Office assistants	8	Reports to the senior office assistant. Performs general office administration, packing and checking of election materials, issuing ballot papers during early voting, and counting ballot papers.
Senior office assistants	4	Senior office assistants assist the returning officer manage key tasks during the election period including staffing and venue management, the secure receipt and return of election material, and managing counting and results.
Returning officer	1	An official appointed by the Electoral Commissioner to conduct an election for one or more council areas. Duties include staffing the returning officer's office, conducting the ballot paper draw and liaising with political parties, candidates and the public.
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	

Of the staff employed throughout the election period, four staff members identified as being Aboriginal and eight staff had not previously worked at an election. All staff were required to complete online training, mapped to their job role. An additional online module was developed to provide staff with safe work practice guidelines relating to COVID-19.

### Returning officer

The returning officer's office was located at 62 Marshall Street, Cobar.

The duties of the returning officer include:

- set up and decommissioning of the returning officer's office
- training of office staff, polling place managers and deputy polling place managers
- arranging voting at polling places
- issuing and processing postal and early votes
- responding to enquiries from candidates and electors
- processing candidate nominations and electoral material
- counting votes.



A returning officer support officer was appointed in the NSW Electoral Commission's head office to monitor, guide and support the election manager on electoral matters and procedures in the preparation and conduct of the by-election.

## Work health and safety principles

Work health and safety principles focussing on fatigue management were implemented for the Cobar Shire Council by-election in the interests of staff safety and wellbeing. The principles included cut-off times for counting on election night and closing times for voting venues and returning officer's office.

### General principles

- staff will not work in isolation
- one 30-minute break to be taken every five hours
- a minimum break of eight consecutive hours between rostered shifts
- staff should not work more than six consecutive days
- maximum 10-hour shifts, with the exception of election day.

### Election day operations

- all counting to cease at 10:30pm on election night
- staff working in the election manager's office will not work past 11pm on election night
- voting centre staff to cease work no later than 11pm on election night
- on election night, staff should not be expected to drive more than one hour from their voting/count venue to a nominated material drop-off point
- staff responsible for returning materials on election night will finish no later than 12.30am.

## Venues and logistics

### Polling places and office premises

The NSW Electoral Commission selects the most suitable premises from those available. Venue considerations are extensive and include size, location, accessibility, amenities, street frontage, access for deliveries, internet connectivity and workplace health and safety. The ability to secure premises that meet functional requirements presents challenges, particularly in negotiating agreements to enter short-term leases when the supply of premises is limited.

The Electoral Commission aimed to provide accessible and appropriately sited polling places (voting centres) for the Cobar Shire Council by-election. Polling place locations, including information about venue accessibility, were published on the Electoral Commission's website.

**Table 6: Cobar Shire Council venue accessibility**

Venue type	Fully accessible	Assisted access	No wheelchair	Total
Polling places (election day)	0	2	0	2
Pre-poll venue for early voting (returning officer's office)	0	1	0	1

## Supplies

A total of 7,700 ballot papers were printed (4,100 ordinary and 3,600 postal). A sample of the ballot paper is reproduced at [Appendix C](#).

As part of the *COVID-19 Safety Plan* for the Cobar Shire Council by-election, voters were encouraged to bring their own pen. Single-use pens were also provided and voters were able to take these with them when leaving the voting centre.

## Waste management

The NSW Electoral Commission operates within the NSW Government's waste management policy framework. In providing electoral services, wherever possible the Electoral Commission seeks to use paper and cardboard items comprising recycled content and to ensure that the paper and cardboard items are themselves recycled. For the Cobar Shire Council by-election, standard cardboard items used in voting centres included voting screens, accessible voting screens, ballot boxes, signage and recycle bins.

## Counting and results

From 6pm on election night, the initial count (sorting and counting of first preference votes) was conducted on all ballot papers at each polling place and some, but not all, pre-poll votes at the returning officer's office.

From the Monday following election day, initial counts on the remaining pre-poll votes, declaration votes and postal votes continued at the returning officer's office until the close of receipt of postal votes at 6pm on Friday, 11 March 2022. During this period, all ballot papers (for all vote types from all venues) underwent a manual check count. Results were published on the NSW Electoral Commission's website from 6pm on election night and updated progressively.

The distribution of preferences was conducted on Monday, 14 March. There was no request for a recount. The result of the election was declared on Tuesday, 15 March 2022. Count reports are available on the NSW Electoral Commission's [website](#).

## Failure to vote notices

Under electoral legislation, the Electoral Commissioner is required to issue 'Apparent failure to vote' notices to those electors whose names were not marked off the electoral roll as having voted or not recorded as providing a valid reason for not voting. The penalty for not voting is \$55.00. The funds generated from penalty notices are not retained by the NSW Electoral Commission but are paid into NSW Government consolidated revenue.

All electoral rolls used for voter name mark-off at voting centres or in the returning officer's office were scanned after election day to create a list of apparent non-voters for the by-election. The Electoral Commission issued 593 penalty notices on 23 May 2022. The remainder of electors who did not vote had provided a valid excuse for not voting either prior to or immediately after election day.

Responses to the notices can be submitted either by mail, email, or through the NSW Electoral Commission's online payments system. The notice provides options to satisfy the matter by either:

- paying the penalty of \$55.00
- advising of the voting centre attended
- submitting a reason for failure to vote for review
- electing for the matter to be dealt with by a court.

If the elector's reason for failing to vote is not accepted, a final notice will be issued giving two options:

- paying the penalty of \$55.00
- electing for the matter to be dealt with by a court.

If a person does not respond to the initial notice by the due date (28 days from the issue of the notice), a reminder notice is issued, giving a further 28 days to deal with the matter. If no response to the reminder notice or final notice is received by the due date, the matter is referred to Revenue NSW for enforcement action.

# Appendices

## Appendix A: Cobar Shire Council by-election, 26 February 2022 – elector brochure


### Cobar by-election

**Making political donations to a candidate or political party**  
If you donate \$1,000 or more to a candidate or political party, you must report it to the NSW Electoral Commission within 4 weeks after the end of the financial year. For more information visit [elections.nsw.gov.au/fd](https://elections.nsw.gov.au/fd)

**Can I get assistance in any other language?**  
Yes. Please call Translating and Interpreting Service National on 131 450 and ask them to call the NSW Electoral Commission on 1300 135 736. If you are deaf, hard of hearing and/or have a speech impairment, please contact us through the National Relay Service.

**How can I help someone who cannot read this brochure?**  
If you or someone you know requires assistance reading this brochure, please call 1300 135 736.

**For more information**  
Visit [elections.nsw.gov.au](https://elections.nsw.gov.au) or call 1300 135 736.



## Your guide to voting in the Cobar by-election

Saturday 26 February 2022

Bring this brochure with you when voting. It will make voting easier.

- Wear a mask.
- Bring your own pen.
- Maintain recommended physical distancing.
- Hand sanitiser will be provided.

Name Surname  
13 Some Street  
Any suburb NSW 2038

### Cobar by-election

This brochure contains important information about the by-election. It is important to remember:

- Polling places will be open from 8am to 6pm on Saturday, 26 February 2022
- you must vote in this election
- the penalty for not voting is \$55.

**Why is this by-election being held?**  
This by-election is required to fill one position on the council as not enough candidates nominated at the December ordinary elections.

**Do I need to vote?**  
You have received this brochure because you are enrolled in the Cobar local government area. You must vote in this election.

**Where can I vote on election day?**  
You can vote at the polling places listed on the other side of this brochure. Visit [elections.nsw.gov.au](https://elections.nsw.gov.au) for any last minute change to locations.

**What if I can't get to a polling place on election day?**  
You can vote by post.  
Postal voting is available for eligible voters, including if you are concerned about voting due to COVID-19. Application forms are available from [elections.nsw.gov.au](https://elections.nsw.gov.au) or by calling 1300 135 736.  
Applications must be received by the Returning Officer by 5pm, Monday, 7 February 2022.  
If you are a general postal voter, you will automatically be sent your ballot papers. You do not need to re-apply.

### Saturday 26 February 2022

**How to vote**  
You must record a vote on the ballot paper by placing the number 1 in the square opposite the name of the candidate you want to give your first preference vote. You can show more choices, if you want to, by writing numbers in the other squares, starting with the number 2.  
To view the list of candidates please visit [elections.nsw.gov.au](https://elections.nsw.gov.au)

**Cobar Shire Council**

**ELECTION OF 1 COUNCILLOR**  
Held on 26 February 2022

**DIRECTIONS FOR VOTING**

- Place the number "1" in the square next to the candidate of your choice.
- If you wish to vote for any more candidates, place consecutive numbers starting with "2" in the squares next to those candidates in order of your preferences for them.
- Fold this ballot paper so your vote cannot be seen and place it in the ballot box (or in the envelope provided).

CANDIDATE A  
PARTY

CANDIDATE B  
PARTY

CANDIDATE C  
Independent

CANDIDATE D

### Cobar by-election

**Find out where to vote early**  
Every elector is eligible to vote early at this by-election. Visit [elections.nsw.gov.au](https://elections.nsw.gov.au) for venues and opening hours.

Venue	Address
Cobar Returning Officer's Office	Old Local Land Service Building, 62 Marshall Street, Cobar

**Here's where to vote on election day**  
Election day polling places 8am-6pm.

Venue	Address
Cobar High School	Wetherell Cres, Cobar
Euabalong Community Centre	29 Lachlan Street, Euabalong

Assisted Access      Fully Wheelchair Accessible

**Bring this brochure with you when voting. It will make voting easier.**

- Wear a mask.
- Bring your own pen.
- Maintain recommended physical distancing.
- Hand sanitiser will be provided.

Visit [elections.nsw.gov.au](https://elections.nsw.gov.au) for information on our COVID-19 safety measures.

COB\_EL\_4156\_ELECTOR\_BROCHURE\_V0 Information correct as at 18/01/2022

## Appendix B: Cobar Shire Council by-election, 26 February 2022 – voting locations


### Pre-poll voting locations

Venue name	Address	Accessibility
Returning Officer's office	62 Marshall Street Cobar 2835	Assisted

### Election day voting centres

Venue name	Address	Accessibility
Cobar High School	Wetherell Cres Cobar	Assisted
Euabalong Community Centre	29 Lachlan Street Euabalong	Assisted

## Appendix C: Cobar Shire Council by-election, 26 February 2022 – ballot paper



**Cobar**

**ELECTION OF 1 COUNCILLOR**

Held on 26 February 2022

**DIRECTIONS FOR VOTING**


- Place the number "1" in the square next to the candidate of your choice.
- Fold this ballot paper so your vote cannot be seen and place it in the ballot box (or in the envelope provided).

**CANDIDATES**

COCHRANE ADOLFSON, Jesse

PRINCE, Michael  
Independent

You must not take a ballot paper out of the polling place



## Appendix D: Advertising, media and communications

### Media releases

Media releases were distributed to promote key milestones of the election, including open of candidate nominations; ballot paper draw; commencement of early voting; election day; and to announce the results.

Release: 26 January 2022



Wednesday, 26 January 2022

### Rural NSW council vacancies - nominations close soon

Five vacant councillor roles need to be filled at three NSW rural councils. Candidates wishing to nominate for the Cobar Shire Council, Murray River Council or Tenterfield Shire Council by-elections only have until midday, Thursday 27 January to submit their nomination.

The Cobar Local Government Area, the Greater Murray and Greater Wakool Wards of Murray River Council and Wards C and E in Tenterfield will hold by-elections for one councillor each on Saturday, 26 February 2022.

John Schmidt, NSW Electoral Commissioner said nomination forms are available from [elections.nsw.gov.au](https://elections.nsw.gov.au) or by calling the candidate helpdesk on 1300 022 011.

"I encourage anyone interested in running in one of the upcoming local council by-elections to get their nomination forms ready on Australia Day. A lot of helpful information is on our website explaining how to become a candidate."

"There is also information on the website of the NSW [Office of Local Government](#) which explains what is involved in being on a council."

"Nominations close at 12 noon on Thursday, 27<sup>th</sup> January and should be submitted at the office of the local Returning Officer first thing in the morning on Thursday. Late submissions cannot be accepted," he said.

Further information about the by-elections is available at [elections.nsw.gov.au](https://elections.nsw.gov.au), including the NSW Electoral Commission's COVID-19 Safety Plan.

### Ballot paper draw

The draw to determine the order of candidates' names on the ballot paper will occur at each returning officer's office at **2pm, Thursday 27 January 2022**.

### Media contact

0400 810 162

[nswecmedia@elections.nsw.gov.au](mailto:nswecmedia@elections.nsw.gov.au)

Release: 15 February 2022



Tuesday, 15 February 2022

## Local Government by-elections: Early voting opens Cobar, Tenterfield postal packs arriving

Early voting is now open for enrolled residents of Cobar Shire Council and Ward C of Tenterfield Shire Council ahead of election day on Saturday, 26 February 2022.

Pre-poll venues will be operating between 9am and 5pm until Friday 25 February, at the below venues:

- 282 Rouse Street, Tenterfield
- 62 Marshall Street, Cobar

All pre-poll venues will close at 5pm on Friday, 25 February.

John Schmidt, NSW Electoral Commissioner said to help reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission, a postal pack will also be automatically sent to everyone enrolled to vote in these by-elections.

"All voters in the Cobar and Tenterfield C Ward areas can choose to vote by post or vote in person at one of the polling venues. Locations of pre-poll venues, and polling places on election day for these by-elections are [available on our website](#)."

Mr Schmidt said for those voting by post, ballot papers must be completed by 6pm on election day, Saturday, 26 February, and returned to the NSW Electoral Commission as soon as possible. The cut-off to accept postal votes is 6pm, Friday, 11 March.

"If voters do not vote and complete their postal vote certificate by 6pm on election day, their ballot papers cannot be counted and should not be returned.

Postal packs will start arriving in resident letterboxes from this week.

"Voters can follow "five easy steps" outlined in their postal pack on how to fill out the ballot papers and successfully complete and return the pack.

"Anyone with questions about completing their postal voting pack can find more information our website or call us on 1300 135 736", he said.

Translated information regarding these by-elections is available [here \(Cobar\)](#) and [here \(Tenterfield Ward C\)](#).

The NSW Electoral Commission's COVID safety plan is available [here](#).

Further information about the by-elections is available at [elections.nsw.gov.au](http://elections.nsw.gov.au).

Release: 25 February 2022



Friday, 25 February 2022

## Local Government by-elections: Election day and results

### Cobar, Tenterfield Ward C go to the polls

More than 50 per cent of voters have already had their say ahead of tomorrow's Local Government by-elections in Cobar and Tenterfield Ward C.

So far, 1,545 postal votes have been returned and 337 people have voted early in person.

Pre-election metrics and results for the by-elections can be found here:

- [Cobar](#)
- [Tenterfield \(Ward C only\)](#)

NSW Electoral Commissioner John Schmidt reminded electors they can cast their vote via post or in person until 6pm on election day, Saturday 26 February. Voting in each of these elections is compulsory.

Polling places will be open between 8am and 6pm on Saturday 26 February, at the below venues:

#### Cobar Shire Council

- Cobar High School, Wetherell Crescent, Cobar
- Euabalong Community Centre, 29 Lachlan Street, Euabalong

#### Tenterfield Ward C

- Deepwater School of Arts, 72 Tenterfield Street, Deepwater
- Mingoola Community Hall, Mingoola School Road, Mingoola
- Tenterfield Shire Council – Timbarra Room, 247 Rouse Street, Tenterfield

Mr Schmidt said voters could follow "five easy steps" outlined in the postal pack they have received in the mail to fill out their ballot papers and successfully complete and return the pack.

"Make sure you have your vote completed on or before 6pm on election day and return it to us by 6pm Friday, 11th March. Otherwise, your vote cannot be counted," he said.

"Information regarding how to complete postal packs is available on our website and translated into seven languages. Any voters who need assistance in a language other than English can call us via the national Translating and Interpreting Service on 13 14 50".



Social media

Overview Performance Feed preview


**NSW Electoral Commission**  
Published by Ebony Stansfield · February 14 ·

Voting in person is now open for the Cobar and Tenterfield Ward C by-elections.

You can vote NOW at your local pre-polling place.

Find a polling place near you:  
Cobar: <https://bit.ly/3JsupB0>  
Tenterfield (Ward C only): <https://bit.ly/3sGEa7U>

**Cobar Shire Council**



**Early voting now open**  
NSW local council by-elections:  
Cobar and Tenterfield Ward C

See insights

5 7 Shares


Like Comment Share

**NSW Electoral Commission**  
2,359 followers  
5mo ·

Did you know we have Auslan interpreters to help with any questions you have today about the NSW local council by-elections in Cobar and Tenterfield Ward C?

Just follow these two steps to be connected to an Auslan interpreter:

1. add Skype contact NSWelections Auslan or NSWelections Auslan2
2. make a Skype call on your phone or tablet. (Available until 6pm today).



**Assistance in Auslan today**  
NSW local council by-elections:  
Cobar and Tenterfield Ward C



**Assistance in your language**  
NSW local council by-elections:  
Cobar and Tenterfield Ward C

**NSW Electoral Commission** @NSWElectoralCom · Feb 22

Want to skip the queues on election day? Pre-poll venues are now open for the Cobar and Tenterfield Ward C by-elections. Find pre-poll venues near you: Cobar: [bit.ly/3JsupB0](https://bit.ly/3JsupB0)  
Tenterfield (Ward C only): [bit.ly/3sGEa7U](https://bit.ly/3sGEa7U)  
[pic.twitter.com/MR3dLL3JPZ](https://pic.twitter.com/MR3dLL3JPZ)

[View Tweet activity](#)


**NSW Electoral Commission** @NSWElectoralCom · Feb 26

Voting by post in the Cobar and Tenterfield Ward C Council by-elections? You must fill out your postal vote before 6pm TODAY. If you do not vote and complete your postal vote certificate before 6pm today, your ballot papers cannot be counted and should not be returned.

[View Tweet activity](#)

## Print media

The Cobar Shire Council by-election public notices were run in the Sydney Morning Herald and Daily Telegraph.



### Cobar by-election

**Saturday, 26 February 2022**

**Enrol to Vote**  
A by-election will be held for Cobar Shire Council on Saturday, 26 February 2022 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 by-election.  
Details of the eligibility criteria and enrolment claim forms may be obtained from the Cobar Shire Council office at 36 Linsley St Cobar NSW 2835 or calling (02) 6836 5888. Alternatively, you can email mail@cobar.nsw.gov.au  
The claim must be completed and lodged with Cobar Shire Council by **6pm Monday, 17 January 2022**.  
If a claim for non-residential enrolment was made for a previous election and you wish to claim enrolment for this by-election, you should re-apply.

**Residential Roll**  
If you are enrolled in the in the Cobar Council Shire area as at **6pm Monday, 17 January 2022** you must vote.  
To update your enrolment details online or to obtain a residential enrolment form visit aec.gov.au or call 132326. Enrolment forms must be received by **6pm Monday, 17 January 2022**.

**Voting in Local Government by-elections is compulsory for all electors included on the residential roll.**


**Nominate as a candidate**  
If you intend to nominate as a candidate, it is important that you read this notice. As a candidate, you have certain obligations and responsibilities under law. Visit [elections.nsw.gov.au](http://elections.nsw.gov.au) for further details.

**How to nominate**  
To nominate for councillor, you must lodge a nomination form and \$125 nomination deposit from **Monday, 17 January 2022 to 12 noon Thursday, 27 January 2022**.  
You can lodge the nomination at the office of the Returning Officer: 62 Marshall Street, Cobar 2835  
**Note: Offices will not be open on Australia Day, Wednesday, 26 January 2022.**

**Candidate information sheets**  
Every candidate is required to lodge the candidate information sheet which is included in the nomination form.

**Where to get a nomination form**  
Nomination forms and other important nomination and electoral information are available from the NSW Electoral Commission at [elections.nsw.gov.au](http://elections.nsw.gov.au).

**You must also register as a candidate for funding purposes**  
In addition to being nominated, candidates must be registered **before** accepting political donations or making payments for electoral expenditure.



### Cobar Shire Council by-election

**Saturday, 26 February 2022**

A by-election will be held for the Cobar Shire Council on Saturday, 26 February to elect **one** councillor.  
If you are enrolled in the Cobar Shire local government area, you must vote. To check your enrolment details, visit [www.elections.nsw.gov.au](http://www.elections.nsw.gov.au) or call 1300 135 736.

**Voting before election day**

**Voting by post**  
To help reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission, postal voting will be open to everyone on the electoral roll in this area, and postal voting packs will be automatically sent to them.  
You will receive a postal vote pack in the post. If you choose to vote by post, you must vote and complete your postal vote certificate envelope by **6pm, Saturday, 26 February** (election day). Completed postal ballot papers must be returned no later than **6pm, Friday, 11 March**.  
For more information check [www.elections.nsw.gov.au](http://www.elections.nsw.gov.au) or call 1300 135 736.

**Pre-poll voting**  
You can vote early in person from Monday, 14 February until Friday, 25 February at the Returning Officer's office at 62 Marshall Street, Cobar.  
Pre-poll voting hours:  
• Monday 14 February to Friday 25 February 9:00am – 5:00pm (excluding Sunday, 20 February)

**Voting on election day**  
Voting will take place on Saturday, 26 February between the hours of 8am and 6pm.

**Polling Places**

Locality	Venue Name	Address
Cobar	Cobar High School	Wetherell Crescent, Cobar
Euabalong	Euabalong Community Centre	29 Lachlan Street, Euabalong

For accessibility information visit [www.elections.nsw.gov.au](http://www.elections.nsw.gov.au) or call 1300 135 736

**Candidates**

Name of candidate	Affiliation
COCHRANE ADOLFSON Jesse	-

