

From: [Joshua O'Keefe](#)
To: [DLGSC Act Review](#)
Subject: LG Reforms submission
Date: Monday, 14 February 2022 7:48:34 AM

Hello, please see my submission on the Ministers LG reforms, specifically relating to election recounts.

4.9 Minor Other Electoral Reforms		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other minor reforms are proposed to improve local government elections. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor other electoral reforms are proposed to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The introduction of standard processes for vote re-counts if there is a very small margin between candidates (e.g. where there is a margin of less than 10 votes a recount will always be required) The introduction of more specific rules concerning local government council candidates' use of electoral rolls. 	<p>Strongly support the inclusion of guidance around how elections are conducted and counted. A margin of between 1% and 5% should be considered rather than a fixed number to allow for variation in the number of votes in different precincts.</p> <p>The Act and Regs are currently silent on recount procedures and the interpretation of when recounts should be activated. Returning Officers' are currently applying this standard inconsistently across the metropolitan area. There are cases where positions on Council are being lost by one vote in some instances without a formal recount. In addition, the following points should be added to <i>Minor Electoral</i> reforms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Returning Officer cannot be appointed to conduct an election for the same Local Government more than twice to avoid any actual or perceived conflict or bias The Returning Officer Manual (a current DLGSC document) should be rewritten and wholly incorporated in the Regulations The role of the WAEC and its relationship with the Local Government should be clarified as to whether it's a contractual relationship or a regulatory relationship. This would clarify the role of the WAEC in any Court of Disputed Returns claims being whether they are a WITNESS or the DEFENDANT An independent election Ombudsman should be appointed with powers to be able to review, investigate, inspect votes following an election and make recommendations to the Minister regarding any election disputes without having to go through the Court of Disputed Returns.

Regards,
 Joshua O'Keefe

