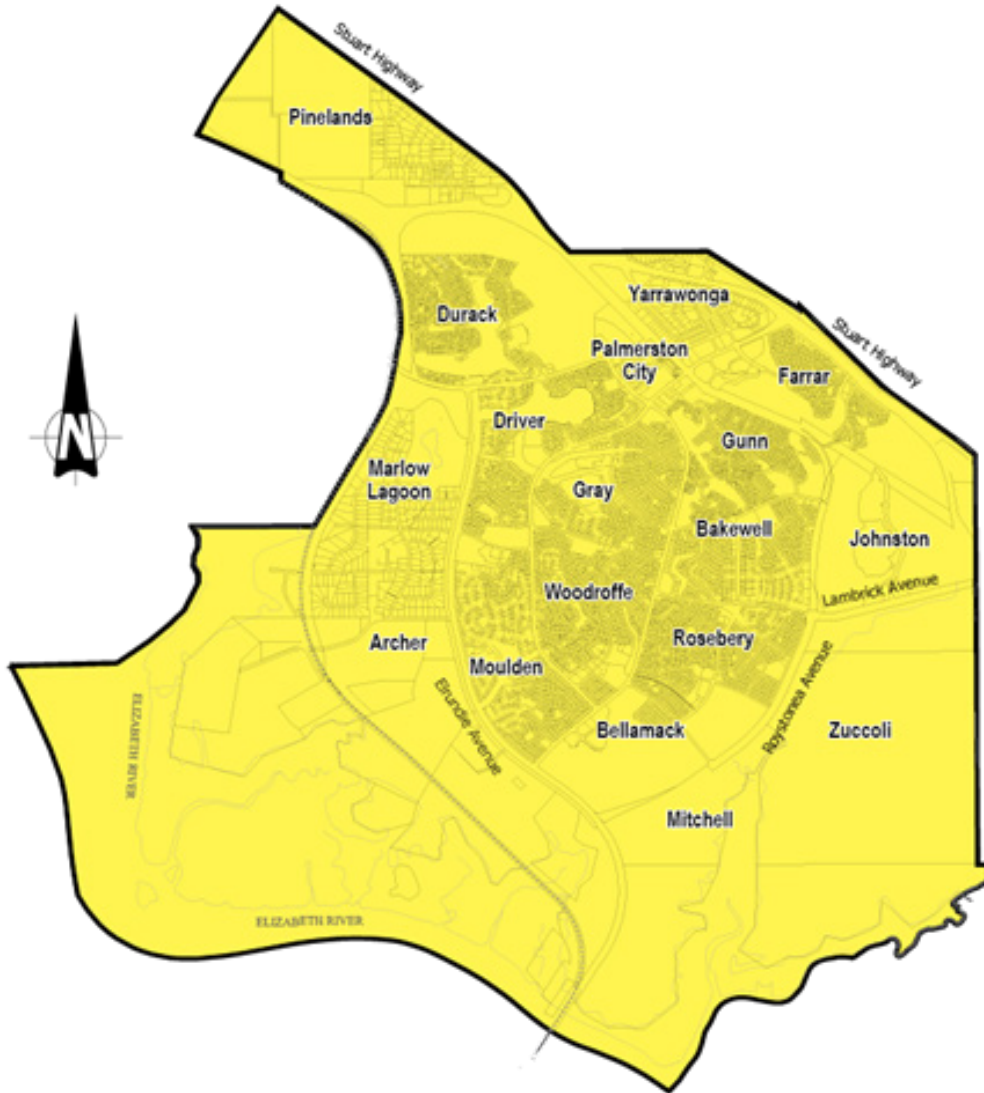




## City of Palmerston Election Report



## Document version control

Version	Description	Date
1.0	Draft	23/12/2025
1.1	Final version: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- added information to election outcomes section</li><li>- added Appendix A</li><li>- minor edits and formatting changes</li></ul>	25/02/2026

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The latest version is accessible via the NTEC website at [ntec.nt.gov.au](http://ntec.nt.gov.au).

## 2025 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

# City of Palmerston

### ELECTION SUMMARY

The 2025 Local Government Elections were the periodic general elections for the Northern Territory's local government councils, held every 4 years. The general elections included:

- 51 elections
- 138 elected positions
- 15 local government councils

The general elections for **CITY OF PALMERSTON** included the following elections:

- **Election of mayor – 1 position**
- **Election of councillors – 7 positions**

### KEY DATES

Event	Date
Nominations open	Friday 11 July
Close of electoral roll	Tuesday 22 July
Nominations close	Thursday 31 July, 12 noon
Declaration of nominations	Friday 1 August
Postal mail out commences	Monday 4 August
Early and mobile voting commences	Monday 11 August
Election day	Saturday 23 August
Deadline for receipt of postal votes	Friday 5 September
Distribution of preferences (final count)	
Declaration of election results	Monday 8 September
Campaign donation returns due	Saturday 1 November

### ENROLMENT

There were 25,914 City of Palmerston electors eligible to vote in the 2025 Local Government Elections.

This is an increase of 2,355 electors (or 10.0%) from the previous general elections held in 2021.

## PUBLIC AWARENESS

### Campaign overview

The 2025 Local Government Elections public awareness campaign unfolded in 3 phases: encouraging enrolment, promoting voter education and empowerment, and issuing a final call to action for Territorians to vote.

Running from 1 July until the declaration of results on 8 September, the campaign used TV, radio, digital and social media, signage, letterbox drops and print to raise election awareness.

The campaign aimed to equip all eligible voters with the knowledge and confidence to participate, while placing special emphasis on disengaged groups and those facing barriers including:

- seniors
- electors with English as an additional language
- electors living in remote communities.

### Website

The NTEC launched the election event webpage in June as the central hub for election information. During the campaign, the site recorded 883,018 views (71.3% from mobile devices and over 10,000 referrals from Meta platforms).

### Radio

The local radio campaign reached a total of 216,900 listeners across all phases, on a high rotation during peak listening times and delivered excellent cost efficiency.

### Print

Newspaper advertising for the 2025 Local Government Elections was largely restricted to statutory advertising requirements as prescribed under the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2021 due to the current prominence of digital news media production and consumption. These advertisements ran in the NT News and the Centralian Today.

Further publications with a digital presence such were also engaged for location targeted aspects of the campaign.

### Council engagement pack

Acknowledging the key role councils play in supporting elections, the NTEC developed a council resource pack to support voter, candidate and council staff information sharing and engagement. Councils were consulted on the draft resource pack and encouraged to provide images unique to each council area to be incorporated in the final version of the engagement pack. The council engagement pack included electronic resources such as social media content, videos, posters, flyers, email templates, forms and handbooks

## Letterbox drop

A total of 67,807 election information flyers were distributed across the Northern Territory through targeted letterbox drops.

## Digital

The digital campaign reached 1.21million people with 288,000 views and 8,073 clicks. “Vote” advertisements had the biggest reach and lowest cost, while “Educate” and “Enrol” advertisements got the highest click rates.

Facebook in-stream videos generated the most clicks, while YouTube engagement was also strong with a 55% view-through rate.

## Social media

From 1 July to 23 August, the NTEC drove a Territory-wide social media campaign.

Paid ads delivered key messages with over 2 million impressions, while organic posts on LinkedIn, Instagram and Facebook tackled misinformation and built community engagement.

Councils were also encouraged to share ready-made content on nominations, enrolment and voting, ensuring consistent local messaging. All activity lead back to the NTEC website as the single source of trusted election information.

## Emails/SMS

Direct messaging was a key communication tool during the elections, targeting electors who had provided email or mobile details through enrolment.

Messages were delivered via email and SMS on enrolment, early voting, remote mobile voting, and election day reminders.

A total of 179,146 SMS and 104,254 emails were sent to electors across the Territory.

## Large banners

Large-format banners promoted enrolment, early voting and election day across major council sites, with placements rotated to match key messages.

## Corflute signs

NTEC branded corflute signs were distributed to councils to install to raise community awareness.

## Posters

Electronic posters tailored and culturally appropriate were distributed to councils and community organisations to distribute aiming to engage diverse groups, including people with disabilities, older voters and English as an additional language speakers, ensuring consistent communication across all audiences.

## Call centre

The NTEC call centre operated from 7 July to 23 August 2025, staffed by 3 officers who assisted electors with a wide range of enquiries. Most calls related to voting, enrolment, or lodging excuses for not voting.

In addition, the NTEC received significant volumes of enquiries via email, Facebook, and in person at its Darwin and Alice Springs offices.

## NOMINATIONS

A candidate information session was held at 5:00pm on Wednesday 9 July 2025 at the council chambers.

Nominations for City of Palmerston elections included:

- 21 accepted nominations across all elections
- 4 dual candidates (who nominated for both mayor and councillor elections)
- no rejected or withdrawn nominations.

Election	Accepted nominations (candidates)
MAYOR (one vacancy)	Raj Samson RAJWIN
	Rob WATERS
	Dani EVELEIGH
	Athina PASCOE-BELL
	Appa Rao ADARI
	Cindy Mebbingarri ROBERTS
COUNCILLOR (7 vacancies)	Mark FRASER
	Cindy Mebbingarri ROBERTS
	Melissa MAGUIRE
	Lucy MORRISON
	Sarah HENDERSON
	Raj Samson RAJWIN
	Rob WATERS
	Wayne BAYLISS
	Colin SOUTHAM
	Jacob BRANT
	Appa Rao ADARI
	Ben GIESECKE
	Damian HALE
	John-Paul MACDONAGH
	Yolanda KANYAI

Age and gender of candidates:

GENDER	Male	Female
Mayor	3	3
Councillor	10	5

AGE	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Mayor	-	-	-	4	2	-
Councillor	-	1	3	4	6	1

Note: Other demographic questions are not asked for on nomination forms

## VOTING SERVICES

### Postal voting

- Postal vote applications received 1,335
- Postal votes issued 1,286
- Postal vote applications rejected 49
- Postal votes returned 1,077
- Postal votes admitted to the count 848
- Postal votes rejected 229

Note: the number of votes admitted does not always equate to the number of votes recorded as postal votes in results webpage, as this often includes missorted ballot papers.

The reasons for rejecting postal vote applications were:

- Multiple applications received from same elector (19)
- Insufficient/undeliverable postal address (18)
- Cancelled by elector (10)
- Application received too late (1)
- Not enrolled (1)

The reasons for rejecting (returned) postal votes were:

- Ordinary vote issued (101)
- Postal vote certificate dated after election day (55)
- Postal vote certificate not signed (32)
- Postal vote received after deadline (28)
- Returned to sender (11)
- Not correctly enrolled (1)
- Signatures do not match (1)

## Early voting

Early voting centre	Votes issued
Alice Springs	19
Casuarina	225
Coolalinga	1,251
Darwin	384
Katherine	41
Palmerston	6,279
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8,199</b>

Note the number of votes issued does not always equate to the number of votes counted

## Urban mobile voting

- Number of votes issued by the Darwin urban mobile team 255
- Number of votes issued by the Alice Springs urban mobile team 6
- Number of votes issued by the Katherine urban mobile team 1

## Election day voting

Election day voting centre	Votes issued
Alice Springs	9
Casuarina	113
Coolalinga	339
Darwin	59
Katherine	11
Moulden*	1,210
Palmerston*	2,157
Rosebery*	1,598
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,496</b>

Note the number of votes issued does not always equate to the number of votes counted

\*Voting centre located within council area

## Declaration voting

- Total number of declaration votes issued 55
- Declaration votes admitted to the count 52
- Declaration votes rejected from the count 3

The reasons for rejecting declaration votes were:

- Enrolled in a different council area (1)
- Could not be enrolled (1)
- Not issued correctly (1)

## ELECTION OUTCOMES

### Results: Election of mayor

Candidate	First preference votes
Raj Samson RAJWIN	973
Rob WATERS	2,933
Dani EVELEIGH	1,824
Athina PASCOE-BELL	6,772
Appa Rao ADARI	167
Cindy Mebbingarri ROBERTS	1,218
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13,887</b>

- Quota required to be elected: 6,944
- Athina PASCOE-BELL elected as mayor at count 3 (7,015 votes)
- A full distribution of preferences table is provided at Appendix A

### Results: Election of councillor

Candidate	First preference votes
Mark FRASER	1,065
Cindy Mebbingarri ROBERTS	798
Melissa MAGUIRE	386
Lucy MORRISON	1,993
Sarah HENDERSON	1,020
Raj Samson RAJWIN	465
Rob WATERS	1,244
Wayne BAYLISS	1,684
Colin SOUTHAM	285
Jacob BRANT	758
Appa Rao ADARI	106
Ben GIESECKE	941
Damian HALE	1,227
John-Paul MACDONAGH	87
Yolanda KANYAI	1,046
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13,105</b>

- Quota required to be elected: 1,639
- Elected councillors:
  - Lucy MORRISON elected at count 1
- Wayne BAYLISS elected at count 1
  - Rob WATERS elected at count 42
  - Sarah HENDERSON elected at count 64
  - Yolanda KANYAI elected at count 68
  - Mark FRASER elected at count 72
  - Damian HALE elected at count 78
- The full distribution of preferences for the councillor election is available on the NTEC website.

## Voter turnout

Based on the number of votes counted in the mayor election, the voter turnout rate was 57.3%. This compares to 64.6% at the previous general election in 2021.

## Informality

Election	No. of candidates	Total votes	Informal votes	%
Mayor	6	14,842	955	6.4%
Councillor	15	14,836	1,731	11.7%

## FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE

All candidates in local government elections are required to submit a campaign donation return if they receive:

- donations of \$200 or more
- loans of \$1,500 or more
- during the disclosure period of 1 July 2024 to 22 September 2025
- with no nil return required if these thresholds are not met.

No City of Palmerston candidates submitted a campaign donation return for the 2025 Local Government Elections.

All returns have been published on the NT Electoral Commission website.

## ELECTION COSTS

Expense category	Estimate \$	Actual \$
Advertising	37,906.96	32,514.74
Corporate	1,306.02	615.53
Destruction/rubbish removal	1,145.27	187.42
Information technology	19,172.60	16,426.51
Materials	22,576.78	16,808.55
Postage	13,970.49	11,976.92
Premises	3,130.62	4,403.50
Staff travel/accommodation/reimbursements	21,499.22	14,224.72
Staff wages	209,969.02	201,822.22
Vehicle hire/charter	5,633.27	3,318.17
Sub-total	336,310.27	302,298.28
GST (10%)	33,631.03	30,229.83
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 369,941.29</b>	<b>\$ 332,528.11</b>

## ELECTION REVIEW MEETING

A post-election review meeting was held Monday 8 December 2025 at the City of Palmerston.

## Appendix A

### Distribution of preferences - Election of mayor

Count	Comments	Raj Samson RAJWIN	Rob WATERS	Dani EVELEIGH	Athina PASCOE- BELL	Appa Rao ADARI	Cindy Mebbingari ROBERTS	Total
<b>1</b>	First preferences	973	2,933	1,824	6,772	167	1,218	<b>13,887</b>
<b>2</b>	Appa Rao ADARI excluded <b>Progressive</b>	68 <b>1,041</b>	24 <b>2,957</b>	14 <b>1,838</b>	33 <b>6,805</b>	-167 <b>0</b>	28 <b>1,246</b>	<b>0</b> <b>13,887</b>
<b>3</b>	Raj Samson RAJWIN excluded <b>Progressive</b>	-1,041 <b>0</b>	453 <b>3,410</b>	178 <b>2,016</b>	210 <b>7,015</b>	0 <b>0</b>	200 <b>1,446</b>	<b>0</b> <b>13,887</b>

**Quota to be elected: 6,944**

**Athina PASCOE-BELL elected at count 3**



# Northern Territory Electoral Commission

EVERY vote counts

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[ntec@nt.gov.au](mailto:ntec@nt.gov.au)

1800 698 683

[ntec.gov.au](http://ntec.gov.au)