



Voting changes for local government

THE return to the first past the post system for local government elections is a winner, says Agricultural Region MLC Brian Ellis.

Mr Ellis, who was Moora deputy shire president for many years, said the return to the previous system – which was scrapped by the previous State Government two years ago – makes common sense.

“At the local government level where there is a relatively small voter base, the first past the post system is less complicated, and reduces the potential for major political parties to influence out-

comes,” Mr Ellis said.

“More importantly, it deters factionalism and makes it difficult for candidates to run on a single-issue ticket.”

Mr Ellis said factionalism was fatal for small councils where everybody has to work together on tight budgets which are often based on small rate bases.

“The proportional preferential voting system made it easier for running mates to make back-room deals,” Mr Ellis said.

The change back to the first past

the post local government voting system has come only two days before the deadline for it to take effect for the local government elections on October 17.

Mr Ellis said the State Government was determined to meet the deadline, so the legislation was given priority in the first sitting week of the Legislative Council, which sat late into the night to ensure it was passed.