

**Representation Review - Banyule City Council - Preliminary Submission
Andrew Conley - Ivanhoe - 23 Jul 2019**

To Mr Gately,

I disclose that I am a committed member of the Australian Greens Victoria, and stood as a candidate for that party at the 2018 state election.

My submission relates only to the issue of electoral structure. In my submission, the Commission's preliminary report should definitely present an option that provides for multi-councillor wards. There are two reasons for my submission.

First, the bulk of Metropolitan Melbourne councils have them. By my count of the data in the *Submission Guide* (pp 16 and 17), of the people outside of Banyule City Council who live in that category of council, 88% live in a council that has multi-councillor wards or is unsubdivided (which might be described as the extreme form of multi-councillor ward). At the very least, this firmly justifies multi-councillor wards being presented as an option in the preliminary report. The good reasons that multi-councillor wards were adopted for those councils no doubt apply here too. Arguments to the contrary are likely to be no more than special pleading.

Secondly, as noted in the *Submission Guide* (p 12), an electoral structure that uses multi-councillor wards provides for proportional representation. The merits of proportional representation are well-known. In most likely scenarios, it results in more voters electing the councillor (in this case) that they most prefer, and persons with a wider variety of views and political philosophies being elected. In my submission, the potential disadvantage set out in the *Submission Guide* (p 11) - '[g]roups may form within the council leading to possible division between councillors' - is an *advantage*, not a disadvantage. Rather than compromises being worked out (or, in the worst case, positions traded off) behind closed doors, it is good for democracy and good for sound reasoning that there be reasonable disagreement at times, with the various arguments brought out into the open so that voters can understand the issues in dispute and really see their councillors in action.

Yours sincerely,
Andrew Conley