

17 September 2019

Victorian Electoral Commission  
Level 11, 530 Collins Street  
Melbourne VIC 3000  
By email: [banyule.review@vec.vic.gov.au](mailto:banyule.review@vec.vic.gov.au)

### **Banyule City Council Electoral Representation Review – Response Submission**

I have considered the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) recommendations for the future electoral structure of the Banyule City Council (Council) contained in its preliminary report dated 21 August 2019. This submission reflects my personal views on the preliminary report.

In my preliminary submission I advocated for retaining the current electoral structure of seven single member Wards in Banyule. I argued that under the current structure Council receives high community satisfaction ratings for its services and has experienced few issues regarding the governance of Councillors. It is disappointing the VEC has not recommended the current structure as an option.

The VEC has instead recommended the following options:

- Option A: Nine Councillors elected from 3x3 Councillor wards.
- Option B: Nine Councillors elected from 3x3 Councillor wards with different boundaries to Option A.
- Option C: Nine Councillors elected from single Councillor Wards.

**Of the VEC recommended options I strongly support Option C as it provides for the continuation of single wards in Banyule.**

The single Ward structure consistently delivers the following benefits for the Banyule community:

- Enables Councillors to develop a good understanding of the unique priorities in their Ward and to be a strong advocate on local issues. This has enhanced the quality to decision-making.
- Provides enhanced accountability to residents for the responsiveness, timeliness and quality of Councillor advice and support in to inquiries.
- Reduces the risk of residents “advice shopping” Councillors in the same Ward.
- Reduces the risk of competitive behavior between Councillors in the same Ward for community recognition of the achievements of Council. The structure helps to foster strong and supportive working relationships among Councillors.
- Best represents the numerous local communities of interest across Banyule.

I believe that the boundaries proposed by the VEC under its Option C can be improved to best represent our unique local communities of interest. I encourage the VEC to consider alternate boundaries that Council has suggested in its formal response to the VEC.

I welcome the opportunity to speak in support of my submission at a public hearing. I can be contacted on [REDACTED] or at [REDACTED].

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

**Cr Rick Garotti**

Grimshaw Ward

Banyule City Council

cc: Cr Wayne Phillips, Mayor Banyule City Council

cc: Mr Geoff Glynne, Acting Chief Executive Banyule City Council