

Boroondara Electoral Representation Review Submission

As a former Mayor and Councillor of Boroondara I have had the privilege of serving the Boroondara community under the current single ward structure which I supported in a written submission to the 2008 review.

In my previous submission I strongly encouraged the Commission to address the issues of voter education and representative reform: namely a system of nomination that actively identifies the legitimate candidates from 'dummy' candidates and determines whether a candidate is party affiliated and/or informally supported by a party on the actual voting papers. My concerns remain largely unaddressed and I believe there has been an increasing loss of independent candidates at the local government level. In fact, there has been increased activity from Federal and State politicians that represent Boroondara to ensure their preferred candidates are elected as Councillors to support their political outcomes rather than the needs of our community as a whole. As a consequence, I now find myself asking what is the best option for proper independent local government representation in Boroondara given the current single ward system has been less functional over the years. Perhaps it is now time to consider a multi ward system that maintains the 'local' in local government representation by dividing Boroondara into five or six wards with two Councillors per ward. There are many geographical and economical similarities across Boroondara which enable a successful pairing of current wards into one larger ward and with the increased population of Boroondara the community may well be better served with an increase number of Councillors as a consequence.

It should be noted that individuals are elected to represent a ward but it is the responsibility of each Councillor to make decisions that are in the best interests of Boroondara as a whole. As with any change or current system it depends entirely on the goodwill of elected representatives to work together for the benefit of the community they have been elected to serve. A two member ward may promote a better working relationship between the ward Councillors and the Council as a whole.

No doubt my submission will not resonate well with the current Council position but I remain committed to good governance and representation for the local community.

Please accept and consider my submission as input into your Boroondara review deliberations.

Yours sincerely,

Judith Voce

