

Electoral Representation Review - Boroondara City Council - Preliminary Submission
Cynthia Watson - Balwyn North - 08 March 2019

I am in favour of keeping Boroondara a Single Member Ward as the representative model. Multi member ward favour candidates who are financially supported by political parties as you have to campaign in an area which is two to three times bigger than a Single Member ward. The larger ward areas inflates campaign costs and candidate time considerably. Reducing barriers for ordinary and non-politically aligned people who would like to stand for council, strengthens our democracy. Single point of accountability is another strength of Single Member wards. Councillors in Single Member wards have a strong sense of accountability to residents on issues within their respective areas. For Councillors, multiple points of accountability is like being locked into a group assignment at school where someone feels they do all the work, another does nothing, and some claim to do work but are actually poaching the advocacy work done by another councillor. Constitutents have multiple points of contact but no comfort in knowing who is the right councillor to contact in their area or if they should be contacting all of their multiple representatives.

One of the unique dangers of using the multi member ward model in Boroondara is that the fault lines will appear between the three old cities of Hawthorn, Camberwell and Kew that were amalgamated to form Boroondara. The representative model chosen must support cohesion and not division within our city. The Single Member Ward model best achieves this outcome in Boroondara.

Let's keep the Single Member ward model in Boroondara.