

Electoral Representation Review - Boroondara City Council - Preliminary Submission
Brendan Weibrecht - Kew - 09 March 2019

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Submission for the council ward structure review
Date: Saturday, 9 March 2019 10:33:38 PM

Hi,

My name is Brendan Weibrecht and my family and I are residents of the Studley Ward. I am writing to you today as it came to my attention that the VEC are considering adjustments to the council makeup in Boroondara; I would very much like to express my strong recommendation for multi-councillor wards comprising 11 councillors.

Making a voting system diversely representative is critical. It is often noted the disconnect between young people and politics, and it is easy to see why when none of our supposed representatives in Boroondara reflect our age group. Making the voting system more proportional - through moving to multi-councillor wards - is surely in the best interest of the community. Of course there was council opposition to this proposal last time a review happened - the change threatened their seats!

You want your leaders to hold each other's integrity to account. Having a wider variety of viewpoints among the councillors would assist in this. Electing multiple per ward is a great way to not just hear from the majority group that's spread across the wards (older people), but also hear from minority - yet still large - groups like the young and ethnic. Sure, you'd want to keep some level of geographic diversity, but other kinds of diversity are equally, if not more, important.

Larger wards sound like a great idea. I may not live in the other wards, but I do care what goes on there. I went to primary school and uni in the Glenferrie Ward; my ex and high school are in the Cotham ward; and I did archery in the Bellevue Ward. Additionally, in the wider context of Boroondara, I'd appreciate a broader representation area to address sorely-needed improvements in the provision of cycling routes for commuting into the Melbourne CBD.

Choosing a good number of councillors to have is important. It is always tricky having an even number of people in a group when a decision needs to be made, as ties on important decisions can happen. Having one person be the decider makes the weight of votes unfair, and deciding randomly is too arbitrary. The group should be adjusted to have an odd number of members. As long as the group doesn't become so large as to be unwieldy, adding one seems like it would be better for proportional representation than removing one. 11 sounds quite suitable for the number of residents we have.

I do hope we are successful this time in achieving an 11-councillor city with multi-councillor wards. We are a long way behind the other metropolitan councils in this regard.

Thank you for your time and deliberation,

-Brendan Weibrecht

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