

Electoral Representation Review - Boroondara City Council - Response Submission  
Bob Stensholt - Glen Iris - 7 May 2019

In my preliminary submission I supported multi-member wards as being in the best interests of diverse representation for our community.

I have now read the Interim Report and its recommendations and arguments and I strongly support Option B. I agree with the following statement in the Report: "The VEC is of the view that Option B—four two-councillor wards and one three-councillor ward—balances the views of those advocating for local representation through single-councillor wards and those in support of multi-councillor wards."

During my time as a State MP, and the first Labor MP in Boroondara, I set a high standard on local representation and caring for the local community. Often I and my office undertook activities and representations that should have been the job of local councillors simply because there was a need for a diversity of voices and opinions in order to come to mutually agreed conclusions that were better for the community. Single ward councillors do not provide that mix of views that is the foundation of a strong democracy and good governance.

At the same time I believe that local representatives need to be close to their community and strongly representative of it. Hence I commend to the review Option B as being a better at meeting this objective as well as providing more diverse representation in Boroondara.

Looking at the proposed wards under Option B they represent in my view a better sense of community of interest than the larger wards in Option A. The latter proposed wards cover very large areas and large areas of overlapping suburbs. Option B is much more focussed on including particular suburbs within a ward (e.g. Kew and Balwyn) although inevitably there are some overlaps remaining. Some suburbs such as Camberwell and Glen Iris are quite extensive, largely because they incorporate the areas that were formerly Burwood. However, the dividing lines of Camberwell Road and the railway line reasonable and acceptably ward boundaries. I do note that the small suburb of Deepdene is divided by the proposed Ward boundary and this could be considered in setting the final boundaries.

In regard to the Ward names I am generally supportive of the proposed names with the exception of "Ferndale". The Ward is bounded by Gardiners Creek while Ferndale Park is in the middle and only a small section of the ward. I therefore propose the name of "Gardiner" for the ward.

Thanks you