

The following is my submission in response to the three options provided by the VEC for comment. It is brief but to the point. Unfortunately I will be overseas for most of May and therefore unable to speak to my submission at the public hearing next week.

My support is for Option A as I believe it provides the opportunity for a fairer and more equitable level of representation.

Communities of interest are common across Boroondara: geographically, environmentally, economically and socially. Pockets of disadvantage are spread throughout the city, as is the diverse range of nationalities and people from all walks of life.

Option A provides clear ward boundaries and will more easily absorb future growth in population perhaps lessening the need for boundary redistributions on a regular basis.

Local neighbourhoods will still exist as they do under the current single ward system as people identify with their immediate locality not their ward in their day to day activities.

The majority of residents do not interact with their ward councillor and in fact many are not able to name their ward representative. Therefore, using this argument to support single over multi ward representation is not a valid consideration.

Furthermore, I agree with the perception of under representation on issues raised by residents when a single ward councillor is absent for any period of time from Council.

Multi ward representation provides the opportunity for a more collaborative approach to addressing issues for the benefit of the community. My contention is that it will promote broader strategic outcomes and representation for the whole of the Council area.

The lack of independent candidates remains an issue. The multi ward option may address this concern although unidentifiable running mates will continue to exist given the background support provided by political parties for their candidates, both formally and informally.

My submission is based on personal experience as a former councillor and is not influenced by any group or individual.

The VEC's summary information of the City of Boroondara contained on pages 19 to 21 of 36 and their arguments for Option A, on balance, reflects the basis of my considerations in selecting Option A over Option B. However, I'm not comfortable with naming one of the wards "Swinburne" as this infers association with an institution rather than a geographical area for residents.

Judith Voce.