



**BELLARINE BRANCH – AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY**

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**Victorian Electoral Commission – review of Greater Geelong City ward structure**

The Bellarine Branch of the Australian Labor Party, at its July meeting, attended by more than 50 people, resolved:

- That the VEC maintain the electoral status quo with respect to the election of Councillors to the City of Greater Geelong so that the City of Greater Geelong has the option of continuing with multi councillor wards.
- that the electoral structure review for the Greater Geelong City Council be extended for 36 months and that the current ward structure be retained for the next Council term.

The following was also noted:

- That with respect to the electoral structure review’s preliminary report the Branch is very concerned at the options put forward by Victorian Electoral Commission. The Bellarine Communities are dismayed that in the proposals for Ward restructure small towns are being split and communities of interest isolated. It is important that communities with common interests and shared geographical locations should be together in the same ward. For example, Ocean Grove and Barwon Heads should be in the same ward. Similarly small coastal towns that are in close proximity to each other, such as St Leonards and Indented Head, should not be placed in separate wards. Communities should not be divided as suggested in all models.
- The Commission of Inquiry into Greater Geelong City Council in March 2016 determined that “the single ward councillor system has not served the city well” and “the Commission’s view is that there should be multi-councillor wards to share representative responsibility”.
- It was the recommendation of the Geelong Citizens Jury supported by the Victorian Labor government and the Victorian Electoral Commission to replace individual councillor wards with multi-councillor wards to share representative responsibility.
- The success of the multiple ward councillor model in Geelong for the past 2 electoral cycles, along with the successful evolution of real communities of interest particularly on the Bellarine.
- The imposition of single councillor wards fails to consider the implications and risks to the constituents of the City of Greater Geelong.

Kylie Rawson - President