

**Electoral structure review - Hepburn Shire Council - Response Submission**  
**Matthew Nickson - Trentham - 19 April 2023, 02:40 pm**

I am writing to strongly support the Single-councillor ward structure (Model 3) as per the Local council electoral structure review – Preliminary report – Hepburn Shire Council.

I believe it addresses the best interests of residents in the proposed wards as it potentially delivers a genuine local representative who will represent their respective wqrd with a greater understanding of the issues that residents face.

I acknowledge that in the report while it is stated:

"However, while ward-based structures enable voters to elect a representative for the area of the ward, it should be noted that a ward-based structure does not guarantee a locally based representative will be elected. There is no requirement under the Act for a councillor to live in the ward they represent."

in practice residents would be totally aware of where potential candidates did or did not live and would vote as such.

Local Council decision making directly effects ratepayers on many levels but none more so than through planning decisions. Local "grass roots" representation is vital to ensure effective decisions are made that do not have short or long term detrimental effects on local communities.

A widespread diverse geographical area as the Hepburn Shire is, means decision making by Council needs localized knowledge to make effective decisions. Local councils now have an ever increasing turnover of staff for a variety of reasons and as such localized and historical corporate memory is lost, thus making local community representation more important than ever.

Once again I strongly support Single-councillor ward structure (Model 3) as the solution for the Hepburn Shire Council.

Yours sincerely

Matthew Nickson



Trentham