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19 July 2023

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The Hon. Melissa Horne
Minister for Local Government
Via email: lgv@ecodev.vic.gov.au

CC: Electoral Representation Advisory Panel and Victorian Electoral Commission

Dear Minister

Re: Wodonga Council electoral structure

I refer to a resolution of Council at the 17 July 2023 Council meeting requesting that Wodonga City Council be un-subdivided as per section 13(5) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Council specifically notes reference to the report from the Monitor to the Local Government Minister stating in the recommendations: "Ways to reinforce the role of a councillor to participate in decisions in the interests of the whole municipal community notwithstanding ward-based electoral structures" as a specific note the concerns that might arise should wards be introduced to Wodonga and the ability for individual councillors in wards to represent the requirements of the act to represent the interests of the whole community ahead of the ward they may be elected to.

For clarity I provide the formal resolution below and a copy of the report and minutes can be located on Council's website at www.wodonga.vic.gov.au/About-Council/Our-Council/Council-meetings/Agendas-and-minutes.

That:

1. Council write to the Minister for Local Government and request that in accordance with section 13(5) of the *Local Government Act 2020* Wodonga City Council be an un-subdivided municipal district, noting that:

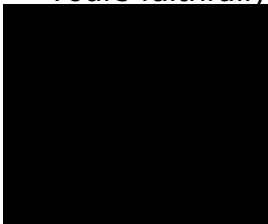


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1. Subsequent to Council's previous correspondence on this matter and the response of 22 December 2022 from the Executive Director, Local Government Victoria, the Municipal Monitor's report into Wodonga Council was released, and raises questions about the governance outcomes from a ward based electoral structure for Wodonga Council; and
 2. In particular, the Municipal Monitor highlighted that the strategic focus expected of councillors, and their separation from the operational aspects of the organisation, could prove "especially challenging" if wards be introduced, and potentially undermine the strategic principles for governance set out in the Act.
2. A copy of the letter to the Minister be sent to the Electoral Representation Advisory Panel and the Victorian Electoral Commission.

Yours faithfully



Matt Hyde
Chief Executive Officer