

**Electoral structure review - Surf Coast Shire Council - Response Submission**  
**Mat Hines - Torquay - 12 April 2023, 08:11 am**

I wish to reiterate my support for an unsubdivided Surf Coast Shire (Model 1). As mentioned in my initial submission, an unsubdivided council structure is the most democratic in that it provides the greatest opportunity for a diversity of views from across the LGA to be represented, including increasing the opportunity for communities of interest that are not defined by geography to be represented - of which there are many. Furthermore, it is more democratic as all councillors are elected by, and are accountable to, all voters.

The experience of other councils that are unsubdivided is that it results in a wide diversity of councillors from right across an LGA, including from the smallest of communities. We can see, for example, in neighbouring Golden Plains Shire, that only one of the councillors resides in the LGA's largest town of Bannockburn. Under an unsubdivided system, candidates have a level playing field, whether they be from Torquay, Lorne, Barrabool or Ombersley, or anywhere in between. If they can attract sufficient support from across the Shire, they will be elected.

I do not support option 2 as it seeks to reduce the number of councillors, thus creating an even number, which can lead to 4:4 split votes, placing unnecessary power in the mayor's casting vote. This model also automatically creates a situation in which half of the councillors come from one community.

I do not support option 3 on the proposed boundaries. If the reason for a ward system is to identify geographic communities of interest then unnecessarily splitting Torquay-Jan Juc into 3 wards does not achieve this. This proposed model places almost 4000 Torquay voters into Winchelsea ward. Torquay's west and Winchelsea are not geographic communities of interest. My initial submission proposed ward boundaries that better reflect the geographic communities of interest. I also note that option 3 does not meet the requirements for the 10% +/- threshold.

I encourage the review to recommend Model 1 for an unsubdivided Surf Coast Shire.