

**Electoral structure review - Mornington Peninsula Shire Council - Response Submission
Despi O'Connor (first submission) - Mount Martha - 15 November 2023, 04:43 pm**

My name is Cr Despi O'Connor, elected to Briars Ward in October 2020, Mayor from 2020-2021. Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission.

Each model is represented as having 11 single councillor wards. I believe that 11 councillors are not required and that 9 could better enable a more equitable spread of voters across the wards. When splitting the wards, knowledge of areas would be required to ensure that communities of concern are catered for, rather than splitting them in half (as is for some areas in the models suggested). Boundary lines formed on roads such as Jetty Road and Hearn Road are clear examples in the models tendered, where single communities are split.

Currently in all models the Nepean Ward is well over the 10% deviation, as is the boundaries that include the townships of Rosebud/Totgarook/Capel Sound for each model. This must be addressed before completion of the review as a priority. The peninsula has three population distinct areas, southern peninsula, northern peninsula and western peninsula. To ensure equity the boundaries should look to break these three areas into 9 wards with each incorporating green wedge. 70% of the shire is indeed Green Wedge where the food bowl of Melbourne is grown. The splits should enable all councillors to have green wedge in their ward so as they can develop a better understanding of the needs of this land use.

It would be great to see the First Nation language names used for some wards that are already geographical place names. The use of the following names would be a terrific start, Kangerong, Warringine, Moorooduc and Totgarook. It would be great to see further consultation with the traditional owners Bunurong/Boon Wurrung after the boundaries and wards are set to enable changes after this process where a First Nations name is appropriate.

Despina O'Connor

 Mt Martha