Electoral structure review - Merri-bek City Council - Response submission Bernard Flinn - Brunswick - 08 November 2023, 4:59 pm

SMALLER WARDS

We do not feel comfortable with the earlier Government decision to bring in single member wards. We foresee problems in representation for a ward, especially those including the Sydney Road activity area. However, as this decision has been made, we have to face the reality of one councillor attempting to represent our area or similar areas. We are not sure that this representation will be effective. The outcomes will be too dependent on the reasons that an individual elected representative brings to their public service term.

BOUNDARY ALLOCATION.

Here there is a connect between the history, geography, natural boundaries and civic centres and the underlying enumeration of populations in each ward.

The proposed models seem quite logical - especially the change to the northern boundary of Brunswick suburb, giving Brunswick representation by four councillors. We agree with this significant change.

We will leave the niceties of alignments to those who have all the relevant data. We will however support the division of the central Brunswick area through Victoria and Blyth Streets, giving North and South Brunswick Wards, rather than aligning the division along Sydney Road. There are probably many supporting reasons for each of the proposals. But as residents of South Brunswick we see logic in viewing our area as containing Sydney Road and the street areas across to Lygon Street.

NAMING of WARDS

We can find no satisfactory reasons to substantially alter the place names.

Calling my original home area Pentridge, for example, takes away all connection I have with with Coburg East.

We believe that Model 1 will maintain that local connection for all residents, new and older.

Melbourne City's history is so strongly bound up with these foundation northern suburbs that losing the names, even in Council elections, would be a substantial loss. So Model 1 is our choice for new Ward Names.