

Electoral structure review – Greater Geelong City Council – Response Submission
Judith Brooks – Barwon Heads – 26 July 2023, 10:48 am

Submission to:
Electoral Advisory Panel Local Council electoral structure review –
Greater Geelong City Council

From Judith Brooks

██████████
Barwon Heads 3227

Firstly, why hasn't there been more time to consider what is a significant change to local government in the Geelong area? I only knew about the report because of my community organisation, the Barwon Heads Association.

Secondly, it appears that there will not be a proper community consultation process about names of wards or their boundaries. The VEC seems to have a distinct separation from the reality on the ground and seem to be treating this as a tiresome homework project. Fanny Brownbill's name has been wiped. Why? The first woman in the ALP to be elected to state parliament and a winner of four elections in the name of the people of Geelong. Women wiped from history, again!

Thirdly, this compulsory breakup of the existing structure, flies in the face of previous history and a thorough consultation process that lead to the City of Great Geelong having multi-councillor wards. The 2016 Inquiry decided that the single-ward councillor model did not suit Geelong. Over the last two elections a sense of identity has been enhanced and ratepayers have become familiar with the existing structure.

Fourthly, the three models presented for consideration of the taxpayers divide communities which have meshed well together to enhance both their assets and their sense of well-being. Communities of interest should be kept together. The VEC seems to be at the mercy of the voter tolerance requirements for each ward and thus faces an almost impossible task. Even allowing for this, did not mitigate the shock of seeing the Bellarine, which its residents are proud of, being sliced and diced in an official document.

Fifthly, none of the models put forward will enhance, in anyway, the proper function of our local government. I believe that it will detract and over time, cause more problems with the functioning of the CoGG than we have now.

However, considering my community, **Model One** is the best of the three models. Connewarre Ward at least has relevance considering the closeness of Lake Connewarre. By referring to a natural asset it reminds us of the value of our Ramsar Wetlands sites and their importance in sustaining local biodiversity and preserving the water table.

Judith Brooks 26/7/23