

Electoral structure review - Warrnambool City Council - Response Submission
Robert Dart - Warrnambool - 18 July 2023, 01:43 pm

I have a personal belief that the strength of the ward system of local government is that the selected representative is able to advocate and better represent parts of Warrnambool that aren't easily represented by councillors who might all live a stone's throw from the CBD.

One flaw of the of the wards system is that a precinct such as the Warrnambool foreshore might get a lot of attention by Council, but the residents living in the ward fail to get the same attention, advocacy or service from council. This ward might include the suburbs of South Warrnambool beyond Pertobe Road (Harris Street, etc), Merrivale and East Warrnambool in current proposals.

Firstly, I would suggest changing the boundaries in the current proposals to ensure that the foreshore and the CBD are in the same ward with surrounding streets. Many of these surrounding streets have have had a lot of attention in the past due to their proximity to teh CBD, and including them in this ward ensures the number of voters in the ward.

This would allow neighbourhoods beyond the centre of town, many with their own smaller unique communities (Allansford, Woodford, Dennington, Merrivale, South Warrnambool, etc.) to be more accurately represented on Council. The previous system did not disadvantage councillors living near the CBD, so there should be plenty of candidates to represent this ward.

Secondly, some of the names of the wards don't easily connect with the neighbourhoods they represent. Moyjil for example, in some proposals covers Swinton Street in the west or Moore Street in the north east. While I think the indigenous term is an appropriate and respectful means of naming a ward, the term needs to link clearly to the site of it's namesake. While the names of the wards aren't essential to the democratic process, I believe we should be making sensible and respectful choices in regards to this.

I think some of the previous ward names from our previous ward system are quite relevant in some of these proposals.

Thank you for taking the time to read my submission.