

**Ward boundary review - Bass Coast Shire Council - Response Submission
Island Voice - Rhyll - 01 March 2024, 11:39 am**

I write this submission on behalf of Island Voice, a key stakeholder in the Phillip Island Community, representing more than 3,000 members.

Both of the models proposed by the VEC significantly disadvantage the electors of Phillip Island providing an inequitable Councillor to elector ratio when compared to the rest of Bass Coast Shire.

Both proposed solutions result in an elector variance in Island Ward greater than 10%, which is outside the VECs targeted variance. The ratio of Councillor representation per elector in Bass Coast is $41,245/9$ councillors = 4,583 i.e. each Councillor on average should represent 4,583 electors. In Model, 1 each Councillor represents 5,280 electors in Island Ward.

Island Voice proposes that San Remo be included into the Island Ward. This would result in an increase in the number of electors in the Island Ward of approximately 2,000, resulting in a total of 17,839 approximately. Applying the ratio of 1 Councillor per 4,583 electors would result in 3.9 Councillors i.e. 4 councillors for Island Ward, if it was configured this way. This would need to be balanced by reducing Westernport Ward to 2 Councillors, leaving 3 Councillors in Bunurong Ward. Defining the boundary of Island Ward in this way would create a logical geographical ward that is governed by the same economic, environmental and demographic drivers. Notably, these drivers differ significantly from the primarily rural area that forms the rest of Western Port Ward.

If this preferred solution is not possible, then Island Voice supports the whole island model (Model 1), under strong protest that it actively disadvantages the Phillip Island Community by providing inequitable representation in Local Government. Implementing Model 1 i.e. all of Phillip Island, means that an area that contributes nearly half (47+%) of the Shire's rates revenue, contains nearly 40% of the Shire's population and has a deviation greater than 15% above the average (i.e. each elector's vote in Island Ward is worth effectively 15% less than other electors in Bass Coast Shire, as calculated by the VEC) is not being truly represented.

Simply, proposed Model 1 and 2 both disadvantage the electors of Island Ward, under-representing them whilst the electors of the other wards are over-represented. Including San Remo into Island Ward and redistributing Councillor numbers to wards accordingly enables meaningful representation to occur.