

Review of Ward Boundries within
The City of Joondalup.

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DRAFT

Executive Summary.

This submission proposes to maintain the existing ward structure and Councillor representation. However should the existing structure not be acceptable to those that control the process then a secondary proposal is forwarded in the best interests of the City, its Electors and the ratepayers of each individual ward.

The "matters" and "Factors" to be considered are detailed below for both the Current Ward structure and a secondary proposal for 4 wards, 11 Councillors and 1 popularly elected Mayor.

The Local Government Association position of voluntary change is supported. See attachment*. The Ministers and Advisory Boards position of forced change is not supported. It is evident that the "Inquiry into the City of Joondalup" has become an avenue of the State Government to push electoral and Local Government reform upon Local Governments in Western Australia. This now throws doubt on the independents and accountability of the Inquiry and its recommendations. Particularly as electoral and Local Government reform was not a term of reference.

The Council of the City of Joondalup should refuse to engage in the process until the term of the existing structure is required to be reviewed in 2007.

Matters to be considered.

1. **The current Ward System and existing Councillor Representation.**
The Current Ward structure should be maintained. It appears the only reason for discarding the existing system is the Advisory Boards insistence on the +/-10% guideline.
The current system has not been in place long enough to evaluate the effectiveness of the representation. However should the current structure not satisfy those that control the process then this proposal is forwarded in the best interests of the City, its Electors and the ratepayers of each individual ward. The Mayor should be elected popularly.
2. **Creation of new Wards by either increasing or decreasing the number of wards.**
No new wards should be created. The existing structure should remain. See point 1.
3. **Changes to Boundaries of the Current ward system.**
No changes to the existing ward boundaries should be undertaken. The existing structure should remain. See point 1.
4. **Abolition of all the wards and electing representation from across the city.**
The existing structure should be retained. Abolishing the wards and electing from across the City would;
 - deprive the common man from being involved in the Local Government,
 - institutions could push single issues due to the amount of fund required to run a City wide election campaign and
 - political parties would be open to push politics in a non-political sphere of government.These points would detract from open, accountable government and prevent a council providing good governance.
5. **Changes to the Names of the Existing Wards or a new ward structure.**

No changes to the existing wards names should be undertaken. The existing structure should remain. See point 1.

6. Changes to the number of Councillor representation across a ward system or if no ward system, across the District.

No changes to the existing Councillor / Elector ratio should be undertaken. The existing structure should remain. See point 1.

7. Maintain the Existing Ward Boundary structure and councillor representation.

The following points are in favour of retaining the existing structure of Ward Boundaries and Councillor representation:

- Due to the City's population the maximum number of councillors should be maintained. 1:7322 which is preferable to a greater number. It should also be noted that Elected Members are to represent Electors of the District (as a whole). Better representation can occur currently than would be achieved with a reduced councillor/elector ratio.
- The possibility of Interest group dominance is reduced.
- Less representation results in limiting of ideas and input into the Local Government.
- Reduced community participation.
- The demands on Councillors with higher representation ratios would be over burdening.
- Understanding of specific issues relative to a ward would be lost.
- Local knowledge and issues are not lost under the current structure.
- The cost and time constraints to run a large City wide campaign would result in a less effective democracy.
- The current wards allow for a good spread of interests and representation across the City.
- Councillors are currently accountable to their local communities and are easily accessible. (This also depends upon the Councillors willingness to be accessible).

Factors to be considered.

1. Community of Interest.

- *A sense of Community identity and belonging.*

This proposal follows the basic urban sub-divisional development of the City of Joondalup. The Coastal Strip followed by the Central Corridor the Lakes Corridor and finally the North Ward including the CBD. The latter still to reach its full development potential. With the corridors located between major traffic arteries of the Mitchell Freeway and Marmion Avenue and the Coast and the Lakes each particular Ward has its own supporting infrastructure. This infrastructure includes local shopping and convenience centers, recreational parks and facilities, Cycle tracks and natural walks, leisure parks and facilities. This Historic and Social infrastructure has generated a feeling of Local Community and belonging.

This is not to say that the population does not cross the main arterial transport routes. Well located major facilities for shopping, sport, recreation, health, higher education are located through out the City and its Wards. This mixing and integration of the city's electors has promoted and encouraged a sense of Community and belonging which extends beyond individuals Ward Boundaries.

Each Proposed Ward has its own particular identity, The Whitford Ward has the Coast, The Pinnaroo Ward has the natural bush lands, The Lakes Ward has the Lakes as an identity and the Northern Ward has a current combination of Coast, Bush and Lakes. Please refer to the Demographic Trends section for the future scenario for the Northern Ward.

- *Similarities in the characteristics of the residents of a community.*

There are many similarities between residents with in the locality of the City of Joondalup. The movement of the population through out the city for activities such as recreation , employment, education and general business results in moderate integration. This integration unifies and consolidates the wider community resulting in a sharing of characteristics , likes and dislikes. The proposed Ward Boundaries also allow for specific characteristics of the ward communities to be enhanced and built upon. The proposed Ward alignments cater for specific interests attributed to specific communities. For a limited example the Whitford Ward has the Coast , The Pinnaroo Ward has the natural bush lands , The Lakes Ward has the Lakes as an identity and the Northern Ward has a current combination of Coast , Bush and Lakes. Please refer to the Demographic Trends section for the future scenario for the Northern Ward.

Residents of a community with specific interests will generally locate themselves in close proximity to their interest. EG; a passion for surfing will generally entice a resident to locate close to the coast. Residents with a need for small lot dwellings and a busy social life will generally locate in the CBD or within the Northern Ward. Etc etc

Other characteristic similarities such as sub-divisional break up of the City are also entertained in this proposal. Architectural style, economic factors, transit or education related living etc are aligned through this proposed ward structure.

- ***Similarities in the economic activities.***

The three large shopping centers of Lakeside, Whitfords and Warwick are dispersed through out the proposed wards. No one ward contains more than 1 large shopping center. All wards are within close proximity to a major suburban shopping Center. The even distribution of local shopping centers and convenience shopping has allowed economic benefit to all suburbs and Wards within Joondalup. The CBD and Winton Road is unique in the City of Joondalup and provides economic benefit to the whole community. Its draw is such that it attracts customers from the City of Wanneroo and Stirling. This proposal allows future flexibility for the CBD in the next round of Ward Boundary Reviews. The locality of Joondalup can either be a stand alone Ward or form part of another ward in future.

Higher education and the major health institution is also centralized in the CBD but provides economic benefit to many if not all wards , as does the Hillarys marina.

With the proposed wards having a degree of self-sufficiency many economic benefits are found with in each Ward. Minor health institutions, recreational facilities, libraries, Local Shopping etc.

The "Tourism Strategy" developed by the City will also be benefited by this Ward proposal and will also increase economic benefit to all sections of the Community. The Tourism Strategy identified the Coast , Natural Bush and Lakes areas as corridors that are to be exploited for tourism.

It is essential that this strategy is promoted highly in order to provide the required economic benefits to each ward community particularly as the City of Joondalup is void of any industrial land or development.

2. Physical and Topographical Features.

The physical and topographical features of the City of Joondalup include the following:

- Natural Features; The Coast line (Whitford Ward), the Bush land settings (Pinnaroo Ward) , The Wet lands (Lakes Ward), Coast, Bush and Wetlands (Northern Ward).
- Un-natural features; Mitchell Freeway and rail line, Marmion Avenue , and to a lesser extent Joondalup Drive, Hepburn Ave, Whitfords Ave , Warwick Rd, Ocean Reef Rd and Burn Beach Rd. The Northern and Southern Boundaries of the City are dictated by the presents of the City of Wanneroo and Stirling.

The natural features of the City are logical dividers of the Proposed Ward Structure. Each Ward contains specific natural features and the potential of the City's tourism strategy has been echoed within this proposal. This is to assist in the dispersal of future economic benefits across the City in an even and logical manner.

The un-natural or man made features are dividers in the community and the Proposed Ward structure. The Mitchell Freeway and Marmion Avenue form the boundaries of 3 of the 4 proposed Wards. Combined with the Natural features of the City, the man made dividers form logical boundaries for the proposed ward structure.

Joondalup Drive, Hepburn Ave, Whitfords Ave, Warwick Rd, Ocean Reef Rd and Burn Beach Rd whilst significant within the City, play a lesser role in the North / South alignment of 3 of the 4 proposed wards.

The future development of the North Ward requires a degree of built in flexibility in any proposal. This proposal allows for several future scenarios for the North Ward. The North / South ward configurations can be extended into the North Ward or the North Ward and Joondalup may form 2 separate wards with Councillor representation increased in future to allow for population increase.

3. Demographic Trends.

Current and future population characteristics and similarities and differences between the areas in the locality of the City of Joondalup have been a major consideration in the Proposed Ward structure. The Advisory Board has indicated that it will not present to the Minister any proposal that is not within the +/- 10% Councillor / Elector Ratio.

This proposal has been formulated to ensure that the +/- 10% Councillor / Elector Ratio has been maintained for the Current Elector numbers as well as the Projected Elector numbers upto and possibly beyond 2011.

The future expansion of the North Ward including the CBD and Joondalup has also been a serious consideration in the Proposal. This proposal allows for several future scenarios for the North Ward. The North / South ward configurations can be extended into the North Ward or the North Ward and Joondalup may form 2 separate wards with Councillor representation increased in future to allow for population increase.

The city has advised that Ward Boundaries remain relatively static in the future and Councillor representation should be set at or below future requirements in order to allow for future equity in representation.

This proposal allows for a relatively static Ward structure for those suburbs that are now dormitory but also allowing future flexibility in the expanding North Ward and the CBD.

Councillor representation will also remain flexible due to the future expansion of the North Ward and the CBD.

This proposal allows for several future scenarios for the North Ward. The North / South ward configurations can be extended into the North Ward or the North Ward and Joondalup may form 2 separate wards with Councillor representation increased in future to allow for population increase. Importantly this proposal allows future flexibility for the CBD in the next round of Ward Boundary Reviews. The locality of Joondalup can either be a stand alone Ward or form part of another ward in future.

This flexibility will continue beyond the next required review of Ward Boundaries.

4. Economic Factors.

The three large shopping centers of Lakeside, Whitfords and Warwick are dispersed through out the proposed wards. No one ward contains more than 1 large shopping center. The even distribution of local shopping centers and convenience shopping has allowed economic benefit to all suburbs and Wards within Joondalup. The CBD and Winton Road are unique in the City of Joondalup and provides economic benefit to the whole community.

The proposed expansion of Lakeside Shopping Center is crucial to the CBD's future economic successes as the City of Joondalup is void of Industrial land and the accompanying economic benefits.

Higher education, police academy and the major health institution is also centralized in the CBD but provides economic benefit to many if not all wards, as does the Hillarys marina.

To maintain economic prosperity within the City of Joondalup, the City's "Tourism Strategy" must be progressed. Each Ward has a unique quality and set of characteristics that must be developed in a sustainable fashion to promote eco-tourism and thus ensuring the supply of future economic benefits to the proposed ward structure. Economic benefits delivered to the City, either as a whole or as individual wards.

The Commencement of planning for the Ocean Reef Boat Harbor should also provide additional economic benefit to the City in the future. This project could be an integral part of the Tourism Strategy supplying economic benefits to the City as a whole.

4. Ratio of Councillors to Electors.

It has been noted that the most important factor to the Local Government Advisory Board is the +/- 10% Councillor / Elector ratio.

This proposal meets the +/- 10% Councillor / Elector ratio for the Current number of Electors as well as the projected number of Electors in 2011.

The degree of flexibility built into the North Ward allows several future ward boundary scenarios that would also meet the +/- 10% Councillor / Elector ratio.

CURRENT ELECTOR NUMBERS FOR COUNCILLOR / ELECTOR RATIOS.

WARD	No of Electors	No of Councillors	Ratio	% Deviation
NORTH WARD	17213	2	1:8606	+7.14%
WHITFORD WARD	27058	3	1:9019	+ 3.01%
PINNAROO WARD	28400	3	1:9467	- 0.01%
LAKES WARD	29844	3	1:9948	- 6.28%
TOTALS	102515	11	1.9320	

PROJECTED 2011 ELECTOR NUMBERS FOR COUNCILLOR / ELECTOR RATIOS.

WARD	No of Electors	No of Councillors	Ratio	% Deviation
NORTH WARD	17572	2	1:8786	+3.86%
WHITFORD WARD	26615	3	1:8872	+ 3.0%
PINNAROO WARD	27610	3	1:9203	- 0.31%
LAKES WARD	29089	3	1:9696	- 5.24%
TOTALS	100887	11	1.9172	

All figures based upon those supplied by the city of Joondalup in the discussion papers.

It should be noted that the preferred ward boundary division and Councillor / Elector ratio is that of the existing Ward Boundaries.

However should the Advisory Board not forward that option to the Minister on the grounds of Councillor / Elector ratio, this proposal has been submitted as second preference.

The discussion papers put before the Public indicate that the desirable average number of Electors per Councillor should be @1:7000. However the report goes on to indicate that a reduction of Councillors would be desirable. Whilst allowing a degree of flexibility to increase the future number of Councillors.

Joondalup cannot reach the required representations of @1:7000 due to the limitations on Councillor numbers imposed by the Act.

It should also be noted that an option for "No Ward Boundaries" is unacceptable on grounds of Democracy and un-equitable representation.

For these reasons it is not possible to forward an acceptable Ward Boundary model other than this proposal.

The failure to provide detailed Elector Numbers on a street by street basis has also negated many options available to the Community when reviewing the Ward Boundaries.

Conclusion.

The current existing ward boundaries, structure and councillor/elector representation should be maintained for the reasons stated in this submission and further review should be recommenced at the end of the maximum Legislative timeframe of the last review – approx August 2007.

Should the Advisory Board not be accepting of;

1. Deferring the current review until early 2007 and
2. Retaining the existing system.

Then;

3. the secondary proposal for 4 wards, 11 Councillors and 1 popularly elected Mayor should be adopted.

This proposal should be adopted on the stated relevant points of

- *A sense of Community identity and belonging being promoted.*
- *Similarities in the characteristics of the residents of a local community being recognized and enhanced whilst simultaneously recognizing and enhancing the similarities in characteristics of the residents of the whole district.*
- *Similarities and diversities in the economic activities conducted within each ward and the future promotion of economic strategies such as the Tourism strategy.*
- *Physical and Topographical Features dividing and dissecting the community into ward structures.*
- *Demographic Trends particularly in the North ward where development is yet to be completed compared with the dormitory suburbs.*
- *Economic Factors being evenly dispersed through the community for equity purposes.*
- *Ratio of Councillors to Electors would be within the +/-10% rule and also allow for compliant future flexibility.*
- *The built in flexibility of the proposal benefits all and provides for stability and future review.*

NORTH WARD

2 Councillors.

40 WARDS

11 Councillors
1 Mayor.

LAKES WARD

3 Councillors

WHITFORD WARD

3 Councillors

PINNAROO WARD

3 Councillors

BURNS BEACH
148
237

KINROSS
3801
3894

ILUKA
2131
2314

CURRAMBINE
3993
4029

JOONDALUP
4746
4746

CONNOLLY
2394
2257

OCEAN REEF
5299
5206

HEATHRIDGE
4533
4448

EDGEWATER
3206
3134

BELDON
2739
2663

MULLALOO
4049
3953

CRAIGIE
3929
3812

KALLAROO
3625
3539

WOODVALE
6695
6549

HILLARYS
6917
6890

PARBURY
5896
5723

KINGSLEY
9713
9470

SORRENTO
5492
5402

DUNCRAIG
11303
16994

GREENWOOD
7314
7096

MARMION
1676

WARWICK
2840
2916

1625

SHOPPING CENTRES

Voluntary Change the key to Local Government Reform

A period of significant change is looming for Local Government in Western Australia.

By the time it has ended there may be boundary adjustments, Councils sharing resources including key staff and even the combination of some Councils into new single entities.

However, the position of the WA Local Government Association is that change should not be forced on local communities.

It is important that Councils decide if they need to make changes and enter into the process voluntarily.

Achieving a sustainable system of Local Government may require structural reform which could include capital and human resource sharing, consolidation, boundary adjustments, developing alliances and changes to Local Government's legislative and regulatory operating environment.

Local Government is the sphere of government that is closest to the community and ideally reflects the will of specific communities.

In order for any changes to be sustainable in Local Government they have to be supported by the local community and not forced onto Councils.

Defining a sustainable system of Local Government should be the focus of any changes to Councils or how they allocate their resources.

However, sustainability should not just be considered in economic terms, but also in terms of social and community outcomes and for that to occur it needs to be supported by the community.

Recently Local Government Minister John Bowyer suggested the Local Government Advisory Board conduct a review of structural and electoral reform. The LGAB is expected to report its findings in February next year.

"The Association has always maintained that any change process be voluntary."

The Association supports the Local Government Advisory Board undertaking a review of electoral and structural reform, but it is disappointing that this is occurring in isolation to any possible review of the systemic sustainability of Local Government in WA.

Meanwhile, earlier this year, the Association was given a mandate by Local Government in Western Australia to develop a framework to examine the structural reform process by a resolution passed at its Annual General Meeting.

The resolution to develop a framework demonstrated that the sector understood the

need for a sustainable system of Local Government.

There is a genuine desire to make sure we get the process correct, but an overwhelming desire is that any change be developed, managed and implemented by Local Government.

An example of Councils taking charge of their own future was the current process underway in the Mid-West involving the City of Geraldton and the Shire of Greenough attempting to merge.

The need for change in the Mid-West has been identified by the Councils and is being managed by the Councils.

The Association has always maintained that any change process be voluntary and that all and any structural reform needs to be negotiated in an open and consensual framework.

There is some opposition in the community to the proposed merging of Geraldton and Greenough and the Councils are taking these concerns on board as part of the process.

The current discussion on structural reform had caused concern among some Councils that they will be forced to share resources or merge.

Some of the unwarranted alarm had been caused by individuals and groups who had conflicting agendas to that which is most beneficial and workable for Local Government in Western Australia.

The worst thing that can happen through this process is that Councils do not consider options for a sustainable system because they believe to do so may lock them into a course of action.

I imagine those groups and individuals who would want to force change on Local Government would like nothing better than for the sector to ignore the issue and be subsequently under prepared to defend its chosen position.

An example of the potential for change to be forced on Local Government from external parties was the recent report into the inquiry into the City of Joondalup which recommended State Government appointed commissioners replace Elected Members for every Council in WA.

This recommendation was unwarranted and undemocratic and sensibly rejected by the Minister, but it demonstrates the type of change some would seek to have forced onto Local Government.

It also should be clear evidence to Local Government in WA that the sector needs to consider the issue of structural reform, participate in constructive discussions and be prepared to defend its chosen position to ensure that any change is on a voluntary basis.

Cr Bill Mitchell

President
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