

Local Council Representation Review

Final Report



**CASEY CITY
COUNCIL**

April 2020

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Recommendation

The Victorian Electoral Commission recommends that Casey City Council consist of 12 councillors elected from six two-councillor wards.

This recommendation is submitted to the Minister for Local Government as required by the *Local Government Act 1989*.

Please see Appendix 2 for a map of this recommended structure.

Executive summary

The *Local Government Act 1989* (the Act) requires the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) to conduct an electoral representation review of each local council in Victoria before every third council general election.

The purpose of an electoral representation review is to recommend the number of councillors and the electoral structure that provides ‘fair and equitable representation for the persons who are entitled to vote at a general election of the Council.’¹ The matters considered by a review are:

- the number of councillors
- the electoral structure of the council (whether the council should be unsubdivided or divided into wards and, if subdivided, the details of the ward boundaries and the number of councillors per ward).

The VEC conducts all reviews based on three main principles:

1. taking a consistent, State-wide approach to the total number of councillors
2. if subdivided, ensuring the number of voters represented by each councillor is within plus-or-minus 10% of the average number of voters per councillor for that local council
3. ensuring communities of interest are as fairly represented as possible.

Current number of councillors and electoral structure

Casey City Council currently comprises 11 councillors elected from six wards (five two-councillor wards and one single-councillor ward). Prior to the representation review in 2005, Casey City Council was comprised of 11 councillors elected from 11 single-councillor wards.

Visit the VEC website at vec.vic.gov.au for more information on the Casey City Council and to access copies of the 2005 and 2012 representation review final reports.

Preliminary submissions

Preliminary submissions opened at the commencement of the current review on Wednesday 6 November 2019. The VEC received 30 submissions for the representation

¹ Section 219D of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

review of Casey City Council by the deadline of 5.00 pm on Wednesday 4 December 2019.

Preliminary report

A preliminary report was released on Wednesday 5 February 2020 with the following options for consideration:

- Option A (preferred option)
Casey City Council consist of 12 councillors elected from four three-councillor wards.
- Option B (alternative option)
Casey City Council consist of 12 councillors elected from four three-councillor wards with different ward boundaries to Option A.
- Option C (alternative option)
Casey City Council consist of 12 councillors elected from six two-councillor wards.

Response submissions

The VEC received 18 submissions responding to the preliminary report by the deadline of 5.00 pm on Wednesday 4 March 2020.

Public hearing

The VEC conducted a public hearing for those wishing to speak about their response submission at 6.00 pm on Wednesday 11 March 2020. Four people spoke at the hearing.

Recommendation

The Victorian Electoral Commission recommends that Casey City Council consist of 12 councillors elected from six two-councillor wards.

This electoral structure was designated as Option C in the preliminary report. Please see Appendix 2 for a detailed map of this recommended structure.

Background

Legislative basis

The Act requires the VEC to conduct a representation review of each local council in Victoria before every third general council election, or earlier if gazetted by the Minister for Local Government.

The Act states that the purpose of a representation review is to recommend the number of councillors and the electoral structure that provides 'fair and equitable representation for the persons who are entitled to vote at a general election of the Council.'²

The Act requires the VEC to consider:

- the number of councillors in a local council
- whether a local council should be unsubdivided or subdivided.

If a local council is subdivided, the VEC must ensure that the number of voters represented by each councillor is within plus-or-minus 10% of the average number of voters per councillor for that local council.³ On this basis, the review must consider the:

- number of wards
- ward boundaries
- number of councillors to be elected for each ward.

Public engagement

Public information program

The VEC conducted a public information program to inform the community of the representation review, including:

- public notices printed in local and State-wide papers
- a public information session to outline the review process and respond to questions from the community
- media releases announcing the commencement of the review and the release of the preliminary report

² Section 219D of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

³ *Ibid.*

- a submission guide to explain the review process and provide background information on the scope of the review
- an information email campaign targeted at known community groups and communities of interest in the local council area
- sponsored social media advertising geo-targeted to users within the local council area
- ongoing information updates and publication of submissions on the VEC website.

More information on the VEC's public information program for the representation review of Casey City Council can be found at Appendix 3.

Public consultation

Public input was encouraged by the VEC via:

- preliminary submissions at the start of the review
- response submissions to the preliminary report
- a public hearing that provided an opportunity for people who had made a response submission to expand on their submission.

Public submissions are an important part of the review process but are not the only consideration. The VEC ensures its recommendations comply with the Act and are formed through careful consideration of public submissions, independent research, and analysis of all relevant factors.

The VEC's principles

Three main principles underlie all the VEC's work on representation reviews:

1. Taking a consistent, State-wide approach to the total number of councillors.

The VEC is guided by its comparisons of local councils of a similar size and category to the council under review. The VEC also considers any special circumstances that may warrant the local council having more or fewer councillors than similar local councils.

2. If subdivided, ensuring the number of voters represented by each councillor is within plus-or-minus 10% of the average number of voters per councillor for that local council.

This is the principle of 'one vote, one value', which is enshrined in the Act and is common across all three levels of government: local, state and federal. This means that every person's vote counts equally.

3. Ensuring communities of interest are as fairly represented as possible.

Each local council contains a number of communities of interest. Where practicable, the electoral structure should be designed to ensure they are fairly represented, and that geographic communities of interest are not split by ward boundaries. This allows elected councillors to be more effective representatives of the people and interests in their particular local council or ward.

Developing recommendations

The VEC bases its recommendations for the number of councillors and electoral structure on the following information:

- internal research specifically relating to the local council under review, including data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics and .id⁴; voter statistics from the Victorian electoral roll; and other State and local government data sets
- small area forecasts provided by .id for relevant local council areas
- the VEC's experience conducting previous electoral representation reviews of local councils and similar reviews for State elections
- the VEC's expertise in mapping, demography and local government
- consideration of all input from the public in written submissions received during the review and via oral submissions at the public hearing
- advice from consultants with extensive experience in local government.

Deciding on the number of councillors

The Act allows for a local council to have between five and 12 councillors but does not specify how to decide the appropriate number.⁵ In considering the number of councillors for a local council, the VEC is guided by the Victorian Parliament's intention for fairness and equity in the local representation of voters under the Act.

⁴ .id is a consulting company specialising in population and demographic analysis and prediction information products in most jurisdictions in Australia and New Zealand.

⁵ Section 5B(1) of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

The starting point in deciding the appropriate number of councillors for a local council is comparing the local council under review to other local councils of a similar size and type (Principle 1). Generally, local councils that have a larger number of voters will have a higher number of councillors. Often large populations are more likely to be diverse, both in the nature and number of their communities of interest and the issues of representation.

However, the VEC also considers the particular circumstances of each local council which could justify fewer or more councillors, such as:

- the nature and complexity of services provided by the Council
- geographic size and topography
- population growth or decline
- the social diversity of the local council.

Deciding the electoral structure

The Act allows for a local council ward structure to be unsubdivided, with all councillors elected 'at-large' by all voters or subdivided into a number of wards.

If the local council is to be subdivided into wards, there are three options available:

1. single-councillor wards
2. multi-councillor wards
3. a combination of single-councillor and multi-councillor wards.

A subdivided electoral structure must be developed with internal ward boundaries that provide for a fair and equitable division of the local council.

The Act allows for wards with different numbers of councillors, as long as the number of voters represented by each councillor is within plus-or-minus 10% of the average number of voters per councillor for that local council (Principle 2). For example, a local council may have one three-councillor ward with 15,000 voters and two single-councillor wards each with 5,000 voters. In this case, the average number of voters per councillor would be 5,000.

Over time, population changes can lead to some wards in subdivided local councils having larger or smaller numbers of voters. As part of the review, the VEC corrects any imbalances and considers likely population changes to ensure ward boundaries provide equitable representation for as long as possible.

In determining the most appropriate electoral structure, the VEC considers the following matters:

- the VEC's recommendation at the previous representation review and the reasons for that recommendation
- the longevity of the structure, with the aim of keeping voter numbers per councillor within the 10% tolerance for as long as possible (Principle 2)
- communities of interest, consisting of people who share a range of common concerns, such as geographic, economic or cultural associations (Principle 3)
- the number of candidates in previous elections, as outcomes from previous elections indicate that large numbers of candidates can lead to an increase in the number of informal (invalid) votes
- geographic factors, such as size and topography
- clear ward boundaries.

Casey City Council representation review

Profile of Casey City Council

Casey City Council is located on the south-eastern fringe of the Greater Melbourne metropolitan area. It covers an area of 407 square kilometres extending from the base of the Dandenong Ranges in the north to the Western Port shoreline in the south. The City forms part of the Casey-Cardinia growth area and includes established and rapidly growing suburbs, commercial districts, farming lands and green wedge land.

The City is one of the fastest growing local councils in Australia. Between 2006 and 2016, it increased by around 85,000 people from about 215,000 to nearly 300,000.⁶ Growth is being driven by high levels of immigration, mainly from overseas and neighbouring local councils and a relatively high birth rate.⁷

The population is expected to continue to grow at a relatively high rate of 2.4% per year, so that by 2031 it is projected to be 481,380.⁸ The suburbs expected to grow most rapidly over the next ten years include Clyde, Clyde North, Botanic Ridge, Cranbourne East and Cranbourne West.⁹

The rate of home ownership is high amongst the City's residents (75.3%) and significantly above the Greater Melbourne (66.4%) and state (67.6%) averages.¹⁰ Renters make up 20.5% of all households in the council area, though this figure is higher in the suburbs of Doveton-Eumemmerring and Cranbourne.¹¹

The City has a relatively young age profile. The median age is 34 years and children in the 0-14 year age group make up 22.7% of the population.¹² Casey City Council is highly

⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), *Census of population and housing: time series profile, Australia, 2016*, 2003.0, 2017.

⁷ .id, 'City of Casey: population forecast', <https://forecast.id.com.au/casey>, accessed 19 November 2019.

⁸ Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), *Victoria in Future 2019*, 2019, <https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/land-use-and-population-research/victoria-in-future>, accessed 19 November 2019.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ ABS, '2016 Quickstats: Casey (C)', https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/LGA21610?opendocument, accessed 19 November 2019.

¹¹ .id, 'City of Casey: community profile', <https://profile.id.com.au/casey>, accessed 19 November 2019.

¹² ABS, '2016 Quickstats: Casey (C)', https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/LGA21610?opendocument, accessed 19 November 2019.

diverse, with about 38% of the resident population born outside of Australia.¹³ Since 2006 there has been significant growth in people born in India, Sri Lanka and Afghanistan.¹⁴ In some suburbs, such as Doveton-Eumemmerring, Hallam, Lynbrook, Lyndhurst and Endeavour Hills the overseas-born population far exceeds the council average.¹⁵

The City rates well on measures of relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage.¹⁶ However, some suburbs, such as Doveton-Eumemmerring and Hampton Park, are considered highly disadvantaged and have large numbers of social housing tenants and relatively high unemployment rates.¹⁷

Casey City Council dismissed

On 19 February 2020 the Victorian Parliament legislated to dismiss Casey City Council and appoint administrators to manage Council business until the 2024 general council election.¹⁸ The dismissal was in response to two developments: the ongoing Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC) inquiry into allegations of corrupt behaviour involving councillors and property developers; and the subsequent recommendations made by the Municipal Monitor appointed on 27 November 2019 to examine governance at the Council and the functioning of Council decision-making.¹⁹

Several submitters referred to the IBAC inquiry and resulting dismissal of the Council in their preliminary and response submissions, with some urging the VEC to address these matters as part of the representation review. The VEC notes that these issues are beyond the scope of the representation review process. The representation review of Casey City Council cannot resolve matters related to the performance and conduct of individual councillors or governance issues more broadly. The VEC must recommend an electoral structure for fair and equitable representation and is required to complete the representation review of Casey City Council in accordance with current legislation and established timelines.

¹³ .id, 'City of Casey: community profile', <https://profile.id.com.au/casey>, accessed 19 November 2019.

¹⁴

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ .id, 'City of Casey: community profile', <https://profile.id.com.au/casey>, accessed 19 November 2019.

¹⁸ *Local Government (Casey City Council) Act 2020*.

¹⁹ *City of Casey Municipal Monitor Report February 2020*. Victorian Government Printer, February 2020, https://pov.ent.sirsidynix.net.au/client/en_GB/parl_paper/, accessed 20 February 2020.

Current number of councillors and electoral structure

Casey City Council currently comprises 11 councillors elected from six wards (five two-councillor wards and one single-councillor ward). Prior to the representation review in 2005, Casey City Council was comprised of 11 councillors elected from 11 single-councillor wards.

Casey City Council has undergone multiple reviews since the introduction of the current structure in 2005: a representation review in 2012 and subdivision reviews in 2008 and 2016. Visit the VEC website at <https://www.vec.vic.gov.au/reviews/Caseyrr.html> for more information on the Casey City Council and to access copies of the final reports for these reviews.

Preliminary submissions

At the close of submissions on Wednesday 4 December 2019, the VEC had received 30 submissions for the representation review of Casey City Council. A list of people who made a preliminary submission can be found in Appendix 1.

The 30 preliminary submissions included one submitter who made four separate submissions and another who made two submissions.

Number of councillors

Of the 26 individual submitters, 18 proposed increasing councillor numbers to 12, three submitters argued for retaining 11, one for decreasing the number of councillors to nine and four did not comment on the most appropriate number of councillors for Casey City Council.

Reducing councillor numbers

John Glazebrook submitted that for Casey City Council nine councillors would be an appropriate number, would save the council money and would not adversely impact the quality of representation. Mr Glazebrook added in another submission that the current IBAC inquiry provided further evidence for reducing councillor numbers.

Retaining 11 councillors

Adam Newman argued 11 councillors would be appropriate for Casey City Council and that the benefits of an extra councillor would not justify the disruption to the electoral structure likely to be caused by accommodating 12 councillors. Mr Newman also preferred an odd number of councillors to reduce the possibility of tied votes during the Council's decision-making.

The Proportional Representation Society of Australia (Victoria-Tasmania) Inc. (the PRSA) also suggested 11 councillors. The PRSA preferred an odd number of councillors to avoid tied votes during the Council's decision-making and argued that an odd number of councillors would better uphold the democratic principle of a majority view being represented by a majority of elected councillors.

Brian Oates proposed 11 councillors elected from single-councillor wards, but did not detail why 11 councillors was the most appropriate number.

Increasing to 12 councillors

Most submitters argued for increasing the number of councillors to 12, the maximum allowable under the current Act, in response to population growth. Many of these submitters suggested that because Casey City Council had the highest population of all Victorian local councils it should have the highest number of councillors. Garry Page argued that 12 councillors would be appropriate for the City's general and voting population when compared with other metropolitan Melbourne and interface councils. Some submitters argued for councillor numbers to be increased by comparing Casey City Council with neighbouring Greater Dandenong City Council, which also has 11 councillors but less than half the number of voters. They suggested that this was inconsistent and warranted increasing the number of councillors in the City of Casey to 12.

Casey City Council suggested 12 councillors would better manage the high rate of growth expected in the local council area and reduce the high voter-to-councillor ratio. Dr Saadia Majeed, Glenn Ruddle, Kevin Korb and Noel Wyndom all individually submitted that 12 councillors would provide for diversity of representation and better represent the City's diverse interests.

Gary Page suggested 12 councillors would assist with councillor workloads and potentially improve community engagement. Brendan Browne argued an extra councillor would allow councillors to better manage the various matters coming before Council and improve decision-making. Mr Browne also suggested that 12 councillors would increase the number of councillor votes required to pass motions at Council meetings and make it more difficult for voting blocs to be organised.

In relation to the issue of tied votes being more common with an even number of councillors during the Council's decision-making, Mr Page suggested the occurrence of

ted votes was rare and its impact minimal and pointed out that the Act did not prohibit an even number of councillors.

Electoral structure

Although various electoral structures were proposed by submitters, most supported a multi-councillor electoral structure of either three or four wards. Three submitters did not put forward a particular electoral structure and addressed matters out of scope of the representation review process.

One submitter, Christopher McHenry, did not propose an electoral structure but did suggest that because of common interests, the suburb of Harkaway should be included in the same ward as Berwick.

A list of people who made a preliminary submission can be found in Appendix 1.

Unsubdivided

Mr Glazebrook suggested that an unsubdivided electoral structure would be the most appropriate and would reduce the prevalence of 'dummy' candidates, though only if optional preferential voting was allowed. Mr Glazebrook argued that an unsubdivided electoral structure would give voters a say on all candidates at election time and allow residents to better connect with elected councillors. He also proposed that because an unsubdivided electoral structure would not require the creation of wards with potentially different numbers of voters in each, it would better adhere to the 'one vote, one value' principle.

Single-councillor wards

Four submitters, including Casey City Council, Mr Oates, Mr Browne and Mr Page, proposed a single-councillor ward structure. The Council's submission also supported this structure in response to the preference for single-councillor wards in the Local Government Bill 2019. The Council suggested that the 12 wards would enable councillors to connect with their communities and represent local issues. Council mapped a 12 single-councillor ward structure and argued it was important not to divide communities of interest.

Mr Browne put forward a 12 single-councillor electoral structure as a way to help reduce the large number of candidates standing for election and avoid situations whereby incumbents in the two-councillor wards shared preferences to their own advantage. Mr Browne also suggested that single-councillor wards could reduce campaigning costs and better enable independent candidates to stand for election. Mr Oates also

proposed a single-councillor ward structure to reduce the cost of campaigning, which he argued, encouraged candidates to seek outside funding and for vested interests to influence candidates and elected councillors.

Multi-councillor wards

Three submitters—Mr Paech, Ms Puurunen and Mr Salmon—suggested Casey City Council should consist of 12 councillors elected from either three or four wards to provide voters with more choice and better represent the City's diverse interests.

Mr Sloan, Dr Majeed and Ms Perry submitted that three four-councillor wards would provide greater diversity of representation and Ms Hayley suggested such a structure would better enable candidates from minority backgrounds and viewpoints to get elected.

Ten submitters proposed an electoral structure of four three-councillor wards, many of whom proposed similar groupings of suburbs as follows:

- A ward covering much of the west, including Endeavour Hills, Doveton-Eumemmerring, Hallam, Hampton Park, Lynbrook and Lyndhurst
- A ward covering sections of the north and east, including Narre Warren, Narre Warren North, Harkaway and Berwick.
- A ward covering parts of the centre and south-east, including fast-growing areas and new estates in Narre Warren South, Cranbourne North, Clyde North and Clyde.
- A ward covering the south-west, including Cranbourne, Cranbourne East and West, Junction Village, Botanic Ridge, rural areas and towns on the Western Port coast, such as Pearcedale, Warneet, Cannons Creek, Blind Bight and Tooradin.

All of these submitters suggested this electoral structure would better represent the City's diversity and communities of interest.

Mr Page suggested a structure of six two-councillor wards would be the best option for Casey City Council, as it would minimise the impact of 'donkey voting.'²⁰ Mr Page

²⁰ 'A donkey vote is a vote cast by a voter who numbers the squares down (or more rarely up) the ballot paper, without caring about the nature of the candidates on offer.' VEC, *Report to Parliament on the 2018 Victorian State election*, October 2019, State of Victoria (Victorian Electoral Commission), p. 99. Mr Garry Page adopted a broader definition of a 'donkey vote' than this.

contended that the prevalence of donkey voting had been underestimated and was inherently unfair.

The PRSA proposed an electoral structure of two three-councillor wards and one five-councillor ward, as this would provide an odd number of councillors overall and within each ward. The PRSA explained that their preferred structure would maximise the percentage of effective votes when compared with the current electoral structure or a structure of single-councillor wards.

Mix of single and multi-councillor wards

Mr Newman provided a map proposing adjustments to the ward boundaries of the current structure (five two-councillor wards and one single-councillor ward) to ensure that in all wards the voters per councillor were within plus-or-minus 10% of the average number of voters per councillor for Casey City Council. Mr Newman opposed an unsubdivided electoral structure due to the large number of candidates likely to appear on the ballot paper. He also disagreed with any structure involving a major redrawing of Casey City Council's ward boundaries.

Preliminary report

A preliminary report was released on Wednesday 5 February 2020. The VEC considered public submissions and research findings when formulating the options presented in the preliminary report.

In the preliminary report the VEC noted and reported on the challenges facing Casey City Council with regard to the IBAC inquiry. The VEC reaffirmed that these matters were beyond the scope of the representation review and the VEC was obliged to continue the representation review process as per the scheduled timeline for reviews.

Number of councillors

When considering the appropriate number of councillors for Casey City Council, the VEC assessed population data and other factors which may warrant an increase or decrease in the number of councillors, such as projected population growth or special circumstances relating to communities of interests. The VEC also compared Casey City Council with other similar local councils to determine the appropriate number of councillors.

The VEC reported that Casey City Council is the largest local council in Victoria by population and is expected to continue to grow at a significant rate. The VEC also

noted that the Council had the highest voter-to-councillor ratio of all local councils, which was well above those metropolitan Melbourne and interface local councils with 11 councillors. The VEC found Casey City Council to be highly diverse, and there were some areas facing high levels of social and economic disadvantage. The VEC considered there would be continued pressure on urban planning and service provision. For these reasons it was determined that the number of councillors should be increased to 12, the maximum permitted under the current Act.

Electoral structure

To determine the most appropriate electoral structure, the VEC considered numerous factors, including previous representation and subdivision reviews, changes in the number and distribution of voters since the last review, election outcomes and arguments presented in submissions.

Since the introduction of the current electoral structure in 2005, Casey City Council has undergone multiple representation and subdivision reviews. Although the overall electoral structure has remained the same, there have been numerous changes to the internal ward boundaries to correct voter imbalances and ensure that all wards satisfied the plus-or-minus 10% equality requirement.

Currently, four out of six wards are outside the accepted plus-or-minus 10% deviation. At the very least, major ward boundary adjustments were required to ensure the current electoral structure complied with the Act for the next general election. Moreover, sustaining a single-councillor ward to cover the rural communities located in the south of the City as well as areas of major urban growth was found to be increasingly untenable. Moreover, the VEC identified various difficulties developing appropriate and sustainable electoral structures for local councils undergoing rapid and uneven population growth. It was noted that in some cases, the VEC had proposed electoral structures that provided fair and equitable representation but were not likely to be sustained over the long-term or for at least three general council elections. This was because various factors, such as communities of interest and special circumstances, needed to be balanced alongside the long-term sustainability of a given electoral structure.

The VEC also considered the exceptional circumstances regarding the IBAC inquiry and eventual dismissal of the Council in February 2020. Although council elections would not be expected to be held until at least 2024, the VEC was required to conduct the

representation review of Casey City Council according to the same principles and standards that apply to reviews generally.

In balancing the many factors relevant to fair and equitable representation for the voters of Casey City Council, the VEC considered several other options, as summarised in the table below.

Overview of models considered

Electoral structure	Option in preliminary report	Key Considerations
Four three-councillor wards	Options A and B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current and projected elector population data indicates that this electoral structure will be viable until the next scheduled review in 2031 (for elections in 2020, 2024 and 2028) • Geographic communities of interest are clearly reflected in wards • Retains some of the current ward boundaries • Strong support in submissions • Very large wards
Six two-councillor wards	Option C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderate change • Projected elector population data indicates that this electoral structure meets the equality requirement to 2024 • Largely retains the main communities of interest in wards • Minimal support in submissions
Unsubdivided	✘	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History of large fields of candidates will likely lead to high rates of informal voting
11 or 12 single-councillor wards	✘	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projected elector population data indicates that this electoral structure would only be viable for the short-term and very unlikely to last to the 2024 elections. • Divides communities of interest • Uses arbitrary boundaries • Some support in submissions

Five two-councillor wards and one single-councillor ward (current structure)	✘	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current electoral structure: least change option • Projected elector population data indicates that this electoral structure would be viable beyond the 2020 local government elections • Due to a high voter-to-councillor ratio and projected growth, 12 councillors was considered the most appropriate • Minimal support in submissions
Four two-councillor wards and one three-councillor ward	✘	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal change • Projected elector population data indicates that this electoral structure would be viable beyond the 2024 local government elections • Due to a high voter-to-councillor ratio and projected growth, 12 councillors was considered the most appropriate • No support in submissions
Three four-councillor wards	✘	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some support in submissions • Number of voters in each ward would be overly large with around 80,000 voters
Two three-councillor wards and one five-councillor ward	✘	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal support in submissions • Five-councillor ward would be overly large with potentially more than 100,000 voters

The VEC did not consider an unsubdivided electoral structure to be appropriate for Casey City Council. In previous elections large fields of candidates have stood for council elections. Under an unsubdivided structure the expected number of candidates appearing on the ballot paper would be overly large, which would likely be confusing for voters and result in high rates of informal voting.

It was also determined that a single-councillor ward structure would be unsuitable for Casey City Council. The VEC found that single-councillor wards would not as effectively accommodate population growth when compared with a structure of multi-councillor wards and would be very unlikely to last to the 2024 council elections. Furthermore, modelling revealed that single-councillor wards would divide communities of interest and rely heavily on the use of arbitrary ward boundaries.

The VEC determined electoral structures consisting of four-councillor or five-councillor wards, with on average 80,000 or 100,000 voters in each, would be far too large and potentially difficult for councillors to manage.

The VEC considered 12 councillors to be the most appropriate number of councillors for Casey City Council and therefore did not put forward for further community consultation electoral structures consisting of 11 councillors.

The VEC presented three viable options for the community to consider, each of which was developed in response to analysis of preliminary submissions, the VEC's own research and modelling of population projections.

Two of the options proposed in the preliminary report consisted of four three-councillor wards with varying ward boundaries and the other option consisted of six two-councillor wards.

Option A: 12 councillors elected from four three-councillor wards

The VEC considered that although the wards in Option A were very large (ranging between 51,810 and 60,091 voters per ward), the option effectively accommodated population growth and change over the medium to long-term or up until the 2028 elections. It was considered that three councillors per ward enabled a more even distribution of the population when compared with an electoral structure of smaller wards.

Option A was considered to successfully capture and represent the City's communities of interest as follows:

- West Ward to include established suburbs, such as Endeavour Hills, Doveton, Hallam, Hampton Park and Lyndhurst, which have similar social profiles, including large numbers of residents born overseas, specific cultural communities and many residents that connect with areas in Greater Dandenong City Council.
- East Ward to include established suburbs, such as Narre Warren North and Harkaway in the north and Berwick in the east, which have similar social profiles and generally reflect higher levels of income and education, and also containing some of the newer suburbs in Clyde North.
- Central Ward to contain the suburbs of Narre Warren South and Cranbourne North, and to largely maintain the communities contained in Springfield Ward under the current structure, and to also include some of the City's major growth areas in parts of Clyde and Clyde North.

- South Ward to keep most of Cranbourne together, contain major areas of growth in Clyde, Cranbourne East and Botanic Ridge, and keep together the small townships of Pearcedale, Cannons Creek, Warneet, Blind Bight and Tooradin.

In addition, Harkaway was in the same ward as Berwick, as was proposed in one preliminary submission.

The VEC determined that in most cases, Option A used solid and easily identifiable ward boundaries including the Monash Freeway and other major roads. Option A retained many of the current ward boundaries, such as the Monash Freeway to separate Springfield and Four Oaks Wards, and a large section of the current ward boundary separating Springfield and Edrington Wards.

The VEC proposed a small improvement to the River Gum-Springfield Ward boundary to make better use of the easily identifiable power transmission line, which is the same in all of the options.

The VEC considered that in Option A, voters would likely have more diversity of representation than in the current two-councillor wards. It was also determined that improving voter choice at elections was not a major issue, as the number of candidates standing for election in Casey City Council in previous general elections has been very high.

The VEC considered the main potential drawback of Option A to be the likelihood of increased candidate numbers. In the 2016 general elections in metropolitan and interface councils, the median number of candidates standing for election in a three-councillor ward was 12, whereas in two-councillor wards it was nine. Candidate numbers might further increase under Option A, making voter choice more difficult and increasing the informal vote.

Option B: 12 councillors elected from four three-councillor wards, with different ward boundaries from Option A

The VEC considered Option B to have similar benefits to those addressed in Option A, including accommodation of population growth over the long-term; wards containing the City's main communities of interest; the use of solid and easily identifiable ward boundaries; and diversity of representation.

Option B had the same range of voters across the wards (51,810 to 60,091), and the South and West Wards were identical in both Options A and B. As such, the VEC

considered Option B to effectively contain and represent the City's communities of interest, though with slight variations.

In Option B all of Narre Warren was contained within East Ward and a section of Berwick was included in Central Ward. This difference reflected proposals in submissions to keep Narre Warren together with Narre Warren North, Harkaway and Berwick. However, the ward boundary separating Central and East Wards in Option B was considered less clear when compared with the more extensive use of Monash Freeway in Option A. Option B also contained a larger section of the growth areas in Clyde and Clyde North together in the one ward, but split Berwick between Central and East Wards along Clyde Road.

As in Option A, Harkaway was contained in the same ward as Berwick.

Similar to Option A, the main growth areas of the council area are shared across multiple wards, which ensures that Option B can remain viable over the medium to long term.

Option C: 12 councillors elected from six two-councillor wards

The VEC proposed Option C as a minimal change option, that when compared with Options A and B would impact far fewer voters. It was reported that 28,580 voters (or 12.76% of total voters) would be impacted through the ward boundary changes proposed in Option C.

The number of voters in each ward ranged between 33,882 and 40,421, which was considered more manageable for candidates and councillors than the approximate average of 56,000 voters in each ward in either Option A or Option B. It is expected that Option C would remain viable for the medium term, with all wards likely to remain within the accepted plus-or-minus 10% deviation for the 2024 council elections.

Option C required various ward boundary adjustments in order to accommodate the additional councillor allocated to Balla Balla Ward. These changes included:

- extending Balla Balla Ward north to capture parts of Cranbourne East and Clyde North
- extending Springfield Ward to include a section of Clyde North
- extending Mayfield Ward to include a part of Cranbourne
- extending River Gum Ward to contain Lyndhurst
- extending Edrington Ward to include Harkaway.

The VEC considered that Option C retained large sections of the current ward boundaries, including the same locality boundaries separating River Gum and Springfield Wards and Edrington and Springfield Wards, and the Monash Freeway to separate River Gum and Four Oaks Wards as well as Springfield and Four Oaks Wards. A small boundary change was proposed to the latter, using Cranbourne Road and the railway instead of the Monash Freeway. The change was required to ensure the affected wards met the plus-or-minus 10% equality rule.

Overall, the VEC considered that Option C maintained many of the City's communities of interest, as follows:

- communities in the north such as Endeavour Hills and Narre Warren North are together in Four Oaks Ward
- the whole of Berwick is contained within Edrington Ward
- the suburbs in the west, such as Doveton-Eumemmerring, Hallam and Hampton, remain in River Gum Ward
- much of the centre of the council area in Springfield Ward is retained
- most of the rural area and all of the coastal townships are contained in the same ward.

The VEC also considered that with smaller wards, Option C would likely mitigate against the larger fields of candidates and increased informality that could occur under Options A and B.

Options

After careful consideration, the VEC put forward the following options:

- Option A (preferred option)
Casey City Council consist of 12 councillors elected from four three-councillor wards.
- Option B (alternative option)
Casey City Council consist of 12 councillors elected from four three-councillor wards with different ward boundaries to Option A.
- Option C (alternative option)
Casey City Council consist of 12 councillors elected from six two-councillor wards.

Public response

Response submissions

The VEC accepted submissions responding to the preliminary report from Wednesday 5 February 2020 until 5.00 pm on Wednesday 4 March 2020. The VEC received 18 response submissions. A list of people who made a response submission can be found in Appendix 1. The table below indicates the level of support for each option.

Preferences expressed in response submissions

Option A	Option B	Option C	Other
1*	1*	14	2*

* Some submissions nominated a preference for more than one option.

Number of councillors

Derek Mosely and Sharon Mitchell suggested that increasing the number of councillors to 12 would improve the voter-to-councillor ratio and reduce councillor workloads. Margaret Turner submitted that 12 councillors would provide a balanced, flexible and good range of viewpoints to represent the City's voters and residents.

Brian Oates suggested that the maximum number of councillors allowable should be increased to 13, which for Casey City Council would reduce the very high voter-to-councillor ratio and provide an odd number of councillors.

Two submitters—John Glazebrook and Paul Richardson—suggested the need to reduce councillor numbers. Mr Glazebrook criticised the approach used by the VEC to determine the number of councillors and saw no reason for councillor numbers to be increased; Mr Richardson argued in favour of reducing councillor numbers to nine and suggested that any increase would be a cost burden to residents and ratepayers.

Electoral structure

There were 14 response submissions in support of Option C and one submission in favour of Option A or Option B. One submitter proposed a single-councillor ward structure and two submitters did not preference any of the options proposed in the preliminary report.

Support for Options A and B

The PRSA argued that with an increase in councillor numbers to 12, Options A and B were the most appropriate. This was because Options A and B would elect the same odd number of councillors per ward and would therefore be the most appropriate

structure to guarantee the benefits of proportional representation. The PRSA also argued against single-councillor wards and an electoral structure consisting of wards with an even number of councillors, as would be the case under Option C.

Support for Option C

Most submitters supported Option C, as it would involve minimal change to the current electoral structure.

Adam Newman favoured Option C because it retained the current ward names and would impact fewer voters when compared with Options A or B. Casey City Council argued Option C was consistent with the current electoral structure, which residents and voters would be familiar with. The Council also considered it important to convey to the community a message of business as usual and that the two-councillor wards in Option C would be more closely aligned with reforms proposed under the new Local Government Bill 2019.

Various submitters, including Sonia Beaumont, Rosalind Crofts, Ruth Crofts, Robert Flavell and Louise Reeve, supported Option C as it would retain the current ward names, which the submitters argued would continue to reflect the history and heritage of the City of Casey. The same submitters also argued that Option C would not split communities and that two councillors per ward was the ideal number to represent voters.

Stuart Chalmers preferred Option C because it mostly retained the current ward boundaries, including Four Oaks Ward. Mr Chalmers argued that Four Oaks Ward as proposed in Option C more effectively contained established communities of interest, including the semi-rural, rural and green wedge features of the area.

Kelly Ryan supported Option C and argued that smaller wards reflecting the social composition of different areas within the City would best represent the needs of voters. Clive Ellis suggested that the two-councillor wards proposed in Option C would provide greater accountability and representation and would be the best option for community engagement. Margaret Turner suggested Option C provided good coverage of the council area and that two councillors per ward would give residents a choice when connecting with councillors.

Some of the submitters supporting Option C agreed with the proposed ward boundary adjustments. For example, Casey City Council supported the inclusion of Lyndhurst into River Gum Ward in Option C; Donald Jewell and Annette Jewell did not object to ward boundary changes to accommodate population growth, especially in Springfield and

Mayfield Wards. The same submitters also supported the allocation of an additional councillor for Balla Balla Ward due to the large geographical area covered and the growth expected in the north of the ward. Similarly, the Council supported an increase from one to two councillors for Balla Balla Ward, which would provide appropriate representation for the growth expected in Clyde North.

Casey City Council did, however, propose a boundary adjustment to Balla Balla Ward, extending the ward boundary with Springfield Ward further north to contain a greater part of the Clyde growth area.

Some submitters in support of Option C outlined reasons against Options A and B. Many of these submitters suggested that the wards in the three-councillor options were far too large in both geographical area and number of voters. The Council argued that Options A and B would create supersized wards and that the significant ward boundary adjustments proposed would affect a far greater number of voters than Option C. The Council also suggested that the ward boundary adjustments in Options A and B would erode the existing local characteristics that defined the current electoral structure. Mr Chalmers did not support splitting Narre Warren North as proposed in both Option A and Option B and argued against including large areas of growth in the proposed East Ward.

Mr Mosely and Ms Mitchell argued against the size of the wards in Options A and B and suggested that the large wards would undermine the representation of communities, increase councillor workloads and increase the cost of campaigning.

Mr Newman suggested that under the smaller wards proposed in Option C the informal vote would more likely be lower than in larger wards.

Brian Oates did not agree with any of the options proposed by the VEC, but instead, favoured an electoral structure consisting of single-councillor wards. Mr Oates argued that this structure would address a range of issues pertinent to the Council at present, including: the overt role of outside influences at election time; the need for more equity in campaigning costs; and the need to better encourage and enable candidates from diverse backgrounds to stand for election. Mr Oates was also concerned about the large number of candidates standing at election time. He suggested that Options A and B would not change the lack of transparency and accountability currently affecting Council business. Finally, Mr Oates suggested that it was possible to create 11 single-councillor wards within the accepted plus-or-minus 10% deviation and which did not split communities of interest.

Mr Page did not advocate for any particular option. He suggested that the VEC should recommend for the representation review not to proceed because, due to population growth and the Council's history of frequent structural and ward boundary adjustments, a review would be required by the 2024 general council elections anyway.

Paul Richardson proposed nine councillors elected from an unsubdivided electoral structure as his first preference, which it was argued would lessen the cost to ratepayers when compared with any of the three options proposed in the preliminary report. Mr Richardson's second preference was for nine councillors elected from three two-councillor wards and three single-councillor wards. According to this proposal, those wards with a voter population above the average of voters per councillor (Mayfield, Balla Balla and Edrington Wards) would be allocated two councillors and those below the average (Four Oaks, River Gum and Springfield) would have one councillor. Mr Richardson argued that this would better maintain the one vote, one value principle. Mr Richardson also addressed matters out of scope of the review process, such as councillor allowances, the timing of council elections and issues related to the IBAC inquiry and dismissal of Casey City Council.

Mr Glazebrook was highly critical of the VEC's approach to determining the most appropriate electoral structure for Casey City Council. Mr Glazebrook also advised the VEC to address issues outside of the scope of the review process, such as donations to councillors from property developers and reforming the current voting systems in favour of optional preferential voting.

Public hearing

The VEC conducted a public hearing for those wishing to speak about their response submission at 6.00 pm on Wednesday 11 March 2020 in the Function Centre, Bunjil Place, 2 Patrick Northeast Drive, Narre Warren. Four people spoke at the public hearing. A list of people who spoke at the hearing can be found in Appendix 1.

Ruth Crofts argued in favour of Option C, mainly to retain the current ward names, which reflected the heritage and history of the City. Ms Crofts further suggested that the ward names communicated a sense of place to the community and new residents. When questioned by the panel whether Options A or B would be preferred if some of the current ward names could be retained, Ms Crofts maintained that Option C was the best option for the City's voters and communities.

Ms Crofts also argued that: the two-councillor wards in Option C retained for the most part the existing ward boundaries and would therefore involve a minimal level of disruption for voters; was the most appropriate structure for the City's communities of interest; and would provide fair and equitable representation overall.

Paul Richardson expressed concerns about increasing councillor numbers to 12 and argued it was unfair for residents and ratepayers to have to pay for an additional councillor. As such, Mr Richardson favoured a reduction in councillor numbers to nine or at least 11 councillors, primarily to reduce the cost burden on ratepayers. Mr Richardson restated his preference for an unsubdivided electoral structure and outlined his second preference for a structure consisting of three two-councillor wards and three single-councillor wards. He argued that both of these options were preferable to Options A, B or C.

Mr Richardson addressed a number of matters outside the scope of the review process, including councillor allowances, the schedule of council general elections and a proposal to have all councils run by administrators for a certain period of time.

Mr Page raised concerns about the representation review process and timeline, given that the council general election would not be held until at least 2024 and that by this time another review would likely be required. Further to this matter, Mr Page suggested setting the voter-to-councillor ratio within wards beyond the accepted plus-or-minus 10%. Mr Page also proposed the VEC to recommend that, given the circumstances facing Casey City Council, the representation review should not proceed.

Overall, Mr Page favoured Option A, as it would provide more councillors per ward. He suggested that the smaller, two-councillor wards proposed in Option C promoted behaviours amongst councillors that limited their focus and response to particular issues. Mr Page suggested a number of ward boundary changes to Option A to better accommodate population growth and represent communities of interest. Mr Page also advised the VEC to address issues relating to 'donkey voting'.

Stuart Chalmers favoured Option C and identified numerous problems with Option A and Option B. For example, Mr Chalmers suggested the need to adjust the East and West Ward boundary in both options to avoid splitting communities of interest and keep together the similar and cohesive communities currently contained in Four Oaks Ward. Mr Chalmers also argued that East Ward in particular contained numerous communities of interest with different needs, including growth areas in the south of the ward, more established suburbs in the centre and rural communities in the north.

Mr Chalmers expressed doubts about the inclusion of Harkaway with Berwick in Edrington Ward but was unsure about community sentiment regarding this proposal. Overall, Mr Chalmers supported Option C as the best option for representing communities of interest, including established communities in the north of the council area and those emerging in the City's growth areas.

Findings and recommendation

The VEC's findings

Number of councillors

The VEC found convincing evidence for increasing councillor numbers to 12, the maximum allowed under the *Local Government Act 1989*. Casey City Council has the largest number of voters of all Victorian local councils and the greatest voter-to-councillor ratio. Population growth is expected to continue at a high rate, placing significant pressure on council services, policy and planning, and councillor workloads.

There was overwhelming support in submissions for the number of councillors to be increased to 12, mainly as a means to reduce the very high voter-councillor-ratio and accommodate current and projected population growth.

While a small number of submissions suggested a reduction in councillor numbers to nine was required, primarily in response to the sacking of the Council and to reduce the cost on ratepayers, the VEC did not consider this would be appropriate. Given the current and projected growth in voter numbers, it was determined that any decrease in councillor numbers would have an adverse impact on fair and equitable representation.

Electoral structure

The VEC put forward three viable options: two electoral structures consisting of four three-councillor wards (Option A and Option B) and one consisting of six two-councillor wards (Option C).

In coming to its final recommendation, the VEC assessed the arguments presented in submissions and considered the findings of its own research to determine the most appropriate electoral structure for the voters of Casey City Council. The VEC determined that Option C, an electoral structure of six two-councillor wards, would be the most appropriate for fair and equitable representation for Casey City Council.

Notably, the size of the wards in Option C were considered to be easier to represent when compared with the wards in Options A and B. Ranging from 33,882 to 40,421, the number of voters in each ward in Option C would be significantly less than the range for Options A and B (51,810 to 60,091 voters). The VEC considered that candidates and councillors in the larger, three-councillor wards would likely have more difficulties connecting with voters.

More significantly, the VEC reasoned that the number of candidates standing for election in the three-councillor wards in Options A and B would potentially be very high. Given the number of candidates standing for elections under the current electoral structure (84 candidates in 2016, 85 in 2012 and 52 in 2005), the VEC was concerned that candidate numbers per ward would increase even further under Options A and B. This would make it difficult for voters to make an informed choice about their preferred candidates at election time and increase informal voting.

The VEC considered Option C, by retaining six wards and affecting 28,580 voters (or 12.76% of total voters) would involve the least amount of disruption for voters. Moreover, Option C would retain many of the current ward boundaries, most of which would be clear and familiar to voters. The VEC also determined there to be some advantage in retaining all of the current ward names, which it recognised as an important issue for submitters.

Although Options A and B maintained some of the current ward boundaries, significant adjustments were required to ensure that both options would be viable. For example, in both Options A and B, the present Four Oaks Ward was split along Eumemmering Creek. To accommodate the projected growth in population, the current Mayfield Ward would be divided almost in half along a series of less familiar roads. Although Option A was considered to perform marginally better than Option B with regard to the use of familiar and solid ward boundaries, both options would involve a significant level of change when compared with Option C.

In retaining much of the current ward structure, Option C was considered to better represent communities of interest, especially those based around established suburbs in the north and west of the council area. This was particularly the case with regard to Four Oaks Ward, River Gum Ward and Mayfield Ward, all of which were almost identical to the wards of the current structure. In Option C, changes were proposed to the current wards containing the City's areas of growth: Springfield Ward was extended south to contain the growth occurring and expected in Clyde North; Balla Balla Ward was extended north for similar reasons.

Under Option C, Edrington Ward was adjusted so that areas of growth contained in the current ward boundaries were redistributed to Springfield and Balla Balla Wards. The VEC considered this change was essential to accommodate growth and ensure the viability of the ward boundaries over the medium to long-term.

The extension of Edrington Ward to encompass Harkaway in Option C recognised the connections between Harkaway and Berwick and provided a potentially clearer ward boundary than the locality boundary used in the current structure. Only one submitter raised doubts about the inclusion of Harkaway with Berwick in Edrington Ward; there were no objections from Berwick submitters and there were no submissions from residents in Harkaway. As such, the VEC considered the change to be acceptable from a community of interest perspective.

Furthermore, the VEC determined Edrington Ward in Option C, which contains most of the City's eastern suburbs, is preferable to East Ward in Options A and B, which contains a greater number of communities, including rural communities, established suburbs and new housing estates.

The VEC also considered the ward boundary changes Casey City Council proposed for Option C at the response stage. The Council suggested moving the Balla Balla-Springfield Ward boundary further north to a transmission line. The Council reasoned that this change would ensure that the expected growth in Clyde would be more sustainable, particularly for voters in Springfield Ward. While the VEC considered that this change made use of a clear and familiar ward boundary, and reflected communities of interest, too much of the growth projected for Clyde would be contained within Balla Balla Ward; Springfield and Balla Balla Wards would be unlikely to satisfy the accepted plus-or-minus 10% equality rule for the 2024 elections if the Council's proposal was adopted.

The VEC considered strong arguments for allocating the additional councillor to Balla Balla Ward in Option C. As Balla Balla Ward contains important areas of growth in the north and a vast geographical area, including rural and coastal communities, it was determined that two councillors would be required for fair and equitable representation. With the additional councillor allocated to Balla Balla Ward, all wards in Option C would elect the same number of councillors. This was considered an advantage when compared with the current electoral structure, as all candidates would require the same quota of votes to be elected.

Finally, the VEC considered the long-term viability of the options proposed. Although the three-councillor wards in Options A and B would better accommodate population growth and change and would likely last longer than the smaller, two-councillor wards in Option C, the VEC was confident that Option C would remain viable to the 2024 elections. Given the difficulties associated with developing viable, long-term electoral

structures for interface councils and those councils undergoing rapid and unpredictable growth, the VEC found that on balance Option C would provide fair and equitable representation for an acceptable period of time.

Overall, the VEC considered that when compared with Options A and B, Option C involved the least disruption to voters, retained most of the current ward boundaries, and would best represent the Casey City Council's communities of interest.

The VEC's recommendation

The Victorian Electoral Commission recommends that Casey City Council consist of 12 councillors elected from six two-councillor wards.

This recommendation is submitted to the Minister for Local Government as required by the *Local Government Act 1989*. The model was designated as Option C in the VEC's preliminary report for this review.

If this recommendation is accepted, any changes to the number of councillors and electoral structure will apply at the October 2024 general election.

Please see Appendix 2 for a detailed map of this recommended structure.

Appendix 1: Public involvement

Preliminary submissions

Preliminary submissions were made by:

Browne, Brendan	Page, Garry (2)
Casey City Council	Perry, Hayley
Closs, Lydia	Porto, Daniel
Cox, Jessica	Prochelle, Mario
Glazebrook, John (4)	Proportional Representation Society of Australia (Victoria- Tasmania) Inc.
Hornbuckle, Terry	Puurunen, Alissa
Korb, Kevin	Rees, Karen
Majeed, Saadia	Ruddle, Glenn
McHenry, Christopher	Salmon, Jason
McNeil, Jen	Sims, Nyssa
Newman, Adam	Sloan, Matt
Oates, Brian	Wyndom, Noel
Oosterbeek, Lauren	
Paech, Mathew	

Response submissions

Response submissions were made by:

Beaumont, Sonia	Jewell, Donald & Lynette
Casey City Council	Oates, Brian
Chalmers, Stuart	Mosely, Derek & Mitchell, Sharon
Crofts, Rosalind	Newman, Adam
Crofts, Ruth OAM	Page, Garry
Ellis, Clive	Proportional Representation Society of Australia (Victoria- Tasmania) Inc.
Flavell, Robert	
Glazebrook, John	

Reeve Louise

Ryan, Kelly

Richardson, Paul

Turner, Margaret

Public hearing

The following individuals spoke at the public hearing:

Chalmers, Stuart

Page, Garry

Crofts, Ruth OAM

Richardson, Paul

Appendix 2: Map

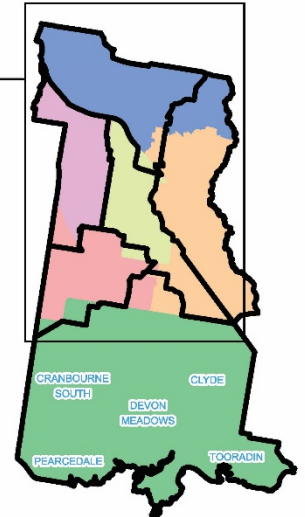
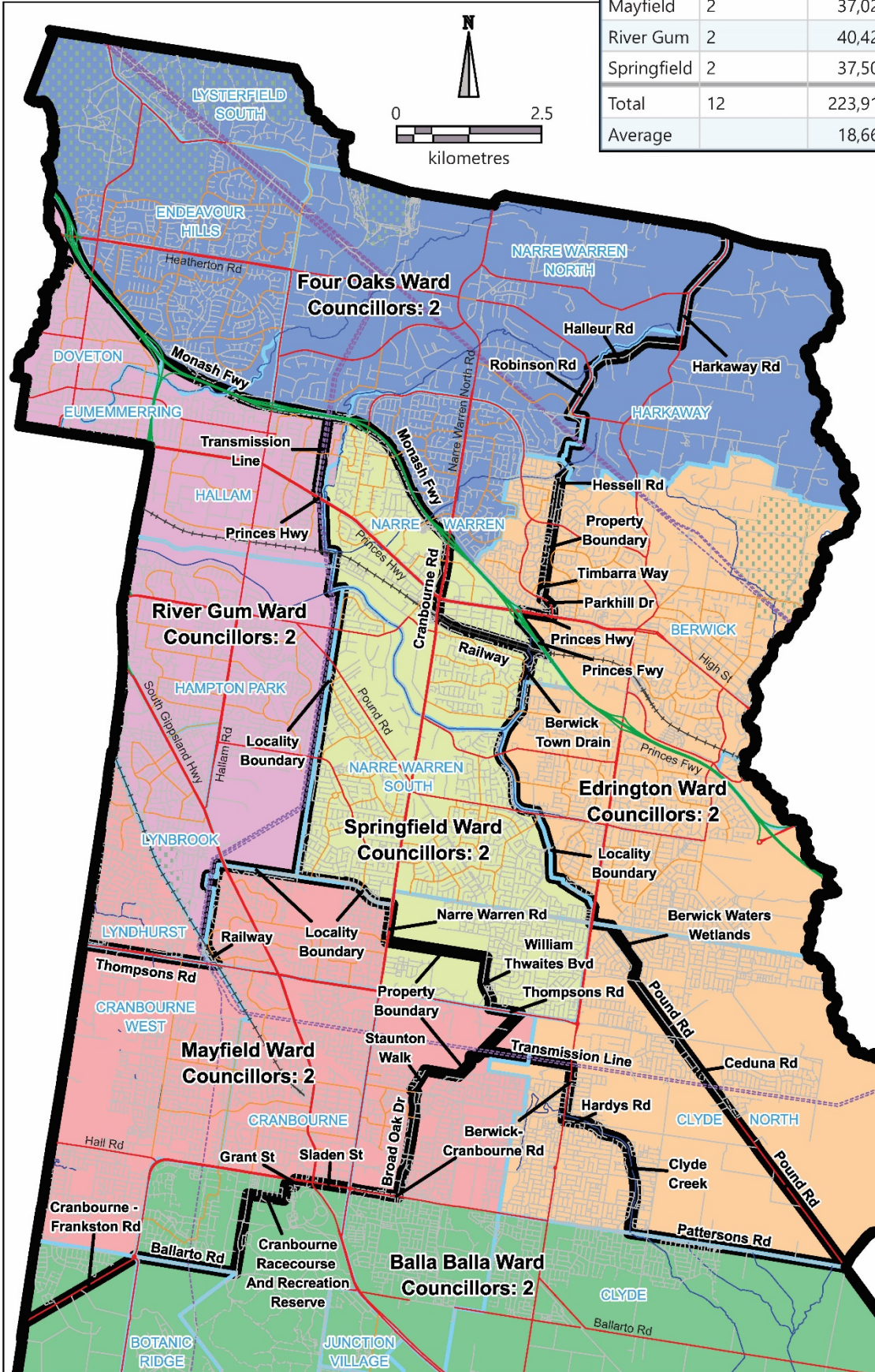
The map is provided on the next page.

Casey City Council

Map of Recommended Option Twelve Councillors, Six Wards

Ward	Councillors	Electors*	Deviation	Area sq km
Balla Balla	2	33,882	-9.21%	183.46
Edrington	2	35,953	-3.66%	58.75
Four Oaks	2	39,135	+4.86%	50.65
Mayfield	2	37,021	-0.80%	33.62
River Gum	2	40,421	+8.31%	33.7
Springfield	2	37,505	+0.50%	36.45
Total	12	223,917	-9.21% - +8.31	396.62
Average		18,660		66.11

*Elector numbers at 3rd September 2019



Legend

- Recommended Boundary
- Existing Wards**
- Balla Balla
- Edrington
- Four Oaks
- Mayfield
- River Gum
- Springfield
- Map Symbols**
- Freeway
- Main Road
- Collector Road
- Road
- Unsealed Road
- Railway Line
- River/Creek
- Transmission Line
- Park/Reserve
- Local Boundary

Inset Map

Map prepared by:



Data use:



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Appendix 3: Public information program

Advertising

In accordance with the Act, public notices of the review and the release of the preliminary report were placed in the following newspapers:

Newspaper	Notice of review	Notice of preliminary report
<i>Herald Sun</i>	Thursday 24 October 2019	Wednesday 29 January 2020
<i>Berwick News</i>	Thursday 24 October 2019	Thursday 30 January 2020
<i>Cranbourne Leader</i>	Wednesday 30 October 2019	Wednesday 5 February 2020

Media releases

A media release was prepared and distributed to local media to promote the commencement of the review on Thursday 24 October 2019. A further release was distributed with the publication of the preliminary report on Wednesday 5 February 2020. A final media advisory was circulated on the publication date of this final report.

Public information session

A public information session for people interested in the review process was held on Wednesday 6 November 2019 in the Function Centre, Bunjil Place, 2 Patrick Northeast Drive, Narre Warren.

Submissions guide

A submission guide was developed and made available on the VEC website, or in hardcopy on request, throughout the review timeline. The submission guide provided information about the review, the review timeline and how to make submissions to the review.

Online submission tool

An online submission tool was developed and made available during the submission periods of the review. The tool allowed people to make a submission from the VEC website. During the preliminary submission stage, users also had the opportunity to map out their preferred subdivisions through the online submission tool using Boundary Builder. Boundary Builder included real elector numbers so that users could see if their preferred structures and numbers of councillors met the plus-or-minus 10% rule.

VEC website

The VEC website delivered up-to-date information to provide transparency and facilitate public participation during the review process. All public submissions were published on the website.

Email and social media engagement

The VEC delivered an information email campaign targeted at known community groups and communities of interest in the local council area. This included a reminder email at each milestone of the representation review process.

The VEC also published sponsored social media advertising that was geo-targeted to users within the local council area. This included advertising at both the preliminary submission and response submission stages. The total reach of these posts was 9,574 during the preliminary submission stage and 11,788 during the response submission stage.

Council communication resources

The VEC provided the Council with a communication pack that included information on the review in various formats. While the council is encouraged to distribute this information and raise awareness about the review, the VEC is an independent reviewer and all communications resources include reference and links to the VEC website and core materials.

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(Victorian Electoral Commission)
April 2020

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