

Local council electoral structure review

Final Report

Central Goldfields Shire Council

May 2023

Revised July 2023

Acknowledgement of Country

The electoral representation advisory panel acknowledges the Dja Dja Wurrung people as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters for which it is holding this review and pays respects to ancestors and Elders past, present and emerging. The panel acknowledges their custodianship for many thousands of years and their continuing living culture.

Document history and version control

Version	Date approved	Submission approved by	Brief description
1	19 May 2023	Acting Electoral Commissioner	Final version
2	24 July 2023	Program Sponsor	Revised version with inclusion of good governance wording

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Executive summary

An independent electoral structure review panel appointed by the Minister for Local Government has reviewed the electoral structure of Central Goldfields Shire Council.

The purpose of the review is to advise the Minister on the appropriate number of councillors and electoral structure for the council.

The panel looked at:

- whether the council had an appropriate number of councillors
- whether it should be unsubdivided or subdivided
- appropriate ward names.

This report presents the panel's final advice to the Minister on the recommended new electoral structure of Central Goldfields Shire Council to meet the requirements of Victoria's *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act).

More information about the background to the reviews is available on [page 6](#).

Recommendation

The electoral representation advisory panel recommends that Central Goldfields Shire Council adopt a single-councillor ward structure, with a total of 7 councillors, 7 wards and one councillor per ward.

The recommended names for the 7 wards in this electoral structure are Flynn Ward, Maryborough Central Ward, Maryborough East Ward, Maryborough North Ward, Maryborough West Ward, Paddys Ranges Ward and Tullaroop Ward.

This advice is submitted to the Minister for Local Government as required by the Terms of Reference of the electoral representation advisory panel and the Act.

Please see [Appendix 1](#) for a detailed map of this recommended electoral structure.

Summary of approach

Developing electoral structure models

The panel considered a range of factors when deciding on its final recommendation including:

- research and analysis
- voter growth or decline over time
- public submissions (see below).

More information on the way the panel decided on the models is available on [page 7](#).

Preliminary submissions

The panel received 4 preliminary submissions. Of these, one submission included maps.

A summary of the preliminary submissions is contained in the preliminary report, available on the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) website at vec.vic.gov.au

Preliminary report

The panel published a preliminary report on Wednesday 29 March 2023 with the following electoral structure models for public consultation:

- Model 1: an unsubdivided electoral structure with 7 councillors.
- Model 2: a subdivided electoral structure with a total of 6 councillors, 3 wards and 2 councillors per ward.
- Model 3: a subdivided electoral structure with a total of 7 councillors, 7 wards and 1 councillor per ward.

The full preliminary report is available on the VEC website at vec.vic.gov.au

Response submissions

The panel received 5 submissions responding to the preliminary report.

A full analysis of response submissions received can be found on [page 15](#).

Public hearing

The panel held an online public hearing for those wishing to speak about their response submission at 2 pm on Wednesday 26 April 2023. One person spoke at the hearing.

Background

About the 2023–24 electoral structure reviews

In October 2022, the Minister for Local Government formed 2 electoral representation advisory panels to review and provide advice on the electoral structures of 39 local councils, under section 16 of the Act. If the Minister accepts the electoral structure recommended by the panel, any changes will take effect at the October 2024 elections.

The Act introduced several changes to local government representation, including the types of electoral structures local councils may have. Large and small rural shire councils (including Central Goldfields Shire Council) can have one of 3 electoral structures:

- unsubdivided (entire council area with no wards)
- single-councillor wards
- multi-councillor wards with the same number of councillors per ward.

For Central Goldfields Shire Council, the electoral representation advisory panel examined:

- the number of councillors
- whether the council should be subdivided into wards or unsubdivided.

For subdivided structures, it also examined:

- the number of wards
- where the ward boundaries should be
- the names of each ward
- how many councillors should be elected for each ward.

The Act requires electoral structures to provide fair and equitable representation and facilitate good governance. For subdivided structures, each ward must have an approximately equal number of voters per councillor (within +/-10% of the average). While conducting the review, the panel also noted the role of a councillor as specified under section 28 of the Act.

The electoral representation advisory panel

The panel that conducted the electoral structure review of Central Goldfields Shire Council had 3 members:

- Ms Julie Eisenbise (Chairperson)
- Mr Tim Presnell
- Acting Electoral Commissioner Ms Dana Fleming.

The panel is independent of councils and the Victorian State government.

Under the Act, the VEC is not responsible for reviewing council electoral structures but must provide administrative and technical support to the panel. The Electoral Commissioner (or their delegate) must be a member of each panel.

Public engagement

Public information program

To inform the public about the Central Goldfields Shire Council electoral structure review, the VEC supported a public information and awareness program, which included:

- printing public notices in state-wide newspapers
- holding public information sessions to outline the review process and respond to questions from the community
- sending out media releases announcing the start of the review and the release of the preliminary reports
- publishing information on social media channels
- regularly updating the VEC website content on vec.vic.gov.au, with:
 - current information on the review process
 - submission guides and fact sheets for each council under review with background information
 - preliminary and response submissions from the public.

Public consultation

The panel encouraged public input to the review of Central Goldfields Shire Council via:

- preliminary submissions at the start of the review
- response submissions to the preliminary report
- an online public hearing for anyone who made a response submission to speak to the panel and expand on their submission.

Public submissions are an important part of the review process and are considered alongside other factors addressed during the review. These are outlined below.

Developing recommendations

The panel's final recommendations comply with the Act and were developed through careful consideration of:

- research and analysis conducted by the VEC support team, including geospatial and demographic data
- rates or patterns of population and voter change over time, and relevant forecasts of growth or decline based on forecast information provided by .id (informed decisions, a company specialising in demographics and forecasting)
- input received during public consultation.

Deciding on the number of councillors

The Act allows local councils to have between 5 and 12 councillors, but neither the Act nor the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2020 specify how the number of councillors is to be

determined. As such, the recommendation put forward by the panel in this report is guided by the Act's intention for fairness and equity in voter representation and the consequent facilitation of good governance.

In examining the appropriate number of councillors for Central Goldfields Shire Council, the panel considered the following criteria:

- the population and number of voters in the council area compared to other councils with a similar population size and number of voters in the same category (for example, other comparable rural shire councils)
- patterns of population change and voter growth or decline in the council area over time
- the current and past numbers of councillors
- the representation needs of communities of interest in the council area
- whether a particular type of electoral structure requiring a certain number of councillors would best suit the council (see 'Deciding the electoral structure' below)
- any matter raised in public submissions not already listed above.

Generally, local councils with a larger number of voters will have a higher number of councillors. Large populations are often more likely to have greater diversity, both in the type and number of communities of interest and issues relating to representation. However, the ideal number of councillors can also be influenced by the particular circumstances of a council, such as the:

- nature and complexity of services the council provides
- geographic size and topography of the area
- forecast population and voter growth or decline
- social diversity.

Deciding the electoral structure

The electoral structure of large and small rural shire councils can be:

- unsubdivided (entire council area with no wards)
- made up of single-councillor wards
- or
- made up of multi-councillor wards with the same number of councillors per ward.

When developing electoral structure models for Central Goldfields Shire Council, the panel considered these criteria:

- whether the structure would comply with section 15(2) of the Act (see below), and for how long it would likely comply
- the appropriate number of councillors, as outlined above
- whether meaningful and effective ward boundaries can be established and whether these would be easily identifiable to local communities

- representation of communities of interest
- the voter distribution and physical features of the area, and the impact these may have on the shape and size of any wards
- past elections for the council, including:
 - numbers of candidates nominating
 - incidences of uncontested elections
 - rates of informal voting.
- other matters raised in public submissions not already listed above.

Under section 15(2) of the Act, subdivided structures must aim for an approximately equal number of voters per councillor in each ward. This means the number of voters represented by each councillor in a ward should be within +/-10% of the average number of voters per councillor for all wards.

During this review, the panel aimed to recommend a structure that would comply with section 15(2) at the time of the 2024 local government elections and, if possible, also comply based on voter numbers at the time the review was conducted. The panel used forecasts of population and voter change to assess compliance at the 2024 elections with as much accuracy as possible. In some cases, population change and other factors impacting voter numbers mean it is not always possible to create a subdivided structure that complies with section 15(2) based on voter numbers that were current at the time of the review as well as forecast voter numbers. In these instances, the panel prioritised compliance at the 2024 local government elections to ensure each vote will have approximately equal value at the 2024 election.

One of the factors that may impact compliance with section 15(2) is the number of current and forecast voters with ratepayer-based voting entitlements. Voters' rolls are a combination of state electors (making up the majority of a voters' roll) and a smaller number of ratepayer-based voting entitlements. The Act introduced changes to ratepayer-based entitlement categories, which come into full effect at the 2024 local government elections. As this will change the makeup of voters' rolls, and therefore compliance with section 15(2) of the Act, this is a consideration of the panel during this review.

Deciding on ward names

The panel has taken the following approach to naming wards.

1. Existing ward names were retained where possible and appropriate (if the name was still relevant to the area covered by a ward).
2. Where a new name was required, the panel based this on features such as:
 - places (registered under the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998*) located in the ward
 - compass directions
 - native flora or fauna.

Use of Aboriginal language

The panel recognises that there should first be meaningful consultation with local Aboriginal communities and groups before a ward be named using Aboriginal language. Meaningful consultation is a significant and important process which the panel is not able to undertake within the timeframes of the current review program.

At the same time, the panel also recognises that many of the place names in current use across Victoria are based on Aboriginal language. As such, the panel has in some cases put forward new ward names using Aboriginal language, but only where this is the name of a place within a ward, it is currently in common use, and this name is registered under the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998* (Vic). This is a practical solution to the reality that many of Victoria's geographic features are named using Aboriginal language.

Unregistered names using Aboriginal language have not been put forward by the panel as new ward names. While the panel supports the adoption of names based on Aboriginal language, an appropriate consultation process should be followed before doing so.

About Central Goldfields Shire Council

Profile

Central Goldfields Shire is located about 120 km north-west of Melbourne and is about a one-hour drive from the regional centres of Ballarat and Bendigo. The shire covers an area of 1,533 km² and shares its borders with Loddon Shire Council to the north, Northern Grampians Shire Council to the north-west, Pyrenees Shire Council to the west, Hepburn Shire Council to the south and Mount Alexander Shire Council to the east.

The Traditional Custodians of the land in Central Goldfields Shire are the Dja Dja Wurrung people.

Landscape

Within the shire there are large areas of land designated for conservation (Department of Transport and Planning, 2022), including Paddys Ranges State Park and several other large nature reserves. Ecologically significant Box-Ironbark forests surround Maryborough and cover large areas in the shire's north and south. Other important features of the natural landscape are Mount Bealiba Range, Moolort Plains and Talbot's volcanic rises.

Several creeks flow through the shire, including the Bet Bet, Tullaroop and McCallums creeks. The Tullaroop and Cairn Curran reservoirs are in the south-east, and the Avoca River forms part of the shire's western boundary. These waterways traverse extensive farmland covering much of the rural area of the shire. This agricultural land is used mainly for cropping and raising beef and sheep (Department of Transport and Planning, 2022).

The shire had a population of 13,483 people at the 2021 Census (ABS, 2021a). Its largest town, Maryborough, recorded 7,769 people, making up almost 60% of the population (ABS, 2021a). Maryborough is the shire's major business, health and administrative centre. Other major towns include nearby Carisbrook, Dunolly to the north and Talbot to the south. Approximately 27% of the population live in smaller communities and rural areas across the shire (ABS, 2021a).

The Pyrenees Highway runs east to west through Maryborough. Railway lines pass north-south and east-west through the shire, carrying freight and passenger trains from Melbourne to Talbot and Maryborough.

Community

The shire had an older age profile compared to regional Victoria at the 2021 Census, with a median age of 52 (ABS, 2021a). This was higher than the regional Victorian median age of 43 (ABS, 2021b) and more than half of the population (53.6%) was aged over 50 years (ABS, 2021a). The population is forecast to grow at a rate of 0.7% annually from 2022 to 2028.

Of the population, 82.3% were born in Australia and 89.7% spoke only English at home (ABS, 2021a). Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people represented 2.3% of the population (ABS, 2021a).

Manufacturing is the main industry in the shire, employing 12.2% of workers and accounting for 20.5% of economic output (REMPAN, 2023). This includes sectors such as printing, publishing and food processing. Other major industries by employment include health care and social assistance (21.2% of workers), retail (12.4%), education and training (9.4%), accommodation and food services (7.5%) and agriculture (7%) (ABS, 2021a; REMPLAN, 2023).

In 2021, unemployment in the shire was 5.9%, higher than the average rate for regional Victoria (4.1%). Nearly half of the population (49%) were not in the labour force, which was also more than regional Victoria overall (36.8%).

The median weekly household income in the shire in 2021 was \$904, lower than the regional Victorian median of \$1,386 (ABS, 2021a; ABS, 2021b). At 46.8%, rates of home ownership in shire were higher than the rate of 39.3% for regional Victoria overall (ABS, 2021a; ABS, 2021b).

Current number of councillors and electoral structure

Central Goldfields Shire Council is currently divided into 4 wards with a total of 7 councillors:

- one ward with 4 councillors (Maryborough Ward)
- 3 wards with one councillor each (Flynn, Paddys Ranges and Tullaroop).

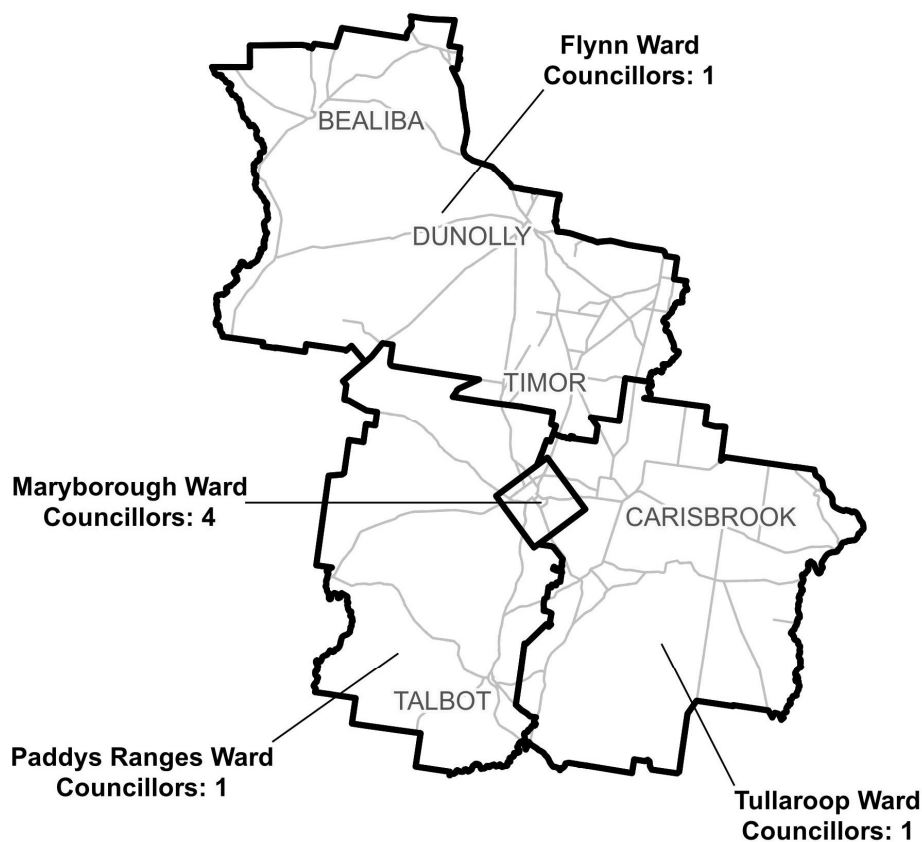


Figure 1: Diagram of current electoral structure of Central Goldfields Shire Council.

There are approximately 11,329 voters in Central Goldfields Shire Council, with a ratio of 1,618 voters per councillor.

Visit the VEC website at vec.vic.gov.au for more information on Central Goldfields Shire Council.

Last electoral structure review

The VEC conducted an electoral representation review of Central Goldfields Shire Council in 2011. This review complied with the *Local Government Act 1989*, which was replaced by the *Local Government Act 2020*.

After conducting the review, the VEC recommended that Central Goldfields Shire Council continue to consist of 7 councillors elected from 4 wards:

- one ward with 4 councillors
- 3 wards with one councillor each.

The VEC recommended that the boundaries of 4 wards be slightly adjusted.

Visit the VEC website at vec.vic.gov.au to access a copy of the 2011 representation review final report.

Before the 2011 review, the VEC held a representation review of Central Goldfields Shire Council in 2005. This resulted in the current electoral structure being implemented. Before the 2005 representation review, Central Goldfields Shire Council comprised 5 single-councillor wards.

Preliminary submissions

At the close of submissions on Wednesday 1 March 2023, the panel had received 4 submissions for the electoral structure review of Central Goldfields Shire Council. You can find a list of people who made a preliminary submission in [Appendix 1](#).

The panel received submissions from a range of stakeholders including individuals and Central Goldfields Shire Council. Submissions were published on the VEC website.

A summary of the preliminary submissions is contained in the preliminary report, available on the VEC website at vec.vic.gov.au

Preliminary report

A preliminary report was released on Wednesday 29 March 2023. The panel considered public submissions and research findings when formulating the models presented in the preliminary report.

After careful consideration, the following electoral structure models were put forward for public consultation:

- Model 1: an unsubdivided electoral structure with 7 councillors.
- Model 2: a subdivided electoral structure with a total of 6 councillors, 3 wards and 2 councillors per ward.
- Model 3: a subdivided electoral structure with a total of 7 councillors, 7 wards and 1 councillor per ward.

The full preliminary report is available on the VEC website at vec.vic.gov.au

Response submissions

The panel received 5 response submissions to the preliminary report from the public by the deadline of 5 pm on Wednesday 19 April 2023. You can find a list of people or organisations who made a response submission in [Appendix 2](#).

The table below provides an overview of preferences in response submissions. You can read an analysis of submissions below this table.

Table 1: Preferences expressed in response submissions		
Model 1 (unsubdivided, 7 councillors)	Model 2 (3 wards with 2 councillors per ward)	Model 3 (7 single-councillor wards)
2	1	2

Model 1

Two submissions supported an unsubdivided electoral structure, of which one did not detail the reasons for the preference.

John Moyle argued that Model 1 was the best structure to give all voters an equal say at elections. Moyle also suggested that councillors would more likely adopt a shire-wide focus than just a local one in this model because they would have to appeal to voters in all parts of the shire. For these reasons, Moyle felt Model 1 would result in the election of councillors more representative of all voters.

The main argument against an unsubdivided structure was the view that it would leave some areas without effective and responsive representation. The council suggested this was particularly the case for voters in rural areas and smaller townships, who faced different issues to those in the more urban main town of Maryborough. The council also argued the proportional vote counting system of Model 1 would be unfamiliar to rural voters, potentially creating confusion and leading to higher rates of informal voting.

Model 2

Jenni Newton-Farrelly supported Model 2 because it was the subdivided structure most likely to stay within the +/-10% tolerance for more than one council term. Newton-Farrelly argued the 3-ward structure would more effectively accommodate current and expected changes in population compared with the 7-ward structure and would reduce the need for future boundary adjustments over a longer period. Having 2 larger wards covering the rural areas along with parts of outer-Maryborough would be beneficial, Newton-Farrelly argued, as councillors would be encouraged to work together and be more responsive to the distinct issues in these different areas.

Reducing councillor numbers to 6 and having only 2 councillors to cover most of Maryborough were the main reasons the council opposed Model 2. The council suggested this reduction would not be appropriate because of the growth expected throughout the shire, particularly in Maryborough. The council also suggested that constricting the boundaries around Maryborough would be detrimental as many of the town's residents would be represented in the larger rural wards. As such, and due to the distinct communities of Carisbrook and Talbot, the council argued Model 2 failed to capture or reflect the shire's communities of interest.

Model 3

Two submissions supported the 7 single-councillor ward structure of Model 3. Both suggested Model 3 would be the least disruptive to voters because it was closest to the current structure. The council felt the minor changes required for the structure to comply and accommodate growth would not affect its effective representation of the community.

The council listed growth as a planning priority to support retaining 7 councillors and as evidence against any reduction, as proposed in Model 2. On the same matter, John Tully suggested growth in Maryborough would occur mainly through higher density living, and believed that, as the 4 proposed wards covering Maryborough would grow at similar rates, ward boundary adjustments would not likely be required in the future.

The council believed dividing Maryborough into 4 wards would not be a potential drawback. They argued councillors in these 4 wards would work together to address issues for the Maryborough wards, as they do in the current multi-councillor ward. The council also believed having one councillor in a ward for residents to identify with would benefit residents. John Tully felt separating Maryborough into 4 wards might prevent block voting, which he suggested had been an issue since 1995.

According to the council, Model 3 best reflected the shire's communities of interest – particularly Maryborough, which it considered different and distinct from the rural communities. They also saw further benefit retaining the current number of councillors to represent Maryborough, while accommodating population growth. The council countered concerns that single-councillor wards would increase the chances of uncontested elections by noting that new candidates regularly stand for election, which occurred at the 2020 elections.

Opposing this, Moyle argued Model 3 would lead to an increased likelihood of uncontested elections in the single-councillor wards and reduce voter choice. Newton-Farrelly suggested Model 3 would be less likely to accommodate population change without adjusting ward boundaries, and so may not comply with equality principles.

Ward names

The submission from Central Goldfields Shire Council provided feedback on ward names for Model 3. The council's preliminary submission proposed keeping the names of Flynn, Paddys Ranges and Tullaroop, and suggested the 4 wards covering the towns of Maryborough include the name of the town and compass directions of north, east, south and west. The council also indicated support for this approach in its response submission.

Public hearing

The panel held an online public hearing for those wishing to speak about their response submission at 2 pm on Wednesday 26 April 2023. One person spoke at the hearing.

You can find a list of people who spoke at the hearing in [Appendix 2](#).

Councillor Chris Meddows-Taylor spoke on behalf of the Central Goldfields Shire Council. Meddows-Taylor made similar points to those covered in the council's submission, supporting the subdivided, 7 single-councillor ward structure and mentioning council plans for growth in the shire.

Meddows-Taylor addressed the panel's concerns about the longevity of single-councillor wards, given the council's plans for growth in the shire. The council believed single-councillor wards would maintain the even distribution of voters, as their projections focused on economic growth and population increases for the whole shire, not just Maryborough.

Meddows-Taylor also spoke of the professional culture in the Central Goldfields Shire Council, highlighting the collaborative workplace and 'all-of-council' approach. On the potential arbitrary division of Maryborough from one ward with 4 councillors to 4 single-councillor wards, Meddows-Taylor said these 4 councillors already saw themselves as representing Maryborough, and the sense of shared responsibility would continue regardless of boundaries. The council also proposed that the 4 Maryborough wards should use the town's name to reinforce a sense of common purpose and representation.

Findings and recommendation

Number of councillors

After considering the requirements of the Act, public submissions and the agreed criteria, the panel found 6 or 7 councillors to be an appropriate number for Central Goldfields Shire Council.

The panel considered the characteristics of Central Goldfields Shire Council in relation to similar rural shire councils, including its size and geography, population and the number and distribution of voters across the shire.

Central Goldfields Shire Council currently has 11,329 voters represented by 7 councillors and covers an area of 1,533 km². This equals a ratio of 1,618 voters per councillor. Other rural shires with a similar number of voters generally also have 7 councillors.

A reduction in the number of councillors to 6 would enable the council to move to multi-councillor wards as in Model 2, in line with the requirements of the Act. However, the panel was mindful of the democratic ratio of councillors-to-voters in Central Goldfields Shire, which sits within an acceptable range with 7 councillors and modest growth projections.

The panel also considered the area of the shire. Central Goldfields is geographically the smallest of other rural shires with similar population, covering an area nearly 1,000 km² smaller than the next smallest shire. While this means councillor workloads are not as impacted by travel distance and commute, the relatively high population density of Central Goldfields Shire warranted either maintaining 7 or reducing to 6 councillors to facilitate good governance.

Electoral structure

After considering the requirements of the Act, public submissions and the agreed criteria, the panel found that Model 3 is the best model for promoting fair and equitable representation for voters in Central Goldfields Shire Council and consequently facilitate good governance.

The panel considered all arguments in favour of and against the 3 preliminary models in coming to its final decision. It also noted that these models represented all possible electoral structures under the Act, and that this level of choice was not possible for every council. The panel acknowledged the potential for new ward boundaries to artificially split the Maryborough community of interest, and the potential for division within the regional centre and with the surrounding rural wards. However, the council indicated it fostered a whole-of-shire approach, and appears to have functioned well with the ward boundary structures already in place. The panel saw the council's collaborative nature as likely to reduce potential for artificial divisions having long-term impacts on shire culture.

The panel discussed possible drawbacks and advantages of the proposed boundaries for communities of interest, with reference to submitted concerns about mixing communities of interest in Model 2. The proposed Flynn and Tullaroop wards in Model 2 contain both rural localities and part of Maryborough township, combining 2 distinct communities of interest. The panel acknowledged that having 2 councillors per ward could allow the interests of both communities to be represented, but remained concerned these hybrid wards could foster

disharmony. The wards of Model 3 were seen to better represent the shire's communities of interest. The panel considered the Maryborough wards in Model 3 would both bring the community of interest together and consolidate Maryborough, given the town's growth and the need to preserve the one vote, one value principle.

The panel also considered the longevity of the 3 modelled electoral structures, noting the council's plans for growth. Given the modest population growth forecast for the shire, all models were projected to maintain acceptable voter-to-councillor ratios. The panel also noted there may be some risk of uncontested elections in subdivided models 2 and 3. The council addressed this concern, stating there was a high degree of interest in standing for election and candidate engagement from the community. On reflection, the panel also acknowledged that electoral structures alone are not responsible for the contestability of elections, and it is up to community members to nominate as candidates.

The panel also acknowledged that Model 3 most resembled the current structure, which appears to be serving the community well. The panel noted the current structure seemed to support harmonious council functions and governance. The panel did note that Model 3 requires a shift to conform with the Act, with the ward structure moving from multi- to single-councillor wards. However, this change allows for Maryborough to be completely captured in 4 wards and maintains the current number of councillors. For these and the above-stated reasons, the panel considered Model 3 to be the best model for the continuity of good governance and culture in the shire.

There are valid arguments both in favour of and against the unsubdivided and subdivided electoral structures examined in this review, as each have their own benefits and drawbacks. While it is not possible for an electoral structure to address all issues in the shire, the panel considers Model 3 the best model for promoting fair and equitable representation for voters in Central Goldfields Shire Council and consequently facilitate good governance under the requirements of the Act.

Ward names

The ward names for the panel's recommended electoral structure were based on the following:

- Flynn Ward: The existing name of the ward under the current electoral structure. The new ward covers much of the same area as this existing ward.
- Maryborough Central Ward: New name based on a combination of locality name and a directional term. This locality name is registered in the VICNAMES register.
- Maryborough East Ward: New name based on a combination of locality name and a directional term. This locality name is registered in the VICNAMES register.
- Maryborough North Ward: New name based on a combination of locality name and a directional term. This locality name is registered in the VICNAMES register.
- Maryborough West Ward: New name based on a combination of locality name and a directional term. This locality name is registered in the VICNAMES register.

- Paddys Ranges Ward: The existing name of the ward under the current electoral structure. The new ward covers much of the same area as this existing ward.
- Tullaroop Ward: The existing name of the ward under the current electoral structure. The new ward covers much of the same area as this existing ward.

The panel's recommendation

The electoral representation advisory panel recommends that Central Goldfields Shire Council adopt a single-councillor ward structure, with a total of 7 councillors, 7 wards and one councillor per ward.

The recommended names for the 7 wards in this electoral structure are Flynn Ward, Maryborough Central Ward, Maryborough East Ward, Maryborough North Ward, Maryborough West Ward, Paddys Ranges Ward and Tullaroop Ward.

This advice is submitted to the Minister for Local Government as required by the Terms of Reference of the electoral representation advisory panel and the *Local Government Act 2020* (Vic). This electoral structure was designated as Model 3 in the preliminary report.

Please see [Appendix 1](#) for a detailed map of this recommended electoral structure.

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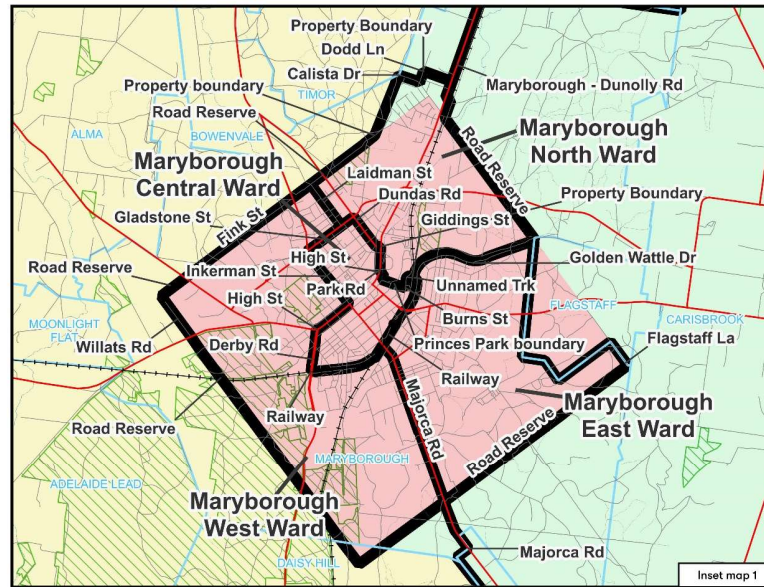
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Appendix 1: Map of recommended structure

Central Goldfields Shire Council Seven single-councillor wards



Ward	Councillors	Electors*	Deviation	Area sq km
Flynn	1	1,657	+2.38%	628
Maryborough Central	1	1,638	+1.21%	2
Maryborough East	1	1,558	-3.73%	6
Maryborough North	1	1,545	-4.54%	5
Maryborough West	1	1,699	+4.98%	9
Paddys Ranges	1	1,609	-0.58%	412
Tullaroop	1	1,623	+0.28%	471
Total	7	11,329		1,533
Average		1,618		219

*Elector numbers as at 11 November 2022

Map prepared by:



Data use:



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Appendix 2: Public involvement

The panel wishes to thank all submitters to the review and speakers at the public hearing for their participation in the review process.

Preliminary submissions

Preliminary submissions were made by:

Central Goldfields Shire Council

Doran, Anne

Mann, Roger

Moyle, John

Response submissions

Response submissions were made by:

Bagley, Prudence

Central Goldfields Shire Council

Moyle, John

Newton-Farrelly, Jennifer

Tully, John

Public hearing

The following people spoke at the public hearing:

Cr Chris Meddows-Taylor (on behalf of Central Goldfields Shire Council)

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