

Local council electoral structure review

Final Report

Moonee Valley City Council

December 2023

Acknowledgement of Country

The electoral representation advisory panel acknowledges Wurundjeri People as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters for which it held 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.

Report approval

Version	Date approved	Approved by
1	6 December 2023	Ms Julie Eisenbise
1	6 December 2023	Mr Tim Presnell
1	7 December 2023	Ms Dana Fleming

Version approval

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Executive summary

An electoral structure review panel appointed by the Minister for Local Government has reviewed the electoral structure of Moonee Valley City Council.

The purpose of the review was to advise the Minister on the appropriate number of councillors and electoral structure, including ward names, for the council.

Under Victoria's *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act), Moonee Valley City Council must now have a single-councillor ward electoral structure.

The panel looked at:

- the appropriate number of councillors and wards for the council
- the location of ward boundaries
- appropriate ward names.

This report presents the panel's final advice to the Minister on the recommended new electoral structure of Moonee Valley City Council to meet the requirements of the Act.

More information about the background to the review is available on page 6.

Recommendation

The electoral representation advisory panel recommends that Moonee Valley City Council adopt a 9 single-councillor ward structure – 9 wards with one councillor per ward.

The recommended names for the 9 wards in this electoral structure are Airport Ward, Buckley Ward, Canning Ward, Fairbairn Ward, Milleara Ward, Myrnong Ward, Queens Park Ward, Steele Creek Ward, Woodlands 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.

A detailed map of the boundaries for the recommended electoral structure is provided as [Appendix 1](#).

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 report

The panel published a preliminary report on Wednesday 18 October 2023 with the following electoral structure models for public consultation:

- Model 1: a subdivided electoral structure with a total of 9 councillors – 9 wards with one councillor per ward.
- Model 2: a subdivided electoral structure with a total of 9 councillors – 9 wards with one councillor per ward, with different ward boundaries to Model 1.

The full preliminary report is available on the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) website at vec.vic.gov.au

Response submissions

The panel received 26 submissions responding to the preliminary report. Of these, 3 submissions included maps.

A full analysis of response submissions received can be found on [page 14](#).

Public hearing

The panel held an online public hearing for those wishing to speak about their response submission at 2 pm on Tuesday 14 November 2023. Six people 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 local council elections.

The Act introduced several changes to local government representation, including the types of electoral structures local councils may have. All metropolitan, interface and regional city councils (including Moonee Valley City Council) must now have single-councillor ward electoral structures.

For Moonee Valley City Council, the electoral representation advisory panel examined:

- the number of councillors and wards
- where the ward boundaries should be
- the names of each ward.

The Act requires electoral structures to provide fair and equitable representation and facilitate good governance. 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 Moonee Valley City Council had 3 members:

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

The purpose of the review is to advise the Minister on the appropriate number of councillors and electoral structure, including ward names, for the council. The panel is independent of councils and the VEC.

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

On behalf of the panel, the VEC conducted a public information and awareness program to inform the public about the Moonee Valley City Council electoral structure review. This included:

- public notices in state-wide newspapers
- public information sessions to outline the review process and respond to questions from the community
- media releases announcing the start of the review with the release of the preliminary report
- information on social media channels
- updated website content on vec.vic.gov.au, including:
 - current information on the review process
 - submission guide and fact sheets for each council under review with background information
 - response submissions from the public.

Moonee Valley City was also offered 2 optional methods to promote the reviews:

- targeting social media advertisements at the council area
- notifying voters in the council area subscribed to the VEC's VoterAlert service about the start of the review and release of the preliminary report.

Moonee Valley City Council took up the targeted social media option but not the VoterAlert option.

Public consultation

The panel encouraged public input to the review of Moonee Valley City Council via:

- 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 Moonee Valley City 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 metropolitan, interface and regional city 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
- any matter raised in public submissions not already listed above.

Local councils with a larger number of voters will often have more councillors. Large populations generally 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 circumstances of each 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

Under the Act, regional city, metropolitan and interface councils must now have single-councillor ward electoral structures.

When developing single-councillor ward models for Moonee Valley City 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 could be established and whether these would be easily identifiable to local communities
- the 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 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 council 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 possible to create compliant subdivided structures based both on voter numbers that were current at the time of the review and 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, also known as council-enrolled voters. Voters' rolls include both state-enrolled electors (the majority of the roll) and a smaller number of council-enrolled electors. The Act introduced changes to ratepayer-based entitlement categories, which come into full effect at the 2024 local council elections. The panel took this change to the makeup of voters' rolls, and therefore compliance with section 15(2) of the Act, into consideration during this review.

Deciding on ward names

The panel has taken the following approach to naming wards.

1. Retaining existing ward names if these were still relevant to the area covered by the ward.
2. When a new name was required, the panel based this on features such as:
 - places (registered under the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998*) 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 is named using Aboriginal language. Meaningful consultation is a significant process that the panel was not able to undertake within the timeframes of the current review program.

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 only put forward new ward names using Aboriginal language if:

- it is the name of a place within a ward
- it is currently in common use

and

- the name is registered under the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998*.

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, this requires appropriate consultation.

Accordingly, for the panel to consider an Aboriginal language ward name that is suggested in a public submission to the review, the name submitted needs to comply with the above guidelines.

About Moonee Valley City Council

Profile

The City of Moonee Valley is located 4 to 13 kilometres northwest of the Melbourne CBD and covers an area of approximately 43km². It shares its eastern boundary along Moonee Ponds Creek with Merri-bek City Council and part of Flemington with Melbourne City Council. The Maribyrnong River forms the southern boundary with Maribyrnong City Council and to the west it is separated from Brimbank City Council by roads, rail and natural features.

The Traditional Custodians of the land in the Moonee Valley City Council area are the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin Nation.

Landscape

About two-thirds of the council area is dedicated to residential housing. With the exception of Keilor East on the western side, the most populated suburbs – Essendon, Keilor East, Moonee Ponds and Ascot Vale – are located in the southeast. They contain the highest proportion of medium to high density housing in the area. The council area has multiple commercial centres, mainly in the southeast. The largest is in Moonee Ponds.

Essendon Fields is in the northeast. It takes up a large area and is a commercial precinct. In the northeast, the Calder and Tullamarine Freeways provide important transport beyond the boundaries of the council area. Moonee Valley Racecourse is in the southeast. In Flemington, there is high rise public housing in the southeast corner of Racecourse Road and Crown Street. There are several train lines and tram services in the council area, mostly in the south and east. The Maribyrnong River is on the southern boundary and adjacent parkland is used for recreational activities.

Population and community

In 2021, the population of the council area was about 122,000 (ABS 2022). Between 2022 and 2028 the population is estimated to grow at a rate of 1.5% per year and is expected to reach 166,143 by 2041. The highest population growth has been forecast in Moonee Ponds and its surrounds, where further housing developments are planned.

High-density living is more common in the council area than for Greater Melbourne overall; apartments make up 23% of all dwellings compared with 15.6% in Greater Melbourne (ABS 2022). Most high-density housing is concentrated in the southeast of the council area, from Travancore up through to Essendon, whereas in the west, in Keilor East and Avondale Heights, houses predominate (ABS 2022).

The municipality is culturally diverse, with nearly one-third of the population born overseas and over a third speaking a language other than English at home (ABS 2022). After English, the most common languages spoken are Italian, Greek and Vietnamese (ABS 2022). The proportion of the population identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander is 0.5%, similar to the Greater Melbourne average of 0.7% (ABS 2022).

The median weekly household income (\$2,011) is higher than that of Greater Melbourne (\$1,901) (ABS 2022). The overall rate of home ownership in the council area is similar to that of Greater Melbourne, though a higher proportion of homes is owned outright (34.2% compared to 29.7% in Greater Melbourne) (ABS 2022).

Current number of councillors and electoral structure

The municipality is currently divided into 3 wards with a total of 9 councillors:

- one ward with 3 councillors (Buckley)
- one ward with 3 councillors (Myrnong)
- one ward with 3 councillors (Rose Hill)

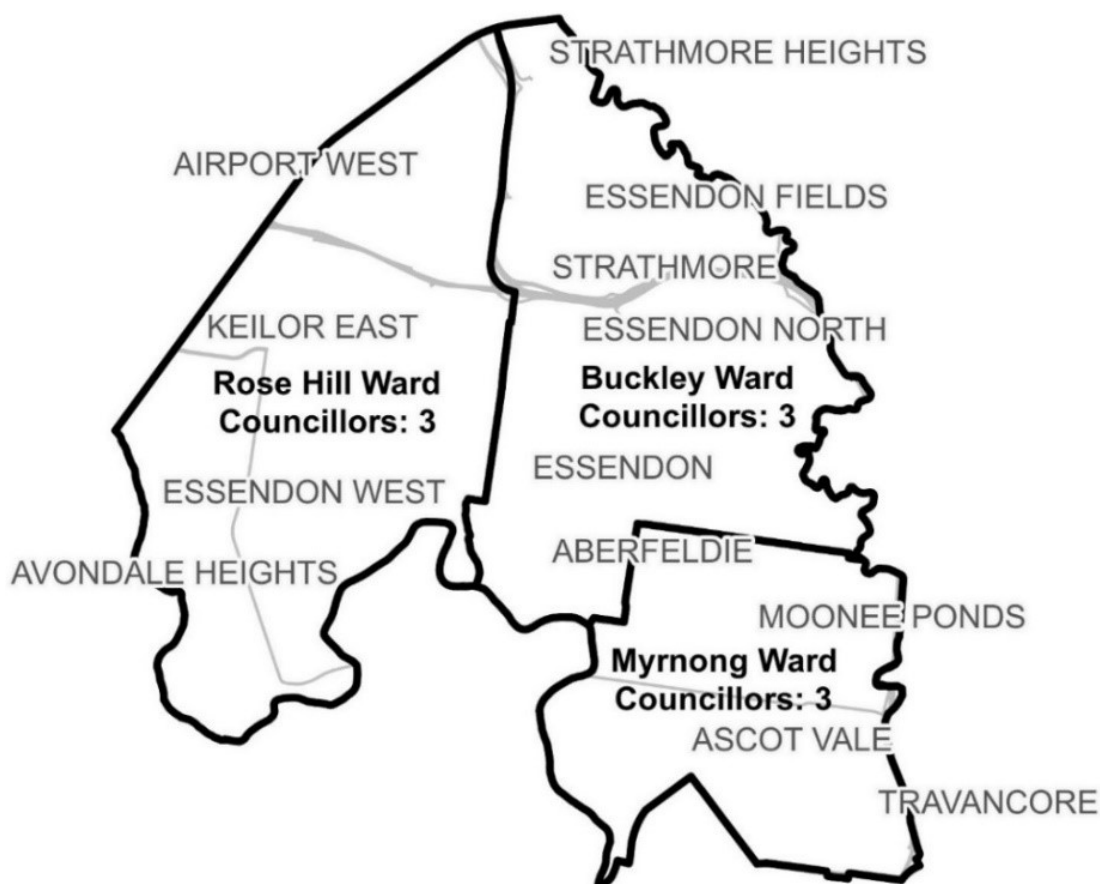


Figure 1: Diagram of current electoral structure of Moonee Valley City Council

There are approximately 93,217 voters in Moonee Valley City Council, with an approximate ratio of 10,357 voters per councillor.

Visit the VEC website at vec.vic.gov.au for more information on Moonee Valley City Council.

Last electoral structure review

The VEC conducted an electoral representation review of Moonee Valley City Council in 2015. This review was carried out under the *Local Government Act 1989* (Vic), which was replaced by the *Local Government Act 2020* (Vic).

After conducting the review, the VEC recommended that Moonee Valley City Council continue to consist of 9 councillors elected from 3 wards, but with minor variations to the ward boundaries.

Visit the VEC website at vec.vic.gov.au to access a copy of the final report of the 2015 electoral representation review.

Preliminary report

A preliminary report was released on Wednesday 18 October 2023. The panel considered research findings and the requirements of the Act 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: a subdivided electoral structure with a total of 9 councillors – 9 wards with one councillor per ward.
- Model 2: a subdivided electoral structure with a total of 9 councillors – 9 wards with one councillor per ward, with different ward boundaries to Model 1.

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

Response submissions

The panel received 26 response submissions to the preliminary report from the public by the deadline of 5 pm on Wednesday 8 November 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 (9 single-councillor wards)	Model 2 (9 single-councillor wards)	Other
18	5	3

Roughly two-thirds of submitters supported Model 1, while 5 supported Model 2. Three submitters provided mapped structures as part of their submission, while a further 9 described ward boundary changes. Most mapped structures and boundary change suggestions were based on Model 1 or 2.

Model 1

Of the 18 submitters supporting Model 1, 12 came from the Strathmore area and focused largely on a single issue. These submitters wanted a ward structure that kept the localities of Strathmore and Strathmore Heights together and disapproved of Model 2 for combining Strathmore Heights with Airport West in the same ward. Other arguments put forward in support of Model 1 were that it better represented their community, more closely aligned to suburb boundaries, or more closely aligned to the current structure. Some expressed a preference for Model 1 with no reasoning. Several supporters of Model 1 suggested minor boundary adjustments, which the panel took into consideration.

Submitters arguing against Model 1 felt it did not follow major features as readily as Model 2. Submitters also felt Model 1 failed to consider business districts. Some suggested that following the current ward structure presupposed the structure to be effective or popular, which might not be the case.

Model 2

A total of 5 submitters supported Model 2, 3 of whom suggested boundary adjustments. Key arguments in support of Model 2 were that it maintained communities of interest, proposed a structure better able to accommodate future population growth and took a more considered approach to business districts. Furthermore, most supporters of Model 2 argued the structure used more logical boundaries such as natural features, major roads, freeways, and the Craigieburn railway line.

Opponents of Model 2 argued that Strathmore Heights and Airport West have little in common and should not be included in the same ward. Submitters also felt the ward boundaries

proposed in Model 2 failed to adequately consider communities of interest and that suburbs were not kept together as well as in Model 1.

Other options

One submitter mapped several different structures, all based loosely on Model 1 or 2. The panel found none of these options would better serve Moonee Valley than the proposed models. However, the panel did look to incorporate relevant boundary ideas where appropriate and/or where it improved on either Model 1 or Model 2.

Public hearing

The panel held an online public hearing for those wishing to speak about their response submission at 2 pm on 14 November 2023. Six people spoke at the hearing, including 4 current councillors.

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

Rose Iser, councillor for Moonee Valley City Council, spoke first. Councillor Iser elaborated on her mapped submission, which was mostly based on Model 2, and emphasised an evidence-based approach to ward modelling. The councillor argued ward boundaries need to be clear and strong and suggested her submission made better use of features such as major roads, railways, and freeways as strong ward boundaries compared with the models proposed. The councillor argued that Airport West and Strathmore should be contained in the same ward, as these localities have shared interests. After reviewing Mayor Tyson's mapped submission, Councillor Iser agreed with the approach taken, except for a small area around Ascot Vale Road and the Craigieburn trainline, which was felt should remain in a Flemington-based ward.

Asked whether Strathmore Heights is more strongly connected with Airport West than Strathmore, the councillor conceded that the Tullamarine Freeway provides a very clear divide between the two areas but noted that the airport and surrounding area are factors considered in Council strategic planning. Expanding on support for Mayor Tyson's model, the councillor argued its boundaries were clearer and better aligned with community expectations.

Councillor Ava Adams spoke second, in support of Model 1. The councillor expressed a preference for keeping suburbs together in wards as much as possible and argued that Model 1 achieved this aim better than Model 2. It was further argued that Model 2 represented a significant change from the current structure, which could confuse residents. The councillor was not convinced Airport West and Strathmore Heights belonged in the same ward, and suggested the suburbs of Strathmore and Strathmore Heights had more in common.

When asked about specific communities of interest being better represented in Model 1, Councillor Adams noted Park Street being included in a ward with Essendon made sense and reiterated the preference for keeping Strathmore and Strathmore Heights together in the one ward. However, the councillor was not opposed to the ward boundaries proposed for Fairbairn and Myrnong wards as part of Model 2, nor the suggestions put forward by Cr Iser or Mayor Tyson regarding the same boundaries. Lastly, the councillor expressed support for changing a proposed ward name from Queens Lake to Queens Park, as that name that would be more recognisable by the community.

Hamish Jones spoke in favour of Model 1 mainly because it kept the communities of Strathmore and Strathmore Heights together, unlike Model 2. Jones also suggested keeping Niddrie together with Airport West was beneficial and the boundaries proposed around Ascot Vale seemed to accord with how the people of this community move and interact.

Responding to questions about different boundary options, Jones did not have a strong view whether Ascot Vale Road would make a better boundary than Mount Alexander Road. Jones did feel the Tullamarine Freeway would provide a strong boundary in the north of the council area and its use would likely reflect how people transit and shop in the area.

Councillor Samantha Byrne spoke in favour of keeping Strathmore and Strathmore Heights together in the same ward and similarly for Niddrie and Airport West. The councillor emphasised the need to use strong, recognisable features as ward boundaries and highlighted the use of the residential Brees Road as a boundary that might not be the most appropriate. Buckley Street was suggested as an example of a strong boundary when considering how well-known and frequently used it is.

When asked about their preferences, the councillor expressed support for any model which both best served Keilor East, and kept Strathmore and Strathmore Heights together. The panel then enquired about the Moonee Valley 2040 Strategy document and why naming a ward Milleara might be problematic. Councillor Byrne stated naming a ward Milleara might be confusing to residents because it refers to a neighbourhood, a shopping centre, and a name used in the Moonee Valley 2040 Strategy document. The councillor also argued that the name Buckley might be more associated with the area around Essendon railway station, and the name Steele Creek Ward might be better than Roberts Ward.

Councillor Katrina Hodgson spoke in favour of Model 2, though with some adjustments to ward boundaries. The councillor affirmed that while ward structures were important and what defined a community was complex and multifaceted, the duty of a councillor was to the whole municipality. Councillor Hodgson was not in favour of basing wards primarily on suburbs or localities, as they inevitably needed to be divided up into different wards under a single-councillor ward structure. As such, the councillor expressed the need to use features such as major roads, trainlines, freeways, and natural features to make strong boundaries, and felt that Mayor Tyson's mapped submission achieved this aim well. Mentioning the recent Victorian Housing Statement, the councillor argued that Model 2 would better accommodate anticipated growth in particular areas and would likely stay within legislated requirements for longer.

On the issue of ward boundaries, the councillor commented that Airport West and Strathmore being connected to Essendon Fields Airport made sense, used strong boundaries, and represented a notable community of interest. Lastly, Councillor Hodgson expressed broad support for Mayor Tyson's mapped submission.

The final speaker, Andrew Gunter, was critical of the requirement to adopt a single-councillor ward structure but acknowledged the legal requirements and parameters of review. Expressing a slight preference for Model 2, Gunter argued any ward structure should use recognisable features to create clear ward boundaries. This view was qualified, and Gunter stated adopting strong boundaries should not come at the expense of long-term adherence to the legislated +/- 10% requirement. Gunter also expressed a concern with Essendon West being included in a ward with Avondale Heights, as occurs in Model 1.

When asked, Gunter acknowledged that all communities are divided across wards to some degree in any structure, including Model 2. However, it was still felt Model 2 was the marginally better structure when considering the limitations of single-councillor ward structures to entirely capture communities of interest. Gunter responded to a question on which features of Model 2 might better serve the community compared with Model 1, stating that including Keilor East in a single ward might be a better outcome, and that any ward involving Essendon Fields Airport and surrounding suburbs will always necessitate a degree of compromise.

Findings and recommendation

As outlined in the submission guide for this review, the panel is committed to the principle of 'one vote, one value', which is a requirement for subdivided electoral structures under the Act. This is to ensure that every person's vote counts equally. When undertaking an electoral structure review, the panel must adhere to the Act's legislated equality requirement to seek to ensure the number of voters per councillor in a ward to be within +/-10% of the average number of voters per councillor in any other ward.

The panel noted several submissions were critical of the legislated requirement for Moonee Valley City Council to adopt a single-councillor ward structure. While the panel understands the concerns of these submitters, the panel cannot make exceptions to legislated requirements.

Number of councillors

After considering the requirements of the Act, public submissions and the agreed criteria, the panel found 9 councillors to be an appropriate number for Moonee Valley City Council.

The panel discussed the characteristics of Moonee Valley City Council in relation to similar metropolitan councils, including its size and geography, population and the number and distribution of voters across the council area.

The panel considered it appropriate to maintain the current number of councillors at 9 because metropolitan councils with a similar number of voters have 9 councillors. Only modest population growth (1.5% pa) is forecast for the municipality and there are no special circumstances, such as high levels of social disadvantage or cultural diversity, which might place increased demands on representation.

Electoral structure

After considering the requirements of the Act, public submissions and the agreed criteria, the panel found an adjusted Model 1 (the recommended structure) to be the single-councillor ward model with the best potential to promote fair and equitable representation for voters in Moonee Valley City Council and consequently facilitate good governance. On balance, the panel considered the final recommendation was well placed to accommodate the varying views expressed in public feedback and considers this a fair compromise and a good outcome for Moonee Valley.

After discussing the arguments and suggestions put forward in public submissions, the panel decided to incorporate elements of Model 2 into the recommended structure. The western wards largely remain as they were in the preliminary report Model 1, with the following minor adjustments:

- Canning Ward and Milleara Ward differ with slight adjustments to follow more of Rosehill Road and then Rachele Road, rather than using the less prominent Brees Road and Medway Road.

- The renamed Steele Creek and Airport wards (named Roberts and Essendon Fields respectively in the preliminary report) are slightly adjusted to include all of Strathmore Heights, including the small area to the west of the Tullamarine Freeway, into Airport Ward.
- An adjustment is made between Airport Ward and Queens Park Ward to include all of Strathmore in Airport Ward by following Woodland Street east until the municipality boundary.
- Buckley Ward remains largely unchanged, except for a slight adjustment made to the western boundary to follow Afton Street, as opposed to Beatrice Avenue.

While the panel acknowledged strong advocacy for combining Airport West and Strathmore Heights with Essendon Fields Airport into a single ward, the panel was more convinced by the need to keep Strathmore and Strathmore Heights together and believed these areas represented a stronger community of interest. Considering the differences in opinion amongst submitters, the panel took the view that having Airport West and Niddrie together in the same ward, as occurs in the recommended structure, was also preferable for these communities.

More significant change was made in the east of the council area, particularly between Woodlands and Queens Park wards (nominally named Windy Hill and Queens Lake wards in Model 1). This area was divided north-south along Buckley Street and Park Street in Model 1, but the panel was convinced the Craigieburn railway line would provide a stronger and more significant boundary. As such, the two wards are split east-west, with the Craigieburn railway line now forming the entire boundary between the newly named Woodlands and Queens Park wards, similar to Model 2. More minor changes were made to Fairbairn and Myrning wards, with Ascot Vale Road now comprising the entire east-west boundary between these two wards, as opposed to the combination of Mount Alexander Road, Kent Street, and Ascot Vale Road found in Model 1. The panel considers these changes to reflect a suitable compromise to public feedback, a better outcome for the communities of Moonee Valley, and an overall improvement to Model 1.

The panel notes valid arguments both in favour of and against the different single-councillor ward structures examined in this review. However, the panel considers an adjusted Model 1 to be the single-councillor ward model with the best potential to promote fair and equitable representation for voters in Moonee Valley City Council and consequently facilitate good governance under the requirements of the Act.

The panel noted that introducing single-councillor wards represents a significant electoral change for Moonee Valley City Council. Achieving models that capture communities of interest into appropriate wards, while also accounting for population growth and distribution, as well as ensuring they comply with the +/-10% requirement through to and beyond the 2024 local council elections was challenging. In addition, due to the variable population growth across the council area, it was necessary to set some current ward deviations outside +/-10% to increase the likelihood of ward deviations being within the +/-10% requirement at the time of the 2024

election. Despite best efforts, the panel acknowledge there remains a risk some wards may remain or move outside +/-10% by the time of the 2024 election, due to the volatility of population change as well as the uncertain impacts of changes to council voting entitlements under the Act.

While it is difficult to predict the number of candidates likely to stand at future elections, past election results provide some indication. The panel examined these results for Moonee Valley City Council, including numbers of candidates nominating, incidences of uncontested elections and rates of informal voting. It found relatively strong candidate numbers over time, across all wards under the current electoral structure. The panel assumes this trend will continue under a structure of 9 single-councillor wards, minimising the risk of uncontested or failed elections.

Ward names

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

- Airport Ward: New name based on a major feature in the ward.
- Buckley Ward: The existing name of a ward under the current electoral structure. The new ward is contained by the area of the existing ward.
- Canning Ward: New name based on a street and park in the ward. This name is registered in the VICNAMES register.
- Fairbairn Ward: New name based on a road and park in the ward. This name is registered in the VICNAMES register.
- Milleara Ward: New name based on a main road in the ward. This name is registered in the VICNAMES register.
- Myrnong Ward: The existing name of the ward under the current electoral structure. The new ward is contained by the area of the existing ward.
- Queens Park Ward: New name based on a park in the ward. Queens Lake Park is the registered place name in the VICNAMES register.
- Steele Creek Ward: New name based on a creek in the ward. This name is registered in the VICNAMES register.
- Woodlands Ward: New name based on a park in the ward. This name is registered in the VICNAMES register.

The panel considered feedback on ward names from public submissions and changed two ward names from that in the proposed model.

Steele Creek was put forward in public submissions as a potential name for Roberts ward. The panel selected the name Steele Creek.

Queens Park was put forward in public submissions as a potential name for Windy Hill ward. The panel selected Queens Park.

The panel's recommendation

The electoral representation advisory panel recommends that Moonee Valley City Council adopt a 9 single-councillor ward structure – 9 wards with one councillor per ward.

The recommended names for the 9 wards in this electoral structure are Airport Ward, Buckley Ward, Canning Ward, Fairbairn Ward, Milleara Ward, Myrnong Ward, Queens Park Ward, Steele Creek Ward, Woodlands 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. This electoral structure was designated as Model 1 in the preliminary report, while adjustments have been made in response to public consultation.

A detailed map of the boundaries for the recommended electoral structure is provided as [Appendix 1](#).

References

Geographic Place Names Act 1998 (Vic)

Local Government Act 1989 (Vic)

Local Government Act 2020 (Vic)

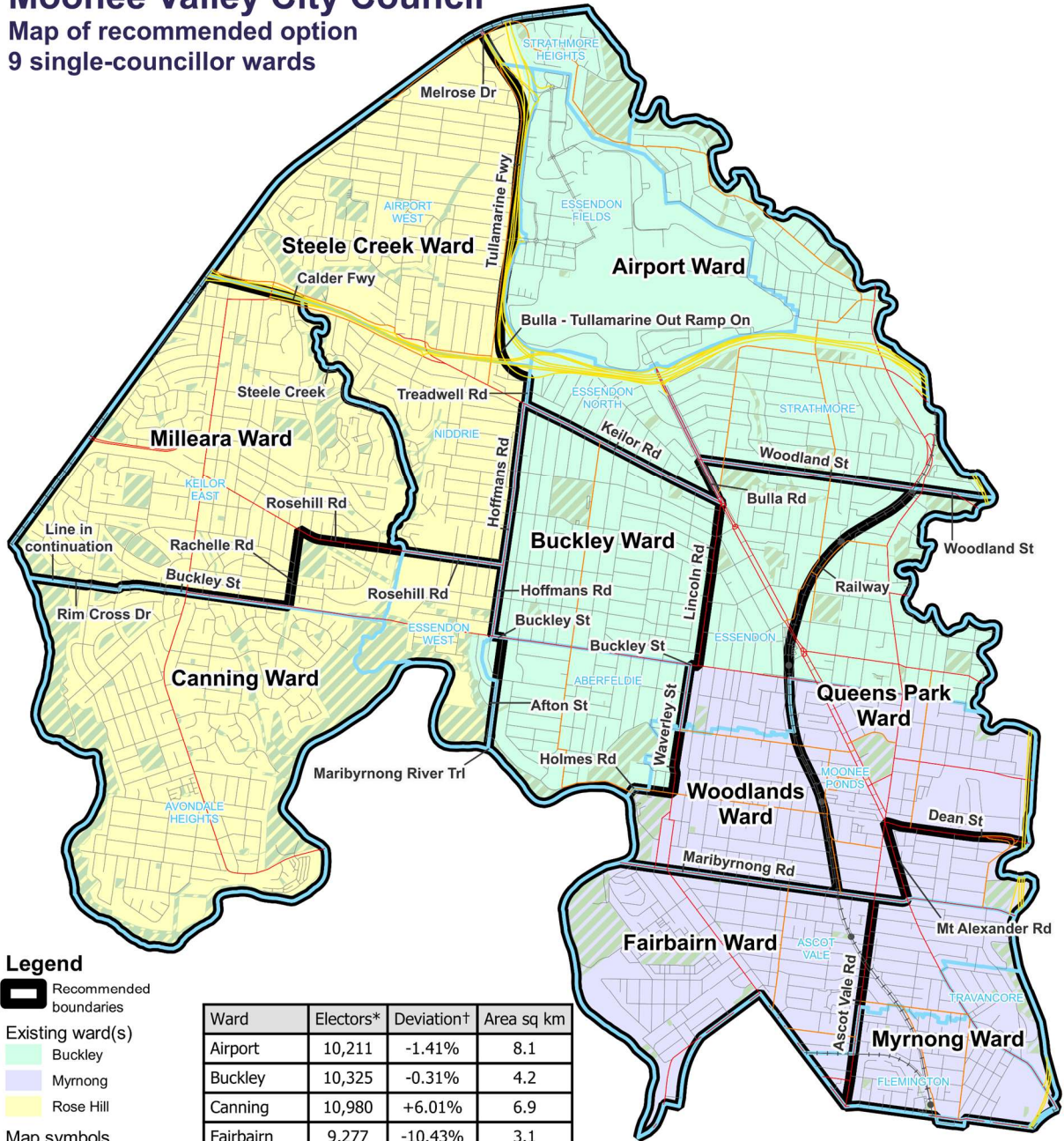
Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2020 (Vic)

ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics) (2022) [2021 Moonee Valley, Census All persons QuickStats](#), ABS, accessed 1 September 2023

Appendix 1: Map of recommended structure

Moonee Valley City Council

Map of recommended option 9 single-councillor wards

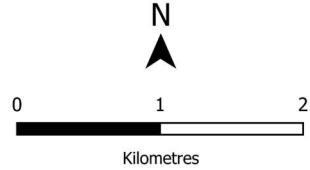


Legend

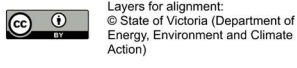
- Recommended boundaries
- Existing ward(s)**
- Buckley
- Myrnong
- Rose Hill
- Map symbols**
- Freeways
- Collector roads
- Main roads
- Minor roads
- Railways
- Railway stations
- Rivers & creeks
- Lakes
- Parks & reserves
- Locality boundaries

Ward	Electors*	Deviation†	Area sq km
Airport	10,211	-1.41%	8.1
Buckley	10,325	-0.31%	4.2
Canning	10,980	+6.01%	6.9
Fairbairn	9,277	-10.43%	3.1
Milleara	10,511	+1.48%	5.0
Myrnong	10,840	+4.66%	2.9
Queens Park	10,210	-1.42%	3.8
Steele Creek	10,911	+5.34%	5.6
Woodlands	9,952	-3.91%	3.5
Total	93,217		43.1
Average	10,357		4.8

*Elector numbers as at 25 July 2023
 †The deviation of all wards are projected to be within +/-10% by the time of the 2024 local government election.



Data use:



Disclaimer: This content is provided for information purposes only. While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy and authenticity of the content, the Victorian government does not accept any liability to any person for the information provided.

Data for recommended structure

Ward	Electors*	Deviation†	Area# (square km)
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*Elector numbers at 25 July 2023

†The deviations of all wards are projected to be within +/-10% by the time of the 2024 local government elections.

#Ward area (square km) and total council area is measured at level of accuracy required for electoral boundaries. This may vary slightly from other data sources (e.g. ABS).

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.

Response submissions

Response submissions were made by:

Adams, Ava (Councillor, Moonee Valley City Council)	Iser, Rose (Councillor, Moonee Valley City Council)
Bowler, Ryan	Jones, Hamish
Byrne, Samantha (Councillor, Moonee Valley City Council)	Marin, Tatiana
Cutajar, Sarah (1)	Marshall, Judith
Cutajar, Sarah (2)	Moffatt, Garry
Essendon Fields Airport	Moffatt, Hannah
Fergie, Stuart	Moonee Valley City Council
Field, Sarah	Murphy, Carolyn
Florey, Margaret	Sharpe, Narelle (Councillor, Moonee Valley City Council)
Goggins, Kate	Starick, Ben
Gunter, Andrew James	Tyson, Pierce (Councillor, Moonee Valley City Council)
Hodgson, Katrina (Councillor, Moonee Valley City Council)	Williams, Alan
Hogan, Catherine	Woods, Ian and Judy

Public hearing

The following people spoke at the public hearing:

Adams, Ava (Councillor, Moonee Valley City Council)
Byrne, Samantha (Councillor, Moonee Valley City Council)
Gunter, Andrew
Hodgson, Katrina (Councillor, Moonee Valley City Council)
Iser, Rose (Councillor, Moonee Valley City Council)
Jones, Hamish

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