
From: Robert Marlborough <Robert.Marlborough@ashburton.wa.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 15 May 2023 3:29 PM
To: Electoral Boundaries Review Mailbox
Cc: Jasmine Bray
Subject: Shire of Ashburton - Submission - 2023 State Electoral Boundary Review
Attachments: Item 12.9 - Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes - 9 May 2023.pdf; Letter - State Electoral Boundary Review.pdf

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Good afternoon

Please see the attached correspondence, following Council's Ordinary Meeting on 9 May 2023.

Regards

Robert Marlborough

Senior Governance Officer

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The Shire of Ashburton acknowledges the first custodians of this region, the richness of their culture, and the responsibility of all Australians to respect Aboriginal heritage.

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10 May 2023

Our Ref. GV45

Electoral Distribution Commissioners
GPO Box F316
PERTH WA 6841

Sent via email: boundaries@waec.wa.gov.au

Dear Commissioners,

RE: 2023 STATE ELECTORAL BOUNDARY REVIEW – NORTH WEST CENTRAL ELECTORATE

Further to the written confirmation from the Western Australian Electoral Commission in late April 2023 granting consent to present a late submission on the first stage of the electoral review boundary process that formally closed on 1 May 2023.

I wish to advise that following concerns raised by another local government within this electorate, the Council of the Shire of Ashburton at its Ordinary Meeting on 9 May 2023 considered a report on the electoral boundary review being undertaken.

Council formally supported the retention of the North West Central electorate on the basis of retaining broad identity, maintaining communities of common interest and ensuring ongoing reasonable access to local representation;

Furthermore, Council resolved to provide the Commissioners a copy of the report considered. Accordingly, please find attached an extract from the relevant Council minutes.

If you have any question please contact the Shire's Manager Governance, Jasmine Bray on 9188 5448.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kenn Donohoe'.

Kenn Donohoe
Chief Executive Officer

12.9 Review of State Electoral Boundaries - North West Central District

File Reference	GV45
Applicant or Proponent(s)	Not Applicable
Author	R Marlborough, Senior Governance Officer
Authorising Officer	T Dayman, Acting Director Corporate Services
Previous Meeting Reference	Nil
Disclosure(s) of interest	Author – Nil
	Authorising Officer – Nil
Attachments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2023 Distribution Review Timetable 2. 2023 Distribution Review Procedure 3. Maps - Legislative Assembly Districts

Report Purpose

Council is required to be aware of the upcoming review of the State's electoral boundaries by an independent Distribution Commission, on behalf of the Western Australian Electoral Commission (WAEC).

The purpose of this report is to provide Council information on the State electoral boundary review to ensure overall awareness in respect to the North West Central electoral district which includes the local government district of the Shire of Ashburton.

Council is requested to note the information provided and support the Chief Executive Officer presenting a submission to the Electoral Distribution Commissioners on the boundary review, with an emphasis on seeking support to retain the North West Central electoral district for the Legislative Assembly (Lower House).

Background

The *Electoral Act 1907* requires that an independent Distribution Commission undertake a review of all electoral boundaries once during each electoral cycle. The last review was undertaken in 2019.

A three-person commission consisting of the retired Supreme Court Judge the Hon. Eric Heenan KC (Chair), the Western Australian Electoral Commissioner Robert Kennedy and government statistician Tom Joseph have commenced a review of the State's electoral boundaries.

The review timeline and procedure are provided (refer to Attachments 1 and 2).

Comments

The North West Coastal electoral district is 802,591 square kilometres in size, which includes the following local government areas:

Shire of Ashburton	Shire of Ngaanyatjaraku
Shire of Carnarvon	Shire of Sandstone
Shire of Cue	Shire of Shark Bay
Shire of Exmouth	Shire of Upper Gascoyne
Shire of Meekatharra	Shire of Wiluna
Shire of Murchison	Shire of Yalgoo
Shire of Northampton	

The advice received on this issue indicates that it is possible that the North West Central district for the Legislative Assembly could be abolished, entirely.

If the North West Central district was abolished, electors could potentially be folded into the nearby Pilbara or Kimberley districts or as otherwise determined during the review, in favour of creating an additional seat in Perth's growing outer suburbs.

A map detailing the North West Central district is provided in Attachment 3.

Electoral districts are generally formed and based on the Average District Enrolments (ADE). However, where an electoral district has an area of 100,000 square kilometres or more, a notional Large District Allowance (LDA) must be applied. There are also tolerances to cater for other factors affecting districts, such as regional representation and remoteness, and the following prescribed factors are also taken into consideration:

- land use patterns
- means of communication, means of travel and distance from capital
- physical features
- existing boundaries of regions and districts
- existing local government boundaries
- the trend of demographic changes.

As at 13 March 2023 the ADE across the State was determined to be 30,432. Applying the variation rules that exists, means that at the completion of the pending distribution review, as a general rule, Legislative Assembly districts must have at least 27,389 enrolled electors, but no more than 33,475.

With specific reference to the North West Central district. As at 13 March 2023 enrolments were at 11,021, added to this number is the LDA of 12,275, which brings the total ADE elector numbers to 23,296.

Under the legislation, the number of actual electors, when added to the LDA (if applicable) must achieve a variance of not more than 20% below or 10% above the ADE. The variation in the North West Central district is currently -23.45%, which is more than the 20% below variance permissible.

There are 10 other districts in the State in a similar position of being outside the permissible 20% below or 10% above limits. The North West Central district is the only electoral district, where a LDA is applied and falls outside these limits.

To summarise, as can be determined from the information and data provided, the North West Central district is the largest in the State and it has the largest ADE variation. As outlined, variations are permissible from the ADE of not less than 20%, or not more than 10%.

The review process being undertaken provides the ability for submissions/suggestions to be lodged with the WAEC. Whilst the first round of submissions on the review closed on 1 May 2023, the WAEC have formally supported an extension for the Shire to lodge initial suggestions until 10 May 2023.

The North West Central electorate is the largest in the State and it covers a vast area stretching from the coast to the State border with both the Northern Territory and South Australia. The electorate falls within the Mining and Pastoral region of the State.

It is recommended that Council make a submission to the WAEC supporting the retention of the North West Central electoral district, given the –

- commonality of the land use patterns and physical features present;
- electorates long and diverse history;
- need to retain the broad identity that exists;
- need to support and recognise communities of common interest, and
- to ensure adequate and continuing reasonable access to local political representation.

Consultation

Nil

Strategic Community Plan

Shire of Ashburton Strategic Community Plan 2022-2032

Strategic Objective	4. Performance - We will lead the organisation, and create the culture, to deliver demonstrated performance excellence to the community.
Strategic Outcome	4.6 Visionary community leadership with sound, diligent and accountable governance
Strategy	3 Deliver best practice governance and risk management.

Council Policy

Nil

Financial Implications

Current Financial Year

Nil

Future Financial Year(s)

Nil

Legislative Implications

The *Electoral Act 1907* is applicable to this matter. The Shire does not administer this legislation.

Risk Management

Risk has been assessed against the Shire of Ashburton Risk Management Framework.

Theme	Risk	Likelihood	Consequence	Inherent Risk Rating	Risk Treatment
Reputation (social/community)	Community perception that the electorate is generally of limited importance.	Unlikely (2)	Insignificant (1)	Low (1-4)	Provide positive advocacy to retain the North West Central district.

Based on the inherent risk rating and risk treatments, the residual risk to the Shire is considered to be low.

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Officer Recommendation

That with respect to the review of State electoral boundaries, Council,

1. Supports the retention of the North West Central district for the Legislative Assembly on the basis of retaining broad identity, maintaining communities of common interest and ensuring ongoing reasonable access to local representation; and
2. Requests the Chief Executive Officer to send a copy of this report to the Electoral Distribution Commissioners as a submission for the State electoral boundary review.

Council Decision **079/2023**

Moved **Cr T Mladenovic**

Seconded **Cr J Richardson**

That with respect to the review of State electoral boundaries, Council,

1. **Supports the retention of the North West Central district for the Legislative Assembly on the basis of retaining broad identity, maintaining communities of common interest and ensuring ongoing reasonable access to local representation; and**
2. **Requests the Chief Executive Officer to send a copy of this report to the Electoral Distribution Commissioners as a submission for the State electoral boundary review.**

Carried 6/2