

10. Reports

10.1 Chief Executive Officer

10.1.1 Ward Boundaries Review

To the Mayor and Councillors

Directorate: Chief Executive Officer

Group: Council Services

Author: Lisa Davey, Governance Manager

Manager: Flora Lepouras, Executive Manager

Approver: Flora Lepouras, Executive Manager

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to seek Council endorsement of the preferred ward boundary option to be reviewed by the NSW Electoral Commission and subsequently publicly exhibited in accordance with Section 210A of the *Local Government Act* (the Act).

Background

Under Section 211 of the Act councils that are divided into wards must keep ward boundaries under review to ensure the difference in elector numbers between wards does not exceed 10%, as outlined by the Office of Local Government in their circular date 5 June 2023 (**Attachment 1**).

At its meeting on 23 July 2019 Council endorsed its current ward boundaries (**Attachment 2**) which were based on the 2016 ABS census data elector numbers as follows:

Table 1 - 2016 Elector Numbers

Ward	Elector Numbers
Ward A	13,712
Ward B	13,162
Ward C	13,044
Ward D	13,571
Total	53,489

The ABS census data elector numbers as at June 2023 for Shellharbour City is 58,435. A review was taken place to assess the difference in elector numbers based on the formula outlined by the Office of Local Government in **Attachment 1**. The below table outlines the results:

Table 2 - 2023 Elector Numbers

Ward	Elector Numbers	
Ward A	17,239	(largest ward)
Ward B	13,562	(lowest ward)
Ward C	13,749	
Ward D	13,885	
Total	58,435	
Difference	3,677	(difference between largest and lowest ward)
Difference %	27.1%	> 10%

As noted in Table 2, as the variation is more than 10% the council is required to alter its ward boundaries in compliance with Section 211 of the Act.

Following review of the ward boundaries, two options are presented to Council for consideration as follows:

Table 3 - Ward Boundaries - Option 1 (Attachment 3)

Option 1		Ward A	Ward B	Ward C	Ward D	Total
		14,717	14,601	14,455	14,662	58,435
Ward A	14,717	0.00	0.79	1.81	0.38	
Ward B	14,601	0.79	0.00	1.01	0.42	
Ward C	14,455	1.81	1.01	0.00	1.43	
Ward D	14,662	0.38	0.42	1.43	0.00	

Table 4 - Ward Boundaries - Option 2 (Attachment 4)

Option 2		Ward A	Ward B	Ward C	Ward D	Total
		14,717	14,601	14,417	14,700	58,435
Ward A	14,717	0.00	0.79	2.08	0.12	
Ward B	14,601	0.79	0.00	1.28	0.68	
Ward C	14,417	2.08	1.28	0.00	1.96	
Ward D	14,700	0.12	0.68	1.96	0.00	

Option 1 and Option 2 follow the SA1 boundaries as required by the NSW Electoral Commission.

Option 2 is the preferred option as it has the least impact to the existing ward boundaries.

The endorsed ward boundary option is to be forwarded to the NSW Electoral Commission to ensure that as far as practicable the proposed ward boundaries of the wards correspond to the boundaries of appropriate districts and census districts and to ensure that the ward boundaries comply with Section 210(7) of the Act. Option 2 complies with these requirements.

Following confirmation from the NSW Electoral Commission, the proposed ward boundary option will be advertised in accordance with Section 210A of the Act.

As noted in **Attachment 1**, the last date for councils to make ward boundary changes is **5 October 2023** to be in effect for the **14 September 2024** ordinary elections.

Council Implications

Financial / Resources

The only financial implication at this stage is the cost of advertising for public exhibition and this is provided for in existing budgets.

Legislation and Policy (including Advocacy, Strategic and Other Plans)

Local Government Act 1993

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021

Social Impact

The community will be given the opportunity to lodge submissions on the endorsed ward boundary option for the 2024 Local Government elections during the public exhibition period.

Sustainability Considerations

Nil

Legal Considerations

Nil

Risk Considerations

Council is meeting its requirements in accordance with Section 211 of the Act and Section 277A of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* to

ensure that ward boundaries are reviewed and changes are reported and publicly exhibited by 5 October 2023 to be in effect for the 14 September 2024 ordinary election. The only identified risk would be if Council did not endorse an option in accordance with this legislation.

Link to Community Strategic Plan

This report supports the following objectives and strategies of the Community Strategic Plan:

4.1 We deliver our future together

4.1.1 The community is meaningfully engaged and active in shaping the future of the city

4.2 We have strong leadership

4.2.1 Our Council is transparent and trusted to make decisions that reflect the values of the community collectively

Previous Council Resolutions (including type and date of meeting)

[23 July 2019](#)

Consultation

Internal

Team Leader Spatial Technology
Senior GIS Officer

External

Nil

Political Donations Disclosure

Not Applicable

Options

Option 1:

Option 1 of the ward boundary options is outlined in **Attachment 3**.

Option 2:

Option 2 of the ward boundary options is outlined in **Attachment 4**. Option 2

is recommended as it has the least impact on existing ward boundaries.

Conclusion

It is recommended that Council endorse **Option 2** as the preferred ward boundary option to be forwarded to the NSW Electoral Commission for review. Following confirmation from the NSW Electoral Commission, the proposed ward boundary option will be placed on public exhibition.

Recommendation

That:

- 1. Council endorse Option 2 as the preferred ward boundary.**
- 2. The preferred ward boundary option be forwarded to the NSW Electoral Commission for review in accordance with Section 210(1)(a) of the *Local Government Act 1993*.**
- 3. Following the NSW Electoral Commission review, the preferred ward boundary option be placed on public exhibition in accordance with Section 210A(1)(b) of the *Local Government Act 1993*.**
- 4. If any relevant submissions are received as a result of public exhibition, a report be submitted to Council for consideration detailing the public exhibition outcomes and with further recommendations regarding adoption.**
- 5. If there are no valid submissions received as a result of public exhibition and there are no substantial post public exhibition changes proposed for any other reason, Council adopt Option 2 as the preferred ward boundary.**

Attachments

1. Office of Local Government Circular 23-05 - 5 June 2023
2. Current Ward Boundaries
3. Ward Boundaries Review - Option 1
4. Ward Boundaries Review - Option 2