



## Shire of Boyup Brook

### Review of Wards and Representation Discussion Paper

#### Background

The Shire of Boyup Brook has resolved to undertake a review of its ward system to comply with the requirements of the Local Government Act 1995 (the Act). Schedule 2.2 of the Act requires local governments with wards to carry out reviews of the ward boundaries and the number of councillors for each ward from time to time so that no more than eight years elapse between successive reviews. A desktop review is conducted by Council following each Local Government election but the last full review of wards in the Shire of Boyup Brook was undertaken some time ago. It is now appropriate to carry out another full review.

#### Current situation

Currently the Shire of Boyup Brook has nine (9) councillors elected from four (4) wards. The position at the 2015 ordinary Local Government elections was as follows:

WARD	NUMBER OF COUNCILLORS	NUMBER OF ELECTORS	COUNCILLOR TO ELECTOR RATIO	% RATIO DEVIATION
Benjinup	2	259	130	-0.13
Boyup Brook	3	453	151	-16.75
Dinninup	2	236	118	8.76
Scotts Brook	2	216	108	16.49
Total	9	1164	129	

It can be seen that the average number of electors to each councillor is 129. The Benjinup Ward in 2015 was close to the average, Boyup Brook Ward with 151 electors to each Councillor was under represented and the Dinninup and Scotts Brook Wards were over represented. Looking at the percentage ratio deviation column and noting that a deviation between plus or minus 10% is considered to be sufficiently balanced, it is apparent that Boyup Brook and Scotts Brook Ward representation levels need to be addressed.

It is important to also look at prior years to establish any trends. Imbalances trending toward or away from a balance may require further analysis to determine the reasons. The following schedules are from 2011, 2013 and 2015 election years:

<b>2011</b>				
<b>WARD</b>	<b>NUMBER OF COUNCILLORS</b>	<b>NUMBER OF ELECTORS</b>	<b>COUNCILLOR TO ELECTOR RATIO</b>	<b>% RATIO DEVIATION</b>
Benjinup	2	248	124	3.88
Boyup Brook	3	474	158	-22.48
Dinninup	2	217	109	15.89
Scotts Brook	2	222	111	13.95
Total	9	1161	129	

<b>2013</b>				
<b>WARD</b>	<b>NUMBER OF COUNCILLORS</b>	<b>NUMBER OF ELECTORS</b>	<b>COUNCILLOR TO ELECTOR RATIO</b>	<b>% RATIO DEVIATION</b>
Benjinup	2	251	126	5.80
Boyup Brook	3	471	157	-17.85
Dinninup	2	241	121	9.55
Scotts Brook	2	236	118	11.43
Total	9	1199	133	

<b>2015</b>				
<b>WARD</b>	<b>NUMBER OF COUNCILLORS</b>	<b>NUMBER OF ELECTORS</b>	<b>COUNCILLOR TO ELECTOR RATIO</b>	<b>% RATIO DEVIATION</b>
Benjinup	2	259	130	-0.13
Boyup Brook	3	453	151	-16.75
Dinninup	2	236	118	8.76
Scotts Brook	2	216	108	16.49
Total	9	1164	129	

The foregoing show that elector numbers in the Benjinup Ward have fluctuated but the variances in number terms are small and in percentage of deviation, within tolerances.

The Boyup Brook Ward elector numbers have trended down. Whilst the numbers are small the percentage continues to exceed plus/minus 10%.

Dinninup Ward elector numbers have fluctuated and whilst the percentage of deviation showed an unacceptable over representation in 2011, 2013 and 2015 were within tolerances.

Scotts Brook Ward continued to be over represented with a percentage outside of tolerances.

## **Review Process**

The review process contains a number of steps:

- The council resolves to undertake the review;
- Public submission period opens;
- Information provided to the community for discussion;
- Public submission period closes;
- The Council considers all submissions and relevant factors and makes a decision;
- The Council submits a report to the Local Government Advisory Board (the Board) for its consideration; and
- If a change is proposed, the Board submits a recommendation to the Minister for Local Government (the Minister).

Any changes approved by the Minister will be in place for the next ordinary election where possible.

### **Factors to be Considered**

When considering changes to wards and representation, Schedule 2.2 of the Act specifies factors that must be taken into account by a local government as part of the review process:

1. Community of interest;
2. Physical and topographic features;
3. Demographic trends;
4. Economic factors; and
5. Ratio of Councillors to Electors in the various wards. The Board offers the following interpretation of these factors.

#### **1. Community of interest**

The term community of interest has a number of elements. These include a sense of community identity and belonging, similarities in the characteristics of the residents of a community and similarities in the economic activities. It can also include dependence on the shared facilities in an area as reflected in catchment areas of local schools and sporting teams, or the circulation areas of local newspapers.

Neighbourhoods, suburbs and towns are important units in the physical, historical and social infrastructure and often generate a feeling of community and belonging.

#### **2. Physical and topographic features**

These may be natural or man-made features that will vary from area to area. Water features such as rivers and catchment boundaries may be relevant considerations. Coastal plains and foothills regions, parks and reserves may be relevant as may other man made features such as railway lines and freeways.

#### **3. Demographic trends**

Several measurements of the characteristics of human populations, such as population size, and its distribution by age, sex, occupation and location provide important demographic information. Current and projected population characteristics will be relevant as well as similarities and differences between areas within the local government.

#### **4. Economic factors**

Economic factors can be broadly interpreted to include any factor that reflects the character of economic activities and resources in the area. This may include the industries that occur in a local government area (or the release of land for these) and the distribution of community assets and infrastructure such as road networks.

## **5. Ratio of Councillors to Electors in the various wards**

It is expected that each local government will have similar ratios of electors to councillors across the wards of its district.

### **Options to Consider**

The Council will consider all options and members of the community may suggest others. Obvious options include:

**Option 1** - Maintain the current ward system

**Option 2** - Create two wards (Boyup Brook Town and Boyup Brook Rural ) using the areas of economic activity (commerce, education and other town type activities for Town and agriculture for Rural) as the boundary (essentially the town site boundary).

**Option 3** - Create three wards (perhaps the current town ward and divide the rural area into two) using main roads and the town sites as boundaries

**Option 4** - No wards

### **Public Submissions**

Members of the community are invited to make a written submission about any aspect of ward boundaries and representation and lodge it :

- In person to Shire of Boyup Brook Chambers/Administration building  
Abel Street Boyup Brook
- By post to Shire of Boyup Brook  
PO Box 2 Boyup Brook WA 6244
- By fax to 08 97651592
- By email: [shire@boyupbrook.wa.gov.au](mailto:shire@boyupbrook.wa.gov.au)

All submissions must be received by 5pm on 7 March 2017.

**Epilogue**

Thank you for your interest and involvement in this review. Council welcomes your comments on any matters that may assist it to make informed and responsible decisions for the benefit of the people of the Shire of Boyup Brook

Councillor Michael Giles  
PRESIDENT

Mr. Alan Lamb  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER