

6 September 2013

Community Consultation
Council Representation Review
Adelaide City Council
GPO Box 2252
Adelaide 5001

Draft Representation Review Report – New Proposal

This is the third submission that SECRA has made on the current Adelaide City Council Representation Review.

During Stage 1 of the Representation Review consultation process SECRA proposed a 3 Ward model with an elected Lord Mayor, 7 Ward Councillors and 4 Area Councillors. This model took into account that 2/7 of electors were located north of the River Torrens and maintained the river as the boundary between the North and Central Wards and provided a similar elector/ Councillor ratio per ward with 2 Ward Councillors north of the river and 5 south of the river. This increased the current number of Ward Councillors by 1 and consequently the number of Area Councillors was reduced by one in order to maintain the current total number of Councillors.

Council's recommended option in Stage 2 of the consultation process was a 3 Ward Option, similar to that proposed by SECRA in its Stage 1 submission with the exception that 5 Area Councillors was proposed. While SECRA supported the proposed 3 Ward Option it raised concerns about having 5 Area Councillors as this increased the total number of councillors from 12 to 13. This concern was shared by the Electoral Commissioner who rejected this option because of this increase in the total number of Councillors. It is SECRA's understanding that the Electoral Commissioner would have supported the 3 Ward Option if the total number of Councillors remained at 12.

SECRA is concerned that after a lengthy consultation process lasting over a year a position has now been reached where Council has changed its preferred 3 Ward Option to a 4 Ward Option with 4 Ward Councillors and 6 Area Councillors. This 4 Ward Option was not identified during this long consultation process and, with the exception of reducing the total number of current councillors by 1, the reasons given for this change in position also applied during the Stages 1 and 2 of the consultation process during which Council decided on the 3 Ward Option.

Under the 3 Ward Option the Council area is split into a mainly commercial Central Ward with the North and South Wards being predominately residential. It also maintained the River Torrens as the boundary between the North and Central Wards.

To cater for the required elector/councillor ratios Council's now preferred 4 Ward Option has to include part of North Adelaide in the Central Ward and shows the South West Ward being a mix of residential and commercial electors. Under this 4 Ward Option the South East Ward remains predominately residential and ensures that there will be at least one elected councillor who has a knowledge of the south east precinct of the city. While SECRA members are not significantly disadvantaged by the 4 Ward Option residents in the North and South West Wards are disadvantaged. Under these circumstances SECRA has significant reservations and concerns about the proposed 4 Ward Option is therefore not prepared to support that option.

That is not to say that in the future a 4 Ward Option may be an acceptable option when the residential growth in the West End of the city creates an imbalance of the elector/councillor ratio under a 3 Ward Option. Under these circumstances the boundary in a 4 Ward Option between the North and Central Wards could be the River Torrens and the South West Ward could include the West End residential development and become a predominately residential Ward. The Central Ward would then be predominately commercial. In the interim SECRA is of the view that the better solution is the 3 Ward Option.

In summary SECRA's position is as follows:

1. SECRA supports the Lord Mayor being elected by electors.
2. SECRA is of the view that the 3 Ward Option, with an elected Lord Mayor, 7 Ward Councillors and a maximum of 4 Area Councillors is the preferred option as it currently satisfies the elector/councillor ratios and maintains North Adelaide as one predominately residential ward together with a South Ward which is also predominately residential and a Central Ward which is predominately commercial.
3. SECRA does not support the proposed 4 Ward Option as it requires part of North Adelaide to be included in the Central Ward and results in the South West Ward being residential with a significant commercial component.
4. SECRA is totally opposed to an Area Councillor only option as under this option there is a greater likelihood that south east residents will not have an elected councillor with a knowledge of the area and residents' needs and concerns.

Yours sincerely,



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