



SHIRE OF NORTHAMPTON

**DISCUSSION PAPER**

**REVIEW OF WARDS AND REPRESENTATION**

**Background**

The Shire of Northampton 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 a review 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.

The last review of ward boundaries in the Shire of Northampton was undertaken in May 2014 to comply with amendments to the Local Government Act where the maximum number of elected members per local government is to be nine.

**Current Situation**

Currently the Shire of Northampton has 9 Councillors elected from (2) wards as follows:

Ward Name	No of electors	No of councillors	Councillor to elector ratio	% Ratio deviation
Ward Northampton	1,170	5	234	<b>4.53%</b> <b>-5.67%</b>
Ward Kalbarri	1,036	4	259	
<b>Totals</b>	2,206	9	245	

The above ratios are based on the number of electors at the October 2022 election.

The Kalbarri Ward includes the townsite of Kalbarri and the Kalbarri National Park. The Northampton Ward is the balance of the Shire.

## **Review Process**

The Minister for Local Government through proposed legislation changes to be made, has advised that the maximum number of elected members for Councils that are classed as Band 3 and 4 as determined by the Salaries and Administrative Tribunal is to be a maximum of seven and a minimum of five.

In addition the Minister has also indicated that as part of the reform of the Local Government Act 1995, that no wards for Band 3 and 4 local governments are to apply.

Therefore this review is to now advise that the future representation of the Council will be seven Councillors and no wards.

The Local Government Act also stipulates the following process for the review:

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

If the Minister approves any changes then these are most likely to be in place for the next bi-annual election to be held in October 2023.

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

The Local Government Advisory 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 communities, 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 plain and foothills regions, parks and reserves may be relevant as may other man made features such as railway lines and roads.

### 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, the rates paid by different sections and the distribution of community assets and infrastructure such as road networks.

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

Due to the direction of no wards this factor is to no longer be considered.

With the pending changes to the Local Government Act and associated Regulations the above factors are now unlikely to be considered by the Local Government Advisory Board or Minister for Local Government.

If the Council request seven Councillors and no wards, the situation at the October 2023 election will be that four elected members will continue their terms to 2025, and an election will be held to elect three members whose terms expire in October 2023. Two positions will be made redundant.

### **Public submissions**

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

Chief Executive Officer  
Shire of Northampton  
PO Box 61  
NORTHAMPTON WA 6535

Phone: (08) 99341202      Fax: (08) 99341072

Submissions will also be accepted by email: [ceo@northampton.wa.gov.au](mailto:ceo@northampton.wa.gov.au)

All submissions must be received by 4.00 pm on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

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 Northampton.

**CR ELIZABETH SUDLOW**  
**PRESIDENT**

**GARRY L KEEFFE**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**