

### 2022 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM REQUIREMENTS

On 20 September 2022 the Minister for Local Government released an instruction to all Western Australian local governments relating to proposed amendments to the Local Government Act 1995 expected to be considered by Parliament in early 2023. The new requirements to be introduced include a directly elected Shire President, and Councillor numbers reduced to between four (minimum) and eight (maximum) Councillors plus the directly elected Shire President. The instruction has triggered the need for the Shire of Manjimup to undertake a Ward and Representation Review and the Discussion Paper appended is the document used to consult with the community.

### CONSULTATION PERIOD

The Ward and Representation Review Discussion Paper is open for public consultation for a period of six weeks concluding at 5pm on 9 December 2022.

### HOW TO MAKE A SUBMISSION

Submissions can be made to the Shire of Manjimup, preferably on the consultation form, before the close of the consultation period. The address to make a submission is contained within the Discussion Paper.

### EXISTING COUNCIL STRUCTURE

Council currently comprises eleven Councillors and has a Ward based structure made up of the Central Ward (five Councillors), North Ward (one Councillor), East Ward (one Councillor), West Ward (two Councillors), Coastal Ward (one Councillor) and South Ward (one Councillor). Each Ward is based on a number of localities comprising the district. The Shire President is elected by Councillors for a two year term after Council elections every two years. Each Councillor is elected for a four year term with half of the Councillor terms being due for expiry every two years.

### REPRESENTATION REQUIREMENTS FOR WARD STRUCTURES

If a Council structure is operated using a Ward based system, there is a requirement for each Councillor that forms part of a Ward to represent an average number of electors plus or minus 10%. Deviations beyond 10% are generally not supported.

### PROPOSED CHANGES

The reduction in the number of Councillors will have a significant impact on the existing Ward structure predominantly because of elector representation requirements. Council may elect to not have any Wards at all or choose a compliant Ward based structure. Other factors that should be given consideration when identifying a suitable future option include the existing Councillor terms, phasing in arrangements either in 2023 or 2025, elector distribution across the district, if a Ward system is preferred the names of proposed Wards, communities of interest, physical and topographical features, demographic trends, and economic factors.

The Discussion Paper analyses four possible options with a number of permutations however if other compliant options are available, the Shire of Manjimup would welcome a submission that details the opportunity.

### WHERE TO FROM HERE

After the submission period closes Council will consider a Ward and Representation Review Report at the Council meeting to be held on 19 January 2023. The Shire of Manjimup is required to notify its decision to the State Government before 14 February 2023.

### FURTHER ADVICE

More information can be obtained in the Discussion Paper, or by contacting the Shire on 9771 7777 or at [info@manjimup.wa.gov.au](mailto:info@manjimup.wa.gov.au)