



Shire of Manjimup

2022 Ward and Representation Review

Discussion Paper

20 October 2022

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BACKGROUND

Clause 6(3) of Schedule 2.2 of the *Local Government Act 1995* ordinarily requires a Local Government to conduct a Ward and Representation Review every eight years upon request from the Local Government Advisory Board. The last Ward and Representation Review for the Shire of Manjimup was undertaken six years ago in 2016, however as a result of the State Government recently introducing Local Government reforms in time for the October 2023 Council election, the Shire of Manjimup is required to make significant changes to the number of Councillors comprising the Council and this will trigger the need for an unscheduled Ward and Representation Review.

The Shire of Manjimup is now obligated to complete the Ward and Representation Review to initiate all applicable Local Government reform changes and finalise this process by 14 February 2023. Any changes resulting from the review will take effect from the October 2023 Council elections. This Discussion Paper explores various options and seeks public comment for a six week period prior to the Council making a final determination.

2022 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM REQUIREMENTS

Since 2018 the State Government has been working on a process to introduce Local Government reform through a series of proposed amendments to the *Local Government Act 1995*. Under the latest reform proposals, the following matters are up for consideration:

- 1) The introduction of optional preferential voting;
- 2) Directly elected Mayors and Presidents for band 1 and 2 Local Governments;
- 3) Councillor numbers based on population; and
- 4) The removal of Wards for band 3 and 4 local governments.

Reforms 1), 2) and 3) apply to the Shire of Manjimup as the organisation is a band 2 Local Government, however only reform 3) is part of this Ward and Representation Review Discussion Paper as the other two reforms will have a compulsory introduction at the next Council election in October 2023.

Reform 3) requires that Local Governments with total populations between 5,000 and 75,000 must have a Council membership comprising of between five and nine Councillors. In the case of the Shire of Manjimup as a band 2 Local Government, where also the Shire President will be required to be elected directly by electors, a total number of Councillors permitted will be between four and eight plus the directly elected Shire President. Changes proposed can transition from the Council elections in October 2023 and be finalised by October 2025 at the latest on the proviso that adequate elector representation is maintained if Wards still apply.

EXISTING WARD STRUCTURE

The six existing Shire of Manjimup Wards are shown in **Attachment 1**. The Wards are based on contiguous groupings of localities. The localities are combined together to form Wards that, as per the requirements of the Local Government Advisory Board, are required to create average (plus or minus 10%) elector representation for each Councillor unless there is a very compelling reason not to do so.

2022 Wards with localities and electors are shown in the table below:

WARD	LOCALITY	Number of Electors
Central	Deanmill	219
	Jardee	38
	Manjimup	3057
	Middlesex	9
	Protected (Section 51B)	25
	Total	3348
Coastal	Boorara Brook	113
	Crowea	109
	Meerup	128
	Northcliffe	209
	Shannon	4
	Windy Harbour	150
	Protected (Section 51B)	5
	Total	718
East	Dingup	138
	Lake Muir	9
	Middlesex	164
	Mordalup	18
	Perup	127
	Quinninup	127
	Smith Brook	41
	Upper Warren	50
	Protected (Section 51B)	3
	Total	677
North	Balbarrup	115
	Deanmill	1
	Dixvale	37
	Glenoran	68
	Linfarne	52
	Palgarup	108
	Ringbark	86
	Wilgarrup	18
	Yanmah	117
	Protected (Section 51B)	0
	Total	602
South	Broke	8
	North Walpole	90
	Walpole	399

	Protected (Section 51B)	0
	Total	497
West	Beedelup	22
	Callcup	15
	Channybearup	90
	Collins	45
	Diamond Tree	20
	Eastbrook	97
	Jardee	86
	Pemberton	619
	Yeagarup	66
	Protected (Section 51B)	2
	Total	1062
TOTAL ELECTORS		6904
Average Electors per Councillor (rounded)		628

The 2022 elector representation per Councillor ratio's are as follows:

Ward	Councillors	Number of electors	Councillor to Elector ratio (rounded)	% Ratio Deviation
Central	5	3,348	670	+ 6.6%
Coastal	1	718	718	+ 14.3%
East	1	677	677	+ 7.8%
North	1	602	602	-4.1%
South	1	497	497	-20.9%
West	2	1,062	531	- 15.4%
Total	11	6,904		

The Local Government Advisory Board's requirement for elector representation per Councillor must be within 10% of the average unless there is a very compelling reason not to do so. Under the existing Council composition with eleven Councillors and six Wards, the Coastal Ward Councillor is significantly under representing electors whereas both the West Ward and South Ward Councillors are significantly over representing electors well beyond the Local Government Advisory Board benchmark. The Shire of Manjimup has had to argue very strongly with the Local Government Advisory Board to maintain the six Ward system during the past two Ward and Representation Reviews and the elector representation disproportion appears to be trending worse as time goes on.

LIMITATIONS ON COUNCILLOR NUMBERS, WARDS AND PHASING IN CHANGES AS A RESULT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM

The Shire of Manjimup is required to reduce the number of Councillors from eleven Councillors to a number between four and eight Councillors plus a directly elected Shire President by the October 2023 election.

When giving any consideration to Wards, the Local Government Advisory Board's requirement to ensure elector representation by Councillors is within 10% of the average of the number of electors per Councillor must be contemplated. When considering the composition of Wards if any, the directly elected Shire President should not be considered as part of the average elector representation by Councillors as the Shire President is elected directly by all electors.

Existing Wards are predominantly based on contiguous localities to form as close to average elector representation for each Councillor. Creating Wards without the use of defined localities would be extremely complex, costly and is not recommended as a viable option. The intent of any consideration for Wards should also take into account potential future elector movement and therefore it is preferable to achieve as close as possible to average elector representation for each Councillor at the time so as to not create significant elector representation disproportion for Councillors in the future.

Local Government reform allows the transitioning at the October 2023 Council election to be finalised by the October 2025 Council election but if transitioning across the two election cycles occurs, elector representation in Wards must be maintained. The existing Councillor vacancy profile should also be factored into consideration if a Ward based system is proposed as there is a requirement to maintain balanced election cycles every two years.

Councillor Vacancies 2023 Election (Wards)	Councillor Vacancies 2025 Election (Wards)
Central	Central
Central	Central
Central	East
West	Coastal
North	West
	South
Total 5	Total 6

OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

Upon consideration of the various permutations imposed by the Local Government reform process, the following four options with variable composition are the most likely pathways available for the Shire of Manjimup to meet Local Government reform requirements:

Option 1: All Available Wards (The establishment of two, three or four Wards plus the directly elected Shire President in 2023)

All available Ward options can be initiated if all Councillor positions are declared vacant in 2023 with half of the agreed number of Councillor positions being filled for four year terms and half of the agreed number of Councillor positions being filled for two year terms in 2023 to balance the two year election cycle.

Option 2: All Available Wards Using “No Ward” Interim Step in 2023 (The transitional establishment of two, three or four Wards plus the directly elected Shire President in 2023)

All available Ward options can be initiated if Council agrees to have no Wards at the October 2023 election, reduces the number of Councillor vacancies for election in 2023 to comply with Local Government reform of four to eight Councillors total, and then introduces one of the available Ward options in 2025 as part of that election. To balance Councillor numbers, in 2025 some of the vacant Councillor positions will need to be filled for four year terms and some of the vacant Councillor positions need to be filled for two year terms depending on the final number of Councillors to balance the two year election cycle.

Option 3: Two Wards Central and Outer (eight Councillors plus elected Shire President in 2023)

This option can be initiated with two Central Ward Councillor vacancies in 2023 (one Central Ward, one West Ward and one North Ward Councillor positions are abolished) with four year terms implemented at the 2023 election along with the direct election of the Shire President. At 2025 election a requirement for two Central Ward Councillors with four year terms, two Outer Ward Councillors with four year terms and two Outer Ward Councillors with two year terms would be required to balance the two year election cycle.

Option 4: No Wards (five, six, seven eight Councillors plus the directly elected Shire President in 2023)

The no Ward option could be adopted commencing 2023 by retaining existing Councillors elected until 2025 with some Councillor vacancies occurring in 2023 depending on the number of Councillor positions Council determines in accordance with the Local Government reform. To balance the two year election cycle, in 2025 some of the vacant Councillor positions will need to be filled for four year terms and some of the vacant Councillor positions need to be filled for two year terms depending on the final number of Councillors agreed by Council. Alternately if the no Ward option was chosen it could be initiated if all Councillor positions are declared vacant in 2023 with half of the agreed number of Councillor positions being filled for four year terms and half of the agreed number of Councillor positions being filled for two year terms in 2023 to balance the two year election cycle.

A summary of the most probable options of Councillor numbers and Ward opportunities is shown below:

Wards Councillors	0	2	3	4	5	6
4*	√	√	X	X	X	X
5*	√	X	X	X	X	X
6*	√	√	√	√	X	X
7*	√	X	X	X	X	X
8*	√	√	X	X	X	X

*Plus a directly elected Shire President

A detailed assessment of the options is included in **Attachment 2**.

Ward names

The existing six Ward names are Central, Coastal, East, North, South and West. As there is no probability of retaining six Wards as a result of the Local Government reform, Ward names will need further consideration unless a no Ward system is determined. As a suggestion the following Ward names could apply if one of the Ward options is chosen, however Council would be open to other naming ideas as part of the final determination:

Number of Wards	Names
2	Central and Outer
3	Central, Inland and Coastal
4	Central, Inland, West and Coastal

HOW TO MAKE A SUBMISSION

Council is seeking submissions from the public on the proposed options for the Shire of Manjimup 2022 Ward and Representation Review. The submission period closes on the **Friday 9 December 2022**.

Submissions can be made on the attached form and lodged with the Shire of Manjimup as follows:

By Mail **Chief Executive Officer
Shire of Manjimup
PO Box 1
Manjimup WA 6258**

By E-mail **info@manjimup.wa.gov.au**

By Facsimile **08 9771 7771**

Following receipt of submissions, Council is to consider the submissions and make its recommendation to the Local Government Advisory Board by the 14 February 2023 to enable any changes to be implemented prior to Council elections in October 2023.

Thank you for your interest and involvement in this review. Council welcomes comments that may assist informed and responsible decision making on Ward and Representation for the benefit of all electors of the Shire of Manjimup.

SUBMISSION FORM

Shire of Manjimup 2022 Ward and Representation Review

Name	
Postal Address	
Email	

Selection of Preferred Outcome from the Discussion Paper

(Select one preference only, please note that your submission will be published as part of Council records)

		Councillor numbers <small>(write number of Councillors preferred)</small>	Method <small>(circle preferred method)</small>
1	No wards	4, 5, 6, 7, or 8	Option 4 <small>(Maintain Cr terms to 2025)</small> or Option 4 <small>(Declare all positions vacant in 2023)</small>
2	Two Wards (Central / Outer)	4, 5, 6, 7, or 8	Option 1 or Option 2 <small>(Option 2: 6 or 8 Councillors only)</small> or Option 3 <small>(Option 3: 8 Councillors only)</small>
3	Three Wards (Central / Inland / Coastal)	6 only	Option 1 or Option 2
4	Four Wards (Central / Inland / West / Coastal)	6 only	Option 1 or Option 2
5	Any Other Valid Option (please specify)		

Ward Names

Existing Ward Names
Central Ward
North Ward
East Ward
West Ward
Coastal Ward
South Ward

Number of Wards	Proposed Ward Names
2	Central and Outer
3	Central, Inland and Coastal
4	Central, Inland, West and Coastal

Question 1: Do you support a proposal to change Ward names as identified above?

Yes / No

Question 2: Are there any other Ward names you believe to be suitable?

Any Other Comments (attach separate document if required)

Signature

_____ Date ___ / ___ / 2022

ATTACHMENT 1



ATTACHMENT 2

FACTORS TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT AS PART OF A WARD AND REPRESENTATION REVIEW

When considering Ward and representation changes, the following factors should also be taken into account:

1. Community of Interests;
2. Physical and Topographical Features;
3. Demographic Trends;
4. Economic Factors; and
5. Ratio of Councillors to Electors in the Various Wards.

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 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.

The Shire of Manjimup covers an area of 7,028 square kilometres and includes the main towns of Manjimup, Northcliffe, Pemberton and Walpole and the settlements of Deanmill, Jardee, Nyamup, Palgarup, Quinninup and Windy Harbour. Each could be considered a community in their own right with the four main centres generally self-sufficient by way of commercial, health, educational and recreational facilities.

Deanmill, Jardee, Nyamup, Palgarup and Windy Harbour, have no schools or no / limited commercial services and limited recreational facilities. They generally use services and facilities in the towns of the Shire of Manjimup. Quinninup has no school and no retail shops but has a tavern, caravan park plus limited community and recreational facilities and its residents generally use services and facilities in other towns within the Shire of Manjimup.

Primary schools exist in all four towns with District High Schools in Northcliffe and Pemberton and two senior high schools (one private, one public) in Manjimup. With the exception of Walpole, most communities within the Shire district utilise the senior high school options available in Manjimup before or after Year 10.

Nursing posts exist in Northcliffe and Walpole, a local hospital in Pemberton and a district hospital in Manjimup. General Practitioners operate within Manjimup, Pemberton and in an outreach arrangement in Walpole from a Denmark based practice. However, in most cases patients are referred out of the district for specialist or intensive care services.

The Manjimup airfield services the whole district however commercial air travel is limited to light aircraft. The Manjimup Airport provides significant support for emergency services air traffic including medical services, bush fire mitigation and other emergency services support.

Manjimup is identified as the regional service and growth centre and this is reflective of the volume of banking, retail, industry and government agency services.

Summary

The variety of Ward option variants can protect smaller communities of interest to a limited extent but it is unlikely that a “no Ward” system will protect smaller communities of interest. It should be noted that under the existing six Ward system, communities of interest were protected as it allowed specifically for local Councillor representation. However as the Local Government reforms have limited Councillor numbers at the Shire of Manjimup to between four and eight Councillors, a six Ward system as it exists now is not possible to continue with due to the representation requirements of the Local Government Advisory Board. If a decision is made to retain Wards in some form, it is recommended that the maximum number of Councillors permitted under Local Government reform is considered as this will provide the most probable method to protect smaller communities of interest if that is a desired outcome.

2. Physical and topographical 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 highways.

Rivers, forests, highways, ocean and major roads figure prominently in forming existing Ward boundaries as they do in also forming the boundaries of the Shire.

Currently:

- Frankland River, Shannon River and the Southern Ocean forms part of South Wards boundaries;
- Warren River, Shannon River, Callcup Road, South West Highway and the Southern Ocean forms part of Coastal Wards boundaries;
- Donnelly River, Warren River, Callcup Road, Vasse Highway and South West Highway form part of the of West Wards boundaries;
- Donnelly River, Perup Road and South West Highway form part of the North Ward boundaries; and
- Perup Road, Muir Highway and South West Highway form part of the East Ward boundaries.

Summary

The use of Wards is more likely based on the need to established average elector representation within 10% average rather than demarcation of physical or topographical characteristics. An argument could be had to create an entire Ward that borders the Southern Ocean boundary of the Shire of Manjimup district as the physical and topographical issues can be very similar, but given the land mass is so vast, difficult to directly traverse and comprising of mainly sparsely populated areas, the creation of this sort of Ward area would not be the most efficient or effective method for a Councillor to represent a community. Other

possible Wards are unlikely to have any unique physical or topographical features as they all have combinations of similar elements.

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 the areas within the local government.

The last fully completed ABS Census was in 2021.

2011 Census	2016 Census	2021 Census (revised)	Change % (2016-2021)
9,463	9,250	9,351	+ 1.1 %

The Shire of Manjimup continues to question population statistics as this does not accord with the significant increase in the number of electors (157 electors in the last year, 248 electors since 2016), increased development and building activity and lack of residential rental availability over recent years. Subdivision activity and residential approvals indicate modest population growth is very likely over the next 5 years in most of the town sites. Population growth outside of the town sites may increase slightly given increased agricultural viability as the industry continues to transform and the tourism sector improves.

2021 Census data is relatively limited as further detailed information is yet to be released. Some information known at this point in time includes:

- The medium age is 47 years up from 45 years in 2016;
- 3.4% of the Shire population identifies as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander;
- 76.3% of residents of the Shire were born in Australia, with the next highest number being born in England at 5.2%;
- 49.1% of the Shire population indicated they are not religious;
- 60.2% of the Shire population do not have ongoing health conditions, however 8.8% indicated they have a mental health condition;
- 66.1% of the Shire population live in family households, with 31.8% living alone;
- 69.8% of dwellings were owner occupied, whilst 25.1% of dwellings were rented;
- Total personal income has risen on average by 13.6% in the past five years whilst total household income has risen by 8.3% for the same period; and
- Median rent prices have increased by 25.7% to \$230 per week over the past five years.

Summary

Demographic trends across the Shire district appear relatively stable. Without additional information yet to be made available from the 2021 Census, it is difficult to isolate any demographic trends that have relevance to considerations as part of this Ward and Representation Review.

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.

Central Ward predominately includes the Manjimup town site, a large urban, commercial, light industrial, manufacturing and service centre with a strong community of interest in its own right with two high schools, three primary schools, hospital, medical, dental, ancillary health services, community services and significant recreational facilities. It has a strong economic base servicing surrounding wards and districts and is emerging as a tourism destination in its own right.

Coastal Ward includes the Northcliffe townsite and the settlement of Windy Harbour. It is predominately rural centred on agriculture, dairy, and plantation timber. It includes significant areas of State Forest and National Park with natural attractions forming the basis of a tourism destination. This Ward has the greatest proportion of coastline supporting the fishing and tourism industries. Native timber and plantation timber harvesting continues but native forest production has declined in recent years, and will be further reduced as a result of decisions of the State Government on forest management. The town of Northcliffe has a small commercial and industrial district, a Visitor Centre, Community Resource Centre, library, nursing post and district high school.

East Ward is the largest Ward by area and includes significant areas of State Forest and rural activity including agriculture, horticulture and timber plantations. The area includes the Quinninup settlement.

North Ward as a predominately rural Ward has a strong economic base through agriculture and horticulture. The Ward includes the Palgarup settlement.

South Ward comprises large areas of forest, National Parks, Wilderness Areas and Marine Parks making it a highly desirable tourism destination. The Ward includes the town site of Walpole with a Visitor Centre, Community Resource Centre, primary school, nursing post with outreach General Practitioners and small commercial and industrial centre supporting largely tourism, agriculture and plantation timber industries. Walpole is some 113km south from Manjimup and given its isolation, industry, specialist health and education is often supported from either Denmark or Albany.

West Ward includes the townsite of Pemberton and outlying rural areas, as well as large area of forest and National Parks. Agriculture, horticulture tourism, and timber are the main industries. Pemberton has a small to medium commercial

district, two primary schools and one district high school, a hospital, medical practice, visitor centre, and Community Resource Centre.

Summary

The economic profile of the Shire of Manjimup is diverse and generally spread consistently across the Shire district. Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing is the main industry sector representing more than a quarter of the economy in the Shire district but significant three year growth in Manufacturing; Public Administration and Safety; Transport, Postal and Warehousing; Arts and Culture; and Mining Sectors and early indicators that the economy is diversifying away from more traditional economic profiles. For the purpose of this Ward and Representation Review there is no stand out economic factor specific to any particular location other than perhaps the Central Ward which regularly operates as a regional centre.

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.

The Advisory Board requires that the ratio of Councillors to electors should be similar in each Ward and within a variance of plus or minus 10% from the average for the whole of the Shire district. In 2016 the Shire of Manjimup successfully retained the South Ward being significantly over represented by arguing isolation and community of interest factors. Given the current Local Government reform proposals, this argument is expected to be significantly weaker and is likely to fail with any disproportionate ratio variance outside of the required range.

Summary

To achieve appropriate representation under a Ward based system significantly limits the options available for consideration. The most viable Ward based options are identified in the ratio to elector tables in the four main options forming this Ward and Representation Review Discussion Paper. It is not recommended that any Ward options are considered that fall significantly outside of the 10% range of the average elector to Councillor ratio.

OPTION 1 – All Available Wards

**VARIANTS: 4, 5, 6, 7, or 8 Councillors
2, 3 or 4 Wards**

Overview

This option enables any of the available Ward options and any number of permitted numbers of Councillors under the Local Government reform but relies on declaring all Councillor positions vacant at the October 2023 Council election.

Ratio of Councillors to Electors in a Ward Based System

Dependent on the number of Councillors the ratio of Councillors to electors in a Ward based system will vary in accordance with the following tables:

Two Wards – 4 Councillors

Ward	Councillors	Total # Electors	Councillor to Elector ratio	% Ratio Deviation
Central	2	3,348	1,674	- 3.0%
Outer	2	3,556	1,778	+ 3.0%
Total	4	6,904	1,726	

Two Wards – 6 Councillors

Ward	Councillors	Total # Electors	Councillor to Elector ratio	% Ratio Deviation
Central	3	3,348	1,116	- 3.0%
Outer	3	3,556	1,185	+ 3.0%
Total	6	6,904	1,151	

Two Wards – 8 Councillors

Ward	Councillors	Total # Electors	Councillor to Elector ratio	% Ratio Deviation
Central	4	3,348	837	- 3.0%
Outer	4	3,556	889	+ 3.0%
Total	8	6,904	863	

Three Wards – 6 Councillors

Ward	Councillors	Total # Electors	Councillor to Elector ratio	% Ratio Deviation
Central	3	3,348	1,116	- 3.0%
Inland	2	2,341	1,171	+ 1.7%
Coastal	1	1,215	1,215	+ 5.6%
Total	6	6,904	1,151	

Four Wards – 6 Councillors

Ward	Councillors	Total # Electors	Councillor to Elector ratio	% Ratio Deviation
Central	3	3,348	1,116	- 3.0%
Inland	1	1,279	1,279	+ 11.1%
West	1	1,062	1,062	- 7.7%
Coastal	1	1,215	1,215	+ 5.6%
Total	6	6,904	1,151	

Likely outcome for elected members

This option requires all Councillor positions to be declared vacant for the October 2023 Council election. Whilst this option is realistic, it could be considered unfair on the six Councillors elected at the October 2021 Council elections for four year terms as well as the electors who voted for those Councillors. Any Councillor elected at the October 2021 Council election would have to renominate as a candidate and be elected under an optional preferential voting system if they wanted to continue as a Councillor of the Shire of Manjimup. Half of the Councillor terms may have to be reduced to two years at the October 2023 Council election to balance the two year election cycles.

Arguments in support of option 1**(a) Wards**

- This option allows for the easy introduction of a 2, 3 or 4 Ward based system;
- Some local Council representation could be maintained under a Ward based system in local communities; and
- Wards may protect the representation of smaller communities as the large population bases will be restricted on the number of Councillors they could elect.

(b) Number of Councillors

- There is potential cost savings by reducing the number of Councillors that comprise the Council; and
- The reduction in Councillor numbers may permit more administrative support for individual Councillors.

Arguments against option 1**(a) Wards**

- With smaller Ward numbers, electors may feel their own area is not adequately represented and that there is a lack of understanding of issues specific to their area;
- A four Ward system may be problematic as the representation ratio is very close to the Local Government Advisory Board's benchmark; and
- Councillors may be initially overwhelmed having to represent a larger number of electors across a wider area particularly in different communities of interest.

(b) Number of Councillors

- This option is considered unfair on Councillors elected in 2021 for a four year term if their position is declared vacant for the October 2023 Council election;
- With a reduction in Councillor numbers electors may feel their own area is not adequately represented and that there is a lack of understanding of issues specific to their area;
- A reduction in Councillor numbers will result in increased representation obligations for Councillors;
- The smaller the number of Councillors that comprise the Council, the more workload that will be placed on individual Councillors; and

- If Councillor numbers are only reduced to eight Councillor it may not significantly reduce expenses and administration depending on a range of factors including extra travel expenses, additional training, and increases to fees and allowances based on increased representation requirements.

Proposed Ward Boundary Map

A locality map showing the current Ward boundaries can be found at **Attachment 1**.

Two Wards	Locality
Central	Deanmill Jardee (31%) Manjimup Middlesex (5.2%)
Outer	Balbarrup Beedelup Boorara Brook Broke Callcup Channybearup Collins Crowea Deanmill (0.5%) Diamond Tree Dingup Dixvale Eastbrook Glenoran Jardee (69%) Lake Muir Linfarne Meerup Middlesex (94.8%) Mordalup Northcliffe North Walpole Palgarup Pemberton Perup Quinninup Ringbark Shannon Smith Brook Upper Warren Walpole Wilgarrup Windy Harbour Yanmah Yeagarup

Three Wards	Locality
Central	Deanmill Jardee (31%) Manjimup Middlesex (5.2%)
Inland	Balbarrup Beedelup Callcup Channybearup Collins Deanmill (0.5%) Diamond Tree Dingup Dixvale Eastbrook Glenoran Jardee (69%) Lake Muir Linfarne Middlesex (94.8%) Mordalup Palgarup Pemberton Perup Quinninup Ringbark Smith Brook Upper Warren Wilgarrup Yanmah Yeagarup
Coastal	Boorara Brook Broke Crowea Meerup Northcliffe North Walpole Shannon Walpole Windy Harbour

Four Wards	Locality
Central	Deanmill Jardee (31%) Manjimup Middlesex (5.2%)
Inland	Balbarrup Deanmill (0.5%) Dingup Dixvale Glenoran Lake Muir Linfarne Middlesex (94.8%) Mordalup Palgarup Perup Quinninup Ringbark Smith Brook Upper Warren Wilgarrup Yanmah
West	Beedelup Callcup Channybearup Collins Diamond Tree Eastbrook Jardee (69%) Pemberton Yeagarup
Coastal	Boorara Brook Broke Crowea Meerup Northcliffe North Walpole Shannon Walpole Windy Harbour

OPTION 2 – All Available Wards Using “No Ward” Interim Step in 2023

**Variants: 6 or 8 Councillors
2, 3 or 4 Wards**

Overview

This option enables a transitional pathway where for the October 2023 Council election Wards would be abolished, the six Councillors with terms expiring in 2025 remain and the election of either no Councillors or two Councillors would occur at the October 2023 Council election depending on what number of Councillors comprise the Council.

Ratio of Councillors to Electors in a Ward Based System

Dependent on the number of Councillors, the ratio of Councillors to electors in a Ward based system will vary in accordance with the following tables:

Two Wards – 6 Councillors

Ward	Councillors	Total # Electors	Councillor to Elector ratio	% Ratio Deviation
Central	3	3,348	1,116	- 3.0%
Outer	3	3,556	1,185	+ 3.0%
Total	6	6,904	1,151	

Two Wards – 8 Councillors

Ward	Councillors	Total # Electors	Councillor to Elector ratio	% Ratio Deviation
Central	4	3,348	837	- 3.0%
Outer	4	3,556	889	+ 3.0%
Total	8	6,904	863	

Three Wards – 6 Councillors

Ward	Councillors	Total # Electors	Councillor to Elector ratio	% Ratio Deviation
Central	3	3,348	1,116	- 3.0%
Inland	2	2,341	1,171	+ 1.7%
Coastal	1	1,215	1,215	+ 5.6%
Total	6	6,904	1,151	

Four Wards – 6 Councillors

Ward	Councillors	Total # Electors	Councillor to Elector ratio	% Ratio Deviation
Central	3	3,348	1,116	- 3.0%
Inland	1	1,279	1,279	+ 11.1%
West	1	1,062	1,062	- 7.7%
Coastal	1	1,215	1,215	+ 5.6%
Total	6	6,904	1,151	

Likely outcome for elected members

Under this option the six sitting Councillors with terms expiring in 2025 would remain as Councillors and depending on the final number of Councillors, either none or two Councillors would fill positions at the October 2023 Council election. No Wards would exist until the October 2025 Council election at which point Wards of a determined number would be introduced. Some Councillor terms may have to be reduced to two years at this point to balance the two year election cycles.

Arguments in support of option 2**(a) Wards**

- This option allows for the phased introduction of a 2, 3 or 4 Ward based system in 2025;
- Some local Council representation could be maintained under a Ward based system in local communities from 2025; and
- Wards may protect the representation of smaller communities as the large population bases will be restricted on the number of Councillors they could elect.

(b) Number of Councillors

- There is potential cost savings by reducing the number of Councillors that comprise the Council; and
- The reduction in Councillor numbers may permit more administrative support for individual Councillors.

Arguments against option 2**(a) Wards**

- There will be no Wards at the October 2023 Council election with the intent to transition to a Ward based system in 2025. It would be entirely open to the Council to change their decision on the introduction of Wards in 2025;
- Councillors may be initially overwhelmed having to represent a larger number of electors across a wider area particularly in different communities of interest.
- Electors may feel their own area is not adequately represented and that there is a lack of understanding of issues specific to their area; and
- A four Ward system may be problematic as the representation ratio is very close to the Local Government Advisory Board's benchmark.

(b) Number of Councillors

- This option only allows for the consideration of six or eight total Councillors due to the current terms of six Councillors expiring in 2025;
- With a reduction in Councillor numbers electors may feel their own area is not adequately represented and that there is a lack of understanding of issues specific to their area;

- A reduction in Councillor numbers will result in increased representation obligations for Councillors;
- The smaller the number of Councillors that comprise the Council, the more workload that will be placed on individual Councillors; and
- If Councillor numbers are only reduced to eight Councillors it may not significantly reduce expenses and administration depending on a range of factors including extra travel expenses, additional training, and increases to fees and allowances based on increased representation requirements.

Ward Basis

A locality map can be found at **Attachment 1**.

Two Wards	Locality
Central	Deanmill Jardee (31%) Manjimup Middlesex (5.2%)
Outer	Balbarrup Beedelup Boorara Brook Broke Callcup Channybearup Collins Crowea Deanmill (0.5%) Diamond Tree Dingup Dixvale Eastbrook Glenoran Jardee (69%) Lake Muir Linfarne Meerup Middlesex (94.8%) Mordalup Northcliffe North Walpole Palgarup Pemberton Perup Quinninup Ringbark Shannon Smith Brook Upper Warren Walpole Wilgarrup Windy Harbour Yanmah Yeagarup

Three Wards	Locality
Central	Deanmill Jardee (31%) Manjimup Middlesex (5.2%)
Inland	Balbarrup Beedelup Callcup Channybearup Collins Deanmill (0.5%) Diamond Tree Dingup Dixvale Eastbrook Glenoran Jardee (69%) Lake Muir Linfarne Middlesex (94.8%) Mordalup Palgarup Pemberton Perup Quinninup Ringbark Smith Brook Upper Warren Wilgarrup Yanmah Yeagarup
Coastal	Boorara Brook Broke Crowea Meerup Northcliffe North Walpole Shannon Walpole Windy Harbour

Four Wards	Locality
Central	Deanmill Jardee (31%) Manjimup Middlesex (5.2%)
Inland	Balbarrup Deanmill (0.5%) Dingup Dixvale Glenoran Lake Muir Linfarne Middlesex (94.8%) Mordalup Palgarup Perup Quinninup Ringbark Smith Brook Upper Warren Wilgarrup Yanmah
West	Beedelup Callcup Channybearup Collins Diamond Tree Eastbrook Jardee (69%) Pemberton Yeagarup
Coastal	Boorara Brook Broke Crowea Meerup Northcliffe North Walpole Shannon Walpole Windy Harbour

OPTION 3 – Two Wards Central and Outer

Variants: 8 Councillors, 2 Wards only

Overview

This option maintains the predominant population hubs of Manjimup and Deanmill as one Ward with all other elector communities combined into the other Ward. Councillor numbers under option 3 can only be eight Councillors plus the directly elected Shire President as this option factors into account the Councillor vacancies at the October 2023 Council election which could be easily implemented in full at this time if chosen.

Ratio of Councillors to Electors in a Ward Based System

The ratio of Councillors to electors in a Ward based system will vary in accordance with the following table:

Councillor to Elector Ratio (Two Wards: Central/Outer)

Ward	Councillors	Total # Electors	Councillor to Elector ratio	% Ratio Deviation
Central	4	3,348	837	- 3.0%
Outer	4	3,556	889	+ 3.0%
Total	8	6,904	863	

Likely outcome for elected members

This option is one for serious consideration as it can be predominantly achieved at the October 2023 Council election through implementation via the existing Councillor vacancy profile. To enable this option to be implemented, in October 2023 Council election, two Central Ward vacancies would remain with one Central Ward, one North Ward, and one West Ward vacancy being abolished. This would ensure equal representation in both the Central and Outer Wards with the only matter to be finalised being two of the four Outer Ward vacancies up for election in October 2025 Council elections requiring two year terms to balance the two year election cycles.

Arguments in support of option 3

(a) Two Wards

- The elector representation ratio under a two Ward system is good and likely to be sustained within the 10% range for many years to come;
- A two Ward system diminishes real prospects of elector domination in the most populated area being the Central Ward. Under this scenario, smaller communities of interest such as those found currently in the South Ward would prospectively have a greater opportunity to be elected to Council through more localised election campaigning; and
- This option is perhaps the least disruptive to achieve using any of the Ward based system options including meeting the timelines of the Local Government reform requirements.

(b) Numbers of Councillors

- This option provides the maximum number of Councillors permitted under the Local Government reform requirements;
- Eight Councillors plus the directly elected Shire President could potentially provide lower costs of Councillor fees, governance, conferences, travel, training, hospitality and stationery compared to the existing eleven Councillors; and
- Reduced numbers of Councillors should allow more administrative support for Councillors.

Arguments against option 3

(a) Two Wards

- Electors could feel their own community of interest is not adequately represented and that there is a lack of understanding of issues specific to their area; and
- Councillors may be initially overwhelmed having to represent a larger number of electors across a wider area particularly in different communities of interest.

(b) Numbers of Councillors

- This option is limited to eight Councillors only and does not allow for a further reduction in Councillors numbers if desired; and
- If Councillor numbers are only reduced to eight Councillors it may not significantly reduce expenses and administration depending on a range of factors including extra travel expenses, additional training, and increases to fees and allowances based on increased representation requirements.

Ward Basis

A locality map can be found at Attachment 1.

Ward	Locality
Central	Deanmill Jardee (31%) Manjimup Middlesex (5.2%)
Outer Ward	Balbarrup Beedelup Boorara Brook Broke Callcup Channybearup Collins Crowea Deanmill (0.5%)

	Diamond Tree Dingup Dixvale Eastbrook Glenoran Jardee (69%) Lake Muir Linfarne Meerup Middlesex (94.8%) Mordalup Northcliffe North Walpole Palgarup Pemberton Perup Quinninup Ringbark Shannon Smith Brook Upper Warren Walpole Wilgarrup Windy Harbour Yanmah Yeagarup
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OPTION 4 – No Wards**VARIANTS: 4 to 8 Councillors****Overview**

This option explores the abandonment of the Ward system altogether and a reduction in the number of Councillors in accordance with the Local Government reform. The number of Councillors that can make up the Council is between four and eight which needs to be implemented at the October 2023 Council election.

Ratio of Councillors to Electors Under a No Ward System

Dependent on the number of Councillors the ratio of Councillors to electors will vary in accordance with the following table.

Councillors	Ratio of Councillor to Elector
4	1726
5	1381
6	1151
7	986
8	863

Likely outcome for elected members

Typically abandonment of the Ward system results in a full spill of Council or under the Local Government reform proposal, could be transitioned commencing at the October 2023 Council election and being finalised in October 2025 Council election.

Declaring all positions vacant at the October 2023 Council election is likely to be disruptive to Council and the strategic direction of the Shire of Manjimup. It is recommended that if the no Ward option is preferred, that transitioning occurs over two Council election cycles to maintain stability and to respect the four year appointment of Councillors that occurred in the October 2021 Council election. This would mean that six Councillors would remain until 2025 under a no Ward system with October 2023 Council election vacancies occurring for either none, one or two Councillors depending on the final number of Councillors agreed to comprise Council in the future. Some Councillor terms may have to be reduced to 2 years at the October 2025 Council election to balance the two year election cycles.

Arguments in support of option 4**(a) Abandonment of wards**

- Members are elected by the whole community. Councillor views may be broader and beyond the immediate concerns of a particular Ward which often currently happens;
- Councillors working and representing the whole community at all times;

- Community can approach any elected member about their concerns which often currently happens;
- Balanced Councillor to elector representation is automatically achieved; and
- Election processes easier to understand and administer particularly given the introduction of the optional preferential voting system for Local Government.

(b) Number of Councillors

- The Shire of Manjimup currently functions effectively with eleven Councillors, however a less number of Councillors is likely to be just as effective albeit each Councillor would have a greater number of electors to represent;
- Along with option 1, this option provides the most flexibility to determine final Councillor numbers to comprise the Council in the future;
- Less Councillors would prospectively provide lower costs for Councillor fees and allowances, governance, conferences, travel, training, hospitality and stationery; and
- Reduced numbers of Councillors would permit more administrative support for individual Councillors.

Arguments against option 4

(a) Abandonment of wards

- Electors may feel their own area is not adequately represented and that there is a lack of understanding of issues specific to their area;
- Potential for interest groups may dominate Councillor positions especially with optional preferential voting being introduced;
- More difficult and costly for Councillors to campaign for Council especially under the optional preferential voting system;
- If a full spill results, this can prove disruptive to the organisation's knowledge base, governance and strategic direction; and
- The Shire of Manjimup is somewhat unique with 4 towns and 7 settlements disbursed over a relatively large area of 7,028 km². It can be difficult for Council to make informed decisions without local knowledge input from Ward Councillors.

(b) Number of Councillors

- Less Councillors will have more electors to represent. Whilst in theory all Councillors would equally represent electors across the Shire district, if a Councillor is living in a specific community of interest, it is more than likely that Councillor would be the first point of contact for those local electors;
- The lesser number of Councillors forming the Council there is, the less likely candidates with limited profile across the whole Shire district will be elected; and
- The lesser number of Councillors forming the Council there is, the greater the importance of candidates campaigning for election and this may favour candidates who can afford to run significant campaigns.

Proposed Ward boundary map

A locality map showing the current Ward boundaries can be found at **Attachment 1**. Where Wards are abandoned, no Ward boundaries will exist and therefore no Ward map is applicable as all Councillors represent the electors of the whole Shire district.