



# **Review of Wards and Representation**

## **Discussion Paper**

**All submissions must be received by 4pm on Monday  
21 November 2016**

28/9/2016

This document links to the Community Strategic Plan through:



Goal 1: Valuing the natural environment



Goal 2: Welcoming and inclusive communities



Goal 3: Managing growth sustainably



Goal 4: Vibrant and diverse economy



**Goal 5: Effective leadership and governance**

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## Introduction

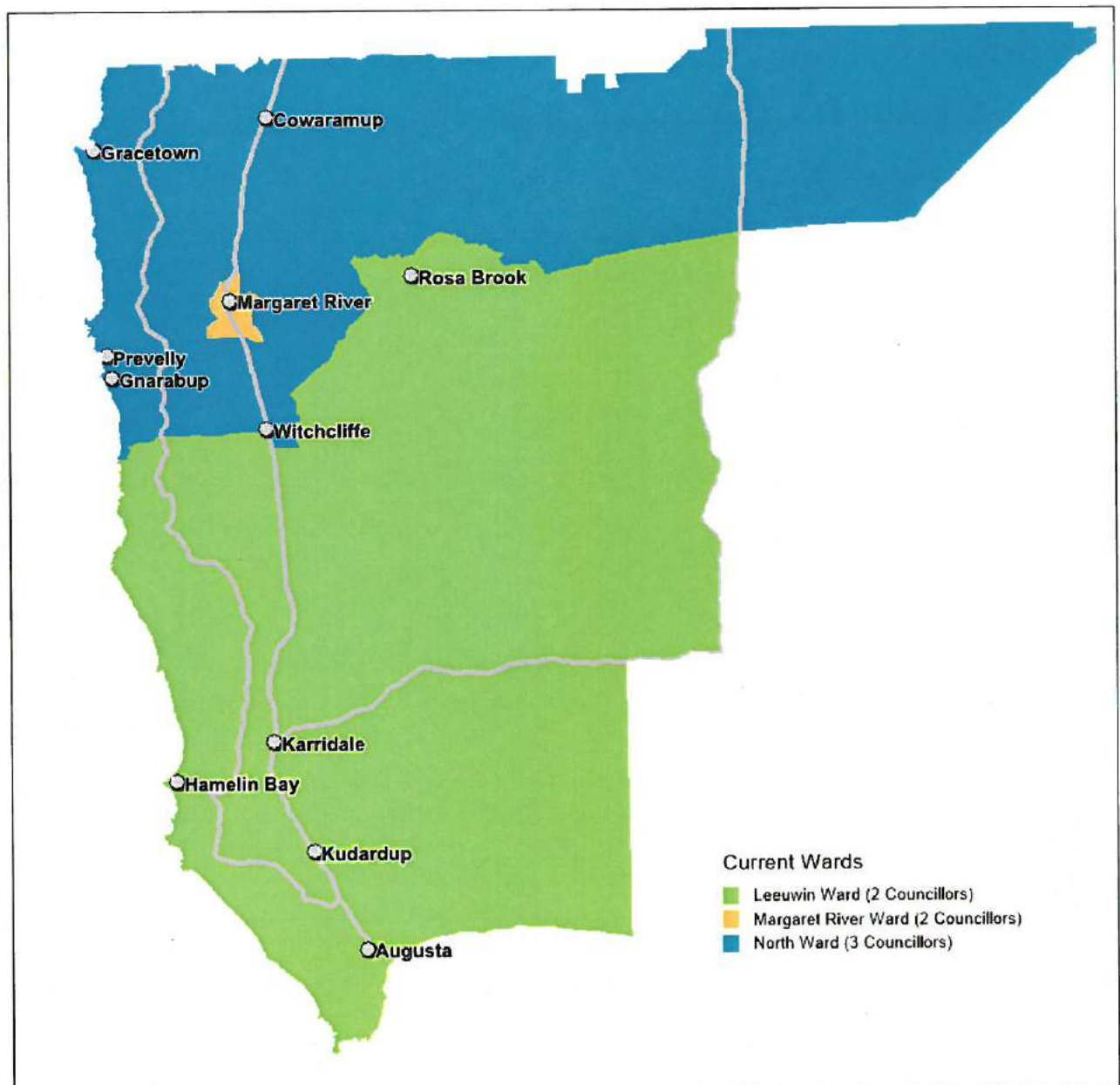
The Shire of Augusta Margaret River has resolved to undertake a review of its ward system to comply with the requirements of the *Local Government act 1995* (the Act).

The Act requires local governments with wards to carry out reviews of the ward boundaries and the number of councillors for each ward every eight years. The last ward review for the Shire of Augusta Margaret River was completed on 23 April 2009 and it is now appropriate to carry out another review to allow any changes to be put in place for the 2017 elections.

## Current Situation

The Shire of Augusta Margaret River currently comprises 7 Councillors elected from 3 wards.

### Current Ward Map





The table below shows the numbers of electors and the ratio of councillors to electors in the current ward system forecast for the next election (2017), based on historical elector growth rates over the past four elections of 2009, 2011, 2013 and 2015. The WA Local Government Advisory Board (LGAB) requires local governments when considering a ward system, unless there are special circumstances prevailing, to keep councillor to elector ratios to within 10% plus or minus of the average ratio across the whole Shire. This ensures as much as possible that there is a "one vote one value" system of democratic representation and voters in one ward are not unfairly over represented or under represented compared to voters in another ward.

**Table 1:** Forecast councillor to elector ratios for 2017 elections based on elector growth trends from 2009-2011-2013-2015 elections

Ward	Councillors	Estimated number of electors	Councillor : elector ratio	% Ratio deviation
Leeuwin	2	2508	1:1254	8.41%
North	3	3959	1:1320	3.59%
Margaret River	2	3116	1:1558	-13.80%
Total	7	9583	1:1369	

Source: Western Australian Electoral Commission and Shire of Augusta Margaret River<sup>1</sup>.

The % ratio deviation gives a clear indication of the % difference between the average councillor to elector ratio for the whole local government and the councillor to elector ratio for each ward.

The current ward system reveals a growing imbalance in representation across the Shire with the Margaret River Ward being significantly under represented, growing well beyond the minus 10% variance. A balanced representation would be reflected in the percentage ratio deviation being within plus or minus 10%. The North Ward is forecast to fall well within the recommended ratio variance of 10%, while the Leeuwin Ward is nearing the 10% margin of being over represented.

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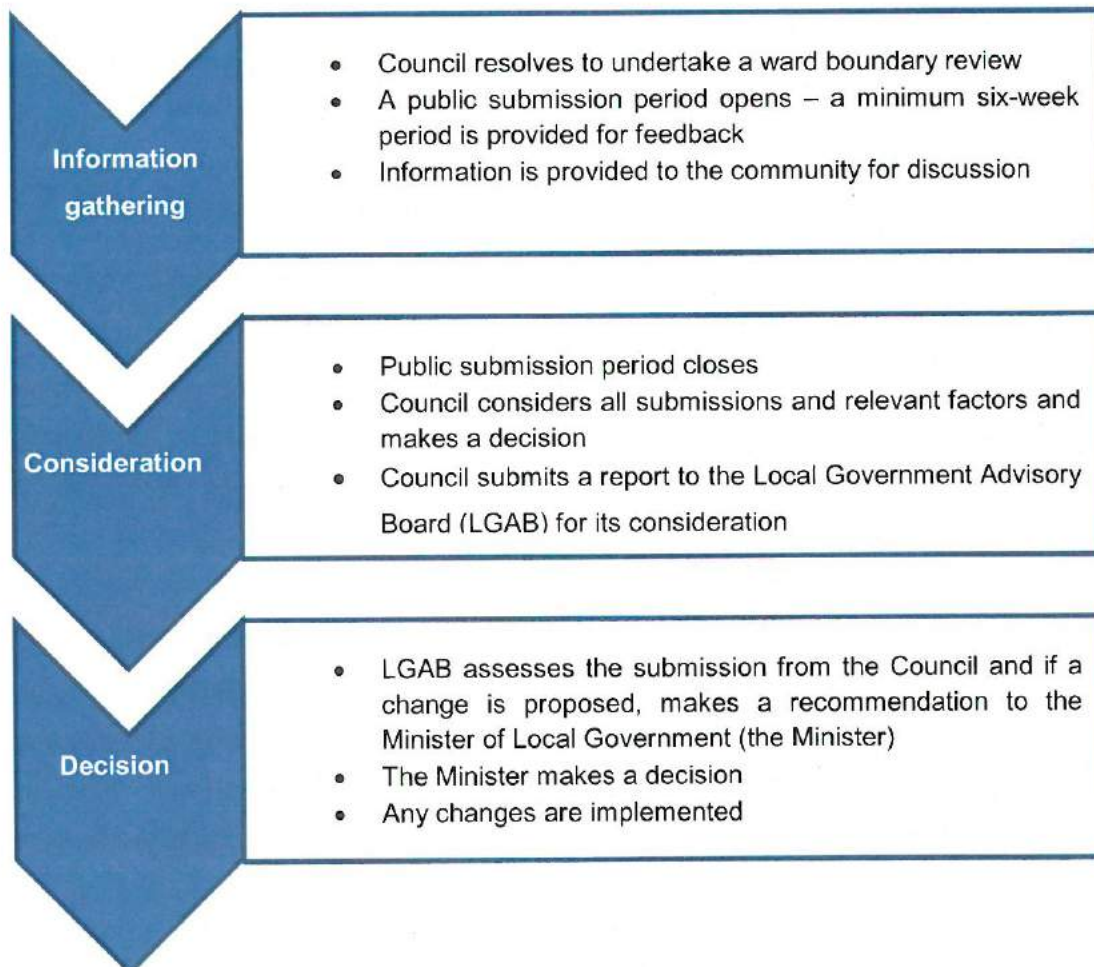
<sup>1</sup> Forecast number of electors has been estimated based on growth rates in number of electors over the 2009-2011-2013-2015 elections, provided by WAEC.

Using these figures, it is predicted that a Margaret River Ward Councillor will represent an additional 304 electors or 22% more electors than a Leeuwin Ward Councillor in 2017, resulting in inequitable councillor to elector representational ratios. Growth trends into the future indicate that the inequitable councillor to elector ratios will only worsen in future years, based on predicted elector growth.

This current ward system has functioned well for the past 7 years, however the Margaret River Ward which includes the fast growing East Margaret River suburbs of Rapids Landing and Brookfield is now being under represented per capita compared to their counterparts on other wards and this trend is set to worsen. A review of wards is required to address these demographic trends.

## Review Process

The review process involves a number of steps:



The next Council elections will be held in October 2017. Any changes approved by the Minister will be in place for the next ordinary election.



## Factors to be considered

When considering changes to wards and representation, 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.

### What do these factors mean?

#### 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 plain 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 distributions 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

LGAB consider that the ratio of councillors to electors is particularly significant. It is expected that each local government will have similar ratios of electors to councillors across the wards of its district.<sup>2</sup>

## Options to Consider

The options summarised in the table below have been developed by Council to invite discussion from members of the community. There are four possible combinations of wards and Councillors, and members of the community may suggest others. Council will consider these options and any suggestions made by the public against the relevant factors.

Option	Number of Wards	Description
1	No ward boundaries (One Shire wide Ward)	7 councillors elected by all voters in one Shire wide ward.
2	3 Wards	One Augusta Ward covering the Augusta Townsite, East Augusta, and Molloy Island (1 Cr), one expanded Margaret River Ward (3 Crs) and one Coastal-Rural Ward comprising the balance of the Shire (3 Crs).
3	4 Wards	One Augusta Ward covering the Augusta Townsite, East Augusta, and Molloy Island (1 Cr), an expanded Margaret River Townsite Ward (3 Crs), one North Ward covering the settlements of Cowaramup and Gracetown townships (1 Cr) and a Coastal-Rural Ward encompassing the rest of the Shire (2 Crs).
4	3 Wards	An expanded Leeuwin Ward with northern boundaries of Mowen Road, the Margaret River, Roxburgh Road, Caves Road and property boundaries (2 Crs), an expanded Margaret River Townsite Ward (3 Crs), one North Ward covering Cowaramup-Gracetown-Prevelly Gnarabup and land north of the Margaret River (2 Crs).

The four options have been described in more detail below.

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<sup>2</sup> Definitions provided by WA Local Government Advisory Board, 2013, A Guide for Local Governments.



## Option 1 – No ward boundaries (one Shire wide ward)

With no ward boundaries the seven (7) Councillors would be elected by all voters in one Shire wide ward. The advantages and disadvantages of a no ward structure identified in the WA LGAB publication "A Guide for Local Governments" are listed below.

Advantages	Disadvantages
Elected members are elected by the whole community not just a section of it. Knowledge and interest in all areas of the Council's affairs would result in broadening the views beyond the immediate concerns of those in a ward.	Electors may feel that they are not adequately represented if they don't have an affinity with any of the elected members.
The smaller town sites, villages, hamlets and rural areas would have the whole Council working for them.	Elected members living in a certain area may have a greater affinity and understanding of the issues specific to that area.
Members of the community who want to approach an elected member can speak to any elected member.	There is potential for an interest group to dominate the Council.
Social networks and communities of interest are often spread across a local government and elected members can have an overview of these.	Elected members may feel overwhelmed by having to represent all electors and may not have the time or opportunity to understand and represent all the issues.
Elected members can use their specialty skills and knowledge for the benefit of the whole local government.	It may be more difficult and costly for candidates to be elected if they need to canvass the whole local government area.
There is balanced representation with each elected member representing the whole community.	
The election process is much simpler for the community to understand and for the Council to administer.	

### Councillor to elector ratios

With no wards, there is no variation in councillor to elector ratios. This option presents balanced representation across the Shire.

**Table 2:** Forecast Councillor to Elector ratios for 2017 based on elector growth trends from 2009-2011-2013-2015 elections – Option 1

No Ward Boundaries	No. of Councillors	2017 No. of Electors	Councillor : Elector ratio	% Ratio Deviation
	7	9606	1:1372	0.00%

**Table 3:** Forecast Councillor to Elector ratios for 2025 based on elector growth trends from 2009-2011-2013-2015 elections – Option 1

No Ward Boundaries	No. of Councillors	2025 No. of Electors	Councillor to Elector ratio	% Ratio Deviation
	7	11337	1:1620	0.00%

Source: Western Australian Electoral Commission (WAEC) and Shire of Augusta Margaret River<sup>3</sup>

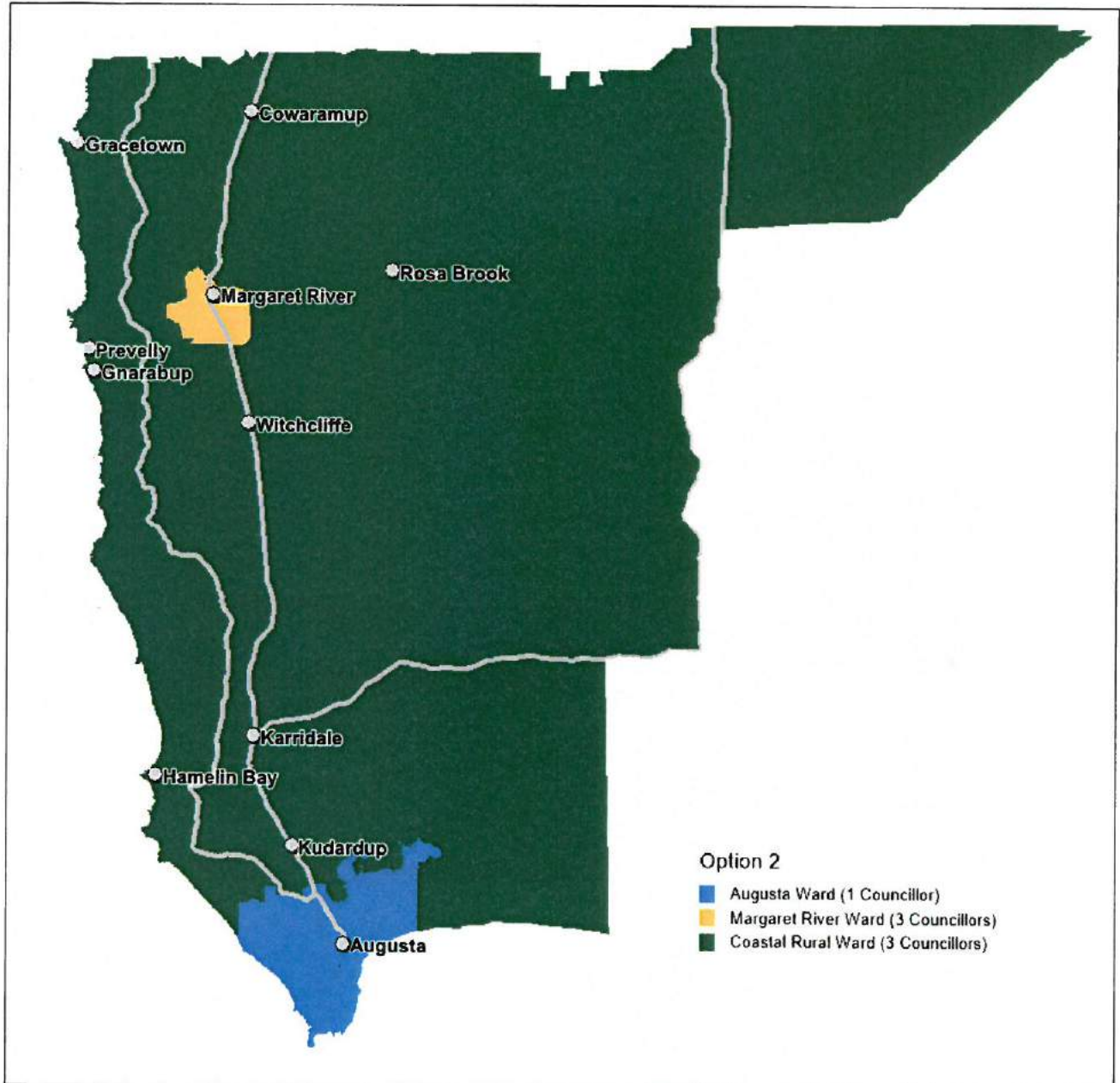
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<sup>3</sup> Forecast number of electors has been estimated using data from the electoral roll as at March 2016, provided by WAEC and the growth rates in number of electors over the 2009-2011-2013-2015 elections.

## Option 2 – Three Wards

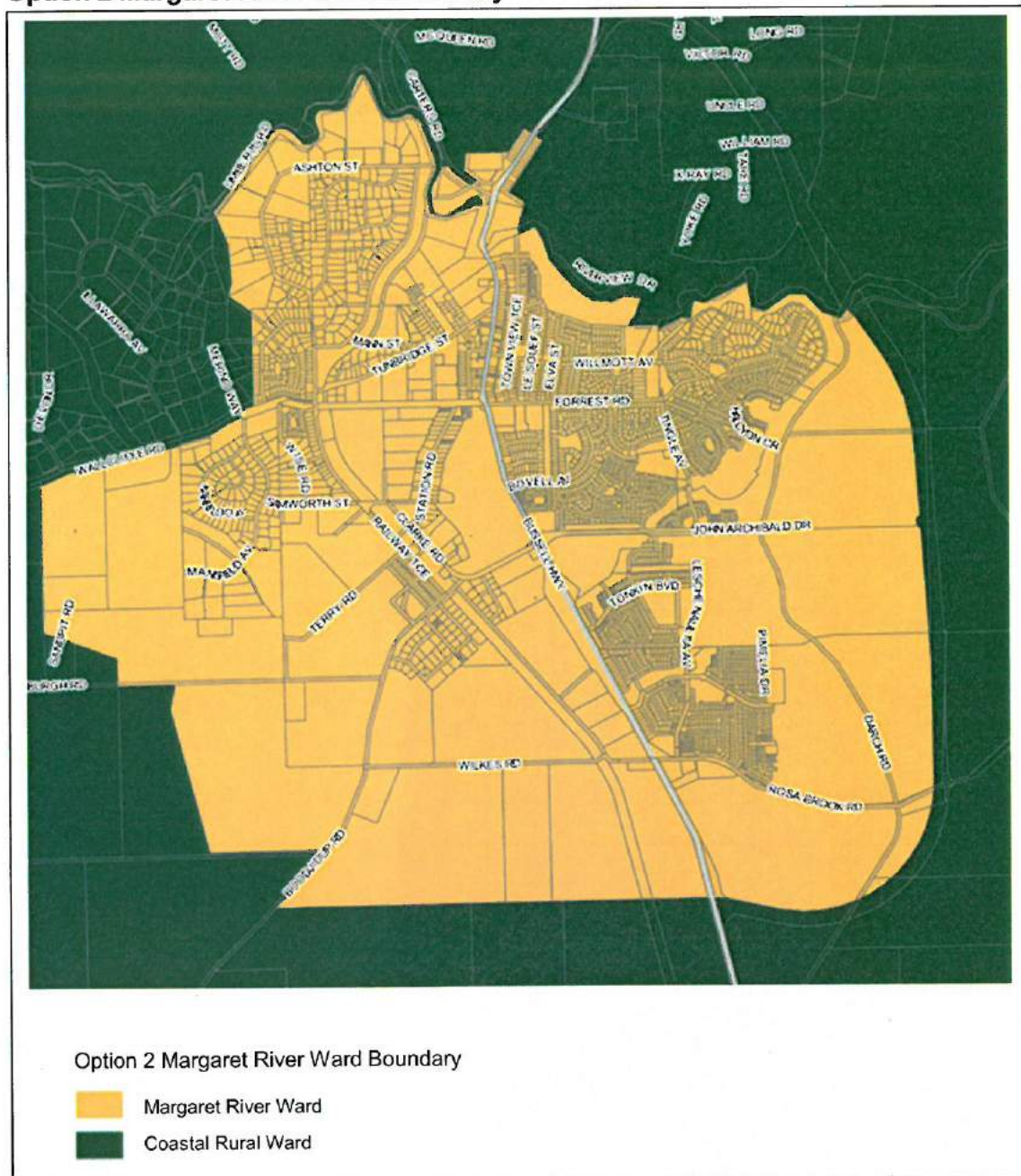
This option includes one Augusta Ward covering the Augusta Townsite, East Augusta, and Molloy Island (1Cr), one expanded Margaret River Ward (3 Crs) and one Coastal-Rural Ward comprising the balance of the Shire (3Crs).

Option 2 Ward map





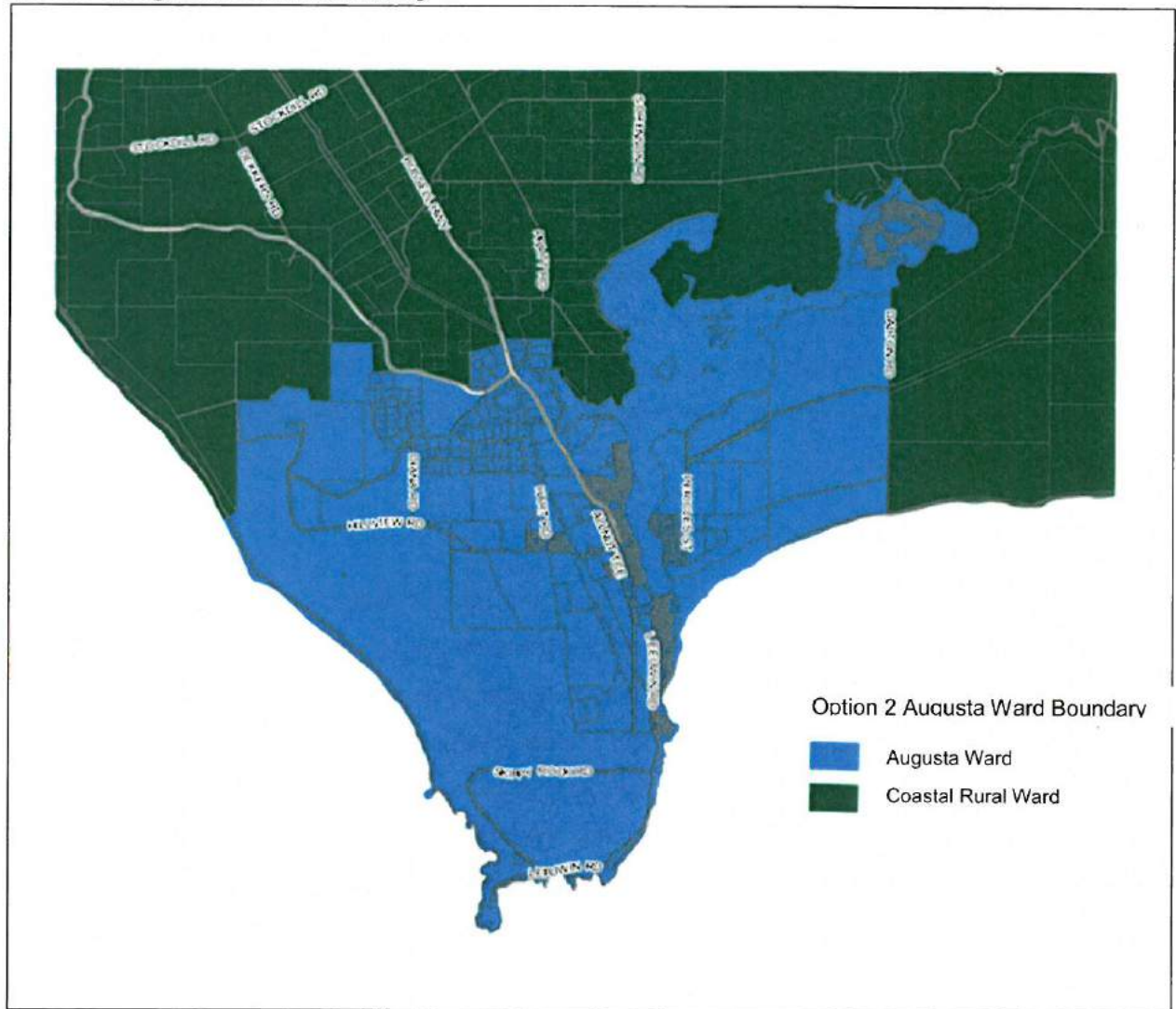
## Option 2 Margaret River Ward boundary



### Margaret River Ward boundary description

The north boundary of the Margaret River Ward follows the Margaret River, the east, south and west boundaries closely follow the route of the proposed Perimeter Road, a section of Wallcliffe Road, and property boundaries, back to the Margaret River.

### Option 2 Augusta Ward boundary



#### Augusta Ward boundary description

The north boundary of the Augusta Ward (from west to east) follows State Reserve Boundaries, Caves Road, Gimbel Road, across property boundaries to the Hardy Inlet, around Molloy Island, and follows Dalton Road, Johnston Road, to the southern coastal boundary, taking in East Augusta, Blackwood Rivermouth, and Cape Leeuwin.

#### Coastal-Rural Ward boundary description

The Coastal-Rural Ward forms a donut around the Margaret River Ward, and shares boundaries with the Augusta Ward, Shire of Nannup, and City of Busselton.

## **Features of this option**

### Augusta Ward

Augusta is acknowledged as having a strong community of interest based on school, shopping and specialist services catchments, participation in sporting clubs, service clubs and special interest groups, and has a local newspaper circulating within the Town. Topographically it is located on the meeting point of the Indian and Southern Oceans at the mouth of the Blackwood River and at the southern terminus of Bussell Highway. Augusta has an older demographic (median age is 59) compared to both Margaret River and Cowaramup, with a median age of 35. Having a single designated representative will ensure the views and interests of Augusta electors will be represented on Council and that the councillor to elector ratio will be within the required LGAB range.

### Margaret River Ward

Margaret River is the largest Town in the Shire and has a strong community of interest based on school, shopping and specialist services catchments, participation in sporting clubs, service clubs and other special interest groups. Like Augusta it has a strong topographical location on the Margaret River and its junction with the Bussell Highway. Demographically Margaret River has a relative young cohort in the most rapidly growing settlement in the Shire compared to other locations. Three councillors in an expanded ward will provide more equitable representation on an elector to councillor ratio now and over the next 8 years allowing for expansion and growth.

### Coastal-Rural Ward

Augusta and Margaret River are the two main Towns in the Shire which will have direct representation and the other three councillors will represent the interests of all of the other electors in the Shire. The third ward shares communities of interest between rural residents and those in coastal and inland hamlets with the largely rural focused town of Cowaramup and the larger population concentrations at Gracetown, Prevelly and Gnarabup and Witchcliffe.

## **Ratio of councillors to electors**

The tables below show the numbers of electors, and the councillor to elector ratios for option 2, forecast for the next election in 2017, and the end of the eight-year ward review period in 2025, based on historical elector growth rates over the past four elections of 2009, 2011, 2013 and 2015.

The ratios of councillors to electors forecast for option 2 is within the +/- 10% range, showing a balanced representation from 2017 to the end of the eight-year ward review period in 2025.



**Table 4:** Forecast councillor to elector ratios for 2017 based on elector growth trends from 2009-2011-2013-2015 elections – Option 2

Wards	No. of Councillors	2017 No. of Electors	Councillor : Elector Ratio	% Ratio Deviation
Margaret River	3	3862	1:1287	6.20%
Rural	3	4246	1:1415	-3.15%
Augusta	1	1498	1:1498	-9.17%
Total	7	9606	1:1372	

**Table 5:** Forecast councillor to elector ratios for 2025 based on elector growth trends from 2009-2011-2013-2015 elections – Option 2

Wards	No. of Councillors	2025 No. of Electors	Councillor : Elector Ratio	% Ratio Deviation
Margaret River	3	5124	1:1708	-5.45%
Rural	3	4710	1:1570	3.07%
Augusta	1	1504	1:1504	7.16%
Total	7	11337	1:1620	

Source: Western Australian Electoral Commission (WAEC) and Shire of Augusta Margaret River<sup>4</sup>

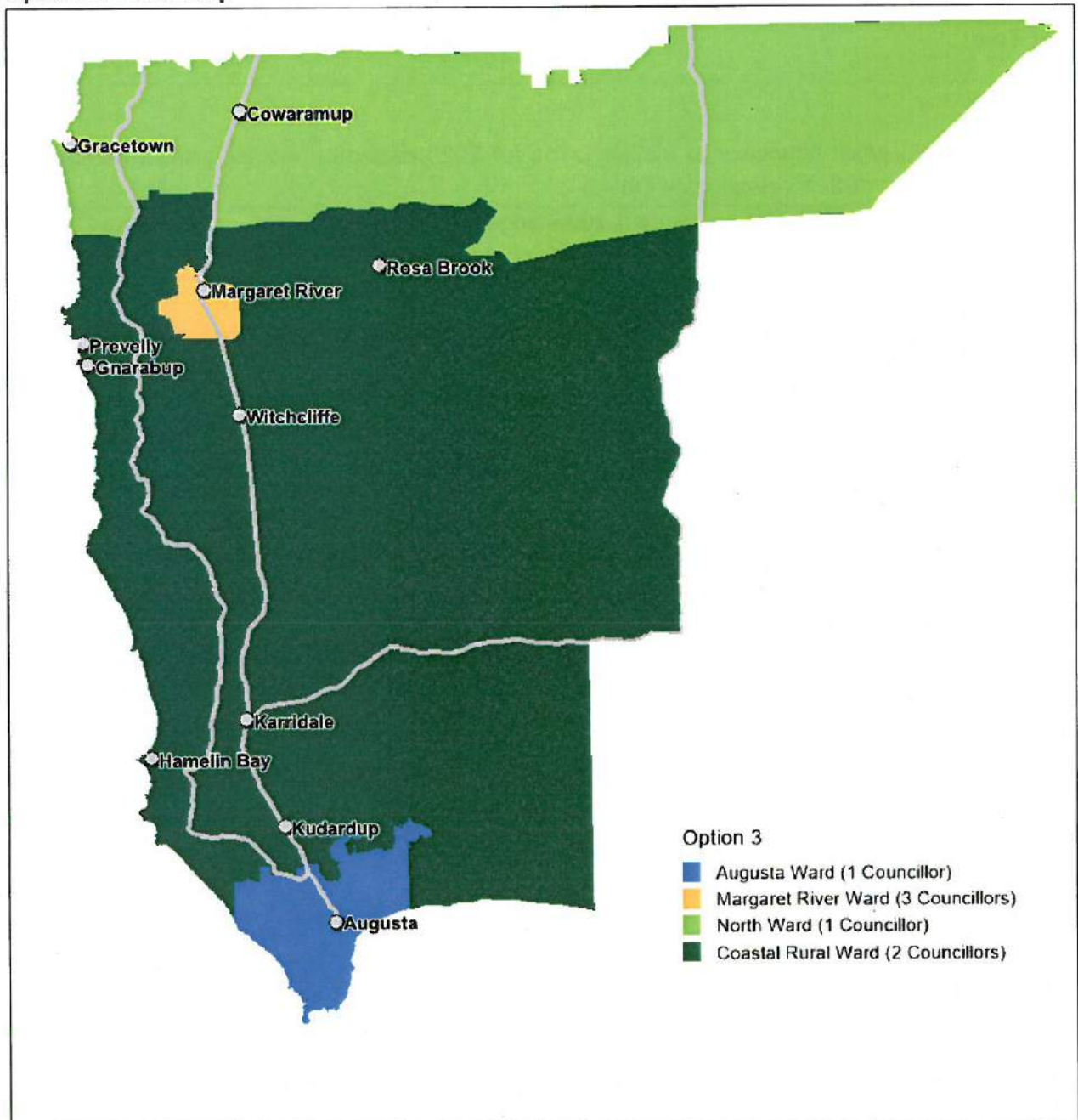
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<sup>4</sup> Forecast number of electors has been estimated using data from the electoral roll as at March 2016, provided by WAEC and the growth rates in number of electors over the 2009-2011-2013-2015 elections.

### Option 3 – Four wards

This option includes an Augusta Ward covering the Augusta Townsite, East Augusta, and Molloy Island with a single councillor representative (1Cr), an expanded Margaret River Townsite Ward (3 Crs), one North Ward covering the settlements of Cowaramup and Gracetown townships (1 Cr) and a Coastal-Rural Ward encompassing the rest of the Shire (2 Crs).

Option 3 Ward map



### Option 3 North Ward boundary



#### North Ward boundary description

The North Ward boundary (from west to east) follows State Reserve and property boundaries, a section of Caves Road, Palandri Road, across property boundaries to a section of Bussell Highway, Osmington Road, State Forest boundaries to Mowen Road, and then shares boundaries with the Shire of Nannup and City of Busselton.

#### Margaret River and Augusta ward boundary description

The Margaret River Ward and Augusta Ward boundaries are the same boundaries shown in Option 2.

#### Coastal-Rural ward boundary description

The Coastal-Rural Ward forms a donut around the Margaret River Ward and shares borders with the North Ward, Augusta Ward and Shire of Nannup.



## **Features of this option**

### North Ward

Cowaramup is the third largest Town in the Shire and has its own community of interest with a primary school catchment, service clubs and a shopping and business precinct. Gracetown shares a community of interest with Cowaramup, as it is located on Cowaramup Bay and uses Cowaramup Town as the closest larger settlement for shopping and specialist services such as the chemist and local doctor. Cowaramup has a younger cohort (median age is 35) than the national median age of 39, and is growing at a faster rate than Augusta. Having a designated ward representative will ensure the views and interests of Cowaramup and Gracetown electors will be represented on Council and that the ratio of the one councillor to electors will be within the required range.

### Coastal-Rural Ward

The Coastal-Rural Ward has collective communities of interest with rural residents and those in coastal and inland hamlets. Two representatives will ensure that rural and coastal views are heard as their needs are quite different from those in the main towns of Margaret River, Augusta and Cowaramup/Gracetown. The largest concentration of residents in the ward are in the coastal hamlets of Gnarabup and Prevelly.

### Augusta Ward

See comments for Option 2.

### Margaret River Ward

See comments for Option 2.

## **Ratio of councillors to electors**

The ratios of councillors to electors for option 3, shown in the tables below, are forecast to fall within the +/- 10% range, showing a balanced representation from the next elections in 2017 to the end of the eight-year ward review period in 2025.

**Table 6:** Forecast councillor to elector ratios for 2017 based on elector growth trends from 2009-2011-2013-2015 elections – Option 3

Wards	No. of Councillors	2017 No. of Electors	Councillor : Elector Ratio	% Ratio Deviation
Margaret River	3	3862	1:1287	6.20%
North	1	1412	1:1412	-2.88%
Augusta	1	1498	1:1498	-9.17%
Coastal-Rural	2	2835	1:1417	-3.28%
Total	7	9606	1:1372	

**Table 7:** Forecast councillor to elector ratios for 2025 based on elector growth trends from 2009-2011-2013-2015 elections – Option 3

Wards	No. of Councillors	2025 No. of Electors	Ratio	% Ratio Deviation
Margaret River	3	5124	1:1708	-5.45%
North	1	1614	1:1614	0.37%
Augusta	1	1504	1:1504	7.16%
Coastal-Rural	2	3096	1:1548	4.42%
Total	7	11337	1:1620	

Source: Western Australian Electoral Commission (WAEC) and Shire of Augusta Margaret River<sup>5</sup>

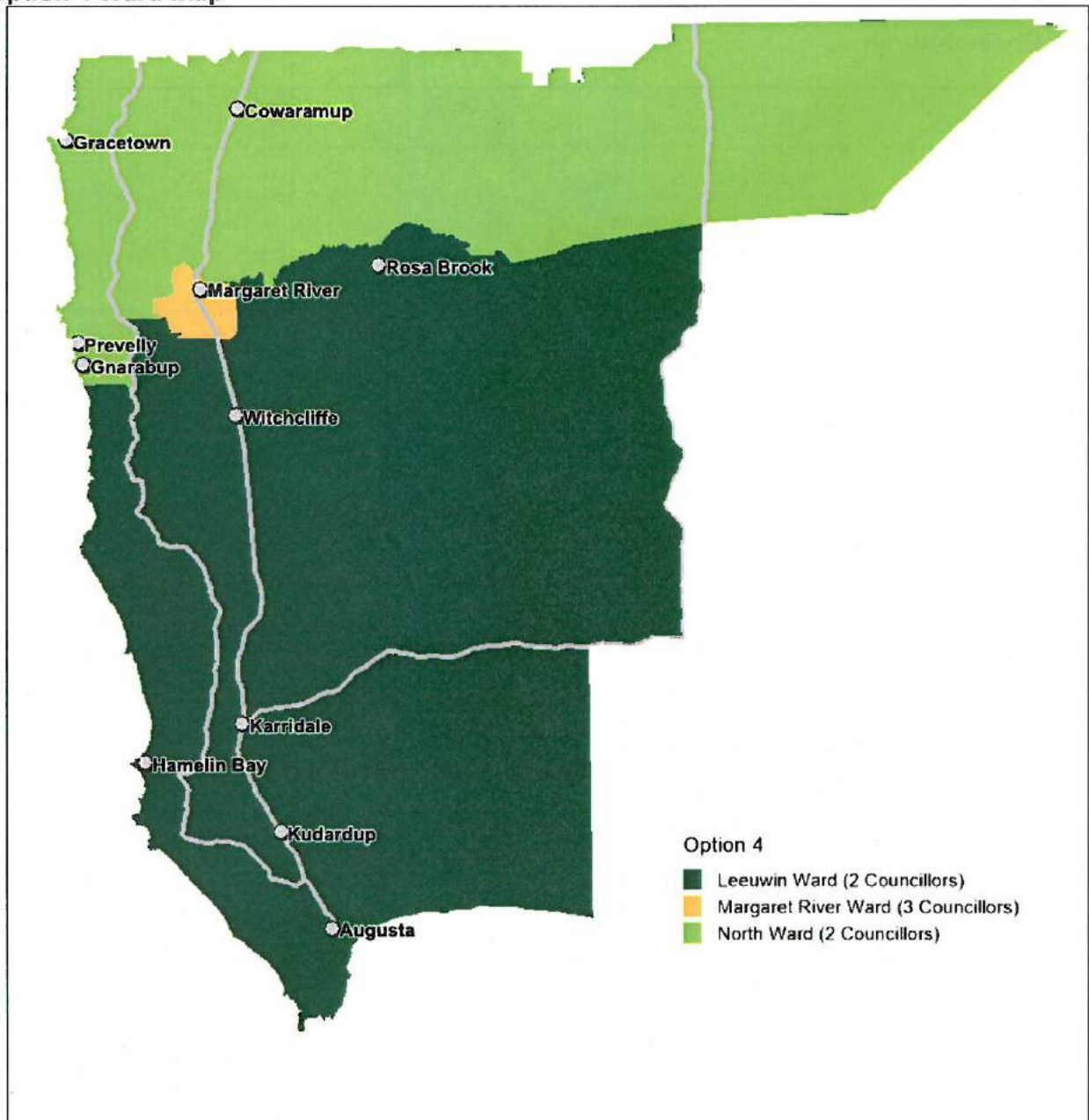
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<sup>5</sup> Forecast number of electors has been estimated using data from the electoral roll as at March 2016, provided by WAEC and the growth rates in number of electors over the 2009-2011-2013-2015 elections.

## Option 4 – Three wards

Option 4 includes an expanded Leeuwin Ward with northern boundaries from west to east of State Reserve and property boundaries, Caves Road, Roxburgh Road, Margaret River Perimeter Roads, the Margaret River and Mowen Road (2 Crs), an expanded Margaret River Townsite Ward (3 Crs) and one North Ward covering Cowaramup-Gracetown-Prevelly Gnarabup and land north of the Margaret River (2 Crs).

Option 4 Ward map





Option 4 North Ward Boundary

- Leeuwin Ward
- Margaret River Ward
- North Ward

The North Ward boundary (from west to east) follows State Reserve and property boundaries, Caves Road, Roxburgh Road, shares boundaries with the Margaret River Ward boundary along a section of Wallcliffe Road, property boundaries, and the Margaret River. The boundary then follows the Margaret River to State Forest boundaries, Mowen Road, and shares boundaries with the Shire of Nannup and City of Busselton.

The Margaret River Ward boundary is the same boundary shown in Option 2.

The Leeuwin Ward shares boundaries with the Margaret River Ward, North Ward, and Shire of Nannup.

## **Features of this option**

### North Ward

Cowaramup is the third largest Town in the Shire and has its own community of interest with a primary school catchment, service clubs and a shopping and business precinct. Gracetown has a community of interest with Cowaramup, as it is located on Cowaramup Bay and uses Cowaramup Town as the closest larger settlement for shopping and specialist services such as the chemist and local doctor. Cowaramup has a younger cohort (median age is 35) than the national median age of 39, and is growing at a faster rate than Augusta. This ward also takes in Prevelly and Gnarabup which have a community of interest in common with Gracetown but tend to use Margaret River as a service centre. Having two designated ward representatives will ensure the views and interests of electors in Cowaramup, Gracetown and Prevelly/Gnarabup and the surrounding rural areas will be represented on Council and that the ratio of the two councillors to electors will be within the required range.

### Margaret River Ward

See comments for Option 2.

### Leeuwin Ward

The Leeuwin Ward will ensure two councillors will represent electors to the south of the Margaret River, the Margaret River townsite, and Prevelly and Gnarabup. The settlements of the ward include Augusta, Kudardup, Karridale, Hamelin Bay, Witchcliffe and Rosa Brook. Two designated councillors will represent the views and interests of electors from Augusta through to Rosa Brook and the ratio of the two councillors to electors will be within the required LGAB range.

## **Ratio of councillors to electors**

As shown in the tables below, the ratios of councillors to electors for option 4 is forecast to fall within the +/- 10% range, showing a balanced representation from the next elections in 2017 to the end of the eight-year ward review period in 2025.



**Table 8:** Forecast councillor to elector ratios for 2017 based on elector growth trends from 2009-2011-2013-2015 elections – Option 4

Wards	No. of Councillors	2017 No. of Electors	Councillor : Elector Ratio	% Ratio Deviation
Margaret River	3	3862	1:1287	6.20%
North	2	2807	1:1404	-2.26%
Leeuwin	2	2938	1:1469	-7.04%
Total	7	9607	1:1372	

**Table 9:** Forecast councillor to elector ratios for 2025 based on elector growth trends from 2009-2011-2013-2015 elections – Option 4

Wards	No. of Councillors	2025 No. of Electors	Councillor : Elector Ratio	% Ratio Deviation
Margaret River	3	5124	1:1708	-5.46%
North	2	3208	1:1604	0.96%
Leeuwin	2	3005	1:1503	7.23%
Total	7	11337	1:1620	

Source: Western Australian Electoral Commission (WAEC) and Shire of Augusta Margaret River<sup>6</sup>

## Names of Wards

The names of the wards will also be considered. For example, it may be preferable to use the names of localities or landmarks within the district, or the names of early settlers e.g. M.C. Davies, or the names of Aboriginal people or places e.g. Sam Isaacs. Suggestions from the community are encouraged.

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<sup>6</sup> Forecast number of electors has been estimated using data from the electoral roll as at March 2016, provided by WAEC and the growth rates in number of electors over the 2009-2011-2013-2015 elections.



## Further Information

For further information on the Review of Wards and Representation, contact Megan Smith, Executive Assistant on 9780 5200 or [msmith@amrshire.wa.gov.au](mailto:msmith@amrshire.wa.gov.au) to obtain copies of Council reports relating to the Ward Review.

## Public Submissions

Members of the community are invited to make a submission about any aspect of ward boundaries and representation and lodge it by any of the following methods.

### Hand delivery to

Shire of Augusta Margaret River Office  
41 Wallcliffe Rd, Margaret River

Or

Augusta Customer Service Office  
66 Allnutt Tce, Augusta

### Mail to

Shire of Augusta Margaret River  
Review of Wards and Representation  
PO Box 61  
Margaret River WA 6285

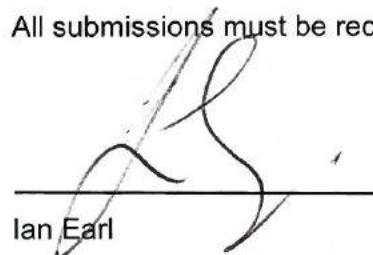
### Email to

[amrshire@amrshire.wa.gov.au](mailto:amrshire@amrshire.wa.gov.au)

### Online submission on

[www.yoursay.amrshire.wa.gov.au/review-of-wards](http://www.yoursay.amrshire.wa.gov.au/review-of-wards)

All submissions must be received by **4.00pm on Monday 21 November 2016**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Ian Earl  
SHIRE PRESIDENT  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Gary Evershed  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE



## Shire of Augusta Margaret River Review of Wards and Representation

2016

### PUBLIC SUBMISSION

This form is provided for your convenience.  
Public submissions do not have to be made on this form.

1. Please mark your preferred option below.

- ☐ Option1 – No ward boundaries (one Shire wide ward)
- ☐ Option 2 – Three wards
- ☐ Option 3 – Four wards
- ☐ Option 4 – Three wards
- ☐ None of the above

Comments:

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Do you have any further comments/suggestions regarding the Review of Wards and Representation?

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Name and address

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Thank you for your interest and involvement in this review. The Shire 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 Augusta Margaret River. You can lodge this submission in a number of ways:

**Hand delivery to**

Shire of Augusta Margaret River Office

41 Wallcliffe Rd, Margaret River

Or

Augusta Customer Service Office

66 Allnutt Tce, Augusta

**Mail to**

Shire of Augusta Margaret River

Review of Wards and Representation

PO Box 61

Margaret River WA 6285

**Email to**

[amrshire@amrshire.wa.gov.au](mailto:amrshire@amrshire.wa.gov.au)

**Online submission on**

[www.yoursay.amrshire.wa.gov.au/review-of-wards](http://www.yoursay.amrshire.wa.gov.au/review-of-wards)

All submissions must be received by **4.00pm on Monday 21 November 2016**

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