

Review of Divisional Boundaries

2019 FINAL DETERMINATION
REDLAND CITY COUNCIL

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INTRODUCTION

The Local Government Change Commission (Change Commission) is an independent body established under the *Local Government Act 2009 (Qld)* (the Act). The Change Commission is responsible for periodically reviewing the internal boundaries of divided councils so that each division has relatively the same number of enrolled voters. This upholds the key democratic principle of ‘one vote, one value’, by ensuring each person’s vote carries the same weight.

The Change Commission has finalised its assessment of the Redland City Council’s divisions on Friday, 20 September 2019. This report outlines the recommended divisional boundaries and sets out the reasons for the Change Commission’s decisions. Maps of the final boundaries are attached at Appendix A.

The Change Commission for this review consists of:

- Mr Pat Vidgen, Electoral Commissioner; and
- Mr Wade Lewis, Casual Commissioner.

The casual commissioner was appointed by the Governor in Council on 1 November 2018.

Background

On 17 April 2019, the Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs, The Honourable Stirling Hinchliffe MP referred a divisional boundary review of the Redland City Council (see Appendix B).

In conducting its assessment, the Change Commission was legally required to ensure each division of the Council has a reasonable proportion of enrolled voters, herein referred to as ‘quota’. Community interests, public submissions and easy-to-identify boundaries were also considered.

Table 1 shows the Council’s enrolment quota as at 31 January 2019 and the projected quota for 31 March 2024.

Table 1 – Current and Projected Enrolment Quota		
	31 January 2019	31 March 2024
Number of divisions	10	10
Enrolment	108,407	115,889
Average enrolment per division	10,841	11,589
Average enrolment (+10%) per division	11,925	12,748
Average enrolment (-10%) per division	9,757	10,430

Determining the quota

A quota is determined by dividing the total number of enrolled voters by the number of councillors (other than the mayor), plus or minus 10%. The Change Commission also considers projected enrolment, so the divisions remain in quota for as long as possible.

Current enrolment data has been sourced from Queensland's electoral roll and projected enrolment data from the Queensland Government Statistician's Office of Queensland Treasury. Projections are based on the timing of future local government quadrennial elections.

Enrolment information is based on 'Statistical Areas Level 1 (SA1)'. SA1s are geographical units used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) for the release of census data. According to the ABS most SA1s have a population of between 200 to 800 persons with an average population of approximately 400 people.

Current and projected enrolment data are available for download on the Redland City Council webpage on the Electoral Commission of Queensland's (ECQ) website.

THE REVIEW PROCESS

The Change Commission may conduct its assessments in any way it deems appropriate, unless the Minister has provided specific directions.

The process for this review is:

1. Inviting suggestions
2. Publication of the Change Commission's proposal
3. Inviting comments on the proposal
4. Publication of the Change Commission's final determination report
5. Final determination report provided to the Minister for Local Government, for implementation by the Governor in Council
6. New boundaries come into effect at the 2020 Local Government Quadrennial Election

Existing Divisions

The Redland City Council has 108,407 voters and is divided into ten single-member electoral divisions plus a mayor.

Table 2 shows the current and projected enrolment for the Council's existing divisional boundaries. As at 31 January 2019, Divisions 3 and 6 had both exceeded the upper limits of the enrolment quota. In 2024, Divisions 3 and 6 are projected to be further out of quota, with Divisions 5 and 9 also close to the exceeding the upper and lower limits of the quota respectively.

Table 2 – Summary of Enrolment for the Existing Divisions				
Division	Enrolment as at 31/01/2019	(%) Deviation from Average Enrolment	Projected Enrolment as at 31/03/2024	(%) Deviation from Average Enrolment
Division 1	10,590	-2.31	11,263	-2.81
Division 2	10,408	-3.99	11,575	-0.12
Division 3	12,098	11.6	12,976	11.97
Division 4	10,793	-0.44	11,417	-1.48
Division 5	11,164	2.98	12,733	9.87
Division 6	12,371	14.12	13,355	15.24
Division 7	10,336	-4.66	10,690	-7.76
Division 8	10,313	-4.87	10,671	-7.92
Division 9	10,102	-6.81	10,488	-9.5
Division 10	10,232	-5.61	10,721	-7.49

Public Suggestions

The Change Commission sought public suggestions to assist in developing its proposal. Advertisements were placed in The Courier-Mail, the Redland City Bulletin and on the ECQ's website and social media.

Suggestions were invited from 27 April 2019 to 5pm 20 May 2019. Seventeen submissions were received and are available to view at Appendix C.

A common theme to emerge from the suggestions was the desire for the Birkdale Commonwealth lands and Howeston Golf Course to be returned to Division 10, where it was located prior to the 2015 boundary review. The Change Commission agreed with the suggestions and reinstated Jones Road as the boundary between Division 10 and its neighbouring divisions. As a result, this also addressed those suggestions requesting Creek Road be contained in Division 10.

As Division 6 has already exceeded the enrolment quota and has significant developments earmarked for the Division, the Change Commission supported the suggestion to contract Division 6's northern boundary, transferring Sheldon and its portion of Thornlands to Division 9 and its portion of Victoria Point to Divisions 3 and 4.

One of the suggestions provided a comprehensive submission recommending minor changes to all of the Council's divisions. The Change Commission implemented a number of these suggestions, and expanded upon them, making additional modifications to further balance enrolment, improve connectivity and address other public suggestions.

Other matters raised in the public suggestions and the Change Commission's response are discussed below:

- Some submitters requested more of Ormiston, or the entire suburb, be contained within a single division. The Change Commission agreed and proposed uniting Ormiston within Division 1.
- A number of suggestions requested the existing Division 4 boundaries be retained. To support this suggestion, one submitter noted that projected development in the south western portions between Clay Gully Road and Brendan Way should increase enrolment in line with other divisions. The proposal mostly retained the boundaries of Division 4, however made some modification to unite more of Victoria Point in Division 4 and help reduce enrolment in Division 6.
- One suggestion requested the boundaries of Division 5 be retained. This submission was largely accommodated, with a couple of modifications made to the western boundary to lower this Division's projected enrolment.
- One submitter requested the Southern Moreton Bay Islands (SMBI) have their own councillor and division. The Change Commission was unable to implement this recommendation, noting there are insufficient numbers of enrolled voters on the islands to meet the quota.

Proposed Determination

The Change Commission published its proposal and invited public comments on 23 August 2019. Advertisements were placed in The Courier-Mail, the Redland City Bulletin and on the ECQ's website and social media.

The Change Commission's proposal considered both current and projected enrolment data as well as the views expressed in the public submissions. A concerted effort was made to follow suburb boundaries, so that entire localities were united within individual divisions.

Comments on the Proposal

Comments on the proposal were invited from 23 August 2019 to 5pm on 9 September 2019. Fourteen comments were received and can be viewed at Appendix D.

Ten of the fourteen comments expressed support for the proposed boundary changes. Some of the paraphrased feedback includes:

- the Change Commission has listened to both the community and councillors' suggestions and the implementation of these changes is fully supported;
- the inclusion of the area west of and including Taylor Road through to Springacre Road into Division 9 is a good and positive fit;
- support the proposed changes to Division 3;
- understand the reasoning behind the changes and generally agree with them;
- fully support the changes to Division 4 and for all divisions across Redland City;
- the proposed changes reflect the initial suggestions provided by the community;
- the proposal not only improves the numerical spread of electors across all ten divisions, but also improves the geographical manner in which the city suburbs fit within divisional boundaries;
- wholly support the proposal, including the changes to Division 8, particularly regarding Ormiston moving back to Division 1;
- it makes enormous sense for Division 8 to move back into Capalaba; and
- favour and approve of the divisional changes to Redland City.

Some of these submissions also suggested alternative boundaries and are discussed below:

- One submitter requested the industrial estate that is situated south of Weippin Street be returned to Division 2, noting many residents regard these businesses as part of Cleveland. As this suggestion involved an industrial area and did not impact upon voter numbers, the Change Commission supported this change and reversed its proposal to move the industrial area into Division 7.
- Another submitter advised that the suburb of Sheldon may be better served if it was retained in Division 6. Sheldon was transferred to Division 9 in the proposal to help reduce enrolment and accommodate the projected growth in Division 6. The final boundaries have therefore retained the suburb of Sheldon in Division 9.
- Another submitter requested part of Wellington Point bounded by Plumer Street, Starkey Street and Old Cleveland Road East (SA1 3100610 and 3100603) be retained in Division 1 rather than the proposed transfer to Division 8. The Change Commission considered but did not implement this suggestion, noting it would require additional boundary changes to balance enrolment in Division 8. As most submissions expressed support for the proposed boundaries and with no opportunity for further consultation, the Change Commission has retained the proposed boundary.

Four submissions requested the Council's island areas (SMBI) have their own division and councillor. The submitters noted the SMBI have different issues than the mainland and thus suggested that they require their own representation, citing the competition for services as a significant issue. One of these comments also appeared to be discussing federal electorates, requesting that Redland Bay become a part of the federal electorate of Ryan.

As noted in the proposal, there are insufficient voter numbers in the SMBI to meet the legislated divisional enrolment quota. The islands have therefore remained in their existing divisions, where they have connectivity to the mainland.

FINAL DETERMINATION

After assessing the material submitted and having considered the requirements of the Act, the Change Commission recommends the proposed boundaries, with a minor adjustment to retain the industrial estate in Division 2, become the final divisions for the Redland City Council.

Maps of the proposed Divisions 2 and 7 are attached at Appendix E and can be compared with the final division maps at Appendix A.

The Change Commission is satisfied that the final boundaries meet the enrolment requirements of the Act, while also balancing the expressed needs and interests of the community.

It is noted that the implementation of this recommendation is expected to result in the following divisional enrolment:

Table 3 – Summary of Enrolment for the Final Divisions				
Division	Enrolment as at 31/01/2019	(%) Deviation from Average Enrolment	Projected Enrolment as at 31/03/2024	(%) Deviation from Average Enrolment
Division 1	10,442	-3.68	11,121	-4.04
Division 2	10,408	-3.99	11,575	-0.12
Division 3	11,136	2.72	11,975	3.33
Division 4	11,137	2.73	11,930	2.94
Division 5	10,760	-0.74	12,308	6.21
Division 6	10,126	-6.59	10,890	-6.03
Division 7	11,315	4.38	11,735	1.26
Division 8	10,658	-1.69	11,120	-4.05
Division 9	11,133	2.7	11,421	-1.45
Division 10	11,292	4.16	11,814	1.94

RECOMMENDATION

The Change Commission has provided its assessment to the Minister for Local Government and recommends the Governor in Council implement its final boundaries.

The Change Commission's final recommendation is as follows:

- for the purpose of the 2020 Local Government Quadrennial Election, the Redland City Council be redivided into ten divisions as shown in the maps contained in Appendix A.

In accordance with the Act, the Change Commission has published a notice of results in the Government Gazette, a newspaper circulating in the local government area and on the ECQ website.



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Electoral Commissioner



Wade Lewis
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