

Review of Divisional Boundaries

**2019 PROPOSED DETERMINATION
SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL**

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INTRODUCTION

The *Local Government Act 2009 (Qld)* (the Act) provides for a Local Government Change Commission (Change Commission). 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.

On 26 March 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 Sunshine Coast Regional Council (see 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.

Endorsement of proposal

This report outlines the Change Commission's proposed boundaries for the electoral divisions of the Sunshine Coast Regional Council.

Pat Vidgen PSM
Electoral Commissioner

Wade Lewis
Casual Commissioner

THE REVIEW PROCESS

The Change Commission must ensure each division of the Council has a reasonable proportion of enrolled voters, herein referred to as 'quota'. Where possible, community interests, public submissions and easy-to-identify boundaries are also considered.

Assessments are conducted in any way the Change Commission deems appropriate, unless the Minister has provided specific directions.

The process for this divisional boundary review is as follows:

1. Invite suggestions
2. Publish the Change Commission's proposal
3. Invite comments on the proposal
4. Publish 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

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 Sunshine Coast Regional Council webpage on the Electoral Commission of Queensland's (ECQ) website.

EXISTING BOUNDARIES & ENROLMENT

The Sunshine Coast Regional Council has 224,452 voters and is divided into ten single-member electoral divisions plus a mayor. Table 1 shows the Council's current enrolment quota as at 31 January 2019 and the quota projected for 31 March 2024.

Table 2 shows the current and projected enrolment for the Council's existing divisional boundaries. As at 31 January 2019, Division 9 was out of quota and in 2024, Divisions 1, 4, 5 and 9 are projected to be out of quota, with Division 7 also close to lower limit of the quota.

Table 1 – Current and Projected Enrolment Quota		
	31 January 2019	31 March 2024
Number of divisions	10	10
Enrolment	224,452*	257,372
Average enrolment per division	22,445*	25,737
Average enrolment (+10%) per division	24,690	28,311
Average Enrolment (-10%) per division	20,201	23,163

** Note: An anomaly was identified during the modelling process with three voters misallocated to this Council. The data in this table and the documentation on the ECQ website has been updated.*

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	24,154	7.61	34,805	35.23
Division 2	21,073	-6.11	24,869	-3.37
Division 3	23,760	5.86	26,367	2.45
Division 4	20,774	-7.45	22,718	-11.73
Division 5	20,873*	-7*	22,565	-12.33
Division 6	21,968	-2.13	23,925	-7.04
Division 7	21,555	-3.97	23,281	-9.54
Division 8	22,482	0.16	24,569	-4.54
Division 9	25,183	12.2	29,024	12.77
Division 10	22,630	0.82	25,249	-1.9

** Note: An anomaly was identified during the modelling process with three voters misallocated to Division 5. The data in this table and the documentation on the ECQ website has been updated.*

PUBLIC SUGGESTIONS

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

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

The Sunshine Coast Regional Council (Suggestion 8) recommended a number of adjustments to Divisions 1, 4, 5, 6, 8 and 9. The Change Commission has incorporated many of the Council's suggestions in its proposal, however has also performed additional modifications to further balance enrolment and to accommodate other public submissions. The Change Commission's response to the Council's submission is discussed below:

Divisions 1, 5 and 6:

- Adjust the boundary between Divisions 1 and 6 to follow the Mooloolah River west to the Bruce Highway, thereby accounting for projected growth in the Harmony development in Palmview. The Change Commission supported the Council's recommendation regarding the transfer of Palmview and has proposed that the southern boundary of Division 6 follow the Palmview locality boundary.
- Transfer voters from Glenview, Palmview and Maleny from Division 1 to Division 5. The Change Commission supported this suggestion however has made additional modifications to bring Division 1's enrolment to the lowest level possible while still remaining in quota. In doing so, the Change Commission anticipates the boundaries will be well placed to remain in quota for the longest time possible.

Divisions 4, 8 and 9:

- The Council suggested two possible changes in the Maroochy area for Division 4. The Change Commission considered both but implemented 'Proposal 2', moving the Division 4 boundary north from Aerodrome Road to the Maroochy River. As the Sunshine Motorway provides a clear point of connectivity between the areas north and south of the Maroochy River, it seemed appropriate to keep the area discussed in the Council's 'Proposal 1' in Division 8.
- Transfer voters from the Yaroomba, Coolum Beach and Point Arkwright area from Division 9 into Division 8. The Change Commission supported this recommendation, however has proposed to follow Yandina Coolum Road, Yungar Street and the Yaroomba and Point Arkwright suburb boundaries.

The Councillor for Division 3 (Suggestion 6) proposed adding the Kawana Forest section of Meridan Plains to Division 3 and transferring Battery Hill into Division 2. The Change Commission implemented both suggestions with some additional modifications. It proposed that the entire locality of Meridan Plains be united in Division 3, thereby allowing the boundary between Divisions 3 and 6 to follow locality boundaries. In addition to uniting the suburb of Battery Hill within Division 2, the Change Commission has proposed extending the northern boundary of Division 2 to the Currimundi Creek, creating an easily identifiable northern boundary.

The remaining submitters expressed a variety of opinions regarding the boundaries of Divisions 4, 8 and 9. The Change Commission has accommodated as many of these as possible, noting that in doing so, it could not fully implement each recommendation.

The Coolum Residents Association Inc. and Development Watch Inc. (Suggestions 2 and 5) advised of a lack of connection between Bli Bli and Coolum Beach and recommended excising Bli Bli from Division 9, utilising the Maroochy River as a boundary. Both suggestions noted the rural residents in Division 9 have long used Coolum Beach as their district centre, while Bli Bli is linked more closely with Nambour. The submitters noted areas such as Yaroomba and part of Mount Coolum should be moved into Division 9. A third submitter (Suggestion 7) also noted that if changes must occur to Division 9, that these should occur around Bli Bli.

The Change Commission was persuaded by the arguments regarding Bli Bli and has proposed transferring the area south of the Maroochy River into Division 10. However, other changes have been proposed along the coastal strip between Divisions 4, 8 and 9, to accommodate recommendations in Suggestions 3, 4 and 8.

Two submitters (Suggestions 3 and 4) recommended the strip of coastal communities currently in Division 9 be included within Division 8, and that most of the area south of the Maroochy River be excised to Divisions 4 and 7. The Change Commission modelled these suggestions and noted that for Division 8 to incorporate Division 9's coastal strip, Division 9 would have to expand to the south-western edge of the Council to meet the enrolment quota.

The Change Commission has therefore partially adopted these submissions, uniting more of Coolum Beach and the entire Yaroomba and Point Arkwright localities within Division 8 and transferring the part of Maroochy River situated north of Aerodrome Road into Division 4. The Change Commission felt the proposed boundaries better balanced enrolment while enabling the transfer of Bli Bli out of Division 9 as recommended by other public submitters.

Out of Scope Submissions

Two submissions (Suggestions 1 and 7) raised matters that were outside the scope of this review. One requested the Coolum Beach locality be transferred to the Noosa Shire Council, while the other recommended an external boundary review to address the Lake Weyba catchment being divided across two local governments (Noosa and the Sunshine Coast).

The Change Commission cannot consider transferring parts of one council to a neighbouring council unless an external boundary review is referred to it. The Ministerial referral for this review is to balance enrolment within the Sunshine Coast Regional Council's internal divisions. Therefore, both requests were not able to be actioned.

Division 2

The Change Commission has proposed expanding the northern boundary of Division 2 to follow the Currimundi Creek and contracting its western boundary to follow Nicklin Way and the Pelican Waters locality boundary. In doing so this brings enrolment closer to the average and also accommodates a submission recommending Battery Hill be united in Division 2.

The Change Commission proposes the following changes. The Division:

- a. Gains the remainder of Battery Hill and part of Currimundi from Division 3;
- b. Transfers its portion of Caloundra West to Division 1; and
- c. Transfers the part of Caloundra West situated west of Nicklin Way and its portion of Little Mountain to Division 3.

The proposed Division has 22,279 voters which is -0.74% below average and is predicted to have 25,617 voters by 2024 which would be -0.47% below average.

Division 3

A number of changes are proposed to help reduce enrolment and growth pressure in neighbouring Division 1 and to bring Division 3 closer to the average enrolment. One submitter suggested part of Meridan Plains move into Division 3 and the remainder of Battery Hill be transferred into Division 2. The Change Commission modelled and implemented these suggestions with some additional modifications.

The Change Commission proposes the following changes. The Division:

- a. Gains Meridan Plains and the remainder of Birtinya from Division 1;
- b. Gains the part of Caloundra West situated west of Nicklin Way and more of Little Mountain from Division 2;
- c. Transfers the remainder of Battery Hill and part of Currimundi east of Nicklin Way and south of the Currimundi Creek to Division 2; and
- d. Transfers part of Warana to Division 4.

The proposed Division has 23,038 voters which is 2.64% above average and is predicted to have 25,999 voters by 2024 which would be 1.02% above average.

Division 4

While currently in quota at -7.45%, Division 4 needed to gain voters as it is projected to be below the quota at -11.73% in 2024. Of the variety of suggested changes for Division 4, the Change Commission adopted the suggestions to expand the boundary north of Aerodrome Road, taking in more of Maroochydore.

The Change Commission proposes the following changes. The Division:

- a. Gains an additional portion of Maroochydore from Division 8; and
- b. Gains more of Warana from Division 3.

The proposed Division has 22,924 voters which is 2.13% above average and is predicted to have 25,244 voters by 2024 which would be -1.92% below average.

Division 5

Division 5 needed to gain voters as it is projected to be below the quota at -12.33% in 2024. This Division has expanded in the north, west and south to gain voters from Divisions 1 and 10.

The Change Commission proposes the following changes. The Division:

- a. Gains part of Boorobin, Wootha, Peachester and Palmview, the balance of Crohamhurst, Maleny, Bald Knob and Mooloolah Valley and the entire Mount Mellum and Glenview localities from Division 1;
- b. Gains Kenilworth, Coolabine, Mapleton, part of West Woombye and the remainder of Kidaman Creek, Obi Obi and Dulong from Division 10;
- c. Transfers part of Landsborough to Division 1;
- d. Transfers its portion of Rosemount to Division 7;
- e. Transfers Woombye, part of West Woombye and its portion of Nambour to Division 10.

The proposed Division has 23,034 voters which is 2.62% above average and is predicted to have 24,777 voters by 2024 which would be -3.73% below average.

Division 6

The proposed Division 6 has expanded south to take in part of the Palmview locality that is situated east of the Bruce Highway. It is noted that this section of Palmview has considerable projected growth and in proposing this change, it has helped to lower enrolment in Division 1.

The Change Commission proposes the following changes. The Division:

- a. Gains part of the Palmview locality from Division 1; and
- b. Transfers a portion of Buderim and Tanawha bounded by the Sunshine Motorway, Dixon Road and Ballinger Road to Division 7.

The proposed Division has 20,769 voters which is -7.47% below average and is predicted to have 25,176 voters by 2024 which would be -2.18% below average.

Division 7

The Change Commission has sought to increase enrolment in Division 7, noting that it is projected to be close to the lower limit of the quota in 2024 at -9.54%.

The Change Commission proposes the following changes. The Division:

- a. Gains the balance of Rosemount from Divisions 5 and 10; and
- b. Gains an additional portion of Buderim and Tanawha from Division 6.

The proposed Division has 23,784 voters which is 5.96% above average and is predicted to have 25,768 voters by 2024 which would be 0.12% above average.

Division 8

Most of the public submissions discussed Divisions 4, 8 and 9 and proposed a variety of alternative boundaries. The Change Commission has sought to accommodate as many of these suggestions as possible and has proposed expanding Division 8 north to unite Point Arkwright, Yaroomba and more of Coolum Beach within this Division.

The Change Commission proposes the following changes. The Division:

- a. Gains Point Arkwright, the remainder of Yaroomba and more of Coolum Beach from Division 9; and
- b. Transfers part of Maroochydore bounded by Horton Parade, Cornmeal Parade and the Maroochy River to Division 4.

The proposed Division has 23,309 voters which is 3.85% above average and is predicted to have 25,340 voters by 2024 which would be -1.54% below average.

Division 9

Division 9 has exceeded the enrolment quota at 12.2% and is projected to remain out of quota in 2024 at 12.77% above average. The Change Commission was persuaded by submitter's recommendations to remove Bli Bli from this Division, utilising the Maroochy River as the southern boundary. Division 9 has then expanded west to take in several localities from Division 10, bringing its enrolment closer to the average.

The Change Commission proposes the following changes. The Division:

- a. Gains Eumundi, North Arm, Ninderry, Yandina, Kulangoor, Kureelipa, Kiamba, Cooloolabin, Bridges, Eerwah Vale, Belli Park and Gheerulla from Division 10; and
- b. Transfers Point Arkwright, part of Coolum Beach and its portion of Yaroomba to Division 8.

The proposed Division has 22,983 voters which is 2.4% above average and is predicted to have 25,480 voters by 2024 which would be -1% below average.

Division 10

Significant change is proposed for Division 10, which has contracted to become a Nambour, Bli Bli and Woombye based division. This enabled the Change Commission to implement other recommended changes to neighbouring Divisions 8 and 9, and to accommodate the movement of voters north from Divisions 1 and 5.

The Change Commission proposes the following changes. The Division:

- a. Gains Bli Bli, more of Parklands and parts of the Maroochy River, Marcoola and Pacific Paradise localities from Division 9;
- b. Transfers Kenilworth, Coolabine, Mapleton, part of West Woombye and the remainder of Kidaman Creek, Obi Obi and Dulong to Division 5;
- c. Transfers its portion of Rosemount to Division 7; and
- d. Transfers Eumundi, North Arm, Ninderry, Yandina, Kulangoor, Kureelipa, Kiamba, Cooloolabin, Bridges, Eerwah Vale, Belli Park and Gheerulla to Division 9.

The proposed Division has 22,036 voters which is -1.82% below average and is predicted to have 25,809 voters by 2024 which would be 0.28% above average.

COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSAL INVITED

Comments on this proposal are invited until 5pm, 11 October 2019 and can be lodged through:

Online Form

<https://ecq.qld.gov.au/lgr/sunshinecoast>

Email

LGCCsubmissions@ecq.qld.gov.au

Personal Delivery

Electoral Commission of Queensland
Level 20, 1 Eagle Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Post

Local Government Change Commission
GPO Box 1393
BRISBANE QLD 4001

It is recommended that those submitting comments:

- consider the enrolment requirements outlined in the Act and in this report;
- clearly state which division/s your comment relates to;
- provide supporting information for why you support or oppose a proposed boundary change or public submission; and
- if you oppose a change, provide alternative boundary suggestions and reasoning.

FINALISING THE REVIEW

After reviewing the public comments on the proposal, the Change Commission will make a final determination on the Council's divisional boundaries.

The results of a Change Commission review must be provided to the Minister for Local Government. A notice of results is published in a local newspaper, the Queensland Government Gazette and on the ECQ website.

A decision of the Change Commission is not subject to appeal.

IMPLEMENTATION

A local government change can only be implemented by the Governor in Council under a regulation.

The regulation may provide for anything that is necessary or convenient to facilitate the change.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT CHANGE COMMISSION

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