

## MAV BOARD REGIONAL GROUPING REVIEW

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Report Author: Governance Coordinator  
Responsible Officer: Director Corporate Services  
Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);

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*The author(s) of this report and the Responsible Officer consider that the report complies with the overarching governance principles and supporting principles set out in the Local Government Act 2020.*

### CONFIDENTIALITY

This item is to be considered at a Council meeting that is open to the public.

### SUMMARY

The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) is a membership association and the legislated peak body for local government in Victoria. At its State Council meeting a decision was made to alter the number of regions from 12 to 10, and therefore the number of representatives elected to the MAV Board to the same.

This report seeks:

- consideration of the options available to Yarra Ranges Council, as outlined in the MAV Options Paper and included at Attachment 1 to the report, and
- endorsement of Option 2 including a feedback statement, included at Attachment 2 to the report to be submitted to MAV as part of their engagement with councils in reviewing its proposed Regional Groupings.

### RECOMMENDATION

***That Council endorse the feedback statement, included at Attachment 2 to the report, to be submitted to the Municipal Association of Victoria for consideration in the Regional Grouping Review.***

### RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

There are no related Council decisions relevant to this item.

### DISCUSSION

#### ***Purpose and Background***

The purpose of this report is to consider the options available to Yarra Ranges Council in the MAV Board Regional Grouping Review and to formally endorse the feedback statement supporting Option 2 as the preferred option.

The regional groupings were last reviewed in the early 2000's and this review provides an opportunity to consider present-day requirements to best serve the sector and the good governance of the MAV.

A review of the groupings is now scheduled to be implemented every six years.

Through the current review, the 'Interface' group that had previously included Yarra Ranges will be dissolved, with Yarra Ranges proposed to be grouped with other metropolitan Councils in the east or north-east. There may be opportunities through this review or future reviews, for Yarra Ranges to be grouped alongside other 'peri-regional' LGAs, which are 'interfacing' and strategically retaining their regional characteristics (rather than urbanising).

The MAV is expected to make its decision on the review in December 2022 to ensure the March 2023 Board elections are equipped and ready to welcome representatives from each of the new groupings.

The following principles have been applied equally by MAV in consideration of which regional grouping a council will belong to:

- each region should be of equal electoral size (number of councils)
- each region should comprise of councils with common interests, be these spatial or by nature of the councils' operating environment; and
- MAV regions should align with other representative structures.

A single representative from each grouping will be elected to become a member of the MAV Board, whose role consists of:

- developing and giving effect to the strategic direction of the Association;
- the oversight of the administration and financial management of the Association;
- appointing and overseeing the performance of the MAV Chief Executive Officer, in accordance with Rule 33;
- the oversight of the provision of services by the Association;
- the oversight of the Association's risk management;
- adopting the Association's Annual Budget;
- receiving the Association's audited accounts;
- performing those duties imposed, and performing those functions and exercising those powers conferred, on the Board by these Rules;

- ensuring the legal and ethical integrity of the Association; and
- the conduct of the affairs of the Association more generally.

### ***Options considered***

#### Option 1:

- Participating Councils: Yarra Ranges, Manningham, Maroondah, Knox, Whitehorse and Monash.

Aligns with our Eastern Region Group of Councils, meaning we can be consistent in our advocacy through MAV on metropolitan issues such as transport, service provision (MCH, school crossings, etc) and economic development (with Bayswater Business Precinct being a key project delivered by Yarra Ranges, Knox and Maroondah). Strengthens existing relationships, streamlines effort and has potential to build on past advocacy success.

Yarra Ranges, by proximity, does not share a border with two of the five other LGA's in this grouping.

#### Option 2:

- Participating Councils: Yarra Ranges, Nillumbik, Banyule, Manningham, Maroondah, and Knox.

Groups Yarra Ranges together with the four out of five other LGA's that share a border. This provides for common interests to be explored and our collective advocacy to be strengthened, particularly in relation to our economic profiles, environmental resilience, and emergency management. For example, Nillumbik is arguably another 'peri-regional' LGA with significant agricultural land and strong tourism offerings. Both Nillumbik and parts of Manningham are at high risk of natural disasters and have a shared interest in the future of the Yarra River as a key waterway (notable, given the recent endorsement of the Yarra Strategic Plan). Maroondah and Knox partner with Yarra Ranges on the Bayswater Business Precinct, which is key to our local and regional economies.

### ***Recommended option and justification***

#### Option 2

It is recommended that Council endorses Option 2 as its preference. It provides for Council to advocate alongside other councils with 'peri-regional' characteristics, which will be valuable given there is currently no other advocacy network specifically dedicated to 'peri-regional' issues. It would also allow for Council to advocate on geographically specific matters across the majority of our municipality, given the other members share borders along Yarra Ranges' entire western boundary. There is also strong alignment with other councils on priority issues of concern, giving the grouping a clear point of focus.

## FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

There are no financial implications arising from the recommendation in this report.

## APPLICABLE PLANS AND POLICIES

The MAV Strategy 2021-25 is a key paper in the consideration of a suitable regional grouping for Yarra Ranges Council. It outlines the objectives and plans that underpin the MAV's work to support local government. Each grouping will enlist one appointment to represent and advocate for the LGA's allocated to that group which ultimately assists Council in achieving its strategic objectives in the Council Plan.

Advocacy is a key component in the delivery of:

- *Connected and Healthy Communities*: through better public transport connections.
- *Quality Infrastructure and Liveable Places* by responding to the needs of the community and ensuring they're well-maintained for future generations.
- *Protected and Enhanced Natural Environment* by pursuing State led innovative waste processing technology.
- *Vibrant Economy, Agriculture and Tourism* through strong investment and attraction to underpin sustainable economic growth.
- *A High Performing Organisation* by refining our services to best meet the needs of the community.

## RELEVANT LAW

The Municipal Association of Victoria is governed by the *Municipal Association Act 1907* and therein the Rules of Association which, as a result of a recent review, define 10 members (one from each regional grouping) be appointed to the MAV Board.

## SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

### *Economic Implications*

There are no direct economic implications as a result of the recommendation in this report. The MAV assist in advancing Council's advocacy efforts to attain better economic outcomes for the municipality.

### *Social Implications*

There are no direct social implications as a result of the recommendation in this report. The MAV assist in advancing Council's advocacy efforts to attain better social outcomes for the municipality.

### ***Environmental Implications***

There are no direct environmental implications as a result of the recommendation in this report. The MAV assist in advancing Council's advocacy efforts to attain better environmental outcomes for the municipality.

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

No public consultation was sought in the preparation of this report.

### **COLLABORATION, INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

No collaboration with other councils, Governments or statutory bodies was sought.

### **RISK ASSESSMENT**

There are no forecasted risks associated with providing feedback to the MAV in relation to the MAV Board Regional Grouping Review.

### **CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

No officers and/or delegates acting on behalf of the Council through the Instrument of Delegation and involved in the preparation and/or authorisation of this report have any general or material conflict of interest as defined within the *Local Government Act 2020*.

### **ATTACHMENTS TO THE REPORT**

1. MAV Board Regional Grouping Review - Options Paper
2. Yarra Ranges Council Feedback Statement