

# **KNOX CITY COUNCIL**

## **SUPPLEMENTARY REPORTS**

### **ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL**

to be held

on

Monday 23 April 2018

13.1 Victorian Federal Boundary Redistribution

**ALL WARDS****13.1 VICTORIAN FEDERAL BOUNDARY REDISTRIBUTION**

**SUMMARY:** Governance Advisor (Rodney McKail)

*Public notice was given by the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) that Victoria is undergoing a redistribution of House of Representative divisions due to the number of seats increasing from 37 to 38 following a determination of the Electoral Commissioner in August 2017.*

*Council lodged a submission throughout the second stage of the review process. A report from the Redistribution Committee has now been released. It is recommended that Council provide a further submission proposing changes to the recommended boundary for the electoral division of Aston.*

**RECOMMENDATION**

1. That Council make a submission on the proposed redistribution of Victorian electoral division boundaries proposing the following:
  - a) That the area comprising the Tirhatuan Golf Course and Rowville Recreation Reserve, and situated within the Knox City Council Municipal Boundary, be retained in the electoral division of Aston; and
  - b) That the area of Upper Ferntree Gully situated within the Knox City Council Municipal Boundary, proposed to be located in the new electoral Division of Casey, be incorporated into the electoral division of Aston.
2. The rational for the proposed changes are that they:
  - a) Maintain existing economic, social and regional interests;
  - b) Provide alignment for ongoing development and strategic planning;
  - c) Retain long and established communities of interest; and
  - d) Align with the Knox City Council municipal boundary.

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Public notice was given by the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) that Victoria is undergoing a redistribution of House of Representative divisions due to the number of seats increasing from 37 to 38 following a determination of the Electoral Commissioner in August 2017.

Knox City Council is currently covered by two electoral divisions, primarily Aston, with a portion to the north east in the division of La Trobe. Enrolment data indicated that Aston was 10.13% below the state quota and La Trobe 3.8% above.

Council lodged a submission to the review strongly supporting the expansion of the Aston electoral boundary to the east taking in Boronia, The Basin, Ferntree Gully and Upper Ferntree Gully. This would provide for the entire Municipality to be covered by the Aston Electorate.

A report from the Redistribution Committee of Victoria has now been published. The report proposes an expansion of the Aston Electoral Boundary to the east taking in Boronia, The Basin and Ferntree Gully, refer map as Appendix A. It does not extend to include Upper Ferntree Gully, which is proposed to be located in the new electoral Division of Casey

The report also recommends a change to the south of the Municipality, which excises the Tirhatuan Golf Club and the Rowville Recreation Reserve out of Aston and into Bruce. There is no residential land within this geographical area. It is logical for this area, which is within the Knox City Council Municipal Boundary, to be retained within Aston.

## **2. DISCUSSION**

In developing the recent recommendations, the Redistribution Committee was required to adhere to strict numerical requirements. These requirements provide an overall constraint to ensure that there are approximately equal numbers of electors in each electoral division so that each elector in Victoria has equality of representation in the House of Representatives.

All proposed electoral divisions must be within the range of plus or minus 10 per cent of the current enrolment quota, which is 106,954 as at September 2017. All proposed electoral divisions must also be within the range of plus or minus 3.5 per cent of the projected enrolment quota as at August 2019, being 110,372 electors.

The Committee are also required to give due consideration to:

- a. community of interests within the proposed electoral division, including economic, social and regional interests;
- b. means of communication and travel within the proposed electoral division;
- c. the physical features and area of the proposed electoral division; and
- d. the boundaries of existing electoral divisions in Victoria.

An extract from Council's previous submissions is as follows:

*'The existing boundaries of the Aston electorate to the west, south and north are very strong geographically and should be retained. The existing eastern boundary of Albert Avenue, Dorset Road, Glenfern Road and Lysterfield Road are not strong boundaries with little or no geographic basis for retention. Councillors are concerned that the current boundary to the east dissects communities of interest, particularly in Boronia and Ferntree Gully.*

*Councillors are also of the view that as a principle, the fragmentation of Federal representation across Victorian Councils should be lessened wherever possible. Councillors are particularly keen to ensure that the community is not split, nor portions of the community disadvantaged through dislocation from natural/behavioural centres of attraction.*

*Moving the Aston electoral boundary to the east will unite the suburbs of Boronia and Ferntree Gully into one division, and also add the suburbs of Upper Ferntree Gully and the Basin.'*

Whilst a large proportion of this submission has been achieved in the recommendation, Upper Ferntree Gully has been excluded from Aston. Including Upper Ferntree Gully in Aston would still fit within the numerical requirements of the review. Based on estimated voter figures for Upper Ferntree Gully, the following tables demonstrate the current proposal by the Redistribution Committee and the revised figures for Council's proposal.

	September 2017	% Variance	August 2019	% Variance
Aston – As Proposed by Redistribution Committee	107,614	0.62%*	109,204	-1.06%**
Aston – Knox Proposal including Upper Ferntree Gully	109,514	2.39%*	111,104	0.66%**
Casey – As Proposed by Redistribution Committee	102,129	-4.51%*	109,705	-0.60%**
Casey – Knox Proposal excluding Upper Ferntree Gully	100,229	-6.29%*	107,805	-2.33%**

\* Can be plus or minus 10%

\*\* Can be plus or minus 3.5%

There appears to be no basis for the proposed changes in the south, excising the Tirhatuan Golf Club and the Rowville Recreation Reserve from Aston. Council should continue to support the principle that the fragmentation of Federal representation across Victorian Councils should be lessened wherever possible and that communities should not be split, nor portions of the community disadvantaged through dislocation from natural/behavioural centres of attraction. The removal of this geographic area to Aston is clearly contrary to this principle.

### **3. CONSULTATION**

This report forms part of the consultation process on the proposed redistribution of Victorian electoral division boundaries.

### **4. ENVIRONMENTAL/AMENITY ISSUES**

There are no direct environmental/amenity issues associated with this report.

### **5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct financial or economic implications as a result of this report.

### **6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The intention of this report and associated recommendation is to maintain the existing social cohesion within Knox by ensuring that the community is not

split, nor portions of the community disadvantaged as a result of the outcomes from the redistribution.

## **7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021**

The entire municipality being represented by the Federal division of Aston provides a greater opportunity for Council to advocate on behalf of the Knox community and therefore support the delivery of the Knox Community and Council Plan.

## **8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Under section 80c of the Local Government Act 1989, officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

Officer Responsible – Tony Doyle, Chief Executive Officer - In providing this advice as the Officer Responsible, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Author – Rod McKail, Governance Advisor - In providing this advice as the Author, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

## **9. CONCLUSION**

The changes proposed in this report align with the numerical requirements of the concept one vote, one value, as well as the other matters the require due consideration in the legislation when undertaking a boundary review. It is proposed that Council lodge a submission in accordance with the above recommendation by the due date of 4 May 2018.

## **10. CONFIDENTIALITY**

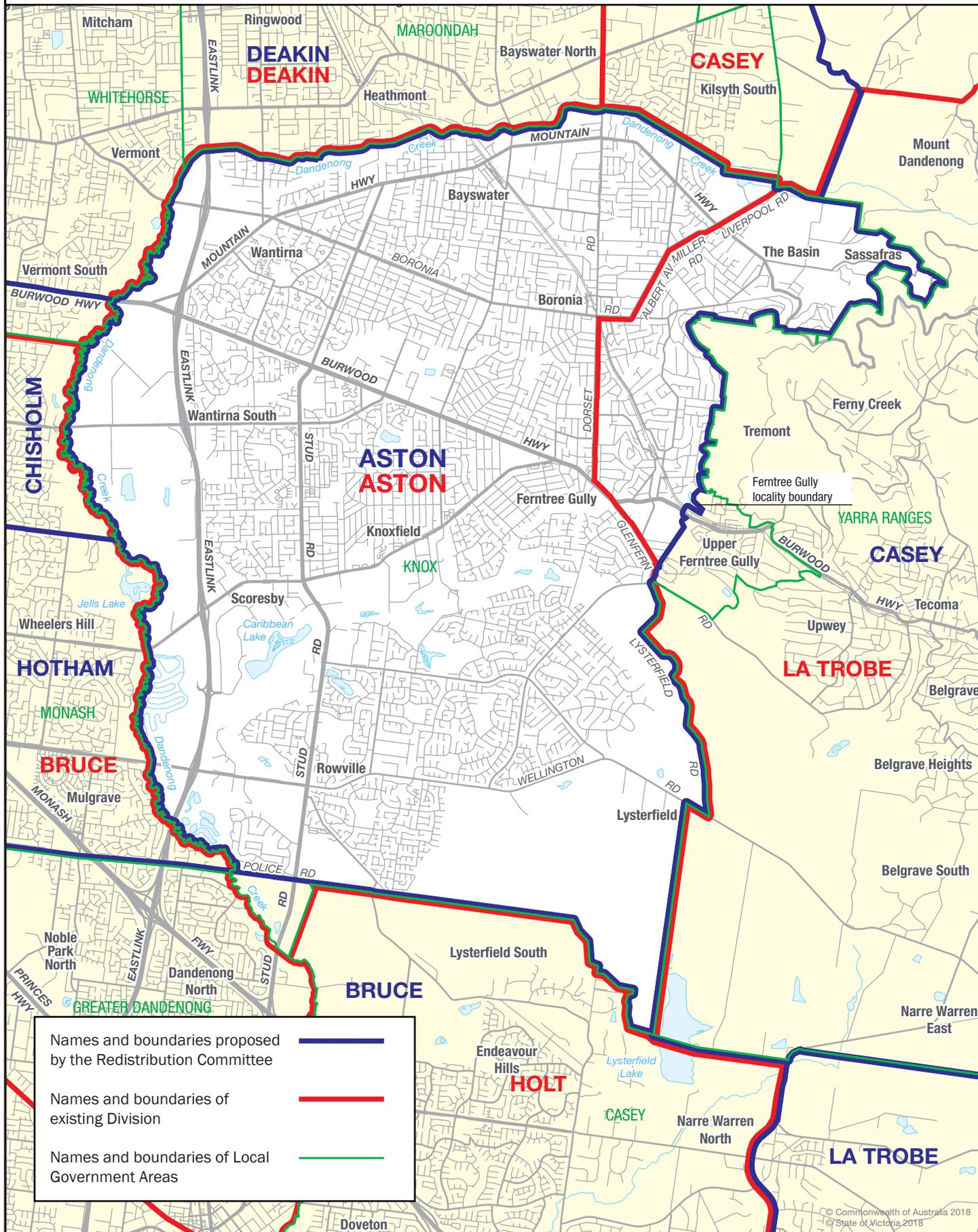
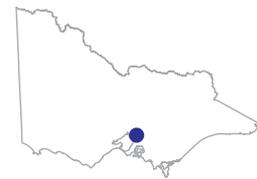
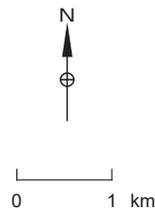
There are no matters of confidentiality associated with this report.

***Report Prepared By: Governance Advisor (Rodney McKail)***

***Report Authorised By: Chief Executive Officer (Tony Doyle)***



# April 2018 MAP OF PROPOSED COMMONWEALTH ELECTORAL DIVISION OF **ASTON**



Names and boundaries proposed by the Redistribution Committee	
Names and boundaries of existing Division	
Names and boundaries of Local Government Areas	