

### 10.3. Review of Ward Boundaries and Names - 2024 Elections

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| <b>ENDORSED BY</b> | Luke Harvey, Director Corporate Support                                |
| <b>ATTACHMENTS</b> | Nil  |
| <b>CSP LINK</b>    | 5. Our Civic Leadership<br>5.1 Lead North Sydney's strategic direction |

#### **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of the requirements to review Ward boundaries and names prior to 5 October 2023 prior to the 2024 Local Government elections.

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

- Under section 211 of the Local Government Act 1993, councils that are divided into Wards must keep Ward boundaries under review to ensure the difference in elector numbers between Wards does not exceed 10%. The attachment to this report provides further information regarding the calculation of the 10% variation to elector numbers within Wards.
- Under section 277A of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, Ward boundary and name changes must be made by 5 October 2023 to be in effect for the 14 September 2024 ordinary elections unless the Electoral Commissioner approves otherwise in special circumstances.
- Council's Wards' elector numbers are currently within 10% of each other and no change is required.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

**1. THAT** Council note that, as the variation between Wards does not exceed 10% in accordance with section 211 of the Local Government Act, it is not proposed to alter the Ward boundaries nor names.

## **Background**

Local government ordinary elections are to be held on 14 September 2024. The last date for councils to make Ward boundary alterations and name changes is 5 October 2023.

Prior to the 2021 elections, Council reviewed its Ward Boundaries and names and resolved on 20 January 2020:

- 1. THAT Council adopt the North/South two (2) Ward boundary proposal as exhibited and attached to this report.*
- 2. THAT Council confirm that the proposed two new Wards be named St Leonards (North) and Cammeraygal (South).*

The resolution to name the two new Wards as St Leonards and Cammeraygal was passed unanimously by Council at its meeting on 18 November 2019 and were in place for the conduct of the 2021 election.

At its meeting on 13 February 2023, Council resolved to enter a contract with the NSW Electoral Commission (NSWEC) to conduct the 2024 elections.

## **Report**

Under section 211 of the Local Government Act 1993, councils that are divided into Wards must keep Ward boundaries under review to ensure the difference in elector numbers between Wards does not exceed 10%.

As at April 2023, based on Australian Bureau of Statistics electoral data, the difference between Cammeraygal (25210) and St Leonards (23648) Wards is 6.8%.

As the variance is less than 10%, there is no requirement for Council to review its Ward boundaries prior to the September 2024 elections.

Should Council wish to hold a referendum or community poll in conjunction with the elections, the question/s need to be provided to NSWEC no later than June 2024. The legislation requires councils to notify the NSWEC no later than 12 months before the elections (i.e. September 2023) if they plan to change the number of councillors via a referendum. The cost of posing a referendum question or a poll question has been estimated at an additional 10% of the total cost of conducting an election per question.

## **Consultation requirements**

Community engagement is not required.

## **Financial/Resource Implications**

Not applicable if the recommended option is chosen.

An estimate of \$739,775.00 has been provided by the NSWEC to conduct the 2024 elections

A referendum or community poll held in conjunction with an election is estimated to cost approximately 10% of the cost of running an election, for each question put. This would be in addition to the quoted figure above.

Resources would be required if it was resolved to change the Ward boundaries to undertake the development of options and community consultation.

### **Legislation**

Section 211 of the Local Government Act 1993 provides that councils that are divided into Wards must keep Ward boundaries under review to ensure the difference in elector numbers between Wards does not exceed 10%.

Section 277A of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 governs the date by which Ward boundary and name changes must be made prior to the next elections.