

Local council electoral structure review

About Horsham Rural City Council

The formally recognised Traditional Custodians of the land in Horsham Rural City Council are the Wotjobaluk, Wergaia, Jupagalk, Jaadwa and Jadawadjali peoples.

Horsham Rural City Council is in western Victoria, approximately 300 km north-west of Melbourne. It covers 4,267 km² and is home to 20,429 people.

Nearly three quarters of the population live in the main town Horsham. Natimuk is the second largest town, with 421 people. Horsham Rural City Council also has about 25 small settlements with less than 200 residents.

Horsham township provides goods, services, arts and cultural activities to the wider region. It serves as an important centre for the surrounding agricultural communities.

About 70% of the area supports dryland broadacre cropping and 27% of the area is covered by native vegetation and waterways.

The main farm industries are cropping, sheep wool and meat production, wheat, barley, canola and lentils. Oats, chickpeas and other pulses are produced to a lesser extent.

Distinct natural features are Dyurrite (Mount Arapiles) and Burren (Black Range State Park), the Wimmera and Mackenzie rivers, Burnt Creek, and the Natimuk-Douglas Saline Wetland Depression.

The median age is 41 years old. The percentage of the population aged 20 to 54 years is lower than that for Victoria overall, and a greater percentage is aged 55 years and over. Australia is the country of birth for 87% of residents, compared to 65% for Victoria overall.

Current structure

Horsham Rural City Council is unsubdivided with a total of 7 councillors.

About the review

Under Victoria's *Local Government Act 2020*, Horsham Rural City Council must now have a single-councillor ward electoral structure.

The Minister for Local Government has appointed an electoral representation advisory panel to conduct an electoral structure review of the council. The panel will advise the Minister on the most appropriate single-councillor ward structure for Horsham Rural City Council.

The panel is looking at:

- the appropriate number of councillors and wards
- the location of ward boundaries
- appropriate ward names.

Electoral structure reviews are an important part of democracy, and your input is valuable. As a local, you know your local council area better than anyone. This is your chance to let the panel know your thoughts about the single-councillor ward electoral structure that you believe would best provide representation for your community.

There are 2 opportunities for you to have your say on the electoral structure of the council:

1. in a response submission to the preliminary report
2. in an online public hearing, if you request to speak in your response submission.

Last review

The VEC conducted an electoral representation review of Horsham Rural City Council in 2015.

Visit the VEC website at vec.vic.gov.au to access a copy of the 2015 review final report.

Review process

Monday 26 and Tuesday 27 June

Information sessions

Session 1: 12 noon, Monday 26 June

Session 2: 6 pm, Tuesday 27 June

Information sessions are for anyone wanting to find out more about the review process. Links to register for an information session will be available on the VEC website.

Wednesday 28 June

Preliminary report

The panel will release a preliminary report including one or more options for the electoral structure on Wednesday 28 June.

Response submissions open from this date.

Wednesday 19 July

Response submission close

The panel must receive all submissions by 5 pm on Wednesday 19 July.

Late submissions will not be accepted.

Wednesday 26 July

Public hearing

The panel will hold an online public hearing if anyone requests to speak about their response submission at 10 am on Wednesday 26 July.

The public hearing will not be held if there are no requests to speak.

Wednesday 23 August


Final report

The panel will submit a final report to the Minister for Local Government, including its advice for the electoral structure, on Wednesday 23 August.

The Minister will then consider the panel's advice before recommending a change to the electoral structure. Any change to the electoral structure of the council following the review is expected to apply at the next local council elections.

How to make a submission

 On the VEC website at vec.vic.gov.au

 By email to

Horsham.ERAPSubmissions@vec.vic.gov.au

 By post to

Electoral representation advisory panel
c/o Victorian Electoral Commission
Level 11, 530 Collins Street
Melbourne VIC 3000

Submissions must include your:

- full name
- contact phone number or email address
- residential or postal address.

All submissions will be published on the VEC website. Your name and locality (suburb or town) will be published, but your full address and contact details will be removed. See the submission guide and VEC website at vec.vic.gov.au/privacy for privacy information.

Submission guide

Download the submission guide from the VEC website at vec.vic.gov.au for more information on the review process and making a submission.

One vote, one value

The 'one vote, one value' democratic principle is enshrined in the *Local Government Act 2020*. This means that every person's vote counts equally.

When a local council area is subdivided into wards, the number of voters each councillor represents in each ward must be within plus-or-minus 10% of the of the average number of voters per councillor for all the wards.

The map below includes the current number of voters in each ward and the ward's current deviation from the average. The panel will consider likely population and voter changes to ensure the structure remains equitable.

If you make a submission online, you can use a mapping tool to build your preferred electoral structure. The tool uses current voter numbers to tell you the deviations of the wards you make. This will help you propose a structure that meets the requirements of the Act.

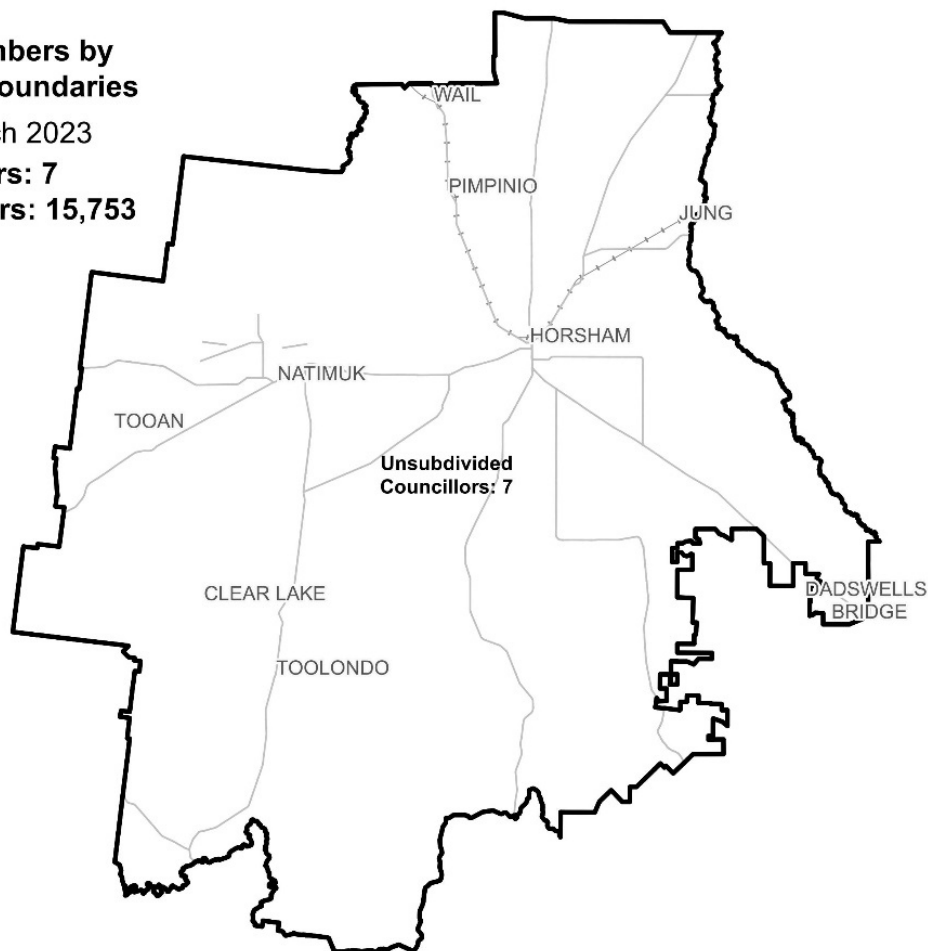
Current electoral structure

Voter Numbers by Current Boundaries

As at March 2023

Councillors: 7

Total Voters: 15,753



Ward	Councillors	Voters	Deviation
Unsubdivided	7	15,753	n/a

Statistics

Area (km²) 4,267

Voters

Voters per square km

3.7

Average voters per councillor

2,250

Population

Current population

20,429

Forecast population growth

0.6% p.a.

Further census statistics available at abs.gov.au



Voter numbers by locality (map)

Horsham Rural City Council

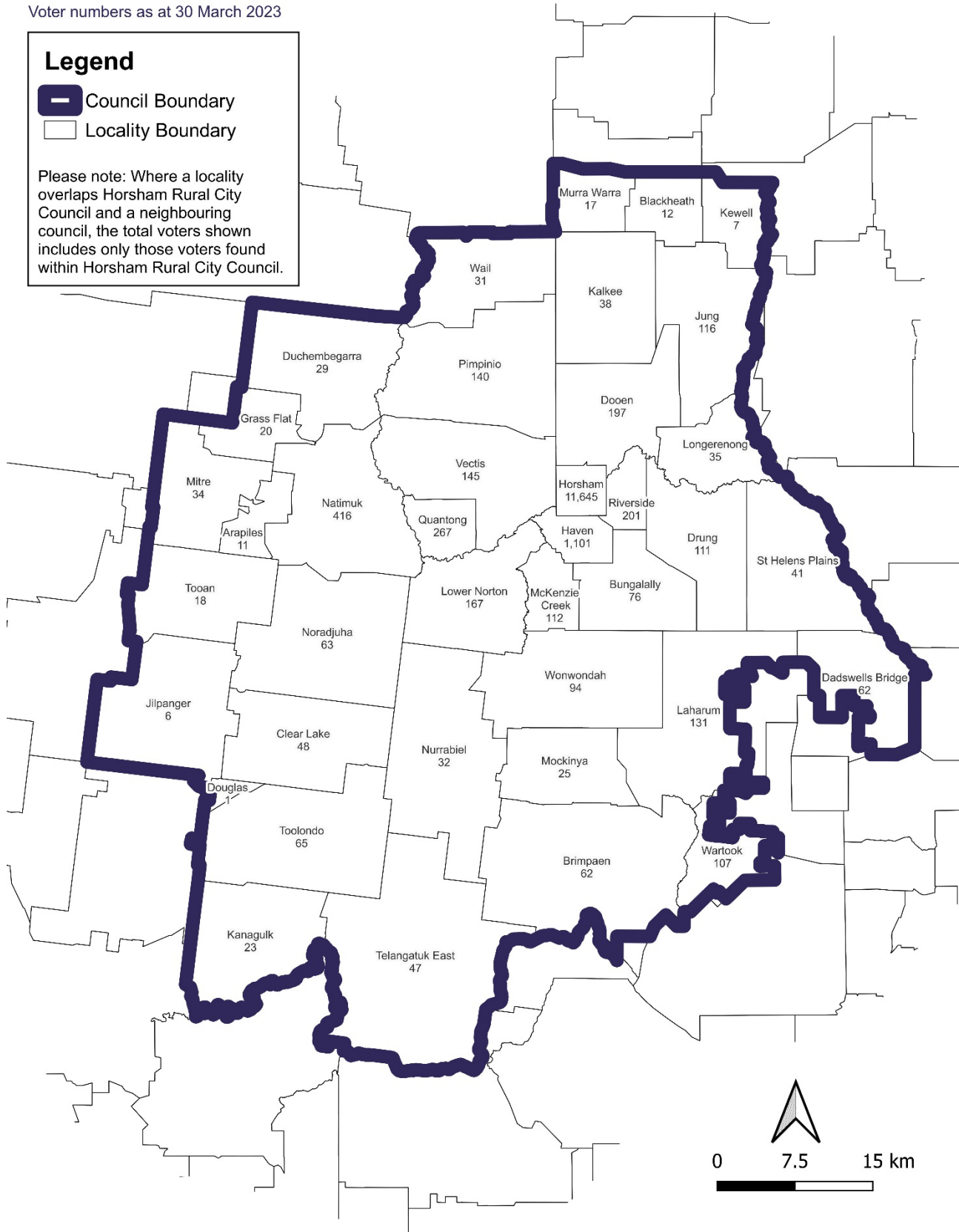
TOTAL VOTERS: 15,753

Voter numbers as at 30 March 2023

Legend

-  Council Boundary
-  Locality Boundary

Please note: Where a locality overlaps Horsham Rural City Council and a neighbouring council, the total voters shown includes only those voters found within Horsham Rural City Council.



Voter numbers by locality (table)

Horsham Rural City Council voter numbers at 30 March 2023

Locality	Voters
Arapiles	11
Blackheath	12
Brimpaen	62
Bungalally	76
Clear Lake	48
Dadswells Bridge	62
Dooen	197
Douglas	1
Drung	111
Duchembegarra	29
Grass Flat	20
Haven	1,101
Horsham	11,645
Jilpanger	6
Jung	116
Kalkee	38
Kanagulk	23
Kewell	7
Laharum	131
Longerenong	35
Lower Norton	167
McKenzie Creek	112

Locality	Voters
Mitre	34
Mockinya	25
Murra Warra	17
Natimuk	416
Noradjuha	63
Nurrabel	32
Pimpinio	140
Quantong	267
Riverside	201
St Helens Plains	41
Telangatuk East	47
Tooan	18
Toolondo	65
Vectis	145
Wail	31
Wartook	107
Wonwondah	94