

Name	Justin from Geelong
Suburb	St Albans Park
Age*	54
Gender*	male

## 1. What should the key roles and functions of council be?

Management and maintenance of local community infrastructure: local roads & footpaths, sporting facilities, parks & playgrounds, local planning issues, rubbish collection, community support ( health services, meals), community facilities (halls etc), collection of funds (rates), Libraries, administration of by-laws, pools & beaches,

## – How councils are elected

The City of Greater Geelong is far too large to have a maximum of 12 councilors. Under the current system this means only 11 ward councilors plus the mayor. This would make Cogg the least represented local government in Victoria. This situation will be exacerbated in the short term with population increases at Armstrongs Creek and developments in or around Lara. To overcome this low level of representation, one of two things needs to happen: either more councilors and wards are provided or Cogg is split into a smaller entity.

The current model of Crs & directly elected mayor has not been successful in my opinion. Its introduction is based on a fallacy. Prior to the general state election of 2010, the opposition of the day indicated they would allow the direct election of mayor for the Cogg, if they won the election. Whilst they won the election (by the smallest possible margin) then claimed a mandate for the directly elected mayor for Cogg, I believe they were in fact misrepresenting the will of the electorate.

In reality there are only four lower house electorates who would have any direct interests in the governance of the Cogg (Bellarine, Geelong, Lara, & South Barwon). Only one of these four seats (South Barwon) was won by the state government elected in 2010. Hence I challenge the validity of their mandate.

In any case, the first directly elected mayor only lasted approximately one year. The next directly elected mayor could hardly be considered a success. The problems with directly elected mayor are at least two fold – election of an individual over such a large electorate means only wealthy or party political candidates can win, and unless that candidate has previous local government experience it is likely that they will struggle to govern effectively.

So I believe Cogg should revert to a mayor elected by a majority vote of the elected councilors. This would overcome both the issues raised above.

I believe local government should have a representative for every 12-15,000 electors. Based on 2016 projected figures of 235,000, this would mean somewhere between 16 – 20 councilors for Cogg in its current form.

In my opinion the number of people in Cogg is too large. A local government of this size becomes less efficient with the sheer size of its bureaucracy. Also some of the outlying areas have more community connection with local communities rather than with Geelong.

Lara & areas north and west of the Geelong Ring road may be better served amalgamating with Golden Plains, Leopold and eastern parts of Cogg (north of Barwon River) could amalgamate with Queenscliffe, with Barwon Heads joining either Queenscliffe or Surf Coast Shire.

## – Council rates and charges

Base charges on land values

## Service delivery and financial decision-making

Council should budget more efficiently – plan to spend the money they have rather than introduce a new levy to cover the cost of some new plan.

Rates should be capped to CPI

## Councillor conduct, offences and enforcement

1. Do standards of councillor conduct need to be improved? If so, how can this be achieved?  
Yes. Set standards for Cr conduct. Reportable conduct referred to independent body eg. ombudsman
2. What powers do councils need to deal with instances of councillor misconduct?  
Independent body should have power to suspend Cr without pay and for a limited period for serious misconduct. Extreme or continued misconduct by Cr should be removed.