

Monday 30 May, 2022

Directions Paper Response

Corangamite Shire Council welcomes the opportunity to respond to the MAV Rules Review Directions paper and to again contribute to the review of the organisation's rules.

We appreciate the rule's importance as being at the core of a well-functioning MAV that can deliver all that it needs to for the sector. We also share the view of Glen Eira City Council that the MAV must deliver value for its members in the context of tangible outcomes through shifting State and Federal Government's policy and funding decisions. The MAV's rules review must continue to keep the attainment of these tangible results as its primary focus. We are broadly supportive of the Directions Paper and believe its recommendations are in line with this aim.

Corangamite is supportive of the decision to maintain the current presidential term of two years. Likewise, we support two-year terms for members of the board. We note that there has been strong support for term limits as a means to encourage renewal and new ideas in the leadership. We have no particular opposition but do feel it may be somewhat unnecessary as a president is unlikely to serve so many terms, and in the event that they did it would likely be as a result of strong performance in the position and would continue to have a democratic mandate from being elected. If there is to be a term limit in place for presidents and board members it should be four terms rather than three to ensure a good president's tenure is not unnecessarily cut short.

Aligning financial memberships with this two-year board term is desirable in order to give the organisation financial certainty. Further, we support the imposition of a minimum notice period for Councils who seek to cease their financial membership with the MAV. The current system of one year membership with no notice required to cease membership poses a financial risk to the MAV and the move to two year memberships with a six month notice period mitigates that risk.

A smaller board is something that we find desirable, but it is important that its composition and electoral structure is correct. We support option 2, maintaining an equal number of Board members from Rural and metropolitan members, with at large elections for the Metropolitan zone and maintaining regional groupings for rural Councils. This will allow the homogenous nature of the metropolitan councils to be accommodated while also meeting the need for the more diverse and varied rural regions to be represented in groupings of common interest.

However, in dropping the size of the board and by extension changing the number of regional groupings from five to six, it is important that great care is taken to ensure that the groupings are still fit for purpose. As is rightfully pointed out in the directions paper, a shrinking of the number regional groupings can undermine their representative function as each grouping gets larger and less able to produce a constituency of similar Councils.

Corangamite warmly welcomes the directions paper recommendation of removing the plural voting system currently used. We reiterate our position that the MAV is an organisation that represents its membership of 79 Councils, and that each of those members is entitled to an equal vote.

We support a simplified arrangement for the period between Council elections and the MAV elections through the abolishment of the Interim Board concept and allowing the board to continue with business as usual. A four-month gap between a Council election and a MAV election represents one sixth of a board's two year term and spending this time in a borderline caretaker arrangement is undesirable. In the event that a quorum could not be reached on account of board members ceasing to be Councillors the MAV president, rather than the CEO, should be empowered to appoint temporary board members from the regions who have lost representatives. A president has a democratic mandate and is directly accountable to the MAV membership, this makes them a more desirable person to be appointing temporary board members than the CEO. It would be expected that the president does this in a consultative way, working with the MAV reps of that region to make their decision on who to appoint.

Sincerely



Ruth Gstrein
Mayor
Corangamite Shire Council