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Gawler to investigate boundary reform to future-proof population expansion

Following the presentation of the Boundary Change Proposal report at a Special Council meeting held on 10 September 2019, Council voted to progress investigations into boundary reform. The report looks at the way alterations to local government borders could affect planning based on the projected tripling of population in the next 20 years.

The greater Gawler area is estimated increase in population from its current more than 23,500 to up to 60,000 by 2040.

Mayor Karen Redman said the time is right for Council to start the conversation around boundary reform for the Town of Gawler given the changes to legislation and the huge growth expected in population in the region over the coming years.

"We are one of the fastest growing local government areas in South Australia and the major service centre for the lower mid-north. We want to make sure we're prepared for the pressures that accompany rapid population growth, including increased demand on infrastructure and services," she said.

"A boundary realignment will help create a strong collective community and ensure a culturally, economically and environmentally sustainable future.

"For a number of areas outside our local government boundary, we are the closest regional town, so residents are already utilising our services and facilities. In effect, we're already one community. With a boundary realignment we'll be able to formalise our relationship.

"We know that many people with library and aquatic centre memberships live outside the council area, so it really does make sense to consider surrounding areas such as Hewett, Concordia, Kalbeeba and Gawler Belt as we plan for one community that thrives into the future".

"Sensible minor adjustments to areas split across two council areas for example Evanston Park, Reid and Hillier, will allow all voices to be heard in decisions being made about the facilities and services already being enjoyed, so it just makes sense.

"At the moment we're looking at the viability of the proposal and there's still a lot of work to be done, including consulting with our community," said Mayor Redman.

A boundary readjustment would potentially remove current administrative inefficiencies with planning and development, waste collection services and infrastructure handled by one local council encouraging business and economic growth in the region.

The areas located immediately adjacent Gawler form an intrinsic extension of the town where these residents have a natural reliance on Gawler for services and their connection to community.

"We believe the time is right for Council to start the conversation around boundary reform for Gawler both in an historic sense and in terms of urban growth for the region and we're excited to get out and talk to residents, businesses and our neighbouring Councils to hear their thoughts," said Mayor Redman.

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