

Representation Review 2024

Strategy and Policy

Local Government Act 2002

The purpose of this Act is to provide for democratic and effective local government that recognises the diversity of New Zealand communities. (section 3)



Overview

- Legal context
- Māori Wards question
- Engagement with Mana Whenua
- Voting system question
- Community Boards question
- Process options
 - In-house
 - Citizen panel
 - Independent panel
- Comms and Engagement Plan
- Timeline
- Questions/Next steps



Legal Context

- Local Electoral Act 2001 requires local authorities to undertake a representation review at least every 6 years
- Aims to achieve fair and effective representation for individuals and communities
- Council must determine:
 1. Total number of councillors
 2. Whether councillors are elected from: wards, at-large, or a mix
 3. Boundaries of wards and names
 4. Boundaries of any Māori wards, names, and number
 5. Community boards: e.g number; names; boundaries; number of members



Māori wards question

- Local Electoral Act 2001 – Māori wards may be established
- Opportunity to decide if Māori ward(s) at the 2025 elections
- With current 12 councillors, HCC could have 1 Māori ward councillor
- Any decision must consider the views of Mana Whenua



Engagement with Mana Whenua

Dual-engagement process:

- Governance engagement – via quarterly hui
- Operational engagement – via Kāhui Mana Whenua



Voting system question

- Single Transferable Vote or First Past the Post?
- 2022 poll in favour of retaining FPP voting system
- No further decision for 2 election cycles



Community boards question

- Review must consider community boards in the City
- If so: how many boards, boundaries and number of members



Past process

- In the past Council has run internal process
- Local Government Commission critical of aspects of 2018 process

The need for [a] fresh approach can be seen in the repeated efforts through successive representation reviews to address perceived inequities of representation at the community level between the three areas added and the 'old Lower Hutt'. LGC Determination (2018)



Process Options

1. Internal, Council-run process
2. Form of participatory democracy
3. Independent review panel



Option 1. Internal process

- Deliver review in-house

Pros:

- Lowest cost option
- Meet statutory deadlines
- Compliant process

Cons:

- No in-house expertise
- Limited staff resources
- Not win public confidence



Participatory democracy

- Uses diverse citizens assembly
- Council secretariat support

Pros:

- In line with Future for Local Government Panel recs
- Public confidence that council listening
- Diverse views

Cons:

- Untested model
- Costly on staff resources
- Risk: limited expertise in group
- Risk: 'capture' by particular views



Independent panel

- Panel appointed by Council
- Council secretariat support

Pros:

- Well-tested model
- Expertise and capability
- Public confidence in process
- Compliant process
- Lowest impact on staff resources

Cons:

- Likely more costly option



Communications and engagement

- Aim – to connect with diverse cross-section of residents
- Two-stage plan:
 - 2023 early engagement – prior to Council adopting a recommendation
 - 2024 engagement – on final proposal



Timeline for completing the review

Action	Tentative scheduling
Council briefing on the representation review Council decision	24 May 2023 30 May 2023
PFS paper: Council decision	5 July 2023 25 July 2023
Initial planning, considers communities of interest and undertakes preliminary engagement	August to November 2023
PFS report: feedback on engagement and update on the initial proposal Council feedback	21 November 2023 12 December 2023
Earliest possible date for agreeing the initial proposal Council briefing	1 March 2024 June 2024
PFS paper: approve the initial proposal Council decision	July 2024
Public notice of the initial proposal Submissions on the initial proposal	July 2024 August 2024
PFS paper: Decision on final proposal Council decision	September 2024

Questions?

Next steps

