



# Briefing: Representation Review

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**19 June 2024 – 10:00am**

## Attendees

**Elected Members:** Mayor Barry, Cr Brown, Cr Dyer, Cr Edwards, Deputy Mayor Lewis, Cr Mitchell, Cr Parkin, Cr Shaw, Cr Stallinger and Cr Tupou.

**Staff:** Jo Miller, Chief Executive; A Blackshaw, Director Neighbourhoods and Communities; J Griffiths, Director Strategy and Engagement, R Hardie, Head of Strategy and Policy; O Miller, Policy Advisor and J Kilty, Democracy Advisor

## Apologies

Cr Morgan and Cr Briggs.

## Not in attendance

Cr Barratt

## Presenters

Paul Swain, Chair of the Independent Review Panel (the panel)

## Key Objectives of the Briefing

The purpose of the briefing is for elected members to receive information regarding the recommendations of the panel for the upcoming Representation Review.

# Introduction

Paul Swain described the processes the panel went through to reach their recommendations. He stated that the documents would be released tomorrow. He strongly recommended that Council adopt the changes suggested.

## Presentation by Paul Swain

**Slide 1 (Header) – Report and Recommendations of the Independent Representation Review Panel on Hutt City Council’s Initial Representation Proposal**

**Slide 2 – Background**

**Slide 3 – Representation Reviews – Local Electoral Act**

**Slide 4 – Communities of Interest**

Paul Swain stated that the panel engaged with various communities of interest as outlined in the report.

**Slide 5 – Māori Wards**

**Slide 6 – Effective Representation – Wards**

**Slide 7 – Effective Representation – wards recommended**

**Slides 8-11 – Recommended five ward option**

**Slide 12 – Fair Representation for Individuals – Number of Councillors: +/- 10 Rule**

He stated that the panel recommended two Councillors for the enlarged Northern and Central Wards. Western, Harbour, and Wainuiomata Wards would retain one Councillor each.

The panel recommended seven wards, five at-large, and one Māori Ward Councillors making 13.

### **Slide 13 – Community Boards**

He noted that the panel determined there should be no Community Boards.

### **Slide 14 – Building a Better Bridge to the Community**

### **Slide 15 – Summary of Recommendations**

### **Slide 16 – Recommended next steps**

He noted the panel's recommendation that Council adopt the panel's recommendations as its Initial Proposal for the Representation Review process.

## **Questions and discussion points**

In response to questions from members, Paul Swain addressed the following points:

- the Māori population emerged from the overall figures because they would have a Māori ward. The figures came from Statistics NZ and census data.
- Manor Park was being left within the Western Ward because it was determined it would best fit in the Western Ward.
- the report's +/- 10% rule application was based on statistics from Statistics NZ. The argument for Wainuiomata having quite a high population per Councillor in the recommended representation changes was that the geography had made Wainuiomata an obvious community of interest on its own and could not be split or added to as other wards could be.
- if you vote in a Māori Ward, you will vote for a Māori Ward Councillor and an at-large Councillor. The panel did not know if it would be an incentive to go off the general ward roll to vote for the Māori Ward.
- there were far too many people in the Northern Ward to be represented by just one Councillor, especially with the proposed extension. He mentioned Wellington City Council, where some wards had multiple councillors while others had only one. He highlighted that the Northern Ward was the least engaged ward in the city and, therefore, could benefit from having an additional councillor."

- it was not particularly common for Councillors to hold portfolios. Still, the panel had felt that several priority groups had no idea what Council did or who their point of contact was. He stated that there were a range of disengaged communities and that if Councillors had portfolios and acted as a contact for specific communities, it might provide better engagement.
- the portfolio holder would be working with Council officers.
- the population of Wainuiomata in the report was based on the census and the latest information from Statistics NZ. He noted that all the calculations were based on current population estimates.
- the panel was unanimous in their findings that the split between ward Councillors and the at-large Councillors was a great mix and balance. He stated that the approach of a mixed arrangement should be retained in future.
- there was no rule that a ward Councillor must live in the ward they represent.
- as far as he understood, the +/- 10% rule did not apply to the Māori Wards.
- Wellington City Council was an example of a Council where some people get to vote for more Councillors than others, but this is because the Councillors in the larger wards represent larger population groupings.
- the panel did not consider the issue of remuneration because it was not part of their Terms of Reference. He understood there would be a possible remuneration issue because there would be an additional Councillor.
- everyone they spoke to thought Lower Hutt was a great place to live and that people were keen to engage with Council.

Mayor Barry acknowledged that this process could be challenging for elected members. He understood the uneasiness that Community Board members might feel as significant changes were proposed.

## Next steps

Council will consider the Panel's final report on 27 June 2024, and Council will agree to an initial representation proposal for public consultation.

# Briefing materials

**Attachment 1** – Presentation: Report and Recommendations of the Independent Representation Review Panel on Hutt City Council’s Initial Representation Proposal

**The briefing closed at 11:06am.**