



Report and Recommendations
of the
Independent Representation Review Panel
on
Hutt City Council's Initial Representation Proposal

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Chair, Independent Panel
June 2024



Background

- Independent Panel appointed in July 2023
- Approx 30 face to face meetings (mainly priority groups)
- Over 150 contacts with groups and organisations
- Online survey (Public Voice); social media, postcards etc

Overall finding:

- Low levels of understanding of HCC functions, representation arrangements and access points
- Low levels of engagement: important voices not heard

Representation Reviews: Local Electoral Act

- Principle: achieving **“fair and effective representation for individuals and communities”**
- Local Government Commission recommends a three-step approach to reviews:
 - identify communities of interest
 - determine effective representation for those communities (Councillor numbers, how elected, community boards etc)
 - determine fair representation for individuals (+/-10% rule)

Communities of Interest

- Detailed analysis of Hutt City's communities of interest
- Considered a range of representation options (examples)
- HCC current system: Mixed wards and at-large
- Public supports mixed system; 12 Councillors “about right”
- Panel's conclusion:
 - Local (groups of) Communities of Interest = Wards
 - City-wide Communities of Interest = At-large
- **Recommendation:** Mixed system should be retained

Māori Ward/s

- Met with Mana Whenua and Mātāwaka
- Considered question of one or more Māori wards
- **Recommendation** (supported by Mana whenua):
 - 1 Māori ward
 - 1 Māori ward councillor
 - HCC boundaries
 - Name: Mana Kairangi ki Tai
- Panel suggests Council works with Mana Whenua to develop dual English/Māori general ward names in its final proposal

Effective Representation: Wards

Current arrangements

- 6 wards
- Issues include:
 - Waiwhetu divided
 - Small section of Woburn divided
 - Alicetown, Melling in Western Ward
 - Boundary between Avalon and Taita

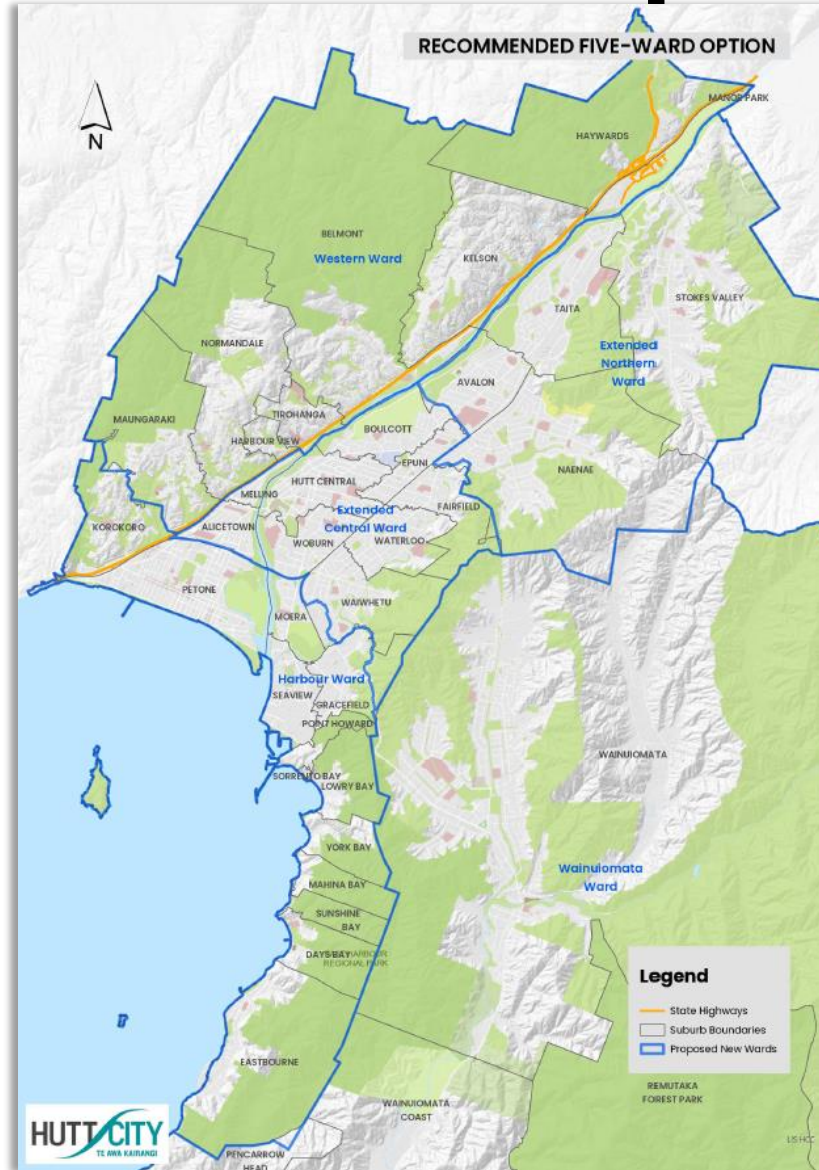




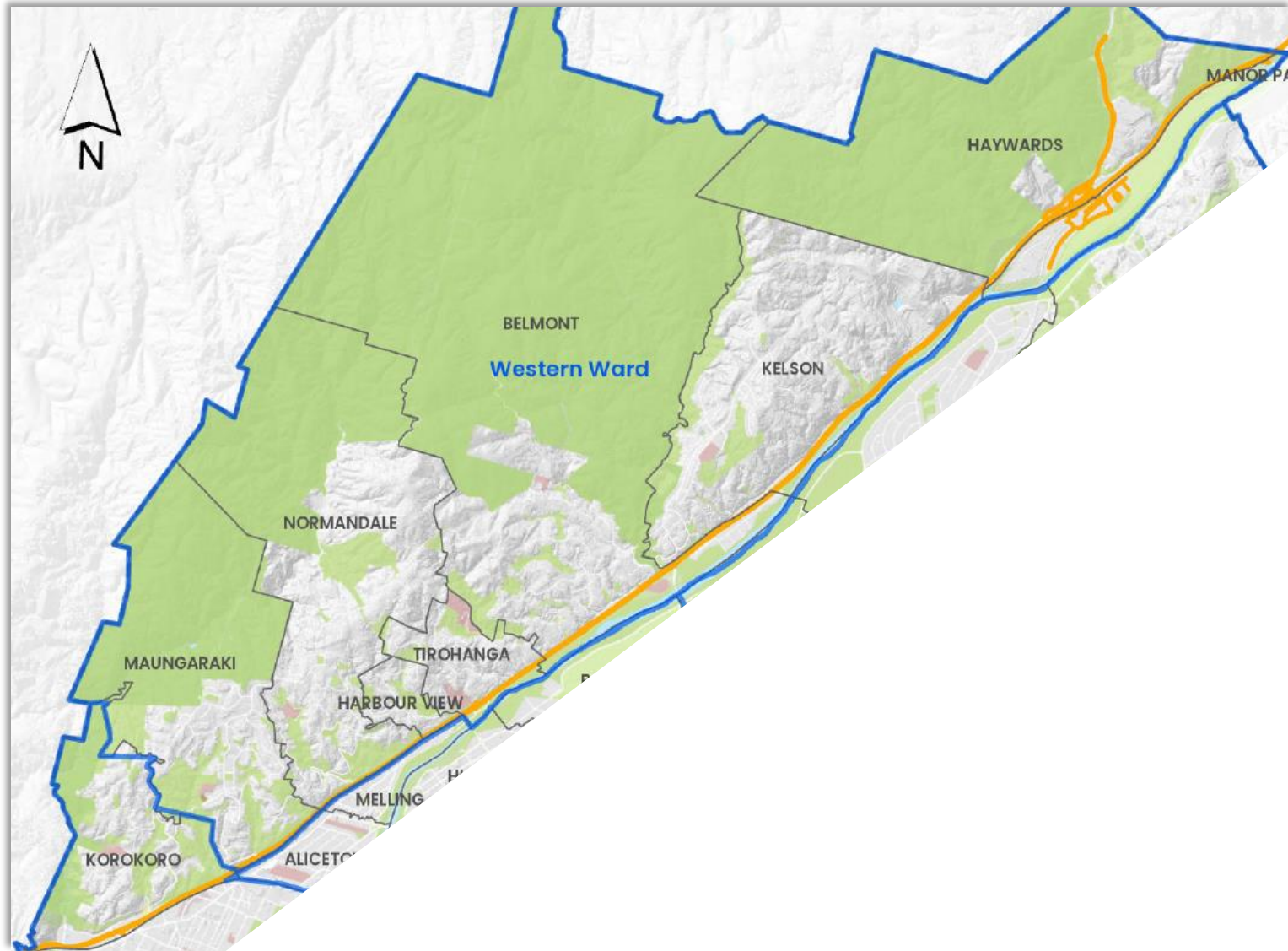
Effective Representation: Wards Recommended

- Considered 6 options (from status quo to 4 ward option)
- **Recommended 5 Ward option**
- Extended Northern ward, including all Avalon and Naenae
- Extended Central ward, including all Waiwhetu, Woburn, Alicetown, Melling, Fairfield, Waterloo
- Retain Wainuiomata, Harbour (reduced) Western (reduced) wards
- Disestablish Eastern ward

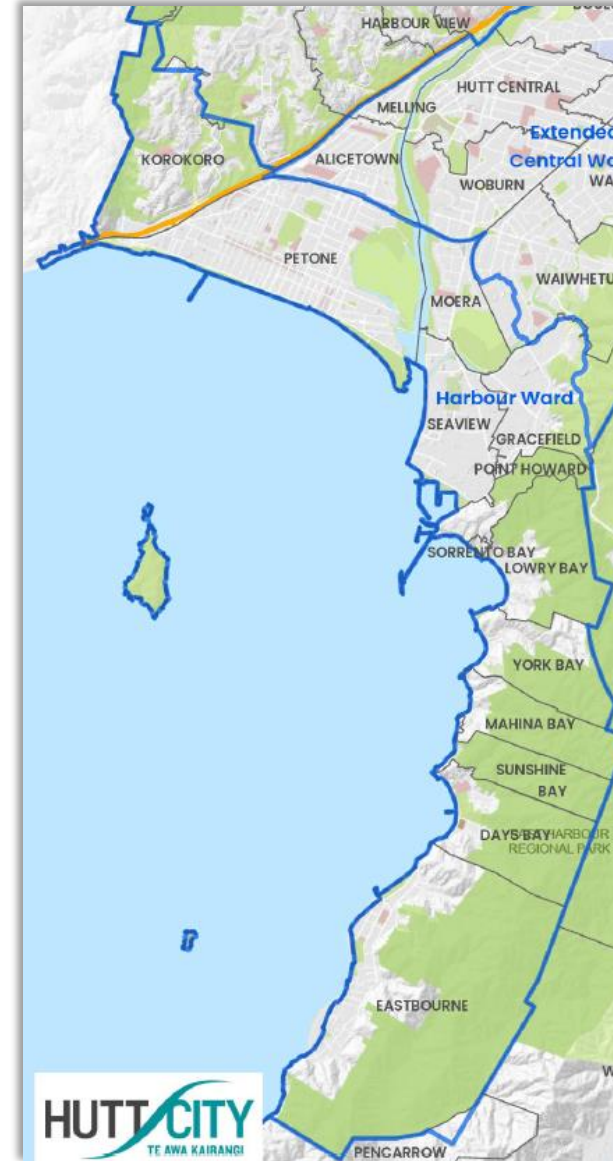
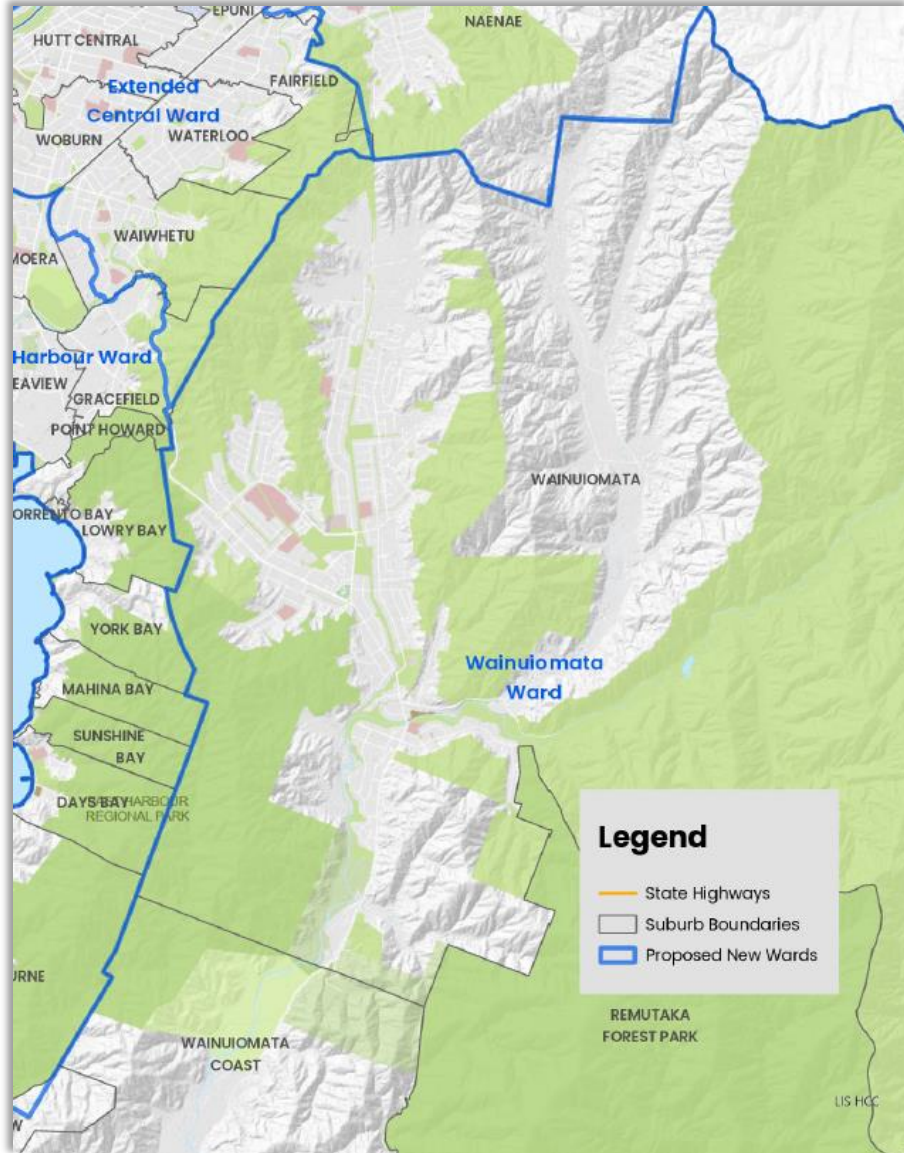
Recommended 5 ward option



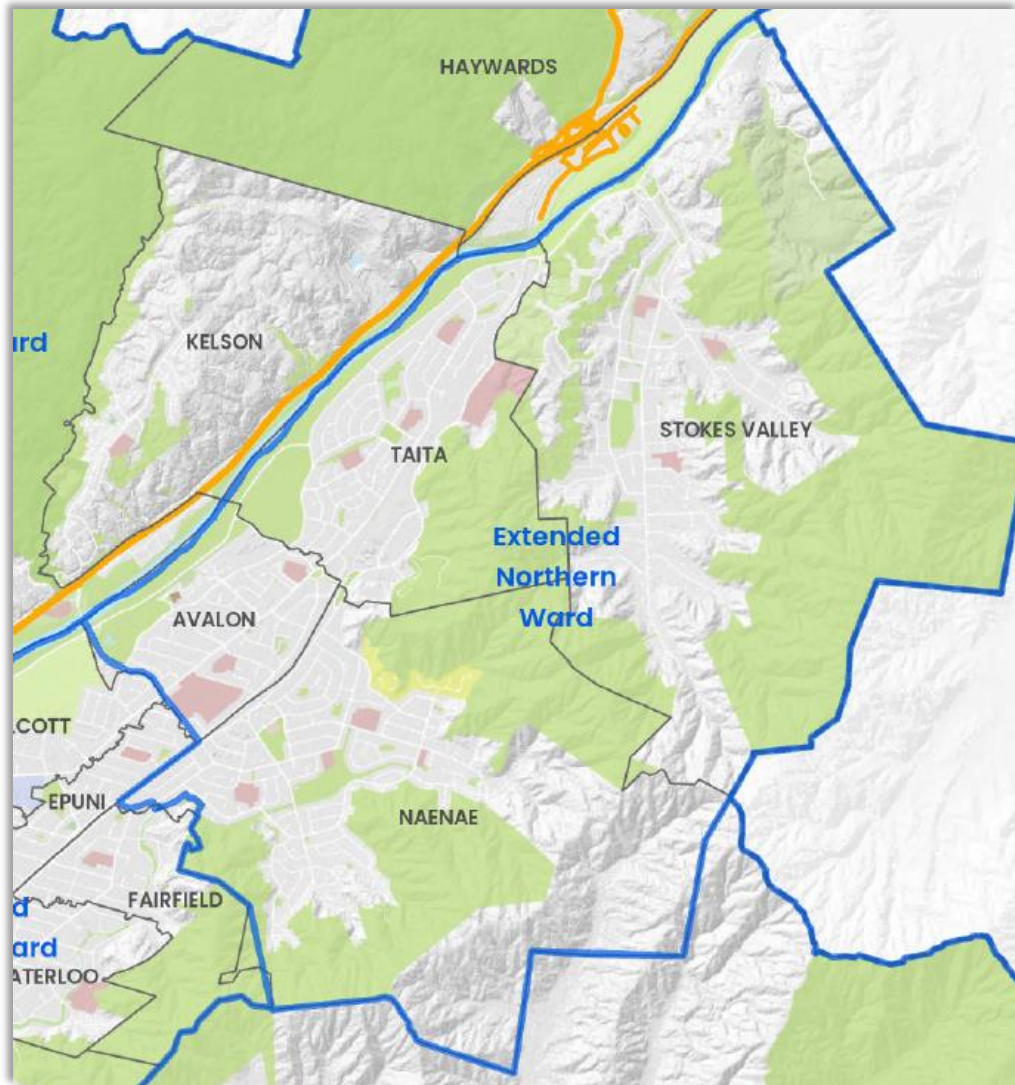
Recommended 5 ward option



Recommended 5 ward option



Recommended 5 ward option



Fair Representation for individuals

Number of Councillors: +/- 10% rule

Current

Ward	General electoral population	Crs	Population per councillor	Difference from average	% difference from average
Northern	14,750	1	14,750	-2,133	-12.63%
Central	17,500	1	17,500	+617	+3.65%
Eastern	16,700	1	16,700	-183	-1.08%
Western	16,750	1	16,750	-133	-0.79%
Harbour	19,000	1	19,000	+2,117	+12.54%
Wainuiomata	16,600	1	16,600	-283	-1.68%
TOTAL	101,300	6	16,883		

Recommended

Ward	General electoral population	Crs	Population per councillor	Difference from average	% difference from average
Northern	27,470	2	13,735	-736	-5.09%
Central	27,520	2	13,760	-711	-4.91%
Western	13,960	1	13,960	-511	-3.53%
Harbour	15,700	1	15,700	+1,229	+8.49%
Wainuiomata	16,600	1	16,600	+2,129	+14.71%
TOTAL	101,300	7	14,471		

Recommended total number of Councillors: 7 ward, 5 at-large, 1 Māori ward = 13

Community Boards:

- Options: Retain existing boards; all/some wards; no community boards
- Landscape has changed since 1989:
 - Political imperative for establishing community boards no longer exists today
 - Hutt City more cosmopolitan, greater mobility within/between communities
- Council/community board relationship not as effective as it could be:
 - **Functions** (e.g. engagement) not used creatively by Council
 - **Delegations** are very low-level: street names, tree planting/removal, leases/licences etc
 - Relationship unlikely to change
- Confusion: Councillors (consult/decide); Community Boards (engage/advocate)
- Inequitable: 2 in Harbour ward, 1 in Wainuiomata ward, none in 4 wards;
- Alternatives trialled in other wards: committees, panels, funding panels; not progressed
- Structures between community/Council not ideal; tailored approach needed
- **Recommendation:** No community boards in Hutt City



Building a Better Bridge to the Community

- Low levels of understanding/engagement in community
- Need a more tailored, focused, proactive approach, particularly for those groups not engaged at present:
- Recommendations:
 - Consider the engagement principles suggested by Panel
 - Identify “community agents”
 - Introduce portfolio responsibilities for Councillors
 - Better use of community hubs: Councillor bases, promoting Council work
 - Establish a work programme with KPIs
 - Disabled people
 - Funding



Summary of Recommendations

- Mayor and 13 Councillors
- Mixed system of representation
- 7 ward Councillors, 5 at-large, 1 Māori ward councillor
- 5 general wards: Northern, Central, Western, Harbour, Wainuiomata
- 1 Māori ward: Mana Kairangi ki Tai
- No community boards



Recommended next steps

The Panel recommends that Council:

- Adopts Panel's recommendations as its Initial Proposal
 - Notifies the Initial Proposal for public consultation
 - Considers the feedback on the Initial Proposal; and
 - Adopts the Final Proposal for 2025 elections
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- Considers the “Building a better bridge to the community” approach (Section 10 of the report)