



Local Government Commission

Mana Kāwanatanga ā Rohe

Guidelines for local authorities undertaking representation reviews

9th Edition
July 2023

Record of amendments

Version	Date	Summary of amendments
V1.0	21 July 2023	Original document approved by Commission
V1.1	25 August 2023	Incorporating amendments made by the Local Government Electoral Legislation Act 2023
V1.2	2 October 2023	Incorporating: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A definition of “population transfer limit” for purposes of s.19JAA, LEA made by the Local Electoral Amendment Regulations 2023. • A new definition of “allotment” made the Natural and Built Environment Act 2023.
V1.3	22 February 2024	Removing references to templates

ISBN 978-0-473-68279-8

© Crown Copyright



This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 New Zealand licence. You are free to copy, distribute and adapt the work as long as you attribute the work to the Local Government Commission and abide by the other licence terms. To view a copy of this licence, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/nz/>. Please note that no government emblem, logo or Coat of Arms may be used in any way which infringes any provision of the *Flags, Emblems, and Names Protection Act 1981*. Attribution to the Local Government Commission needs to be in written form and not by reproduction of any emblem, logo or Coat of Arms.

Guidelines for Local Authorities Undertaking Representation Reviews

Local Government Commission
Mana Kāwanatanga ā Rohe
Wellington

July 2023 (9th edition)

ISBN 978-0-473-68279-8

Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
What are representation reviews?	1
Related processes	2
These guidelines.....	2
The Commission’s role	3
Are the guidelines legally binding?	3
Supplementary information.....	3
Feedback and review	4
Contact details.....	4
Chapter 2: Recommended practice processes.....	5
Preliminary steps.....	5
Representation review steps	7
Additional considerations	10
Chapter 3: Choosing an electoral system	15
Introduction	15
Key statutory provisions for changing electoral systems	15
General.....	16
Further information	17
Chapter 4: Māori wards and constituencies.....	18
Introduction	18
Deciding whether to establish Māori wards/constituencies	19
Matters to be determined by representation review.....	19
Populations.....	20
Processes.....	20
General.....	23
Chapter 5: Fair and effective representation	24
Key considerations	24
Questions and answers relating to effective and fair representation.....	30
Chapter 6: Reviewing communities and community boards.....	32
Introduction	32
Key statutory provisions.....	32
Appointed members	34
Effect of administrative changes.....	34
General.....	35
Chapter 7: Reviewing local boards	36
Introduction	36
Key statutory provisions.....	36
Local board area boundaries.....	38

General.....	38
Chapter 8: Technical requirements.....	39
Names of electoral areas	39
Meshblocks.....	40
Use of population data.....	42
Chapter 9: Informing relevant organisations	44
Chapter 10: Appeals, objections, and referrals	46
Introduction	46
The role of the Commission	46
Information to be provided to the Commission	47
Commission consideration.....	48
Commission decisions	48
Chapter 11: Implementation	49
What happens if a local authority’s proposal is not considered by the Commission?.....	49
What happens after the Commission makes a determination?	49
Preparation and certification of plans	50
When do determinations take effect?	50
Chapter 12: Minor boundary alterations	51
Introduction	51
Key statutory provisions.....	51
Commission consideration.....	52
Detailed matters for local authorities	52
Chapter 13: Auckland Council.....	53
Appendix A: Timelines diagram.....	55
Appendix B: Statutory Provisions	56
Appendix C: Contacts.....	61
Appendix D: Sample public notice – initial proposal	63
Appendix E: Sample public notice – final proposal	67
Appendix F: Sample public notice – no submissions.....	72
Appendix G: Sample public notice – no appeals or objections.....	75
Appendix H: Basis of election	78
Appendix I: Criteria for local government reorganisation.....	81
Appendix J: Appeals and objections hearing processes	83
Appendix K: Section 575, Natural and Built Environment Act 2023	85

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 These are the ninth representation review guidelines issued by the Local Government Commission in accordance with *section 19ZI, Local Electoral Act 2001*. They replace the guidelines issued in March 2021.

1.2 *Section 19ZI, Local Electoral Act 2001* states:

The Commission must issue guidelines identifying factors and considerations for territorial authorities or regional councils to take into account in making their determinations under any of the provisions of sections 19H to 19JB and Schedule 1A.

1.3 The next local authority elections will be held in October 2025. These guidelines are provided to assist local authorities carrying out their representation reviews for these elections.

1.4 The guidelines also provide guidance on the processes in *sections 19JA and 19JB, Local Electoral Act 2001* that permit local authorities to make minor changes to the boundaries of electoral areas when not undertaking representation reviews.

What are representation reviews?

1.5 Representation reviews are reviews of the representation arrangements for a local authority (*Local Electoral Act 2001*).

1.6 Local authorities' representation reviews determine detailed arrangements for: the number of electoral areas (if any), and their boundaries, names, and number of members.

1.7 For territorial authorities, the representation review also includes deciding the:

- the basis of election (at large, wards, or a mix of both), and
- establishment of community boards.

1.8 Where a unitary authority has local boards the review:

- must consider the membership arrangements for each local board, and
- may make minor alterations to the boundaries of local board areas.

1.9 Local authorities are required to carry out a representation review at least every six years. They may undertake a review after three years if they choose.

Related processes

- 1.10 In addition to the above representation arrangements, local authorities and communities have the opportunity to consider the:
- electoral system to be used for their elections (first past the post (FPP) or single transferable vote (STV)), and
 - establishment of Māori wards/constituencies.
- 1.11 These decisions are not formally part of the representation review process, and are matters for local discretion with no right of appeal to the Commission. However, these options are important in helping to identify appropriate representation arrangements for a district/region and need to be resolved before the detailed ward/constituency arrangements are determined.

These guidelines

- 1.12 These guidelines cover:
- the representation review processes (generally covered in the order they are carried out)
 - electoral system and Māori wards/constituencies (covered early in the guidelines, as they must be carried out before the representation review)
 - related processes – minor boundary alterations and Auckland Council requirements.
- 1.13 Terms used in these guidelines have the following interpretations:
- **election** – the triennial local authority elections
 - **election year** – the calendar year in which a triennial local authority election takes place
 - **electoral area** – a collective term for part of a district or region over which elections are held, i.e. ward, constituency, community, local board area, or community or local board subdivision
 - **district** – the geographic area of a territorial authority (applies whether it is a city or district council)
 - **section** (abbreviation 's') – legislative sections referred to in these guidelines refer to the *Local Electoral Act 2001*, unless stated otherwise.
- 1.14 See [Appendix A: Timelines diagram](#) on page 55 for an overview of the time requirements leading up to a round of local government elections.
- 1.15 See [Appendix B: Statutory provisions](#) on page 56 for an overview of legislative provisions relevant to undertaking representation reviews.

The Commission's role

- 1.16 The Commission is not involved in developing initial or final local authority representation proposals, other than providing procedural or technical advice, or answering queries regarding representation reviews or other matters raised in these guidelines.
- 1.17 The local authority must refer its proposal to the Commission if the final proposal:
- has appeals and/or objections made against the final proposal, or
 - does not comply with the requirements for achieving fair representation in *s19V(2)*.
- 1.18 In these situations the Commission must determine the representation arrangements for the local authority, including any constituent community boards, for the upcoming local authority election (*s19R*).
- 1.19 However, if the only reason for referral to the Commission is non-compliance with *s19V(2)*, the Commission's role is solely to determine the non-complying arrangements.
- 1.20 The Commission's process for determining representation arrangements in these situations is outlined in [Chapter 10: Appeals, objections, and referrals](#) on page 46.
- 1.21 The Commission also has a role in determining whether to uphold minor boundary adjustments made under *ss19JA and 19JB*. See [Chapter 12 Minor boundary alterations](#) on page 51.
- 1.22 Commission determinations may be:
- appealed only on a point of law
 - subject to judicial review regarding matters of process.

Are the guidelines legally binding?

- 1.23 The statutory requirements described in these guidelines are binding on both local authorities and the Commission itself in the exercise of its powers on objections, appeals and referrals. The other content in these guidelines describes recommended practice for the review process.

Supplementary information

- 1.24 The Commission:
- will consider amending these guidelines or issuing supplementary guidelines if there is an identified need for further information
 - may provide further technical information relating to representation reviews or representation issues from time to time.

Feedback and review

- 1.25 These guidelines are reviewed after each round of local authority elections. Feedback from local authorities on the guidelines and on Commission procedures is welcomed and will be considered. Send feedback to the Local Government Commission (contact details below).

Contact details

The contact details for the Local Government Commission are:

Telephone: (04) 460 2228

Email: info@lgc.govt.nz

Postal address: PO Box 5362
Wellington 6140

All contact details in these guidelines are also listed in [Appendix C: Contacts](#) on page 61.

Chapter 2: Recommended practice processes

- 2.1 The *Local Electoral Act 2001* sets out the steps for a representation review and the criteria to be taken into account. Beyond that each local authority may determine its own process for undertaking its review provided the statutory requirements are met.
- 2.2 The following recommended process steps are designed to assist local authorities to achieve a robust outcome that accords with the statutory requirements and other relevant considerations.
- 2.3 Prior to commencing a representation review, local authorities may choose:
- to change the electoral system to be used for local elections. Local authorities intending to change electoral systems for the 2025 local election must decide to do so by 12 September 2023. See chapter 3 for more information.
 - to establish one or more Māori ward(s). Local authorities intending to establish Māori ward(s) for the 2025 local election must decide to do so by 23 November 2023. See chapter 4 for more information.
- 2.4 The local authorities that must carry out a representation review before the 2025 elections are those:
- that didn't carry out a review leading up to the 2022 elections (*s19H(2) and s19I(2)*); or
 - That are establishing Māori wards/constituencies for the first time for the 2025 local authority elections (*cl 1(1), Schedule 1A*). See [Chapter 4: Māori wards and constituencies](#) on page 18 for more information.
- 2.5 Local authorities that carried out a representation review leading up to the 2022 local elections are not required to undertake a review before the 2025 local elections (unless they are establishing Māori wards/constituencies for the first time). Such a local authority may, however, choose to carry out a review if it wishes to.

Preliminary steps

Step 1: Consider matters relating to electoral systems and Māori representation, and assess whether a review is required

- 2.6 Local authorities who are required to undertake a review, or are considering whether to undertake a review more than once within a six-year period, may wish to consider whether there is a need to address any of the following matters:
- Is the current electoral system appropriate for the local authority? ([chapter 3](#))

- Is specific Māori representation appropriate for the local authority? ([chapter 4](#))
- Were there any matters arising from the previous representation review that suggest a further review in three years' time would be desirable?
- Does the present number of councillors provide effective representation for communities of interest? ([chapter 5](#))
- Have there been significant changes in population in some areas which impact on fair representation, that is, approximate equality between councillors in the numbers represented? ([chapter 5](#))
- For territorial authorities only:
 - Is the current basis of election (that is, a ward system, an at-large system or a mixed system) appropriate for the local authority? ([chapter 5](#))
 - Are current community boards (if any) appropriate? If not, is there a need for the establishment of new boards, or the de-establishment or merger of current boards? ([chapter 6](#))
- Are there any other reasons (current or future considerations) that suggest a review needs to be undertaken at this time?

2.7 In addition, local authorities have the option of making minor boundary alterations after three years rather than undertaking a full review (see [Chapter 12: Minor boundary alterations](#) on page 56).

Step 2: Undertake preliminary consultation

2.8 Local authorities undertaking representation reviews are strongly encouraged to carry out preliminary consultation. Preliminary consultation may assist councils to identify communities of interest, and to seek views on particular representation options. This can assist local authorities to identify issues relevant to the review process and enable them to consider a wider range of representation options when developing their formal proposal.

2.9 Examples of preliminary consultation before beginning the formal statutory representation review process include community surveys, discussion documents, newspaper advertising, focus groups, email groups of interested citizens, and public workshops and meetings. Targeted consultation may also be appropriate, including with iwi and hapū.¹

¹ Specific consultation with iwi and hapū may be required if determining the number, area, names and boundaries of Māori wards/constituencies.

- 2.10 Preliminary consultation is not a substitute for the formal statutory steps set out below. For example, the results of a referendum may indicate overall public opinion but should not be used as the only justification of a particular ward/constituency configuration. The review must seek to achieve the statutory principles of fair and effective representation for all individuals and communities of interest of the district/region, and not be limited to reflecting majority community views on particular aspects of arrangements.
- 2.11 Local authorities should consider using independent panels to undertake preliminary consultation and then make recommendations on options for representation arrangements. This avoids potential perceptions of parochialism and self-interest arising from elected members' involvement at least in the early stages of the review process.
- 2.12 When convening an independent panel:
- select people who have relevant skills, and a good knowledge of the district/region
 - provide clear terms of reference
 - fully brief the panel on its task, ensuring it has a good understanding of the statutory requirements for reviews.
- 2.13 Local authorities should also liaise with other local authorities in the region regarding the timing of representation reviews, including the possibility of carrying out joint consultation activities.

Representation review steps

- 2.14 While the steps below are set out in a suggested order, by its nature a representation review can be an iterative process. Councils may need to revisit steps 4 and 5 several times during the process to be able to identify potential representation arrangements and consider the effectiveness of representation that each provides for communities of interest.

Step 3: Identify communities of interest

- 2.15 Identify the communities of interest of the district/region considering the factors set out in [Chapter 5: Fair and effective representation](#) on page 24 and other relevant information available to the local authority.

Step 4: Determine effective representation for communities of interest

- 2.16 Territorial authorities need to consider whether effective representation for identified communities of interest is best achieved by way of elections held at large, wards, or a mix of both. Considerations will include:
- the accessibility, size, and configuration of the district
 - the existence of community boards
 - the electoral system

- whether Māori wards have been established
- the number of members in each ward, including whether there are a mix of single-member and multi-member wards
- the wider statutory role of local authorities encompassing overall community well-being, sustainability and the interests of future generations
- the diversity of the population and the geographical location of particular communities of interest

2.17 Regional councils are required to have two or more constituencies. Members of a regional council must be elected entirely from constituencies; none may be elected at large.

2.18 Local authorities need to consider what council size, or range in membership, would be appropriate to provide effective representation for the district/region as a whole, bearing in mind:

- the diversity of the district/region
- statutory obligations (for example, does it have the responsibilities of a unitary authority)
- the need for efficient and effective governance of the district/region.

2.19 Consider whether each identified community of interest needs separate representation in a ward/constituency, or whether some communities of interest can be grouped together to achieve effective representation factoring in the need to:

- facilitate elector and resident participation
- avoid dividing recognised communities of interest between wards/constituencies
- avoid grouping communities of interest with few commonalities
- factor in the accessibility, size, and configuration of the area concerned.

2.20 Regarding wards/constituencies, determine:

- the number of wards/constituencies based on communities of interest, or groupings of communities of interest (see previous paragraph)
- the boundaries of wards/constituencies including the requirement, as far as practicable, for constituencies to coincide with territorial authority or ward boundaries, and for ward boundaries to coincide with community boundaries
- the names of the wards/constituencies (see Names of electoral [areas](#) on page 39).

Step 5: Consider fairness of representation for electors of constituencies and wards

- 2.21 In relation to the range of options for the total membership of the local authority:
- identify the ratio of population per member for each proposed ward/constituency
 - compare the ward/constituency ratios calculated with the average population per member for the local authority as a whole.
- 2.22 Under any of the options for total membership, do the ward/constituency ratios fall within +/-10% of the average population per member?
- If “yes”, which option would provide the optimum local authority size in terms of providing effective and fair representation?
 - If “no”, consider altering ward/constituency boundaries or reconfiguring these (to the extent practicable to provide effective representation of communities of interest) so that the ratios fall within +/-10% of the average population per member.
- 2.23 If the alteration or reconfiguration does not achieve the required ratios, consider whether there are sufficient grounds for applying the exceptions to the +/-10% rule, as set out in *sections 19V(3)(a) or (b)*.
- 2.24 If there are sufficient grounds for an exception, these should be identified and documented in appropriate detail.
- 2.25 If there are not sufficient grounds for an exception, return to previous steps and alter/reconfigure boundaries.
- 2.26 Steps 4 and 5 may need to be repeated a number of times until a proposal has been identified that best meets both criteria.
- 2.27 In determining boundaries through these steps ensure that boundaries conform with the boundaries of statistical meshblocks (see [meshblocks](#) on page 40).

Step 6: Consider communities and community boards (for territorial authorities only)

- 2.28 As part of reviewing representation arrangements, all territorial authorities must consider whether communities and community boards are required, whether or not there currently are communities and community boards within the district.
- 2.29 In light of the principle of fair and effective representation for individuals and communities, consider and document:
- whether communities and community boards are required
 - the nature of any community and the structure of any community board
 - whether community boards should cover all or only parts of the district, and the rationale for the approach taken.

- 2.30 Where community boards are to be established or retained, consider whether effective representation for identified communities of interest is best achieved by way of:
- an at large system
 - subdivision of the community, including boundaries and names of subdivisions
 - whole territorial authority wards within the community.
- 2.31 Where community boards are to be established, a similar process for territorial authority reviews is to be undertaken to:
- identify the total number of members required (both elected and appointed)
 - the number of members per subdivision (if any) to ensure compliance with the '+/-10% rule', or number per ward (if any)
 - the number (if any) of members to be appointed by the territorial authority.

Additional considerations

Consultation

- 2.32 *Part 1A, Local Electoral Act 2001* sets out requirements for conducting representation reviews, including providing opportunity for the public to make submissions on a local authority's proposals.
- 2.33 The following sections of the *Local Government Act 2002* apply to local authorities performing functions under all enactments:
- *sections 10, 11, 12(2), and 14* – relating to the purpose of local government and the role, status, powers and principles for local authorities
 - *sections 76 to 82* – relating to decision-making and consultation requirements.
- 2.34 During representation reviews local authorities need to be mindful of the principles set out in *section 14, Local Government Act 2002*, including:
- being aware of, and regarding the views of all of its communities
 - accounting for the diversity of the community
 - providing opportunities for Māori to contribute to decision-making processes.
- 2.35 The statutory consultation requirements for initial and final proposals are:
- Set out in a timeline table in paragraph 2.49 below
 - detailed under *sections 19M* (initial) and *19N* (final) of the *Local Electoral Act 2001* (see [Appendix B](#))
 - based on the special consultative procedure provided for in the *Local Government Act 2002*.

Local authority decision-making

- 2.36 When resolving its initial proposal, each local authority must act in accordance with the requirements of the:
- *Local Electoral Act 2001*, and
 - the consultation and decision-making provisions of the *Local Government Act 2002*
- 2.37 Local authority officers and members involved with the review process need to be familiar with relevant administrative law issues and are encouraged to seek advice from their legal advisers when necessary.
- 2.38 If a local authority receives submissions on its initial proposal, it must ensure that it acts in a legally 'fair' way in considering them. For instance, if any person exercises the right to be heard under *section 19M(3), Local Electoral Act 2001* it is typically appropriate that only local authority members who hear the submissions participate in the decision-making on those submissions. If an elected member has good reason for being unable to attend oral submission presentations, it may be possible for them to still participate in the decision-making, provided that they take all reasonable steps to inform themselves about the oral submissions concerned.
- 2.39 Each local authority needs to consider all submissions received and must be able to demonstrate that it has done this by providing reasons for the acceptance or rejection of submissions. Amendments in a local authority's final proposal should be made in response to submissions, or else the initial proposal needs to be retained. Otherwise, the community has not had an opportunity to give feedback on all aspects of the proposal, and community members may have grounds to submit appeals and/or objections.
- 2.40 The local authority's public notice of its final proposal under *section 19N(2)* is required to state the reasons for amendments and the reasons for any rejection of submissions, so the reasons must be recorded in the local authority's resolution of its final proposal.
- 2.41 It is important to carefully consider the following issues and to record detailed reasoning for all decisions relating to:
- the identification of communities of interest
 - the basis of election (territorial authorities only)
 - the establishment or retention of community boards (territorial authorities only)
 - the provision of fair and effective representation for electors and communities of interest, and compliance with the '+/-10% rule' in particular
 - where the '+/-10% rule' has not been complied with the specific grounds for not complying and the supporting reasons for that decision
 - consideration by regional councils of the practicality of constituency boundaries coinciding with territorial authority or ward boundaries, and
 - consideration by territorial authorities of ward boundaries coinciding with community boundaries.

- 2.42 The following appendices contain sample public notices based on the requirements of *sections 19M and 19N*:
- [Appendix D: Sample public notice – initial proposal](#) on page 63
 - [Appendix E: Sample public notice – final proposal](#) on page 67
 - [Appendix F: Sample public notice – no submissions](#) on page 71
 - [Appendix G: Sample public notice – no appeals or objections](#) on page 76
- 2.43 *Sections 19M and 19N* describe the minimum required. Local authorities need to consider additional steps to encourage feedback from the community on their proposals.
- 2.44 Providing full information to the public on representation proposals is good practice and may reduce the potential for appeals and/or objections.
- 2.45 For example, to improve the public’s access to information about the local elections, consider using:
- local authority facilities and communications channels such as displays at council offices and libraries
 - council publications, newsletters, and websites
 - news media and social media.
- 2.46 Ensure that information is easy to understand. For example, identify proposed electoral areas by including suitable maps (or details of where to view them physically or electronically) in public notices.

Timelines

- 2.47 The Commission encourages all local authorities to start planning for their reviews as early in the relevant triennium as possible, and to allow sufficient time to undertake meaningful preliminary engagement.
- 2.48 The Commission further encourages set local authorities to set internal deadlines that enable sufficient flexibility to respond to issues that may arise during the process, while also ensuring the local authority can meet the statutory deadlines.
- 2.49 In the past some local authorities have worked close to the statutory deadlines. In doing so they limited their ability to deal with any unexpected issues that may have arisen, and potentially created problems for themselves later in the process.
- 2.50 Regional councils and territorial authorities in a region are encouraged to communicate on the timing and direction of their reviews. This is particularly so given the requirement for regional constituencies, as far as practicable, to coincide with territorial authority or ward boundaries (*s19U*).

2.51 *Section 19K(1AA)* provides that a formal resolution of initial proposals must not be made before 20 December in the year that is 2 years before the next election. This enables account to be taken of any demand for an electoral system poll. However this does not preclude local authorities from undertaking preliminary consideration, planning, and consultation well before the 20 December date.

2.52 In general, the representation review process involves the following steps:

Table 1: Representation review timelines

Procedure	Deadline	Relevant section
Local authority undertakes preliminary consultation to understand communities of interest and to develop potential options for initial proposal	With sufficient time to meet statutory deadlines below	
Local authority resolves proposed representation arrangements	Initial proposals must be made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> no earlier than 20 December in the year 2 years before election year by 31 July in the year before election year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 19H (territorial authorities) 19I (regional councils) 19J (community boards) Schedule 1A for Māori wards or constituencies
Local authority gives public notice of "initial" proposal and invites submissions	Within 14 days of resolution, and not later than 8 August in the year before election year	19M(1)
Submissions close	Not less than one month after public notice	19M(2)(d)
If no submissions then proposal becomes final ²	Public notice to be given when there are no submissions but no date fixed for doing this	19Y(1)
Local authority considers submissions and may make resolution to amend proposal	Within 8 weeks of closing date for submissions	19N(1)(a)
Local authority gives public notice of its "final" proposal	Within 8 weeks of closing date for submissions	19N(1)(b)
Appeals and objections close	Must be lodged: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> not less than 1 month after the date of the public notice issued under section 19N(1)(b) not later than 3 December in the year before election year 	19O 19P

² Under *section 19V(4)* proposals that do not comply with the +/-10% fair representation requirement are subject to confirmation by the Commission even if no submissions, appeal or objections have been lodged.

Procedure	Deadline	Relevant section
If no appeals or objections, then proposal automatically becomes final	Public notice to be given when there are no appeals/objections, but no date fixed for doing this	<i>19Y(1)</i>
Local authority forwards appeals, objections, and other relevant information to the Commission ³	As soon as practicable, but not later than 20 December in the year before election year	<i>19Q</i> <i>19V(4)</i>
Commission considers resolutions, submissions, appeals and objections and makes determination	Before 11 April in election year	<i>19R</i>
Determination subject to appeal to High Court on a point of law ⁴	Appeals to be lodged within 1 month of determination	<i>Clause 2,</i> <i>Schedule 5,</i> <i>Local Government Act 2002</i>

³ Includes any proposal that does not comply with the +/-10% fair representation requirement.

⁴ Commission determinations may also be subject to judicial review.

Chapter 3: Choosing an electoral system

Introduction

- 3.1 The *Local Electoral Act 2001* provides for local authorities and their communities to choose either of the following as their electoral system for local elections:
- first past the post (FPP) or,
 - single transferable vote (STV).
- 3.2 A territorial authority’s chosen electoral system also applies to the election of members of any local boards or community boards.
- 3.3 A change of electoral system can be achieved by:
- local authority resolution, or
 - favourable outcome of a poll of electors. This poll may be:
 - demanded by electors, or
 - the result of a local authority resolution.
- 3.4 An electoral system may not be changed if the result of a poll:
- took effect at the previous election; or
 - takes effect at the next election.⁵
- 3.5 The statutory provisions for changing the electoral system are set out in *sections 27 to 34, Local Electoral Act 2001*.

Key statutory provisions for changing electoral systems

- 3.6 The relevant provisions of the *Local Electoral Act 2001* for changing a local authority’s electoral system are:

Who	Provision	Timing	Section
local authority	may resolve to change the electoral system to take effect for the next two elections	no later than 12 September two years before election year	27
local authority	must give public notice of the right for electors to demand an electoral system poll, and that notice must include a statement that a poll is required to countermand any local authority resolution made on the electoral system	by 19 September two years before election year	28

⁵ Section 32 provides that in these situations sections 27 to 31 do not apply.

Who	Provision	Timing	Section
5% of electors	may demand a poll on a proposal that a specified electoral system be used at the election of a local authority	at any time	29
local authority	may resolve to hold an electoral system poll	no later than 11 December the year 2 years before election year	31

3.7 Also, if either:

- a valid demand for a poll is received (s29) by 11 December in the year 2 years before election year, or
- a local authority resolves to hold a poll (s31),

then the:

- electoral officer is notified
- poll must be held not later than 89 days after the notification, that is not later than 14 March in the year 2 years before election year, and
- result of the poll takes effect for the next two elections (s33).

3.8 *Section 30* states that when a valid demand for a poll is received after 11 December in the year 2 years before election year, the:

- poll must be held after 14 March in the year before election year and
- result takes effect for the next but one election and the subsequent election.

General

3.9 The choice of electoral system is not formally part of representation reviews, and the Commission’s role in appeals and objections does not apply. However, the electoral system should be considered as part of the overall review of representation.

3.10 To gain the full benefits of proportional representation under STV, five to seven members is preferable for wards or constituencies using STV (below three members the benefits of proportional representation are not realised).

3.11 So that this can be considered during the review process, choosing an electoral system should occur before:

- decisions on establishment of Māori wards/constituencies
- the representation review.

Further information

3.12 Further information is also available in the following reports:

Graham Bush, "STV and local body elections — a mission probable?" in J. Drage (ed), *Empowering Communities? Representation and Participation in New Zealand's Local Government*, pp 45-64 (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2002).

Christine Cheyne and Margie Comrie, "Empowerment for Encumbrance? Exercising the STV Options for Local Authority Elections in New Zealand, *Local Government Studies*, 31(2), April 2005: pp 185-204.

Dr Janine Hayward, The Local Government Electoral Option 2023
This document is available to Taituarā members as an appendix to Part 4 of the Code of Good Practice for the Management of Local Authority Elections and Polls on <https://taituara.org.nz/lg-sectorgood-toolkit>

STV Taskforce, Choosing Electoral Systems in Local Government in New Zealand (2002)
[http://www.dia.govt.nz/Pubforms.nsf/URL/STV.pdf/\\$file/STV.pdf](http://www.dia.govt.nz/Pubforms.nsf/URL/STV.pdf/$file/STV.pdf)

Jack Vowles, "STV and the 2004 local elections: Disaster or success?", *Public Sector*, 28(3), 2005: 1

Jack Vowles & Janine Hayward (2021) "Ballot structure, district magnitude and descriptive representation: the case of New Zealand local council elections", *Australian Journal of Political Science*, 56:3, 225-244.

Chapter 4: Māori wards and constituencies

Introduction

- 4.1 The *Local Electoral Act 2001* provides that Māori wards (territorial authorities) or constituencies (regional councils) may be established. The statutory provisions for establishing Māori wards/constituencies are set out in *sections 19Z and 19ZH, and Schedule 1A, Local Electoral Act 2001*.
- 4.2 If Māori wards/constituencies are to be established for the next election, the local authority involved must undertake a representation review (whether or not it conducted a review before the previous election).
- 4.3 The Commission's role in respect of determination of appeals and objections on representation arrangements:
- does not extend to whether or not Māori wards/constituencies are to be established
 - is limited to consideration of the detailed arrangements for such wards/constituencies, i.e. the number of wards/constituencies, their boundaries and names, and number of members.
- 4.4 The *Bay of Plenty Regional Council (Māori Constituency Empowering) Act 2001* requires the Bay of Plenty Regional Council to include provision for 1 or more Māori constituencies in representation reviews conducted by it. *Sections 19Z and 19ZH, Local Electoral Act 2001* do not, therefore, apply to the Bay of Plenty Region. In carrying out a representation review the Bay of Plenty Regional Council must follow both the process set out in the *Local Electoral Act* and the *Bay of Plenty Regional Council (Māori Constituency Empowering) Act*.
- 4.5 The *Canterbury Regional Council (Ngai Tahu Representation) Act 2022* provides for Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu to appoint 2 members to the council. The Canterbury Regional Council may however establish Māori constituencies under the *Local Electoral Act* (in addition to members being appointed under the abovementioned Act).

Deciding whether to establish Māori wards/constituencies

- 4.6 A local authority may decide under section 19Z to establish Māori wards or constituencies. This decision must be made by 23 November in the year 2 years before the election.
- 4.7 Section 19Z does not include a specific set of criteria which councils are required to consider when making their decision. Councils should, however, consider those of the principles set out in section 4 of the LEA as are applicable to the matter of specific Māori representation.
- 4.8 Section 19Z does not specify how councils should consult on this issue. The type of engagement to be used would therefore be determined by the council's Significance and Engagement Policy maintained under section 76AA, LGA and take into account the decision-making and consultation requirements of Part 6, LGA.
- 4.9 Section 81, LGA, dealing with contributions to decision-making processes by Māori, implies a requirement to engage with matawaaka as well as iwi/hapu. Local authorities should consider how best to do this.
- 4.10 The key statutory provisions relating to the initial decision to establish Māori wards or constituencies are set out in *sections 19Z and 19 ZH, and Part 1, Schedule 1 Local Electoral Act 2001*.
- 4.11 If a local authority decides to establish Māori wards/constituencies a representation review must be carried out (*cls1 and 3, Schedule 1A, Local Electoral Act 2001*). In such cases the requirements of *Part 1A, Local Electoral Act 2001* (outlining the standard process for a representation review) are subject to the provisions of *Schedule 1A*.

Matters to be determined by representation review

- 4.12 *Clauses 1 and 3, Schedule 1A* provide that the local authority is required to determine:
- the proposed total number of members of the local authority
 - whether (for territorial authorities only):
 - all members are to be elected from either Māori or general wards, or
 - some members are to be elected from either Māori or general wards, and some are to be elected at large
 - the proposed number of members to be elected from the Māori wards/constituencies and the number from the general wards/ constituencies
 - the proposed name and boundaries of each ward/constituency
 - the proposed number of members to be elected from each Māori and general ward/constituency.

Populations

- 4.13 The populations to be used in making decisions about Māori wards/constituencies are:
- the total ordinarily resident population
 - the Māori electoral population (MEP)
 - the general electoral population (GEP)
- 4.14 *Section 5(1), Local Electoral Act* contains definitions for “general electoral population” and “Māori electoral population”. Summaries of those definitions are:
- Māori electoral population – a calculation based on the number of electors on the Māori electoral roll and proportions of those of Māori descent not registered and those under 18 years of age.
 - general electoral population – the total ordinarily resident population at the last census less the Māori electoral population.
- 4.15 The MEP, and the GEP, are calculated by Statistics New Zealand and must be provided on request to a local authority by the Government Statistician.⁶ These populations (at the regional and district level) can also be found on the Local Government Commission’s website.
- 4.16 For information about how the MEP and GEP are calculated search for the following titles on the *Statistics New Zealand* website www.stats.govt.nz:
- Statistics New Zealand, [‘The mathematics of electorate allocation in New Zealand based on the outcome of the 2018 Census and the Māori Electoral Option 2018’ \(2018\)](#)
 - Statistics New Zealand, [‘Deriving the 2018 Māori Descent electoral Calculations’ \(2018\)](#).

Processes

- 4.17 Broadly speaking, the process and requirements set out in *Part 1A, Local Electoral Act* are to be followed when a representation review includes Māori wards/constituencies. There are, however, some key requirements where *Schedule 1A* is to be followed instead of, or in addition, to the requirements of *Part 1A*. These are discussed below.
- 4.18 As is the case with all representation reviews the various steps in the process may need to be repeated several times until a proposal has been identified that best meets all criteria and requirements.

⁶ See paragraph 8.25 about where to request MEP and GEP statistics.

Determining the overall framework

- 4.19 For a territorial authority the first step in the process must be to determine whether:
- all members are to be elected from either Māori or general wards, or
 - some members are to be elected from either Māori or general wards, and some are to be elected at large.
- 4.20 It is necessary to do this first as the members to be elected at large are not to be included in the calculation to determine the number of members to be elected from Māori wards/constituencies.

Calculating the number of members

- 4.21 The next steps in the process are determining the total number of members of the local authority, and then the number of members to be elected from Māori wards/constituencies.
- 4.22 It is anticipated that this will also be a consideration when a local authority is considering whether to resolve to establish Māori wards/constituencies under *section 19Z, Local Electoral Act*. In some cases the general and Māori electoral population requirements described below may mean that either:
- to reach the statistical threshold for Māori wards/constituencies to be able to be established the total number of members of the local authority may need to be increased
 - it is not statistically possible to establish a Māori ward/constituency because the Māori electoral population as a proportion of the total population is too low.
- 4.23 Therefore local authorities need to identify their MEP and GEP at the beginning of determining the range of options for Māori and general wards/constituencies to ensure that any debate occurs in the context of what is possible.⁷
- 4.24 The process for determining the number of members to be elected from both Māori and general wards/constituencies is set out in *clauses 2 and 4, Schedule 1A* and involves:
- determining the total number of members of the local authority
 - multiplying the total number of members by the ratio of the MEP to the total (Māori and general) electoral population.

⁷ Note that the MEP and GEP are different to the number of electors on the Māori and general electoral rolls. The number on the electoral rolls is not to be used when calculating the number of members to represent Māori or general wards/constituencies.

4.25 For territorial authorities the following formula is applied:

$$nmm = \frac{mepd}{mepd + gepd} \times nm$$

where:

- nmm – number of Māori ward members
- mepd – Māori electoral population of the district
- gepd – general electoral population of the district
- nm – proposed number of members of the territorial authority (other than the mayor, and other than members elected from district as a whole⁸).

4.26 For regional councils the following formula is applied:

$$nmm = \frac{mepr}{mepr + gepr} \times nm$$

where:

- nmm – number of Māori constituency members
- mepr – Māori electoral population of the region
- gepr – general electoral population of the region
- nm – proposed number of members of the regional council.

In both cases, fractions are rounded up or down to the nearest whole number.

Number and boundaries of wards/constituencies

4.27 In determining arrangements for Māori wards/constituencies, *clause 6, Schedule 1A* requires local authorities to:

- satisfy *sections 19T and 19U*, which require:
 - that the election of members provides effective representation of communities of interest within the district/region
 - conformity with meshblock boundaries
 - to the extent that is practicable, conformity of ward boundaries with community board boundaries, and conformity of constituency boundaries with the boundaries of territorial authority districts or wards.
- have regard to:
 - the boundaries of any existing Māori parliamentary electoral district
 - communities of interest and tribal affiliation⁹.

⁸ See *clause 2(2), Schedule 1A, Local Electoral Act*.

⁹ The term “tribal affiliations” is interpreted as meaning the rohe of iwi and hāpu.

- 4.28 Application of the +/-10% rule'' to Māori wards/constituencies must be done in a way that is reasonably practicable and is consistent with the requirements to have regard to the boundaries of any existing Māori parliamentary electoral district, and to communities of interest and tribal affiliations.

Number of members to be elected by each ward/constituency

- 4.29 *Clause 6, Schedule 1A* sets out particular requirements when determining the number of members to be elected by each Māori ward/constituency (where there are two or more wards/constituencies). The local authority is required to ensure that the ratio of members to MEP in each Māori ward/constituency produces a variance of no more than +/-10% (to the extent that is reasonably practicable and consistent with the above considerations relating to Māori electoral districts, communities of interest, and tribal affiliations).
- 4.30 This may require a judgment to be made in individual cases as to the relative importance to be given to each of these sets of factors when determining the number of members from each Māori ward/constituency. Local authorities need to record in detail the decisions they reach on this issue.
- 4.31 Where Māori wards/constituencies are established, the '+/-10% rule' for general wards/constituencies is calculated separately using the GEP (which excludes the MEP).

General

- 4.32 In working through the requirements of *Schedule 1A, Local Electoral Act 2001*, local authorities need to consider appropriate consultation at an early stage with iwi and hapū over the boundaries of their rohe. This helps determine the appropriate number of Māori wards/constituencies to reflect Māori communities of interest and areas of tribal affiliation. This will also help in identifying appropriate names for Māori wards/constituencies.
- 4.33 The legislation does not provide for Māori electoral subdivisions to be constituted for community board or local board areas.

Chapter 5: Fair and effective representation

Key considerations

- 5.1 In reviewing their representation arrangements, local authorities must provide for 'effective representation of communities of interest' (*ss19T and 19U*) and 'fair representation of electors' (*s19V*). Therefore, there are three key factors for local authorities to carefully consider. They are:
- communities of interest
 - effective representation of communities of interest
 - fair representation of electors.
- 5.2 These inter-related factors are discussed below.

Communities of interest

Defining communities of interest

- 5.3 The term 'community of interest' is not defined in the *Local Electoral Act 2001* and may mean different things to different people. Defining local communities of interest is an essential part of the representation review process and needs to be carried out before determining how to provide effective representation.
- 5.4 One definition¹⁰ of 'community of interest' describes it as a three-dimensional concept:
- perceptual – a sense of belonging to a clearly defined area or locality
 - functional – the ability to meet with reasonable economy the community's requirements for comprehensive physical and human services
 - political – the ability of the elected body to represent the interests and reconcile the conflicts of all its members.
- 5.5 The perceptual and functional aspects can be extended to define a community of interest as having:
- a sense of community identity and belonging reinforced by:
 - distinctive physical and topographical features (e.g., mountains, hills, rivers)
 - similarities in economic or social activities carried out in the area
 - similarities in the demographic, socio-economic and/or ethnic characteristics of the residents of a community

¹⁰ [*The Concept of Community of Interest*](#) (1989) prepared by Helen Fulcher for the South Australian Department of Local Government.

- a distinct local history of the area resulting in a current perception of community of interest
- the rohe or takiwā of local iwi and hapū
- dependence on shared facilities and services in an area, including:
 - schools, recreational and cultural facilities
 - retail outlets, transport and communication links.

5.6 It is recommended that decisions relating to the representation of communities of interest (the political dimension) reflect these interests and needs.

Identifying communities of interest

5.7 Communities of interest may alter over time, so local authorities need to make sure they identify their current communities of interest when carrying out a representation review.

5.8 Communities of interest can be considered at different levels. For example, local authorities themselves are distinct and identifiable communities of interest.

5.9 Regions are assumed to have a number of distinct identifiable communities of interest and therefore are required to be divided into constituencies.

5.10 A degree of commonality between regional and district communities of interest can be assumed. This is reflected by the requirement relating to effective representation of communities of interest for regional councils (addressed next) for their constituencies, so far as is practicable, to coincide with territorial authority boundaries or territorial authority ward boundaries (*s19U(c)*).

5.11 This does not preclude regional constituencies varying from territorial authority/ward boundaries to reflect, for example, communities based around river catchments. However, if this is proposed the regional council should clearly document the case for any such variations.

5.12 During a representation review territorial authorities need to determine:

- any identifiable communities of interest below the district level
- whether these communities of interest are located in identifiable geographical areas, justifying the establishment of wards, or are spread across the district.

Effective representation of communities of interest

- 5.13 Territorial authorities must ensure effective representation of communities of interest (s19T).
- 5.14 Regional councils must ensure effective representation of communities of interest (s19U).
- 5.15 Achieving effective representation first requires identifying communities of interest that are geographically distinct and, in the case of territorial authorities, those that may be spread across the district.
- 5.16 Effective representation of these communities of interest must be achieved within the following statutory limits:
- between 5 and 29 members (excluding the mayor) for territorial authorities (s19A)
 - between 6 and 14 members for regional councils (s19D).
- 5.17 Other factors to consider include the size, nature, and diversity of the district/region.
- 5.18 The basis of election (at large, by ward, or a combination of both) used by a territorial authority is the one determined by the territorial authority (or Commission, if relevant) to provide the most effective representation of the identified communities of interest.
- 5.19 As far as practicable, the following further factors need to be considered when determining effective representation for the local authority:
- accessibility, size, and configuration of an area, including:
 - the population's reasonable access to its elected members and vice versa
 - the elected members' ability to:
 - effectively represent the views of their electoral area
 - provide reasonably even representation across the area including activities like attending public meetings and opportunities for face-to-face meetings.
 - avoiding arrangements that may create barriers to participation, for example, not recognising residents' familiarity and identity with an area during elections
 - not splitting recognised communities of interest between electoral areas
 - not grouping together two or more communities of interest that have few common interests
- 5.20 As far as practicable, different types of electoral area boundaries (for wards, constituencies, community board and local board subdivisions etc.) need to coincide as this:

- supports communities of interest and local electors' identification with their area
 - may encourage participation, such as voting or standing as a candidate.
- 5.21 The legislation is neutral on whether a territorial authority needs to be divided into wards. General characteristics of territorial authorities that have opted for elections at large include:
- the district has a relatively compact geographic area, and/or
 - a shared common community of interest at the district level, and/or
 - communities of interest that are spread across the district rather than being geographically distinct.
- 5.22 When there are a large number of communities of interest, identify any common interests and consider combining the communities of interest into one or more larger wards/constituencies.
- 5.23 Consider the relative merits of one and multi-member wards/constituencies:
- single-member wards/constituencies provide a close direct link between local electors and their representative
 - multi-member wards/constituencies can:
 - provide greater choice for voters
 - following the election, provide greater choice for residents on who to approach on local issues
 - allow sharing and specialising in responsibilities between the ward/constituency representatives.
- 5.24 The local authority also needs to consider the electoral system used when addressing particular configurations of wards/constituencies (for example wards/constituencies of 5 to 7 members better allow for proportional representation under STV (see paragraph 3.10 on page 16).
- 5.25 Members of a territorial authority may also be elected partly by wards and partly at large (a mixed system). This option may be best when there are clear district-wide communities of interest as well as specific geographically based communities of interest.
- 5.26 All members, regardless of the area they are elected to represent, make the same declaration on coming into office to act in the best interests of the whole district. In other words, the members under a ward or mixed system have the same obligation to the district as the members elected at large. Therefore there is no functional difference in the decision-making role of members elected at large and members elected by way of a ward system. Ward and at large members do, however, continue to represent the areas they are elected from at the council table.
- 5.27 Details of the basis of election adopted by territorial authorities since 1989 are set out in [Appendix H: Basis of election](#) on page 78.

Fair representation of electors

5.28 *Section 19V, Local Electoral Act 2001* details the factors to be applied in determining the membership for wards/constituencies/subdivisions in order to achieve fair representation of electors.

5.29 Under this provision, membership of wards/constituencies/subdivisions is required to provide approximate population equality per member, that is, all votes are of approximately equal value (referred to as the '+/-10% rule') unless there are good (prescribed) reasons to depart from this requirement.

5.30 *Section 19V* outlines the specific requirements as follows:

(2) For the purposes of giving effect to subsection (1), the territorial authority or regional council and, where appropriate, the Commission must ensure that the population of each ward or constituency or subdivision, divided by the number of members to be elected by that ward or constituency or subdivision, produces a figure no more than 10% greater or smaller than the population of the district or region or community divided by the total number of elected members (other than members elected by the electors of a territorial authority as a whole, if any, and the mayor, if any).

5.31 In respect of territorial authorities, *section 19V(3)(a)* provides four grounds for not complying with the fair representation requirements of *section 19V(2)*. These grounds are:

- to provide for effective representation of communities of interest within:
 - island communities
 - isolated communities
- where compliance would limit effective representation of communities of interest by:
 - dividing a community of interest
 - grouping together communities of interest with few commonalities of interest.

5.32 In the case of regional councils, constituencies may be defined in such a way that does not comply with *section 19V(2)* if it is considered that this is required to achieve effective representation of communities of interest (*s19V(3)(b)*).

5.33 For the application of the '+/-10% rule' to Māori wards and constituencies see also *clause 6, Schedule 1A*.

5.34 A decision by a local authority not to comply with *section 19V(2)* must be referred to the Commission for determination. Referral to the Commission is required whether or not appeals or objections have been lodged against the local authority's proposal. That referral is treated by the Commission as an appeal under the *Local Electoral Act 2001*.

- 5.35 It is important that all local authorities, including regional councils, clearly identify the grounds for any proposed non-compliance with the ‘+/-10% rule’ of *section 19V(2)*. This is required for the public notices under *section 19M(2)(c)* and *section 19N(2)(bb)* and assists the Commission in its deliberations.
- 5.36 Examples of the application of the ‘+/-10% rule’, including exceptions, can be found in the Commission’s determinations for the 2010, 2013, 2016 and 2019 elections, available on the Commission’s website www.lgc.govt.nz. Earlier determinations can be found on the Commission’s [archived website](#).¹¹
- 5.37 In relation to isolated communities, the *Local Electoral Act 2001* does not specify the criteria to be met to warrant specific representation by a member or members on a territorial authority, but given the requirements of *subsections (1) and (2) of section 19V*, it does imply a significant test in this regard.
- 5.38 The Commission recommends territorial authorities consider the following factors when determining whether a community or grouping of communities of interest warrants specific representation because of its isolation:
- isolation needs to relate to the ability of a community to receive appropriate representation by elected members
 - isolation needs to be evidenced by things such as significant distance or travel time, or other physical/practical travel, and/or communications difficulties, or service reliability problems
 - for a community to have enhanced representation on the grounds of isolation, a significant proportion of the population of the area should be physically isolated
 - physical separation alone may not necessarily constitute isolation
 - an area may not be isolated simply because it is rural in nature
- 5.39 In addition, a district may have its own particular factors that contribute to an area having a sense of isolation.
- 5.40 While *section 19V* does not specifically identify grounds for regional councils not to comply with the ‘+/-10% rule’, the grounds for non-compliance set out in *section 19V(3)(a)* relating to territorial authorities, could be used as possible reasons for non-compliance by a regional council.

¹¹ Note that determinations made between 2004 and 2013 were made under the then-current legislation which provided that exceptions to the ‘+/-10% rule’ could only be made for territorial authorities in relation to island or isolated communities. Determinations made prior to 2004 were required to achieve fair representation but were not subject to the ‘+/-10% rule’.

Questions and answers relating to effective and fair representation

Is effective or fair representation more important?

5.41 Section 4(1) (Principles) makes it clear that fairness and effectiveness are equally important:

- (a) fair and effective representation for individuals and communities

5.42 This is supported by recent amendments to the fair representation requirements with some permitted exceptions now being linked to effective representation requirements.

5.43 In practice, there is often a tension between the tests for effective and fair representation, and the identified options may not satisfy both tests perfectly. However the assessment of one requirement will help inform assessment of the other in order to reach a balance between the two.

How much discretion is there in applying the isolation factor when determining fair representation for territorial authorities?

5.44 The Commission believes that 'isolation' is best assessed in relation to the particular local circumstances of a district, so a generic definition is not practical. However, it also believes the generic characteristics of isolation identified in paragraph 5.38 on page 29 should guide territorial authorities' assessment of isolation. The Commission applies these when considering appeals, objections, and referrals.

If a territorial authority ward or regional council constituency or community board subdivision is allowed to not comply with the '+/-10% rule' how does that affect the application of the rule across the rest of the district/region/community?

5.45 If wards/constituencies/subdivisions are determined to be defined and members distributed between them in a way that that does not comply with the '+/-10% rule', compliance with the rule is relaxed for the balance of the district/region/community. However, the Commission considers that other wards/constituencies/subdivisions need to be as close as practicable to +/-10%.

How is the '+/-10% rule' calculated for the balance of the district/region/community when an exception is made for one ward, constituency or subdivision?

5.46 The '+/-10% rule' is calculated once under section 19V(2) for the district/region/community as a whole regardless of whether any exceptions to the rule are being proposed. It is not calculated again for the balance of the district/region/community once any exception has been identified.

Checklist for planning purposes

5.47 The following questions may be useful prompts to consider when planning for and carrying out a representation review:

Communities of Interest

- What information is the council relying on in identifying and defining communities of interest? Is this information sourced from within the council? External to the council, or both?
- Are communities of interest geographically located? Are they spread across the district/region? Both?
- What opportunities are provided for community views on communities of interest to be considered? How will the council ensure that the views of vulnerable or under-represented communities are taken into account?
- Do good grounds exist to consider establishing, altering or dis-establishing community boards in all or part of the district? ([See Chapter 6](#)).

Fair and effective representation

- What is the basis for the current number of elected members? Do good reasons exist to consider a change to the number of elected members?
- Do good reasons exist for geographic ward-based representation? For at-large representation? For a mixed system with both geographic ward and at-large representation?
- Do any representation models comply with the +/-10% rule? Do such models group communities of interest in a coherent manner? Do they provide reasonable access of residents to elected members and vice-versa?
- If not, how should communities of interest best be grouped to ensure effective representation?
- Are any communities sufficiently isolated to justify departure from the +/-10% rule? What factors give rise to such isolation?

Chapter 6: Reviewing communities and community boards

Introduction

- 6.1 All territorial authorities must consider whether community boards are (or would be) appropriate to provide fair and effective representation for individuals and communities in its district as part of their representation review (*§19J*).
- 6.2 The representation review provides a process for a territorial authority to propose the constitution of new boards, alterations to existing boards, or disestablishment of existing boards.
- 6.3 When carrying out a review, the required decisions are:
- whether there needs to be communities and community boards within the territorial authority's district
 - if the territorial authority decides that one or more communities needs to be established (or retained):
 - the nature of the community and
 - the structure of the community board.
- 6.4 *Schedule 6, Local Government Act 2002* provides for community boards to be established at any time outside of the representation review process as the result of a proposal from the community concerned. However boards may only be disestablished, or the boundaries of a community altered, as part of a:
- representation review under the *Local Electoral Act 2001*, or
 - local government reorganisation scheme.

Key statutory provisions

- 6.5 *Section 19F* provides for a minimum of 4 and maximum of 12 community board members (with at least 4 elected members) and the appointment of members by the parent territorial authority (appointees must make up less than half the total number of members).
- 6.6 *Section 19G* prescribes that the area of a community board may be subdivided for electoral purposes. This includes provision for the community board members to be elected by wards if the community board area comprises two or more whole wards of a district.
- 6.7 The division of a community board area into electoral subdivisions may be appropriate when the community board area is made up of a number of distinct communities of interest and the formation of subdivisions will provide more effective representation of these communities of interest.

- 6.8 The issues to consider when deciding whether or not a community board area needs to be subdivided are similar to those which apply to the division of a district into wards discussed in [Chapter 5: Fair and effective representation](#) on page 24, excluding the mixed system of representation.
- 6.9 The fair representation requirements of *section 19V* (the ‘+/-10% rule’) also apply in respect of subdivisions of communities including the permitted exceptions in *section 19V(3)(a)*.
- 6.10 The following table sets out specific decisions that need to be made in reviews of community boards under *section 19J, Local Electoral Act 2001*.

Section	Decision
<i>19J(1)</i>	Whether to have communities and community boards If so, the nature of any community and the community board structure
<i>19J(2)(a)</i>	Whether to establish 1 or more communities
<i>19J(2)(b)</i>	Whether to abolish or unite any community
<i>19J(2)(c)</i>	Whether to alter the boundaries of a community
<i>19J(2)(d)</i>	Whether to subdivide any community
<i>19J(2)(e)</i>	Whether to alter the boundaries of a subdivision
<i>19J(2)(f)</i>	The number of members of a community board
<i>19J(2)(g)</i>	The number of elected and appointed members of a community board
<i>19J(2)(h)</i>	Whether the members to be elected need to be elected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • across the whole community • from subdivisions • where the community comprises two or more whole wards, from those wards
<i>19J(2)(i)</i>	Where members are to be elected from subdivisions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the name and boundaries of subdivisions • the number of members to be elected from each subdivision (in accordance with the ‘+/-10% rule’ set out in <i>section 19V(2)</i>)

- 6.11 In undertaking its review, the territorial authority is required to consider the criteria that applies to local government reorganisation under the *Local Government Act 2002* as the territorial authority considers appropriate (*s19W*). Key criteria are set out in *clauses 11, 12 and 19 of Schedule 3, Local Government Act 2002* (see [Appendix I: Criteria for local government reorganisation](#) on page 81). Applying these criteria for reviews relating to community boards means considering:
- Will the proposal promote good local government of the parent district and the community area concerned?
 - Will the district and the community have the resources necessary to enable them to carry out their respective responsibilities, duties and powers?

- Will the district and the community have areas that are appropriate for the efficient and effective performance of their role?
- Will the district and the community contain a sufficiently distinct community of interest or sufficiently distinct communities of interest?

Appointed members

6.12 As noted above some members of a community board may be appointed from among the elected members of the territorial authority. When providing for this, points to bear in mind are that:

- If the district is divided into wards the members appointed to a community board must represent a ward in which the community board is located
- Where the district is divided into Māori wards and general wards the appointed members may be from one or other of those wards or both, as long as the member to be appointed represents a ward in which the community board is physically located
- If the council is elected partly from wards and partly at large the appointed members may only be selected from those elected from wards
- Decisions about whether to have appointed members, and how many there are to be, must be made as part of a representation review. They cannot be made at a later date.

Effect of administrative changes

6.13 As noted in paragraph 6.11, when deciding community board matters under *section 19J*, the territorial authority (or Commission, if applicable) needs to consider the criteria for local government reorganisation that they consider appropriate.

6.14 The High Court has found that previous statutory reorganisation criteria were broad enough that administrative changes resulting from changing existing community board arrangements also fell within the criteria, and therefore are matters that the territorial authority and the Commission need to consider when making their decision.¹²

6.15 Administrative changes include any allocation of resources and funding, and any delegation of statutory authority to enable a community board to discharge responsibilities referred or delegated to it under *section 52, Local Government Act 2002* by the territorial authority.

¹² Paragraphs 111 to 119 of the judgment in *Ford & Ors v The Local Government Commission & Ors* (16/8/2004, High Court, Christchurch, John Hansen J, CIV-2004-409-948) set out the Court's reasoning on this matter.

General

- 6.16 All elements of territorial authorities' representation proposals (including the elements relating to community boards) are subject to rights of appeal and/or objection. Therefore, the issues relating to community boards considered under *section 19J* need to be as carefully considered as all the other elements of the review.
- 6.17 The Commission has no power to determine a community board's functions or delegations as part of any representation determination.

Chapter 7: Reviewing local boards

Introduction

- 7.1 All territorial authorities with local boards (which must be unitary authorities) must consider certain local board arrangements as part of their representation review (s19H(1)(e)-(i)).
- 7.2 When carrying out a review, the required decisions are:
- the number of members of local boards
 - whether elected members are to be elected from the whole local board area, subdivisions, or wards (if the local board area comprises 2 or more wards)
 - if the basis of election is subdivisions, the names and boundaries of the subdivisions, and the number of members for each subdivision
 - if the basis of election is wards, the number of members to be elected by each ward
 - where appointed members are a requirement, the number of appointed members of local boards
 - the names of local boards.
- 7.3 The following matters relating to local boards are to be dealt with only by way of reorganisation applications under the *Local Government Act 2002*, and therefore not through the representation review process (s24, LGA):
- establishment of local board areas
 - abolition of local board areas
 - alteration of boundaries of local board areas, other than those permitted by s19JAA, LEA
 - union of 2 or more local boards.
- 7.4 As can be seen, reviews of local board arrangements are more limited in scope than reviews of community boards.

Key statutory provisions

- 7.5 Section 19EA¹³ provides for a minimum of 5 and maximum of 12 local board members.
- 7.6 The *Local Government Act 2002* and the *Local Electoral Act 2001* state that, if provided for, by an Order in Council implementing a reorganisation proposal, local boards:

¹³ Section 11, *Local Government (Auckland Council) Act 2009* applies in the case of Auckland local boards.

- include appointed members¹⁴
- have a chairperson directly elected by electors¹⁵.

However, neither of these options are able to be used for local boards in Auckland (see *section 11(2)(a), Local Government (Auckland Council) Act*).

7.7 *Section 19EC* deals with the basis of election for elected members of local boards. It provides three bases of election:

- subdivisions
- wards, where a local board area comprises two or more whole wards
- the whole of the local board area.

7.8 The division of a local board area into electoral subdivisions may be appropriate when the local board area is made up of a number of distinct communities of interest and the formation of subdivisions will provide effective representation of these communities of interest.

7.9 The issues to consider when deciding whether or not a local board area needs to be subdivided are similar to those which apply to the division of a district into wards discussed in [Chapter 5: Fair and effective representation](#) on page 24, excluding the mixed system of representation.

7.10 The fair representation requirements of *section 19V* (the ‘+/-10% rule’) also apply in respect of subdivisions of local board areas including the permitted exceptions in *section 19V(3)(a)*.

7.11 The following table sets out specific decisions that need to be made in reviews of local boards under *section 19H, Local Electoral Act 2001*.

Section	Decision
<i>19H(1)(e)</i>	The number of members of a local board
<i>19H(1)(f)</i>	Whether the members to be elected need to be elected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • from the whole local board area • from subdivisions • where the local board area comprises two or more whole wards, from those wards
<i>19H(1)(g)</i>	Where members are to be elected from subdivisions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the name and boundaries of subdivisions • the number of members to be elected from each subdivision (in accordance with the ‘+/-10% rule’ set out in <i>section 19V(2)</i>)
<i>19H(1)(h)</i>	Where members are to be elected from wards, the number to be elected from each ward
<i>19H(1)(i)</i>	The names of local boards

¹⁴ *Section 48E, Local Government Act 2002 and section 19EA, Local Electoral Act 2001*

¹⁵ *Section 48E, Local Government Act 2002 and section 19EB, Local Electoral Act 2001*

Local board area boundaries

- 7.12 In addition to the local board matters that need to be considered as part of a representation review a territorial authority may review the boundaries of a local board area within the limits set by *section 19JAA*.
- 7.13 *Section 19JAA* enables local board area boundaries to be altered provided that:
- The population affected by the new proposed boundaries will not exceed the population transfer limit prescribed by regulations
 - The altered boundaries will enable:
 - Democratic local decision making by, and on behalf, communities of interest throughout the district
 - Equitable provision to be made for the current and future well-being of all communities within the affected area
 - Boundaries conform with meshblocks
 - So far as is practicable, local board area boundaries coincide with ward boundaries.
- 7.14 The population transfer limit referred to above is as follows:
- For any transfer or transfers of an area or areas between 2 local board areas as a result of proposed boundaries, population equal to the lower of the following:
 - 2.5% of the population of the existing local board area that has the smaller population:
 - 2,000 residents.
 - For any transfer or transfer or transfers of an area or areas into or out of a local board area as a result of proposed boundaries, population equal to one of the following:
 - 2.5% of the population of the existing local board area:
 - 2,000 residents.¹⁶
- 7.15 More extensive changes to boundaries would need to be dealt with through a reorganisation initiative under Schedule 3A of the Local Government Act.

General

- 7.16 All elements of territorial authorities' representation proposals (including the elements relating to local boards) are subject to rights of appeal and/or objection. Therefore, the issues relating to local boards considered under *section 19H* need to be as carefully considered as all the other elements of the review.
- 7.17 The Commission has no power to determine a local board's allocated responsibilities or delegations as part of a representation determination.

¹⁶ More detailed explanation of how the transfer limit works can be found in Regulation 141 of the Local Electoral Regulations 2001.

Chapter 8: Technical requirements

Names of electoral areas

- 8.1 When resolving to establish an electoral area of any type a local authority must also determine a name for that area.
- 8.2 In general, names of electoral areas should:
- use the most common or predominant place or feature name (whether official or recorded¹⁷) within the electoral area concerned
 - avoid duplication and confusion of names of electoral areas with those in other local authority areas.
- 8.3 Appeals and/or objections may be lodged with the Local Government Commission against the names of communities, subdivisions, and wards/constituencies.
- 8.4 Local authorities considering new names for any electoral areas may wish to contact the New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa (NZGB), which has national guidelines on naming, including the appropriate use of place names and the conventional spelling of place names.
- 8.5 Information on the NZGB is online at these links:
- An overview of the NZGB can be found here- <https://www.linz.govt.nz/our-work/new-zealand-geographic-board>
 - Naming criteria can be found in the [Frameworks of the New Zealand Geographic Board](#)
 - Place names can be searched in the [New Zealand Gazetteer](#)
- 8.6 The NZGB does not have jurisdiction over the naming of electoral areas, so the statutory process outlined in the [New Zealand Geographic Board \(Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa\) Act 2008](#) does not apply.¹⁸
- 8.7 Local authorities are encouraged to refer to *Section 3 Locality Definition and Naming* in *AS NZS 4819-2011 Rural and urban addressing* for good practice naming guidelines. This is available from the Standards New Zealand website www.standards.co.nz.

¹⁷ Recorded names are unofficial names that have been depicted in at least two documents that the NZGB considers to be authoritative, e.g., maps or charts.

¹⁸ The NZGB does, however, have a role in changing the names of districts and regions when requested to do so by a local authority. See sections 22 and 23 of the New Zealand Geographic Board (Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa) Act 2008.

- 8.8 Enquiries regarding the NZGB and the process for assigning or altering official place names (but not the names of electoral areas) should be directed to:

Wendy Shaw
Secretary/Hekeretari for the New Zealand Geographic Board
Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa
Phone 04 460 0581 or 027 480 7082

Post: Secretariat
New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa
c/o Land Information New Zealand
PO Box 5501
Wellington 6145

Email: NZGBenquiries@linz.govt.nz

Website: www.linz.govt.nz

Meshblocks

- 8.9 A meshblock is the smallest geographic unit for which statistical data is reported by Stats NZ. A meshblock is a defined geographic area, which can vary in size from part of a city block to a large area of rural land. Each meshblock borders another to form a network covering all New Zealand. The meshblock geography includes water such as inlets and extends to the 200-nautical-mile exclusive economic zone (EEZ). It is digitised to the 12-nautical-mile limit. Meshblocks are added together to form larger geographic areas, such as statistical area 2s (SA2). They are also used to define electoral districts, territorial authority districts, and regions.
- 8.10 Meshblock boundaries generally follow road centre lines, cadastral property boundaries or topographical features such as rivers. Expanses of water in the form of lakes and inlets are defined separately from land.¹⁹
- 8.11 Under *sections 19T(b), 19U(b) and 19W(c), Local Electoral Act 2001*, all ward, constituency, community and subdivision boundaries must coincide with meshblock boundaries.
- 8.12 If a local authority is considering boundaries that do not align with meshblock boundaries, it will need to consult Stats NZ to ascertain whether meshblock boundary alterations are possible. Stats NZ may, in some cases, be able to split meshblocks or nudge meshblock boundaries to better reflect communities of interest or current property boundaries.
- 8.13 Where meshblock changes are sought and Stats NZ has agreed to them, that agreement is sufficient for a local authority to make decisions. It is not necessary for the meshblock changes to already be reflected in the digital

¹⁹ For further information about meshblocks and other geographic units maintained by Stats NZ see [Statistical standard for geographic areas 2023 \(stats.govt.nz\)](https://www.stats.govt.nz/standards-and-methods/statistical-standard-for-geographic-areas-2023)

meshblock pattern. In such cases Stats NZ can supply the local authority with an updated copy of the meshblock pattern to ensure they are using the correct version.

- 8.14 Meshblock boundaries are not able to be changed where they coincide with a parliamentary electorate boundary or with another local government electoral boundary that is not being reviewed in the same representation review cycle. This would most usually be where a regional constituency boundary coincides with a ward, community or subdivision boundary.
- 8.15 During a census cycle or when the Representation Commission is or is about to review Parliamentary electorates Stats NZ will freeze the meshblock pattern and no meshblock nudges or splits can occur until the freeze is lifted.²⁰
- 8.16 Stats NZ releases new meshblock boundaries annually on 1 January each year. When reviewing boundaries local authorities must use the most current meshblock boundaries. Not doing so risks proposing boundaries that cannot be accepted, and delaying the finalisation of boundaries. The most current meshblock pattern can be found at:

[Stats NZ Geographic Boundary Viewer](#)

The Geographic Boundary Viewer is easy to use but is view only.

[Browse GIS data | Stats NZ Geographic Data Service](#)

The Geographic Data Services allows data to be downloaded for use in a council's own GIS system

- 8.17 Enquiries regarding meshblock alterations should be directed to the Stats NZ Geospatial Team as follows:

Rachel Livingston Phone: (03) 964 8448

Mark Barnes Phone: (03) 964 8420

Post: Geospatial Team
Stats NZ Tauranga Aotearoa
Private Bag 4741
Christchurch

Email: representationreview@stats.govt.nz for representation review specific enquiries

²⁰ From July 2022 onwards a meshblock freeze is in place for the 2023 Census / Representation Commission period. The freeze remains in place until the Representation Commission has finished its determination of parliamentary electorate boundaries (likely early to mid-2025).

geography@stats.govt.nz for more general meshblock-related enquiries, particularly outside the formal representation review period.

Website: www.stats.govt.nz

Use of population data

8.18 When carrying out its representation review, the local authority must (s19X) apply the “ordinarily resident population”²¹ figures derived from either:

- the most recent census, or
- population estimates prepared by Stats NZ.

Population estimates can be requested by contacting Stats NZ at representationreview@stats.govt.nz.

8.19 The Commission recommends that the most recent population estimates are used, so that each local authority is applying population data that most accurately reflects its current situation. Stats NZ releases sub-national population estimates annually in October each year, as at 30 June in that year.²²

8.20 Local authorities must not use population statistics from more than one source in determining representation arrangements, e.g., population estimates from two different years. To do so would be in breach of section 19X and would result in inaccurate populations.

8.21 Where a new population source is issued after a local authority has resolved its initial proposal the new population source should not be used when the final proposal is being resolved. Doing so might require changes to the proposed representation arrangements that submitters could not have anticipated. This might lessen or remove the ability of submitters to have a meaningful input into the process.

8.22 Stats NZ will provide estimates of population for a variety of areas including individual meshblocks, statistical areas (SA1 and SA2)²³, existing electoral areas, proposed electoral areas (if an appropriate geographic description is provided), and whole districts.

²¹ Stats NZ uses the terminology “usually resident population” (URP).

²² The latest available population estimates are currently as at 30 June 2022. The 2023 population estimates will be available in October 2023.

²³ Statistical areas are groupings of meshblocks devised for the reporting of statistical data for areas larger than individual meshblocks. Statistical area 2’s (SA2) replace the former area units and are, generally, about the same size. Statistical area 1’s (SA1) cover smaller areas than the SA2’s and include either a single meshblock or a small number of meshblocks.

- 8.23 Estimates for local authority districts, existing electoral areas and SA2s are published by Stats NZ on [NZ.Stat](#).
- 8.24 Estimates for MEP and GEP can be provided for SA2s, and other larger groupings of meshblocks. They cannot, however, be provided for individual meshblocks.
- 8.25 The most direct source for obtaining each type of statistics is shown in the table below.

Statistics type	Area	Source
2018 census URP	Meshblocks	info@stats.govt.nz or 0508 525 525
Annual estimates URP	SA2, Regions, TAs, current electoral areas, and proposed areas	http://nzdotstat.stats.govt.nz/wbos/index.aspx
Annual estimates URP	Meshblocks and customised areas	representationreview@stats.govt.nz
MEP/GEP	2018 census by meshblock	https://datafinder.stats.govt.nz/layer/104578-meshblock-electoral-populations-2020/
MEP/GEP	Annual estimates for Regions, TAs, current electoral areas, proposed areas and customised areas	representationreview@stats.govt.nz

- 8.26 Stats NZ charges a fee for the preparation of population estimates for areas that are not routinely published on its website.
- 8.27 Enquiries regarding population estimates should be directed to:

Melissa Adams Phone: (03) 964 8348

Helen He Phone: (03) 964 8353

Post: Population Insights
 Stats NZ Tatauranga Aotearoa Private Bag 4741
 Christchurch

Email: representationreview@stats.govt.nz

Website: www.stats.govt.nz

Chapter 9: Informing relevant organisations

- 9.1 Each local authority needs to keep the following organisations informed of its representation review's progress:
- The Local Government Commission
 - The Surveyor-General
 - The Government Statistician, and
 - The Remuneration Authority.
- 9.2 This is to help these organisations anticipate and plan the work required of them as result of representation reviews.
- 9.3 Local authorities are required to provide the above parties a copy of the:
- resolution on its initial proposals (*section 19L*)
 - public notice of its final proposals, if submissions were received on the initial proposals (*section 19N*)
 - public notice of its final proposals, if no submissions were received on the initial proposals, or if no appeals and/or objections were received (*section 19Y*).
- 9.4 A copy of the public notice under *section 19Y* is also required to be sent to the Secretary for Local Government.
- 9.5 The Commission requests that in addition to the statutory information requirements, each local authority provides copies of the following information to the Commission as and when they are released:
- any public discussion or consultation documents issued relating to the review
 - officer reports to the local authority, and
 - all relevant local authority resolutions and public notices.
- 9.6 A local authority also needs to ensure that other local authorities with a direct interest in its proposal are provided with copies of the public notices issued by the local authority in undertaking its representation review. *Sections 19N and 19Y* require:
- a territorial authority issuing a public notice to provide it to the regional council(s) in whose region(s) the district is located
 - a regional council issuing a public notice to provide it to the territorial authorities located in its region.
- 9.7 The postal and email addresses for the organisations required to receive copies of public notices are:

Chief Executive Officer
**Mana Kāwanatanga ā-Rohe
Local Government Commission**
PO Box 5362
Wellington 6145
lgc@lgc.govt.nz

Government Statistician
Tatauranga Aotearoa Stats NZ
PO Box 2922
Wellington 6011
representationreview@stats.govt.nz

Surveyor-General
Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand
PO Box 5501
Wellington 6145
electoral@linz.govt.nz

Chair
**Te Mana Utu Matua Remuneration
Authority**
PO Box 10-084
Wellington 6143
info@remauthority.govt.nz

Secretary for Local Government
Te Tari Taiwhenua Department of Internal Affairs
PO Box 805
Wellington 6140
councils@dia.govt.nz

- 9.8 For each organisation, the preferred method of receiving public notices and other documentation is by electronic means.

Chapter 10: Appeals, objections, and referrals

Introduction

- 10.1 Once a local authority has decided on its final proposal:
- an appeal may be made by a submitter on the initial proposal about matters related to their original submission (*s190*)
 - an objection may be lodged by any person or organisation if a local authority's final proposal differs from its initial proposal (*s19P*). The objection must identify the matters to which the objection relates.
 - the local authority must refer their final proposal to the Commission if the proposal does not comply with the '+/-10% rule' (*s19V*).
- 10.2 Any references to appeals in this chapter include any proposals referred under *section 19V*, as they are treated as appeals.
- 10.3 Appeals, objections, and referrals under *section 19V* are sent to the Commission.
- 10.4 Local authorities must set the closing date for appeals and objections:
- at least one month after the date of the public notice issued under *section 19N(1)(b)*
 - no later than 3 December in the year before election year.
- 10.5 There is no provision in the *Local Electoral Act 2001* for the acceptance of late appeals or objections.

The role of the Commission

- 10.6 When there are appeals, objections or referrals, the Commission must:
- consider the appeals, objections, and other information forwarded to it
 - determine the representation arrangements for the local authority (*section 19R*)
 - complete its duties before 11 April in election year.
- 10.7 In making its determination, the Commission is able to make any enquiries that it considers appropriate and may choose to hold meetings with the parties.
- 10.8 Determinations of the Commission may be:
- appealed on a point of law, in accordance with *Schedule 5, Local Government Act 2002*
 - subject to judicial review under the *Judicial Review Procedure Act 2016*.

10.9 One of the Commission's 2004 determinations was subject to judicial review²⁴. The High Court's judgement confirmed that:

- the Commission's role is to determine the matters required to complete the review of representation arrangements
- the Commission's role is not merely supervisory of a local authority's decision. This means that the Commission is not restricted to checking that a local authority has followed a correct process and referred to all relevant factors, but that it is also required to form its own view on the matters which are within the scope of the review
- the Commission is required to take into account the local authority's proposal (amongst other matters), and the weight accorded to the proposal is determined by the Commission
- it is not mandatory for the Commission to consider the weight of numbers in favour of a particular viewpoint. One compelling submission may provide sufficient material for the Commission to reach a decision.

Information to be provided to the Commission

10.10 The information required to accompany the appeals and objections forwarded to the Commission is (set out in detail in *section 19Q*):

- copies of the resolutions on the initial and final proposals
- a copy of the public notice of the final proposal
- all submissions made on the local authority's initial proposal
- all appeals and objections received
- information concerning the communities of interest and population of the district, region or community, or any proposed electoral area, as is held by the local authority and is necessary for the Commission's determination of the appeals and objections.

10.11 In addition, the Commission would normally expect the following information to be provided:

- copies of any public discussion or consultation documents on the review
- detailed maps showing the existing electoral areas of the local authority or community and the proposed subdivisions
- officer reports to the local authority that provide background information and make recommendations, including the financial impacts of any proposals.

²⁴ Ford & Ors v The Local Government Commission & Ors (16/8/2004, High Court, Christchurch, John Hansen J, CIV-2004-409-948)

Commission consideration

- 10.12 When considering appeals and/or objections against the final proposal of a local authority, the Commission has the option of either making a decision based on the papers, or holding a hearing at which the parties may put forward their respective viewpoints. The Commission also has the discretion to make any enquiries it considers appropriate.
- 10.13 Occasionally the Commission has invited selected submitters who support local authority proposals to appear at hearings in order that the Commission hears a balance of views. Others, such as representatives of community boards, may also be invited to ensure additional perspectives are heard by the Commission. Such invitations are made at the discretion of the Commission.
- 10.14 Where the only appeals received involve relatively minor matters the Commission has, on occasions, reached its decision based on a consideration of the papers. In deciding whether or not to hold a hearing, the appeals and/or objections received will be assessed to determine whether a hearing is justified in a particular case.
- 10.15 Refer to [Appendix J: Appeals and objections hearing processes](#) on page 78 for details on the conduct of Commission hearings and process requirements.

Commission decisions

- 10.16 Commission decisions take account of matters:
- that come before it through appeals and objections
 - raised in submissions to a local authority's initial proposal, and information gained through any further enquiries the Commission considers appropriate (s19R).
- 10.17 With regard to a proposal before it, the Commission must rectify any element of a local authority's proposal that it considers does not comply with the statutory provisions, whether or not that element of the proposal was the subject of an appeal or objection. Therefore, there may be occasions when the Commission's determination is not founded on any particular proposal, submission, objection, or appeal.
- 10.18 In considering local authority proposals, the Commission must ensure that the provisions of *sections 19T or 19U or 19W*, and *section 19V* are complied with. If the Commission does not consider that the local authority has established grounds for a departure from the '+/-10% fair representation rule' in *section 19V(2)*, then the Commission is required to ensure that this requirement is met.

Chapter 11: Implementation

What happens if a local authority's proposal is not considered by the Commission?

- 11.1 If the Commission does not have to determine a local authority's representation review proposal it is the local authority's responsibility to liaise with Stats NZ over changes required by new or altered boundaries and to arrange with a mapping provider for the preparation of new plans. See paragraphs 11.7 to 11.14 for the preparation of plans.
- 11.2 In such cases Commission staff are able to provide technical advice to the local authority and to Stats NZ.
- 11.3 Stats NZ's preference is for geographic data provided to it to be in sent in digital form. This is more efficient than hard copy information and will better ensure that the local authority's decisions are accurately reflected in the digital meshblock pattern.

What happens after the Commission makes a determination?

- 11.4 After the Commission has made a determination on a local authority's representation arrangements, it:
 - advises the affected local authority and the appellants and objectors
 - advises the news media
 - advises the Surveyor-General, Government Statistician, the Remuneration Authority and the Secretary for Local Government
 - gives public notice of the determination (the cost of which is met by the Commission)
 - where boundaries have been altered or new electoral areas are established, arranges for the preparation of plans defining those boundaries and areas (the cost of which is met by the affected local authority).
- 11.5 As well as formally advising the Government Statistician of the determination, the Commission liaises with Stats NZ's Geospatial Team to ensure that new or altered boundaries are reflected in the digital meshblock pattern. In turn Stats NZ provides the new meshblock pattern to the Electoral Commission, so that electoral rolls reflect the new or altered boundaries.
- 11.6 When the Commission has determined a local authority's representation arrangements, it is not necessary for the local authority to liaise with Stats NZ or to arrange for the preparation of plans. This will be done by the Commission.

Preparation and certification of plans

- 11.7 Representation arrangements for the next local authority or community board election do not take effect unless plans of the relevant electoral areas have been:
- forwarded to Land Information New Zealand (LINZ), and
 - certified by the Surveyor-General or his/her delegate.
- 11.8 Forward plans in PDF format to electoral@linz.govt.nz, with the words 'Plan for certification' and the name of the local authority in the subject line of the email.
- 11.9 The Surveyor-General (in conjunction with the Commission) has issued a standard specifying the requirements for plans submitted for certification - [Standard for plans of local authority areas - LINZS5000](#) .
- 11.10 The requirement to have plans prepared for electoral areas includes Māori and General wards and constituencies where they cover a whole district or region.
- 11.11 When the Commission determines a local authority's representation arrangements and is required to arrange the preparation of new plans, the relevant local authority must reimburse the Commission for all costs incurred in obtaining the certification, or must meet the costs of the production of the certificate if required to do so by LINZ (s19Y(5)). The Commission may either invoice the local authority, or arrange for the firm undertaking the preparation of the plans to invoice the local authority directly.
- 11.12 The drafting and certification of plans, whether undertaken under instructions from a local authority or the Commission, may take some time to complete. The time and costs involved will generally reflect the number and complexity of changes to existing representation arrangements.
- 11.13 All local authorities need to factor in provision for costs associated with such plans when developing the budgets for their representation reviews.
- 11.14 Copies of current plans can be viewed on the Commission's website at www.lgc.govt.nz.

When do determinations take effect?

- 11.15 The Commission's determinations come into force at the upcoming elections. A local authority or electoral officer may act on the content of a determination to prepare for those elections.

Chapter 12: Minor boundary alterations

Introduction

- 12.1 Local authorities not undertaking representation reviews may make minor alterations to electoral boundaries where there have been property boundary changes at or near existing electoral boundaries.
- 12.2 A local authority decision on a minor boundary alteration must be referred to the Commission for determination.

Key statutory provisions

- 12.3 The statutory provisions relating to minor boundary alterations are set out in *section 19JA* for territorial authorities and *section 19JB* for regional councils. These provisions set out the following requirements:
- since the last representation review, there have been changes to allotment boundaries at or near electoral boundaries²⁵
 - the proposed electoral boundary alterations are minor
 - the alterations will maintain effective representation of communities of interest
 - as far as practicable, the proposed electoral boundaries will coincide with allotment boundaries
 - as far as practicable, proposed ward boundaries will coincide with community boundaries (if any), and proposed constituency boundaries will coincide with district or ward boundaries.
- 12.4 The proposal is not subject to consultation in the way a representation review proposal is, but a local authority's decision must be made in an open meeting (*ss19JA and B*) (subject to the requirements of the *Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987*).
- 12.5 The local authority must refer a decision on a proposed minor boundary alteration to the Commission no later than 15 January in an election year. It must also forward any information on communities of interest, population, and the proposed electoral areas held by the local authority and necessary for the Commission's determination. The information provided to the Commission needs to focus on the areas directly affected by the proposed minor boundary alteration.
- 12.6 The Commission is able to make any inquiries it considers appropriate before making a determination on the proposal. It must make its determination before 11 April in election year.

²⁵ Allotment is defined as having the same meaning given by *section 575, Natural and Built Environment Act 2023* (see [Appendix K](#): on page 85).

Commission consideration

12.7 The Commission sees the normal use of this provision as being situations where a property subdivision has occurred that:

- straddles an electoral boundary, resulting in properties being divided between electoral areas
- leaves properties without direct roading access to the electoral area in which they are situated
- is adjacent to an electoral boundary and leaves a new property subdivision outside the electoral area in which its predominant community of interest is located.

12.8 The benefits of making minor boundary alterations are seen as:

- better recognising communities of interest
- providing clarity about which electoral area electors should be enrolled in.

Detailed matters for local authorities

12.9 Minor boundary alterations normally require an alteration to meshblock boundaries and contact should be made with Statistics New Zealand to check whether it will agree to change meshblock boundaries. There may be some circumstances where a meshblock is not able to be changed, for example where the boundary is also the boundary of a parliamentary electorate.

12.10 A local authority considering a minor boundary alteration needs to check whether the proposed new boundary is also:

- another local authority's electoral area's boundary, for example a ward boundary may also be a regional constituency boundary
- a licensing trust district or community trust boundary.²⁶

Where this is the case the local authority proposing a minor boundary alteration should discuss the matter with the other affected local authority to alert them and to discuss whether they also wish to change boundaries. The existence of a shared boundary and the outcomes of those discussions should be included in the information provided to the Commission.

12.11 Discussion with the other affected bodies (and in some cases with the Commission) may help clarify how feasible it is to make a minor boundary alteration.

²⁶ Sections 300, 304, 337 and 363 of the *Sale and Supply of Liquor Act 2012* enable the Commission to alter the boundaries of licensing trust districts and community trusts so that they conform with meshblock boundaries.

Chapter 13: Auckland Council

- 13.1 There are some differences to how the representation review legislation applies to the Auckland Council. This chapter explains those differences.
- 13.2 The representation review provisions of the *Local Electoral Act 2001* apply to the Auckland Council because it is a territorial authority, subject to the following specific provisions of the *Local Government (Auckland Council) Act 2009*:
- local boards must comprise no fewer than 5 and no more than 12 members (*s11(1A)*)
 - a prohibition on the establishment of community boards in Auckland (*s102*).
- 13.3 The following matters relating to local boards are to be dealt with by way of reorganisation applications under the *Local Government Act 2002*, and therefore not through the representation review process (*s24, LGA*):
- establishment of local board areas
 - abolition of local board areas
 - alteration of boundaries of local board areas, other than those permitted by *s19JAA, LEA*
 - union of 2 or more local boards.
- 13.4 The following matters relating to local boards must be considered as part of the representation review process (*s19H(1)(e)-(i), LEA*):
- the number of elected members of local boards
 - whether elected members are to be elected from the whole local board area, subdivisions, or wards (if the local board area comprises 2 or more wards)
 - if the basis of election is subdivisions, the names and boundaries of the subdivisions, and the number of members for each subdivision
 - if the basis of election is wards, the number of members to be elected by each ward
 - the names of local boards.
- 13.5 In addition, the boundaries of local board areas may be reviewed within the limitations set out in section 19JAA (see paragraphs 7.12 to 7.14).
- 13.6 A new local board established following a reorganisation application under the *Local Government Act 2002* may have:
- a chairperson directly elected by the electors of the local board area
 - a mixture of directly elected members and members appointed by the governing body.
- 13.7 These options are not available to the local boards established under the *Local Government (Auckland Council) Act 2009* (*s24(1)(h), LGA*).

- 13.8 The *Local Government (Auckland Council) Act 2009* included the following requirements for the representation arrangements determined for the Auckland Council's first election in 2010:
- single member wards for the rural part of the former Rodney District and for that part of the former Franklin District included in Auckland
 - a more flexible approach to the '+/-10% rule' allowing the requirement not to be complied with if considered necessary for the effective representation of communities of interest.
- 13.9 These arrangements do not apply to reviews carried out after 2010. However, the arrangements in *section 19V(3)(a), Local Electoral Act 2001* now contain greater flexibility in respect of the '+/-10% rule' than was the case in 2010.
- 13.10 The provisions in *section 19JA, Local Electoral Act* which permit minor alterations to the boundaries of territorial authority wards, communities, subdivisions of communities, and local board subdivisions:
- apply to Auckland only in relation to wards and local board subdivisions
 - do not apply to the external boundaries of local board areas as these can only be altered through the process set out in *section 19JAA* or the reorganisation process in the *Local Government Act 2002*.

Appendix A: Timelines diagram

Figure 1 below is a summary of the timelines leading up to a round of local government elections. Refer to the relevant sections in these guidelines for detailed information about the associated requirements. An A3 version is available at the Local Government Commission website www.lgc.govt.nz. Figure 1 includes the dates relating to choosing electoral systems and establishing Māori wards/constituencies that must be met for any new resolutions to apply in the upcoming local government elections.

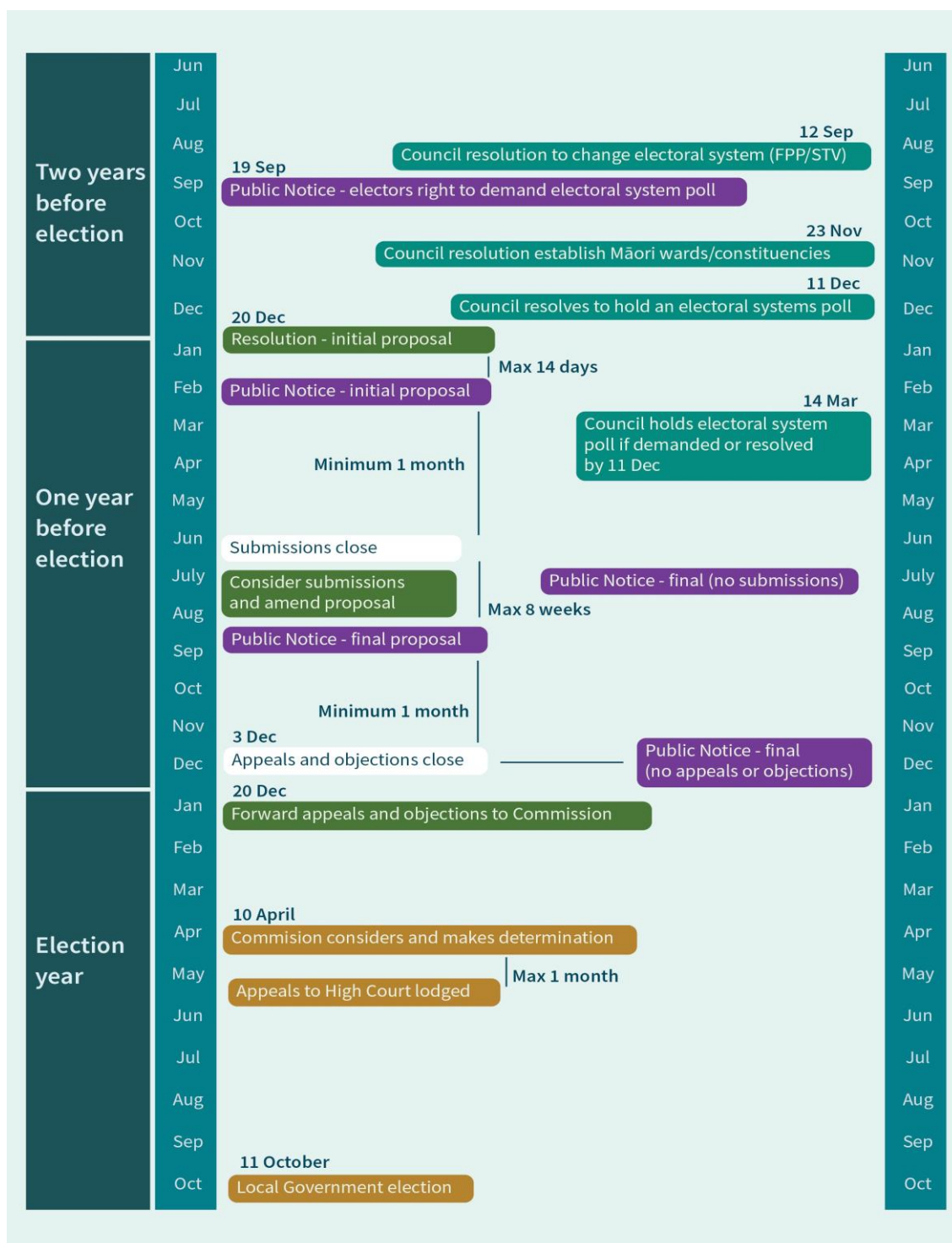


Figure 1: Timelines leading up to local government elections

Appendix B: Statutory Provisions

Statutory provisions from Part 1A, Local Electoral Act

This section covers the statutory provisions from *Part 1A Representation arrangements for elections of territorial authorities, regional councils, local boards, and community boards*.

The requirements relating to local authorities' representation reviews are contained in *ss19A to 19Y, Part 1A Local Electoral Act 2001*. These cover:

- representation arrangements
- representation reviews
- procedural steps and timelines.

Representation arrangements

The following provisions relate to representation arrangements for territorial authorities, regional councils and community boards:

- *section 19A – membership of territorial authorities*
- *section 19B – basis of election of mayor of territorial authority*
- *section 19C – basis of election of members of territorial authority*
- *section 19D – membership of regional councils*
- *section 19E – basis of election of members of regional council*
- *section 19EA – membership of local boards*
- *section 19EB – basis of election of chairperson of local board in certain circumstances*
- *section 19EC – basis of election of members of local board*
- *section 19F – membership of community boards*
- *section 19G – basis of election of members of community board.*

Review of representation arrangements

The following provisions relate to representation reviews:

- *section 19H – review of representation arrangements for elections of territorial authorities*
- *section 19I – review of representation arrangements for elections of regional councils*
- *section 19J – review of community boards*
- *section 19T – requirement for effective representation and other factors in determination of membership and basis of election of territorial authorities and local boards*
- *section 19U – requirement for effective representation and other factors in determination of membership and basis of election of regional council*
- *section 19V – requirement for fair representation and other factors in determination of membership for wards, constituencies, and subdivisions*

- *section 19W – factors in determination of matters in relation to community boards.*

If Māori wards/constituencies are to apply to a local authority election, then the provisions of *Schedule 1A, Local Electoral Act 2001* also apply. Those provisions substitute the *Part 1A* provisions as required to provide for the Māori wards/constituencies.

Matters for local authorities to take into account when formulating proposals for Māori wards/constituencies are outlined in [Chapter 4: Māori wards and constituencies](#) on page 18.

Procedural steps

The following provisions set out procedural requirements relating to representation reviews and associated timelines:

- *section 19K – requirements for resolution*
- *section 19L – distribution of copies of resolution*
- *section 19M – public notice of proposals, and responsibilities in relation to submissions*
- *section 19N – response to submissions*
- *section 19O – appeals*
- *section 19P – objections*
- *section 19Q – obligation to forward appeals and objections to Commission*
- *section 19R – Commission to determine appeals and objections*
- *section 19S – determination of Commission*
- *section 19X – certificate of Government Statistician*
- *section 19Y – when determinations take effect.*

Other relevant statutory provisions

In addition to the specific requirements of *Part 1A, Local Electoral Act 2001*, local authorities preparing for and carrying out representation reviews need to bear in mind other relevant provisions of that *Act* and the *Local Government Act 2002*. These are described below.

Local Electoral Act 2001

Section 3(c) provides that the purpose of the *Act* is to allow diversity, through local decision-making, in relation to:

(ia) the regular review of representation arrangements for local authorities

Section 4(2) requires local authorities:

... in making decisions under this Act or any other enactment, [to] take into account those principles specified in *subsection (1)* that are applicable

(if any), so far as is practicable in the circumstances.

In summary, the principles in *subsection (1)* are:

- representative and substantive electoral participation in local elections and polls
- fair and effective representation for individuals and communities
- reasonable and equal opportunities to:
 - vote
 - nominate, or be nominated as, candidates
- public confidence in, and public understanding of, local electoral processes.

Local Government Act 2002

It is also necessary for local authorities to consider the purpose and principles of local government and the consultation and decision-making requirements set out in the *Local Government Act 2002* when undertaking their review of representation arrangements.

Section 3, Local Government Act 2002 provides that:

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

Section 10 (1) provides that the purpose of local government is:

- (a) to enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of, communities; and
- (b) to promote the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of communities in the present and for the future.

Section 13 provides that *sections 10* (Purpose of local government) and *12(2)* (Status and powers):

...apply to a local authority performing a function under another enactment to the extent that the application of those provisions is not inconsistent with the other enactment.

Section 14 (1) sets out principles for local authorities. These include the following provisions that a local authority must act in accordance with when performing its role (which includes performing the duties and exercising the rights conferred on it by any other enactment):

- (b) local authority should make itself aware of, and should have regard to, the views of all of its communities; and
- (c) when making a decision, a local authority should take account of—
 - (i) the diversity of the community, and the community’s interests, within its district or region; and
 - (ii) the interests of future as well as current communities; and
 - (iii) the likely impact of any decision on each aspect of well-being referred to in *section 10*:
- (d) a local authority should provide opportunities for Māori to contribute to its decision-making processes.

Sections 77, 78 and 81 set out requirements for local authorities when making decisions including contributions to decision-making by Māori, and *section 82* sets out principles of consultation. *Subsection 76(1)* provides that every decision must be in accordance with these sections (that is, *sections 77 to 82*) and *subsection 76(5)* applies these requirements to decisions made under other enactments to the extent they are not inconsistent with the other enactment.

Section 19W, Local Electoral Act 2001 sets out provisions relating to reviews of community boards. It provides that a local authority in undertaking a review under *section 19J*, or the Commission in determining a local authority’s community board arrangements, must have regard to the criteria for reorganisation proposals specified in the *Local Government Act 2002*, as considered appropriate in the circumstances.

The general role of community boards is set out in *section 52, Local Government Act 2002*. The role of particular community boards is significantly determined by the matters referred or responsibilities that are delegated to boards by the parent territorial authority under *subsections 52(b) and (f)*.

Relationship of *Local Government Act 2002* and *Local Electoral Act 2001*

The provisions of the *Local Government Act 2002* described above apply to local authorities making decisions under the *Local Electoral Act 2001*, including representation reviews, if they are not inconsistent with the *Local Electoral Act*.

Specific provisions of the *Local Electoral Act 2001* reflect the philosophy of the *Local Government Act 2002*, which recognises the diversity of New Zealand communities. These provisions provide local choice in respect of:

- the electoral system to be used
- the establishment of Māori wards or constituencies
- representation arrangements (subject to appeal/objection/referral to the Local Government Commission), including:
 - the number of members of the elected body (within a prescribed range)
 - and for territorial authorities, the basis of election (at large, wards, or a mix of both), and the establishment of community boards.

In both the *Local Electoral Act 2001* and the *Local Government Act 2002*, the word 'community' is used in two different senses:

- a community constituted under *Schedule 6, Local Government Act 2002* and relating to a community board, or
- a broader community of interest within the district/region.

Section 5, Local Government Act 2002 provides that, with specified exceptions, the term 'community' (and by cross-reference the *Local Electoral Act 2001*) refers to a community board area. However, 'community' is used in the wider sense in the provisions referred to in paragraphs 0 to 5.270 (from *Part 2, Local Government Act 2002*).

Appendix C: Contacts

Local Government Commission

Telephone: (04) 460 2228
 Email: info@lgc.govt.nz
 Postal address: PO Box 5362
 Wellington 6140

New Zealand Geographic Board (regarding place names)

Wendy Shaw, Secretary for the New Zealand Geographic Board
 Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa

Post: c/o Land Information New Zealand
 PO Box 5501
 Wellington 6145

Phone: (04) 460 0581
 Email: wshaw@linz.govt.nz
 Website: www.linz.govt.nz

Stats NZ

Melissa Adams and Helen He (re population estimates)
 Email: info@stats.govt.nz

Rachel Livingston and Mark Barnes (re meshblocks)
 Email: geography@stats.govt.nz

Tatauranga Aotearoa Stats NZ

Post: Private Bag 4741
 Christchurch

Phone: (03) 964 8370
 Fax: (03) 964 8999
 Website: www.stats.govt.nz

Organisations required to receive public notices

Chief Executive Officer
Mana Kāwanatanga ā-Rohe
Local Government Commission
 PO Box 5362
 Wellington 6140

Chair
Te Mana Utu Matua Remuneration
Authority
 PO Box 10-084
 Wellington 6143

Government Statistician
Tatauranga Aotearoa Statistics New
Zealand
 PO Box 2922
 Wellington 6140

Secretary for Local Government
Te Tari Taiwhenua Department of
Internal Affairs
 PO Box 805
 Wellington 6140

Surveyor-General

Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand

PO Box 5501

Wellington 6145

Preferred means of contact –

electoral@linz.govt.nz

Appendix D: Sample public notice – initial proposal

This example of a public notice for an initial representation proposal is intended to assist local authorities prepare public notices under *section 19M Local Electoral Act 2001*.

Nameless District Council

Initial proposal for representation arrangements for the 2025 local elections

On 26 April 2024 the Nameless District Council reviewed its representation arrangements, and resolved that the following proposal apply for the Council and its community boards for the elections to be held on 11 October 2025:

Council Representation

It is proposed that the Council comprise 10 members elected from five wards, and the mayor. The five wards reflect the following identified communities of interest:

Ward	Communities of interest
Brown Ward	brief geographic description of Brown Ward
Green Ward	brief geographic description of Green Ward
Yellow Ward	brief geographic description of Yellow Ward
Red Ward	brief geographic description of Red Ward
Blue Ward	brief geographic description of Blue Ward

The population that each member will represent is as follows:

Ward	Population (2018 census)	Members	Population per member
Brown Ward	8900	2	4450
Green Ward	11400	3	3800
Yellow Ward	3500	1	3500
Red Ward	8400	2	4200
Blue Ward	8800	2	4400
Total	41000	10	4100

In accordance with *section 19V(2), Local Electoral Act 2001* the population that each member represents must be within the range of 4100 +/- 10% (3690 to 4510), unless particular community of interest considerations justify otherwise.

Only the representation of the Yellow Ward falls outside the stipulated range. The Council considers that the Yellow Ward warrants a single member for the following reasons:

- reason 1 based on the considerations set out in section 19V(3)
- reason 2 based on the considerations set out in section 19V(3).

Community Board Representation

It is proposed that the following five community boards be elected:

Community Board	Area of Community
East Community Board	geographical description of the East Community Board
West Community Board	geographical description of the West Community Board
North Community Board	geographical description of the North Community Board
South-West Community Board	geographical description of the South-West Community Board
South-East Community Board	geographical description of the South-East Community Board

East, West and North Community Boards

The East, West, and North Community Boards will each elect five members. They will not be subdivided for electoral purposes. They will each have one appointed member as follows:

Community Board	Number of members from which ward
East Community Board	1 member appointed from the Brown Ward
West Community Board	1 member appointed from the Green Ward
North Community Board	1 member appointed from the Yellow Ward

South-West Community Board

The South-West Community Board will elect six members. One member will be appointed to the Board from the Red Ward.

The South-West Community Board will be subdivided for electoral purposes as follows:

Subdivision	Area of Subdivision
Hills Subdivision	geographical description of the Hills Subdivision
Valley Subdivision	geographical description of the Valley Subdivision

The population that the members of each subdivision will represent is shown below:

Subdivision	Population (2018 census)	Members	Population per member
Hills Subdivision	3200	2	1600
Valley Subdivision	5800	4	1450
Total	9000	6	1500

The population each member of the South-West Community Board represents falls within the range of 1500 +/-10% (1350 – 1650) in accordance with *section 19V(2), Local Electoral Act*.

South-East Community Board

The South-East Community Board will elect six members. One member will be appointed to the Board from the Blue Ward.

The South-East Community Board will have two subdivisions for electoral purposes as follows:

Subdivision	Area of Subdivision
Lakes Subdivision	geographical description of the Lakes Subdivision
Rivers Subdivision	geographical description of the Rivers Subdivision

The population that the members of each subdivision will represent is shown below:

Subdivision	Population (2018 census)	Members	Population per member
Lakes Subdivision	4200	3	1400
Rivers Subdivision	4000	3	1333
Total	8200	6	1367

The population each member of the South-East Community Board represents falls within the range of 1367 +/-10% (1230 - 1504) in accordance with *section 19V(2), Local Electoral Act*.

Further Information

Copies of the Council’s resolution and maps setting out the areas of the proposed wards, communities and subdivisions may be viewed and obtained from

- Council Offices, 46 Main Street, Somewhere town.

Any queries regarding the Council’s decision should be directed to Tāne Smith, 01 234 5678, extn 9876, tāne.smith@Somewhere.govt.nz.

Relevant information is also available on the Council’s website www.namelesscc.govt.nz.

Submissions are invited

Persons with an interest in the proposed representation arrangements are invited to make written submissions on the Council's representation proposal.

Submissions are to be forwarded to:

- Attention - Tāne Smith (01 234 5678, extn 9876)
- Physical address - Council Offices, 46 Main Street, Somewhere town.
- Email – representation.review@somewhere.govt.nz

Submissions must be received by Council no later than 31 May 2024.

Christine Jones
Chief Executive
30 April 2024

Appendix E: Sample public notice – final proposal

This example of a public notice for a final representation proposal is intended to assist local authorities prepare public notices under *section 19N, Local Electoral Act 2001*.

Nameless District Council

Final proposal for representation arrangements for the 2025 local elections

Submissions

On 29 October 2024 the Nameless District Council considered the submissions received on its initial proposal regarding the representation arrangements for the Council and its constituent community boards to apply for the local elections to be held on 11 October 2025.

The Council received 12 submissions on its proposal. Seven submissions were in favour of the Council's proposal. Five submissions contained objections to various elements of the proposal, as follows:

- one submitter sought the division of the District into 6 wards, electing 12 members
- one submitter objected to the names of the wards, and to the boundaries of the wards
- one submitter considered that the boundary between the Yellow and Red Ward needs to be moved to York Street
- one submitter objected to the continued existence of community boards in the District
- one submitter considered that there only need to be two community boards – one for the Red Ward and one for the Blue Ward, reflecting the rural nature of those wards.

Final proposal

Having considered all of the objections, the Council resolved to adopt its initial proposal as the Council's final proposal, subject to the following amendments:

- the proposed "Brown" Ward be renamed as the "Purple" Ward
- the proposed "Green" Ward be renamed as the "Orange" Ward.

The Council considers that the name changes are appropriate for the following reasons:

- brief description of reason 1
- brief description of reason 2.

The Council rejected the other matters raised in objections for the following reasons:

- brief description of reason 3
- brief description of reason 4
- brief description of reason 5.

Therefore the final proposal is as follows.

Council Representation

It is proposed that the Council comprise 10 members elected from five wards, and the mayor. The five wards reflect the following identified communities of interest:

Ward	Communities of interest
Purple Ward	brief geographic description of Purple Ward
Orange Ward	brief geographic description of Orange Ward
Yellow Ward	brief geographic description of Yellow Ward
Red Ward	brief geographic description of Red Ward
Blue Ward	brief geographic description of Blue Ward

The population that each member will represent is as follows:

Ward	Population (2018 Census)	Members	Population per member
Purple Ward	8900	2	4450
Orange Ward	11400	3	3800
Yellow Ward	3500	1	3500
Red Ward	8400	2	4200
Blue Ward	8800	2	4400
Total	41000	10	4100

In accordance with *section 19V(2), Local Electoral Act 2001* the population that each member represents must be within the range of 4100 +/- 10% (3690 to 4510), unless particular community of interest considerations justify otherwise.

Only the representation of the Yellow Ward falls outside the stipulated range. The Council considers that the Yellow Ward warrants a single member for the following reasons:

- reason 1 based on the considerations set out in *section 19V(3)*
- reason 2 based on the considerations set out in *section 19V(3)*.

Community Board Representation

It is proposed that five community boards be elected. The five community boards will be:

Community Board	Area of Community
East Community Board	geographical description of the East Community Board
West Community Board	geographical description of the West Community Board
North Community Board	geographical description of the North Community Board
South-West Community Board	geographical description of the South-West Community Board
South-East Community Board	geographical description of the South-East Community Board

East, West and North Community Boards

The East, West, and North Community Boards will each elect five members. They will not be subdivided for electoral purposes. They will each have one appointed member as follows:

Community Board	Number of members from which ward
East Community Board	1 member appointed from the Purple Ward
West Community Board	1 member appointed from the Orange Ward
North Community Board	1 member appointed from the Yellow Ward

South-West Community Board

The South-West Community Board will elect six members. One member will be appointed to the Board from the Red Ward.

The South-West Community Board will be subdivided for electoral purposes as follows:

Subdivision	Area of Subdivision
Hills Subdivision	geographical description of the Hills Subdivision
Valley Subdivision	geographical description of the Valley Subdivision

The population that the members of each subdivision will represent is shown below:

Subdivision	Population (2018 census)	Members	Population per member
Hills Subdivision	3200	2	1600
Valley Subdivision	5800	4	1450
Total	9000	6	1500

The population each member of the South-West Community Board represents falls within the range of 1500 +/-10% (1350 – 1650) in accordance with *section 19V(2), Local Electoral Act*.

South-East Community Board

The South-East Community Board will elect six members. One member will be appointed to the Board from the Blue Ward.

The South-East Community Board will have two subdivisions for electoral purposes as follows:

Subdivision	Area of Subdivision
Lakes Subdivision	geographical description of the Lakes Subdivision
Rivers Subdivision	geographical description of the Rivers Subdivision

The population that the members of each subdivision will represent is shown below:

Subdivision	Population (2018 census)	Members	Population per member
Lakes Subdivision	4200	3	1400
Rivers Subdivision	4000	3	1333
Total	8200	6	1367

The population each member of the South-East Community Board represents falls within the range of 1367 +/-10% (1230 - 1504) in accordance with *section 19V(2), Local Electoral Act*.

Appeals and objections

Any person who made a submission on the Council’s initial proposal may lodge an appeal against the Council’s decision. An appeal must relate to the matters raised in that person's submission.

Any person who objects to the final proposal may lodge an objection to the Council’s final proposal. Any objection must identify the matters to which the objection relates.

Appeals [*and objections*] must be made in writing and must be received by Council no later than 3 December 2024.

Appeals [*and objections*] are to be forwarded to:

Note: The references to objections in italics above should only be included where the final proposal is different to the initial proposal.

Attention - Tāne Smith (01 234 5678, extn 9876)

- Physical address - Council Offices, 46 Main Street, Somewhere town.
- Email – representation.review@somewhere.govt.nz

Further information

Direct any queries regarding the Council's decision to Tāne Smith (contact details above).

Christine Jones
Chief Executive
1 November 2024

Appendix F: Sample public notice – no submissions

This example of a public notice for the final representation arrangements is intended to assist local authorities prepare public notices under *section 19Y(1), Local Electoral Act 2001* where no submissions are received in respect of the initial proposal.

Nameless District Council

Final representation arrangements - 2025 local elections

On 28 August 2024 the Nameless District Council reviewed its representation arrangements and resolved that the following proposal apply for the Council and its community boards for the elections to be held on 11 October 2025.

Submissions on the proposal were invited. As no submissions were received in respect of the proposal it becomes the basis of election for the Nameless District Council for the elections to be held on 11 October 2025.

Council Representation

The Council will comprise 10 members elected from five wards, and the mayor. The five wards reflect the following identified communities of interest:

Ward	Communities of interest
Brown Ward	brief geographic description of Brown Ward
Green Ward	brief geographic description of Green Ward
Yellow Ward	brief geographic description of Yellow Ward
Red Ward	brief geographic description of Red Ward
Blue Ward	brief geographic description of Blue Ward

The population that each member will represent is as follows:

Ward	Population (2018 census)	Members	Population per member
Brown Ward	8900	2	4450
Green Ward	11400	3	3800
Yellow Ward	3500	1	3500
Red Ward	8400	2	4200
Blue Ward	8800	2	4400
Total	41000	10	4100

In accordance with *section 19V(2), Local Electoral Act 2001* the population that each member represents must be within the range of 4100 +/- 10% (3690 to 4510), unless particular community of interest considerations justify otherwise.

Only the representation of the Yellow Ward falls outside the stipulated range. The Council considers that the Yellow Ward warrants a single member for the following reasons:

- reason 1 based on the considerations set out in *section 19V(3)*
- reason 2 based on the considerations set out in *section 19V(3)*.

Community Board Representation

Five community boards will be elected. The five community boards will be:

Community Board	Area of Community
East Community Board	geographical description of the East Community Board
West Community Board	geographical description of the West Community Board
North Community Board	geographical description of the North Community Board
South-West Community Board	geographical description of the South-West Community Board
South-East Community Board	geographical description of the South-East Community Board

East, West and North Community Boards

The East, West, and North Community Boards will each elect five members. They will not be subdivided for electoral purposes. They will each have one appointed member as follows:

Community Board	Number of members from which ward
East Community Board	1 member appointed from the Purple Ward
West Community Board	1 member appointed from the Orange Ward
North Community Board	1 member appointed from the Yellow Ward

South-West Community Board

The South-West Community Board will elect six members. One member will be appointed to the Board from the Red Ward.

The South-West Community Board will be subdivided for electoral purposes as follows:

Subdivision	Area of Subdivision
Hills Subdivision	geographical description of the Hills Subdivision
Valley Subdivision	geographical description of the Valley Subdivision

The population that the members of each subdivision will represent is shown below:

Subdivision	Population (2018 census)	Members	Population per member
Hills Subdivision	3200	2	1600
Valley Subdivision	5800	4	1450
Total	9000	6	1500

The population each member of the South-West Community Board represents falls within the range of 1500 +/-10% (1350 – 1650) in accordance with *section 19V(2), Local Electoral Act*.

South-East Community Board

The South-East Community Board will elect six members. One member will be appointed to the Board from the Blue Ward.

The South-East Community Board will have two subdivisions for electoral purposes as follows:

Subdivision	Area of Subdivision
Lakes Subdivision	geographical description of the Lakes Subdivision
Rivers Subdivision	geographical description of the Rivers Subdivision

The population that the members of each subdivision will represent is shown below:

Subdivision	Population (2019 census)	Members	Population per member
Lakes Subdivision	4200	3	1400
Rivers Subdivision	4000	3	1333
Total	8200	6	1367

The population each member of the South-East Community Board represents falls within the range of 1367 +/-10% (1230 - 1504) in accordance with *section 19V(2), Local Electoral Act*.

Further information

Any queries regarding the Council’s decision should be directed to:

- Tāne Smith (01 234 5678, extn 9876)
- Physical address - Council Offices, 46 Main Street, Somewhere town.
- Email – representation.review@somewhere.govt.nz
- Fax - 01 234 9876.

Christine Jones
 Chief Executive
 2 September 2024

Appendix G: Sample public notice – no appeals or objections

This example of a public notice for the final representation arrangements is intended to assist local authorities prepare public notices under *section 19Y(1), Local Electoral Act 2001* where no appeals or objections are received in respect of the final proposal.

Nameless District Council

Final representation arrangements - 2025 local elections

On 6 November 2024 the Nameless District Council gave public notice of its final proposal for representation arrangements to apply for the Council and its community boards for the elections to be held on 11 October 2025. Notification of the right to appeal or object was also given. No appeals or objections were received in respect of the resolution, therefore the representation arrangements for the Nameless District Council's 2025 local elections will be the same as in the final proposal:

Council Representation

The Council will comprise 10 members elected from five wards, and the mayor. The five wards reflect the following identified communities of interest:

Ward	Communities of interest
Purple Ward	brief geographic description of Purple Ward
Orange Ward	brief geographic description of Orange Ward
Yellow Ward	brief geographic description of Yellow Ward
Red Ward	brief geographic description of Red Ward
Blue Ward	brief geographic description of Blue Ward

The population that each member will represent is as follows:

Ward	Population (2019 census)	Members	Population per member
Purple Ward	8900	2	4450
Orange Ward	11400	3	3800
Yellow Ward	3500	1	3500
Red Ward	8400	2	4200
Blue Ward	8800	2	4400
Total	41000	10	4100

In accordance with *section 19V(2), Local Electoral Act 2001* the population that each member represents must be within the range of 4100 +/- 10% (3690 to 4510), unless particular community of interest considerations justify otherwise.

Only the representation of the Yellow Ward falls outside the stipulated range. The Council considers that the Yellow Ward warrants a single member for the following reasons:

- reason 1 based on the considerations set out in *section 19V(3)*
- reason 2 based on the considerations set out in *section 19V(3)*.

Community Board Representation

Five community boards will be elected. The five community boards will be:

Community Board	Area of Community
East Community Board	geographical description of the East Community Board
West Community Board	geographical description of the West Community Board
North Community Board	geographical description of the North Community Board
South-West Community Board	geographical description of the South-West Community Board
South-East Community Board	geographical description of the South-East Community Board

The East, West, and North Community Boards will each elect five members. They will not be subdivided for electoral purposes. They will each have one appointed member as follows:

Community Board	Number of members from which ward
East Community Board	1 member appointed from the Brown Ward
West Community Board	1 member appointed from the Green Ward
North Community Board	1 member appointed from the Yellow Ward

South-West Community Board

The South-West Community Board will elect six members. One member will be appointed to the Board from the Red Ward.

The South-West Community Board will be subdivided for electoral purposes as follows:

Subdivision	Area of Subdivision
Hills Subdivision	geographical description of the Hills Subdivision
Valley Subdivision	geographical description of the Valley Subdivision

The population that the members of each subdivision will represent is shown below:

Subdivision	Population (2018 census)	Members	Population per member
Hills Subdivision	3200	2	1600
Valley Subdivision	5800	4	1450
Total	9000	6	1500

The population each member of the South-West Community Board represents falls within the range of 1500 +/-10% (1350 – 1650) in accordance with *section 19V(2)*, *Local Electoral Act*.

South-East Community Board

The South-East Community Board will elect six members. One member will be appointed to the Board from the Blue Ward.

The South-East Community Board will have two subdivisions for electoral purposes as follows:

Subdivision	Area of Subdivision
Lakes Subdivision	geographical description of the Lakes Subdivision
Rivers Subdivision	geographical description of the Rivers Subdivision

The population that the members of each subdivision will represent is shown below:

Subdivision	Population (2018 census)	Members	Population per member
Lakes Subdivision	4200	3	1400
Rivers Subdivision	4000	3	1333
Total	8200	6	1367

The population each member of the South-East Community Board represents falls within the range of 1367 +/-10% (1230 - 1504) in accordance with *section 19V(2), Local Electoral Act*.

Further information

Any queries regarding the Council's decision should be directed to:

- Tāne Smith (01 234 5678, extn 9876)
- Physical address - Council Offices, 46 Main Street, Somewhere town.
- Email – representation.review@somewhere.govt.nz
- Fax - 01 234 9876.

Chris Jones
Chief Executive
8 November 2024

Appendix H: Basis of election

Basis of election (wards, at large, or a combination of both) only applies to territorial authorities. This appendix gives an overview of territorial authorities' basis of election since 1989.

At the 1989 elections, following the reorganisation of local government, the members of the Kaikoura and Kawerau District Councils were elected at large. All other territorial authority elections were conducted by wards.

At the 1992 elections, four further territorial authorities adopted the at large system: Upper Hutt City, Invercargill City, Nelson City, and the Chatham Islands. All remaining territorial authorities used wards as the basis of election for their members.

The basis of election of territorial authorities remained the same for the 1995, 1998 and 2001 elections except for Napier City which adopted the at large system for the 1998 and subsequent elections.

For the 2004 elections, in addition to the above seven territorial authorities, the Commission upheld a proposal of the Wairoa District Council that the Council be elected at large. For these elections, the Commission also determined that the mixed system of representation would apply for the election of members to the Kapiti Coast District Council and the Tauranga City Council. The remaining 63 territorial authorities continued to use wards as the basis of election for members.

At the 2007 elections, the above eight territorial authorities with the exception of Napier City, conducted their election at large. In addition, as a result of appeals/objections, the Commission determined that the Wanganui District Council election would also be conducted at large. The Commission also determined that three further territorial authority elections (in addition to Tauranga City and Kapiti Coast District) would be conducted using a mixed system of representation. These were Napier City, Masterton District and Gore District Councils. The remaining 60 territorial authorities continued to use wards as the basis of election for members.

For the 2010 elections the Commission upheld the Rotorua District Council's proposal that it be elected at large. The newly constituted Auckland Council was elected from wards. The remaining 53 territorial authorities continued to use wards as the basis of election for members.

In 2013 the Commission determined that the Palmerston North City Council would be elected at large.

For the 2016 elections the Commission determined that the Dunedin City Council would be elected at large.

For the 2019 elections, the Commission upheld the Napier City Council’s proposal that it be elected entirely from wards but determined that the Hutt City Council should be elected from a mixed system instead of the previous ward system. The Masterton District Council resolved that it be elected at large instead of from a ward system. The Commission was not required to make a determination on that matter as no appeals against the proposal were lodged. In addition, as a result of a poll held in conjunction with the 2016 elections, the Wairoa District Council was required to establish a Māori ward (and as a result of that a general ward) for the 2019 elections.

Most recently, for the 2022 elections the decision by several councils to establish Māori wards resulted in:

- three councils moving from an at large system to a ward system. - Masterton District Council, Palmerston North City Council, Rotorua District Council
- One council moving from an at large system to a mixed system – Nelson City Council
- One council moving from a ward system to a mixed system – New Plymouth District Council
- One council moving from a mixed system to a ward system – Tauranga City Council²⁷

This meant that for those elections:

- 51 territorial authorities were elected by wards
- 12 were elected at large
- 4 were elected by a mixed system.

The information outlined above is summarised in the following table.

Election	Councils newly adopting at large systems	Councils newly adopting mixed systems	Number of councils elected solely by wards
1989	Kaikoura District Kawerau District	-	72
1992	Chatham Islands Invercargill City Nelson City (to 2022) Upper Hutt City		68
1995			68
1998	Napier City (to 2007)		67
2001			67

²⁷ No election for the Tauranga City Council was held in 2022 because a Commission to run the Council has been appointed under section 258F, LGA until July 2024.

Election	Councils newly adopting at large systems	Councils newly adopting mixed systems	Number of councils elected solely by wards
2004	Wairoa District (to 2019)	Kapiti Coast District Tauranga City (to 2022)	64
2007	Whanganui District	Gore District Masterton District (to 2019) Napier City (to 2019)	60
2010	Rotorua District (to 2022)		53
2013	Palmerston North City (to 2022)		52
2016	Dunedin City		51
2019	Masterton District (to 2022)	Hutt City	50
2022		Nelson City New Plymouth District	53

Appendix I: Criteria for local government reorganisation

(as prescribed in *Schedule 3, Local Government Act 2002*)

10 Objectives that the Commission must consider in reorganisation investigation

In assessing the desirability of options for the reorganisation of local government within the affected area, the Commission must take into account how best to achieve—

- (a) better fulfilment of the purpose of local government as specified in section 10; and
- (b) productivity improvements within the affected local authorities; and
- (c) efficiencies and cost savings; and
- (d) assurance that any local authority established or changed has the resources necessary to enable it to effectively perform or exercise its responsibilities, duties, and powers; and
- (e) effective responses to the opportunities, needs, and circumstances of the affected areas; and
- (f) enhanced effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of local government services; and
- (g) better support for the ability of local and regional economies to develop and prosper; and
- (h) enhanced ability of local government to meet the changing needs of communities for governance and services into the future; and
- (i) effective provision for any co-governance and co-management arrangements that are established by legislation (including Treaty of Waitangi claim settlement legislation) and that are between local authorities and iwi or Māori organisations.

12 Commission may adopt reorganisation plan

- (3) In deciding whether to adopt a reorganisation plan, the Commission must have regard to—
- (a) the scale of the potential benefits of the proposed changes in terms of the objectives set out in clause 10 and the likelihood of those benefits being realised; and
 - (b) the financial, disruption, and opportunity costs of implementing the proposed changes at the proposed time; and
 - (c) the risks and consequences of not implementing the proposed changes at the proposed time; and
 - (d) existing communities of interest and the extent to which the proposed changes will maintain linkages between communities (including iwi and hapū) and sites and resources of significance to them; and
 - (e) the degree and distribution of demonstrable public support for the proposed changes within communities in the affected area; and
 - (f) the degree and distribution of any public opposition to the proposed changes within communities in the affected area.

19 Communities

When preparing a draft proposal or (if clause 14(4) applies) a reorganisation scheme, the Commission may consider whether good local government of any affected district would be best promoted by—

- (a) a system of communities and the responsibilities, duties, and powers of the community boards in the district; or
- (b) an alternative to an existing system of communities; or
- (c) a change in the responsibilities, duties, and powers of the community boards in the district.

Appendix J: Appeals and objections hearing processes

A standard set of processes applies when the Commission decides to hear the appeals and objections lodged against a local authority's representation proposal.

Preliminary organisation

First the Commission will propose a date for the hearing. The local authority will then be advised of the proposed hearing date and venue arrangements.

Hearings can be held:

- In-person (normally in the local authority's premises)
- On-line
- A mixture of the two, e.g., where some parties are unable to attend in-person, and instead participate on-line.

When the hearing date and venue arrangements are finalised, all parties (the local authority, appellants, and objectors) will be formally notified. Appellants and objectors will be contacted to ascertain whether they wish to appear before the Commission. There is no obligation for appellants and objectors to appear before the Commission – those who decide not to appear can be assured that the Commission will give their written appeals or objections full consideration.

The Commission's strong expectation is that an elected member take part in the Council's presentation at the hearing, as well as the right of reply (whether the mayor, deputy mayor or any another elected member who can appropriately speak on behalf of the Council). It is important for Commissioners to understand why decisions have been made and there are aspects which only the decision-makers themselves can give insight into. The Commissioners may have questions that they would like to put directly to elected members.

The Commission may also decide to invite to the hearing:

- people who made submissions to the local authority in support of its proposal
- other people who might be able to provide relevant information to the Commission, e.g., representatives of iwi/hapū or community boards when they have not lodged an appeal or objection

Once appellants and objectors have responded to the Commission regarding the opportunity to appear, the hearing schedule will be finalised, and each party will receive written advice of the time and venue for their appearance. Ideally each party should plan to be at the hearing venue at least 10 minutes before the allocated speaking time.

A copy of the briefing prepared for the Commission by the Commission's officers will be provided to those appearing at the hearing.

The hearing

Each hearing follows a standard sequence:

1. Introduction from the Commission Chair.
2. Outline of its proposal by local authority.
3. Representations from appellants and objectors – each will have the opportunity to speak to the matters raised in their appeal or objection.
4. Representations from invited parties outlining basis of support for the local authority proposal or to answer questions from the Commission
5. Exercise of right of reply of local authority to matters raised in the hearing.
6. The Commission reserves its determination.

Commissioners may ask questions of each party during the course of their appearance.

As a general guide, the local authority is allocated up to 30 minutes to outline its proposal, and appellants and objectors up to 10 minutes to speak to the matters raised in their written appeal or objection. If an appellant or objector considers that more time is needed to speak to their appeal or objection, then a request for additional time needs to be made to the Commission well before the hearing – each request will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

If any party wishes to table new written material at the hearing, this information needs to be provided to the Commission at the time that the party appears before the Commission. Six copies of the written material are required – five copies for the Commission and one copy for the local authority.

Hearings are generally kept as informal as possible and are open to the public and the news media. Many people appearing before the Commission will not have experience in presenting submissions, and the Commission endeavours to foster an environment in which people can feel comfortable.

Hearings are live-streamed, and the live-streamed footage will be archived to the [Commission's YouTube channel](#).

Appendix K: Section 575, Natural and Built Environment Act 2023

- (1) In this Act, the term **allotment** means any of the following:
 - (a) a parcel of land under the Land Transfer Act 2017 that is a continuous area and whose boundaries are shown separately on a survey plan, whether or not—
 - (i) the subdivision shown on the survey plan has been allowed, or subdivision approval has been granted, under another Act; or
 - (ii) a subdivision consent for the subdivision shown on the survey plan has been granted under this Act:
 - (b) a parcel of land, or a building or part of a building, that is shown or identified separately—
 - (i) on a survey plan; or
 - (ii) on a licence within the meaning of subpart 6 of Part 3 of the Land Transfer Act 2017:
 - (c) a unit on a unit plan:
 - (d) any parcel of land that is not subject to the Land Transfer Act 2017.
- (2) For the purposes of this section –
 - (a) if an allotment is being or has been subdivided from any land, the balance of that land is deemed to be an allotment; and
 - (b) if part of a single allotment is physically separated from any other part of the allotment by a road or in any other manner, the allotment must be treated as a continuous area of land unless the division of the allotment into those parts has been allowed –
 - (i) by a subdivision consent granted under this Act; or
 - (ii) by a subdivision approval under any former enactment that relates to the subdivision of land.
- (3) In subsection (2)(b), **single allotment** means –
 - (a) an allotment that is subject to the Land Transfer Act 2017 and comprised in 1 record of title or for which 1 record of title could be issued under that Act; or
 - (b) an allotment that is not subject that Act and was acquired by its owner under 1 instrument of conveyance.

Local Government Commission
Mana Kāwanatanga ā Rohe
PO Box 5362, Wellington 6140, New Zealand

Phone: +64 4 460 2228

Web: www.lgc.govt.nz

email: info@lgc.govt.nz