



Determination

of representation arrangements to apply for the election of the Hastings District Council to be held on 8 October 2022

Background

1. All territorial authorities are required under sections 19H and 19J of the Local Electoral Act 2001 (the Act) to review their representation arrangements at least every six years. Representation reviews are to determine the number of councillors to be elected, the basis of election for councillors and, if this includes wards, the boundaries and names of those wards. Reviews also include whether there are to be community boards and, if so, arrangements for those boards. Representation arrangements are to be determined so as to provide fair and effective representation for individuals and communities.
2. The Hastings District Council (the council) last reviewed its representation arrangements prior to the 2019 local authority elections. In May 2021 it resolved to establish Māori wards. Accordingly, it was required to undertake a review prior to the next elections in October 2022.

The Commission last made a determination in relation to Hastings District Council's representation in 2013. The council's current representation arrangements have been in place since and comprise a mayor and 14 councillors elected as follows:

Ward	2020 general electoral population estimate*	Number of councillors	Population per councillor	Deviation from district average population per councillor	% deviation from district average population per councillor
Hastings-Havelock North	50,110	8	6,264	-20	-0.32
Flaxmere	12,250	2	6,125	-159	-2.53
Heretaunga	12,410	2	6,205	-79	-1.26
Mohaka	6,570	1	6,570	286	+4.55
Kahurānaki	6,640	1	6,640	360	+5.67
Total District	87,980	14	6,284		

*Based on Tatauranga Aotearoa Stats NZ 2020 general electoral population estimates

3. The current arrangements include one community board, the Hastings District Rural Community Board (the Rural Community Board) comprising four members elected by four subdivisions.

Current review: Council process and proposal

Preliminary consultation

4. Preliminary community engagement included a survey and livestreamed public meetings, Hui-a-iwi, advice from Heretaunga Takoto Noa Māori Standing Committee (HTNMSC), and an online workshop with the Rural Community Board. Council officers also met with Commission officials to discuss the challenges they were facing in balancing effective representation of communities of interest with fair representation for the general electoral population.
5. The community survey generated 403 responses, summarised as follows:
 - a. Location of respondents:
 - 32% from Havelock North
 - 12.2% from Flaxmere
 - 15.5% from Heretaunga
 - 8.9% from parts of the rural wards
 - b. Over 60% supported the existing size of council
 - c. 53.6% felt all parts of the district were represented equally
 - d. 55% thought a mixed model would be preferable to election by wards only (noting that the survey question did not explain the impact of reduced ward councillor numbers on Māori representation)
 - e. Some focus in free form comments on the large number of councillors in the Hastings-Havelock North Ward and an associated perceived lack of accountability
 - f. A small majority (38 respondents vs 28) favoured multiple Māori wards over a single Māori ward
 - g. Support for retention of the Rural Community Board
6. The Hui-a-iwi held by Council during preliminary engagement was attended by over 20 community members. Council officers summarised the feedback as follows:
 - a. Very strong consensus that ward councillor numbers should be sufficient to ensure three Māori ward councillors (requiring a minimum of 14 councillors).
 - b. Clearly stated that fewer than three would not be viewed as acceptable by the Māori electoral population or the wider Māori community.
 - c. Strong consensus on a preference for a single district-wide Māori ward (differing from the results of the general community survey, albeit both having very small samples)
 - d. Strong consensus for the Māori ward name Takitimu Ward

7. Councillor workshops considered 36 options for representation arrangements before identifying three to develop for the initial proposal.

The Council's initial proposal

8. On 26 August 2021 the council resolved as its initial representation proposal a council comprising 15 members elected from six wards, plus the mayor. The Council also resolved to retain the Rural Community Board.

9. The initial proposed ward arrangements were as follows:

Ward	Electoral population estimate*	Number of councillors per ward	Population per councillor	Deviation from district average population per councillor	% deviation from district average population per councillor
Hastings-Havelock North General	43,200	7	6,171	205	+3.35
Flaxmere General	6,830	1	6,830	863	+14.37
Heretaunga General	10,600	2	5,300	-667	-11.25
Mohaka General	5,780	1	5,780	-187	-3.21
Kahurānaki General	5,250	1	5,250	-717	-12.08
Total General	71,660	12	5,972		
Takitimu Māori	16,400	3			
Total District	88,060	15			

*Based on Tauranga Aotearoa Stats NZ 2020 electoral population estimates.

10. The initial proposal included that the Rural Community continue to be subdivided for electoral purposes, with members elected as follows:

Subdivision	2020 general electoral population estimate*	Number of board members per subdivision	Population per board member	Deviation from district average population per board member	% deviation from district average population per board member
Tūtira	3,090	1	3,090	-53	-1.69
Kaweka	3,220	1	3,220	77	2.45
Maraekākaho	2,890	1	2,890	-253	-8.05
Poukawa	3,370	1	3,370	227	7.22
Totals	12,570	4	3,143		

*Based on Tauranga Aotearoa Stats NZ 2020 general electoral population estimates

11. The Council notified its proposal on 30 August 2021 and received 154 submissions by the deadline of 1 October 2021.
12. Key themes in the submissions were:
 - a. 28 submissions supported the proposal overall.
 - b. Some submissions saw the proposal as providing for too many councillors, of which some proposed reducing councillor numbers from the current 14 to varying other numbers (including 12, 10, 9, 8)
 - c. Some submissions support retention of a number of Councillors elected from wards (at least 14) that provides for three Councillors elected from Māori wards.
 - d. Concern at under-representation of the Flaxmere General Ward, with some proposing alternatives including two general ward councillors for Flaxmere, a Flaxmere Māori Ward, and a Flaxmere Community Board.
 - e. Majority support for single Takitimu Ward with three councillors.
 - f. Support from rural submitters for retention of two rural wards with one councillor each, with a small number of submitters (3) saying rural areas are over-represented and seeking decreased representation.
 - g. Strong rural support for retention of the Rural Community Board, and majority support for the proposal to appoint one Takitimu Ward Councillor to the Rural Community Board.
 - h. A range of views by single submitters about the proposed general ward boundary changes

The Council's final proposal

13. On 14 October 2021, the Council met to hear eight submitters and deliberate on submissions and confirmed no change to its initial proposal. The Council resolved its initial proposal as its final proposal for the 2022 local elections.
14. The Council publicly notified its final proposal on 20 October 2021, including advice that the Flaxmere General Ward, the Heretaunga General Ward and the Kahurānaki General Ward did not comply with the fair representation criteria. The Council's reasons were that the available alternatives would limit effective representation for those communities of interest either by combining them with other communities with few commonalities of interest, or by dividing them between wards.
15. Given the non-compliance of the proposed wards, the council was required under section 19V(4) of the Act to refer its proposal to the Commission for determination. In addition, two appeals against the proposal were received.

Appeals/objections against the council's final proposal

16. The Council referred the appeals and objections to the Commission, in accordance with section 19Q of the Act.

17. The two appeals were considered valid. Both appeals oppose the under-representation of the Flaxmere General Ward (+14.46%), expressing concern that this ward will have just one councillor.

Hearing

18. The Commission met with the Council and the appellant, John Schollum, who wished to be heard at a hearing held online on Friday 18 February 2022. The Council was represented at the hearing by Mayor Sandra Hazlehurst and Deputy Mayor Tania Kerr.
19. The Commission also considered it important to hear the Flaxmere community's views on whether and how political under-representation was likely to impact them. As neither of the appellants identified as a current Flaxmere resident, the Commission invited residents of Flaxmere who had submitted on the Council's initial proposal, and the community-based Flaxmere Planning Committee (FPC) to speak at the hearing. The following people accepted our invitation to speak:
 - a. Sandra Tuilaepa
 - b. Paula Mihaka
 - c. Nigel Woodley
 - d. Crystal Edwards
 - e. Nic Dickinson
 - f. Traci Tuimaseve – Chair, Flaxmere Planning Committee (FPC)

Matters raised at the hearing

20. Mayor Sandra Hazlehurst supported by Deputy Mayor Tania Kerr, explained the process the Council had followed in carrying out its representation review and reaching its final proposal. They emphasised the following points:
 - a. The existing ward structure has evolved since the 1990s but remains based on communities of interest that still exist and is valued by the community.
 - b. Rural and urban communities in the district are interdependent but have distinctive needs.
 - c. Flaxmere is a young, diverse, growing and vibrant community that needs a distinct representation voice. A small under-representation to achieve this is preferable to alternative arrangements.
 - d. The district spans 5,000 square kilometres and its geographies, being a large, sparsely populated rural area, and the Heretaunga Plains, have informed the retention of two rural wards and two rural councillors.
 - e. The establishment of Māori wards is a positive step forward and enables the Council to strengthen the effective representation of communities
21. Mr Schollum emphasised the following points in opposition to the Council's proposal:
 - a. Flaxmere is a young, low income community with high Māori and Pasifika populations, and is politically disengaged.

- b. Candidates from Flaxmere standing for election would require considerable support to function on the Council.
 - c. Under the Council's proposal, due to the splitting of the GEP and MEP, 40% of Flaxmere would be unable to vote for the general ward councillor.
 - d. 28% of submitters to the Council's initial proposal opposed the under-representation for Flaxmere.
22. Flaxmere residents emphasised the following points in relation to the Council's proposal:
- a. The Council's proposal assumes a variety of cultural communities will be properly represented in every dimension by single councillor.
 - b. As Flaxmere grows a single councillor will be stretched and the quality of their input will be strained.
 - c. Flaxmere residents feel unsafe in the community given the high incidence of crime and two councillors at the council table could help ensure decisions that address Flaxmere's needs.
 - d. Flaxmere residents have had to work long and hard for what they feel the community needs. One less councillor will exacerbate that.
 - e. Acknowledgment of the good thing happening at the initiative of the Council, but there is a need to ensure representation by two councillors.
 - f. While the FPC was originally an initiative of the Council, it is a community-driven group that is independent of the Council.
 - g. A community board for Flaxmere might be welcome but not if there was a high cost to the community. Two Flaxmere councillors and the continuation of the FPC is preferred.
 - h. Flaxmere is a diverse but tight-knit and responsive community with many engaged community members, business opportunities and successful community initiatives underway.
 - i. Often lower income families are politically disengaged because they are too busy working to feed their families to prepare for what is required to engage.
 - j. Other communities have received better facilities and services from the Council although improvements are happening.
23. The FPC Chair emphasised the following points in relation to the Council's proposal:
- a. FPC's objective is to advocate on behalf of the Flaxmere community to Council to support what was happening in community.
 - b. The negative aspects of the community cannot be ignored but have been highlighted at the expense of the many positive developments in the community.
 - c. The Council has committed resource and support to Flaxmere to address issues from the ground up and the FPC is confident that will continue.
 - d. The high MEP in Flaxmere suggests the community may achieve representation by one of the Māori councillors.

- e. The FPC has been consulted by the Council about a possible Flaxmere Standing Committee and is supportive of the Council's proposal.

Matters for determination by the Commission

24. Section 19R of the Act makes it clear that the Commission, in addition to consideration of the appeals and objections against a council's final representation proposal, is required to determine, in the case of a territorial authority, all the matters set out in sections 19H and 19J which relate to the representation arrangements for territorial authorities. This interpretation was reinforced by a 2004 High Court decision which found that the Commission's role is not merely supervisory of a local authority's representation arrangements decision. The Commission is required to form its own view on all the matters which are in scope of the review.
25. The matters in the scope of the review are:
 - whether the council is to be elected from wards, the district as a whole, or a mixture of the two
 - the number of councillors
 - if there are to be wards, the area and boundaries of wards and the number of members to be elected from each ward
 - whether there are to be community boards
 - if there are to be community boards, the area and boundaries of their communities, and the membership arrangements for each board.

Key considerations

26. Based on the legislative requirements, the Commission's *Guidelines for local authorities undertaking representation reviews* (the Guidelines) identify the following three key factors when considering representation proposals:
 - communities of interest
 - effective representation of communities of interest
 - fair representation for electors.

Communities of interest

27. The Guidelines identify three dimensions for recognising communities of interest:
 - *perceptual*: a sense of identity and belonging to a defined area or locality as a result of factors such as distinctive geographical features, local history, demographics, economic and social activities
 - *functional*: ability of the area to meet the needs of communities for services such as local schools, shopping areas, community and recreational facilities, employment, transport and communication links
 - *political*: ability to represent the interests of local communities which includes non-council structures such as for local iwi and hapū, residents and ratepayer associations and the range of special interest groups.

28. We note that in many cases councils, communities and individuals tend to focus on the 'perceptual' dimension of communities of interest. That is, they focus on what intuitively they 'feel' are existing communities of interest. While this is a legitimate view, more evidence may be required to back this up. It needs to be appreciated that the other dimensions, particularly the 'functional' one, are important and that they can also reinforce the 'sense' of identity with an area. In other words, all three dimensions are important but should not be seen as independent of each other.
29. In addition to demonstrating existing communities of interest, evidence also needs to be provided of *differences* between neighbouring communities, i.e. that they may have "few commonalities". This could include the demographic characteristics of an area (e.g. age, ethnicity, deprivation profiles) and how these differ between areas, and evidence of how different communities rely on different services and facilities.
30. The Council's preliminary consultation supported the Council's view that the current five ward arrangement provides for the most effective representation of communities of interest, which remain relatively unchanged. The Council officers' report on the initial proposal describes the district's communities of interest as follows:

There is a rural community of interest that is more distant from urban areas and services and associated with pastoral farming, forestry activity and rural and marae-based settlements. This community of interest is spread over a very large land area – a great majority of the 5,227 square kilometres of the district. The rural area tends to have communities spread along 'spur' roads that link back to State Highways and other arterial routes. They relate to each other along these 'spurs' and around schools and settlements with interconnecting networks of farming and social activities linking them. They relate in the main to either Napier or Hastings for services/retail but gravitate more toward Hastings for agricultural/farm services and support (e.g., saleyards, agri-business, machinery supply and servicing).

The Heretaunga Plains community of interest is associated with horticultural and viticultural activity on highly productive soils, and with plains and coastal villages and marae communities within the Plains area. While there are two identifiable groups within this wider community of interest, the villages sit within the plains context and are shaped by it.

There is a significant urban population centre in the middle of the Heretaunga Plains spread across Hastings, Havelock North and Flaxmere, with a wide range of services and commercial and industrial activity, much of which is oriented toward the surrounding agricultural and horticultural activity. Within this urban centre, Flaxmere has been seen as a distinctive community of interest with large Māori and Pasifika communities and higher relative levels of socio-economic deprivation.

31. We are satisfied that the Council has identified and described its communities of interest in a way that is supported by the community.

Effective representation of communities of interest

32. Section 19T of the Act requires the Commission to ensure that:
- the election of members of the council, in one of the ways specified in section 19H (i.e. at large, wards, or a combination of both) will provide effective representation of communities of interest within the district
 - ward boundaries coincide with the boundaries of the current statistical meshblock areas determined by Statistics New Zealand and used for parliamentary electoral purposes
 - so far as is practicable, ward boundaries coincide with community boundaries (where they exist).
33. 'Effective representation' is not defined in the Act, but the Commission sees this as requiring consideration of factors including an appropriate number of elected members and an appropriate basis of election of members for the district concerned (at large, wards, or a mix of both).
34. The Commission's Guidelines note that what constitutes effective representation will be specific to each local authority but that the following factors should be considered:
- avoiding arrangements that may create barriers to participation, such as at elections by not recognising residents' familiarity and identity with an area
 - not splitting recognised communities of interest between electoral subdivisions
 - not grouping together two or more communities of interest that share few commonalities of interest
 - accessibility, size and configuration of an area including access to elected members and vice versa.
35. Within the scope of a representation review, councils can achieve effective representation of communities of interest by having members elected by wards, at large, a mixture of wards and at large. As the Hastings District Council has resolved to establish Māori wards, it must also establish at least one general ward.
36. While not a prescribed statutory requirement, the Guidelines suggest that local authorities consider the total number of members, or a range in the number of members, necessary to provide effective representation for the district as a whole. In other words, the total number of members should not be arrived at solely as the product of the number of members per ward, if there are to be wards.
37. Section 19A of the Act provides that a territorial authority shall consist of between 5 and 29 members, excluding the mayor. Hastings District Council comprised a mayor and 14 councillors on its constitution in 1989 and this number of councillors remains today.
38. The appellants' primary concern centres around the proposed reduction in the number of councillors elected by the Flaxmere General Ward from two to one. This has come about due to the uneven distribution of electoral populations across the district once the GEP and MEP are separated out. The GEP comprises slightly more

than half (56%) of the current Flaxmere Ward's electoral population compared to 81% of the district's electoral population.

Fair representation for electors

39. For the purpose of achieving fair representation for the electors of a district, section 19V(1) of the Act requires that the population of each ward divided by the number of members to be elected by that ward must produce a figure no more than 10 per cent greater or smaller than the population of the district divided by the total number of members (the '+/-10% rule').
40. However, section 19V(3)(a) permits non-compliance with the '+/-10% rule' for territorial authorities in some circumstances. Those circumstances are where:
- non-compliance is required for effective representation of communities of interest within island communities or isolated communities
 - compliance would limit effective representation of communities of interest by dividing a community of interest
 - compliance would limit effective representation of communities of interest by uniting two or more communities of interest with few commonalities.
41. The Council's proposal results in three general wards not complying with the '+/-10% rule', Flaxmere (+14.46%), Heretaunga (-11.18%), and Kahurānaki (-12.02%).

Under-representation for Flaxmere General Ward

42. In resolving its final proposal, the Council noted that:
- Achieving compliance with the +/-10% range in relation to the Flaxmere Ward would require either merging the Flaxmere Ward into the Hastings-Havelock North Ward or shifting a significant part of the ward into either the Hastings-Havelock Ward or the Heretaunga Ward. The Council considers that the former approach would limit effective representation of the Flaxmere community of interest by uniting it with a much larger set of communities of interests with few commonalities of interest - the Flaxmere community of interest would become diffused among a much larger population. The latter approach would limit effective representation of communities of interest by dividing the Flaxmere community of interest between two wards.*
43. While the Flaxmere electoral population is clearly a distinct community of interest, it is not sufficiently large to justify two councillors under the Council's proposal while also preserving reasonably fair representation for electors across the district.
44. Many of those speaking at the hearing asked for an additional councillor for Flaxmere based on the high needs of the community. This would provide considerably improved access for the community to its elected members, but both ways of achieving this produce significant non-compliances.
45. Increasing the total number of councillors to 16 results in Flaxmere becoming significantly over-represented at -38.00%. Alternatively, moving a councillor from another ward results in even more significant under-representation for other wards.

Given that Flaxmere is not isolated within the district, there is little legislative justification for these options.

46. We also heard different views from the Council, the appellant and the FPC Chair about the role of Māori ward councillors in ensuring effective representation for the Flaxmere community as a whole. Flaxmere's MEP comprises almost 33% of the district's total MEP. It is therefore statistically possible that Flaxmere's MEP could influence the outcome of the election of the Takitimu Māori Ward councillors.
47. However, this does not address the proposed under-representation for the diverse general population of Flaxmere. We further note that alongside the requirement for all councillors to act in the interests of the whole district, ward councillors enhance representation by being familiar with, and active in, the communities by which they are elected. It is not appropriate to rely on Māori representation to offset under-representation for the general population.
48. Within the scope of a representation review, the Commission could choose to establish a community board for Flaxmere. This would not alter the under-representation of the Flaxmere General Ward, but it could strengthen Flaxmere's ability to influence, advocate and engage meaningfully with the Council on issues of local importance.
49. In resolving its final proposal, the Council did not support a community board for Flaxmere noting that it was not clear what level of support existed within the community. Flaxmere residents at the hearing expressed opposing views on the matter. Some supported any means of additional representation, while others emphasised the need for more direct representation at council level or expressed concerns about the possible cost to residents. In response to questions, the Council advised that the current Flaxmere councillors did not support a community board, favouring instead an appointed committee that reflected the diversity of Flaxmere.
50. We agree with the Council that there is not sufficiently clear evidence of community demand for a community board for Flaxmere. This leads us to consider what alternative mechanisms might be available to the Council for improving representation for Flaxmere.
51. At the hearing, the Council also described other means it was considering for bolstering Flaxmere's voice at the Council. These included continuing its strong relationship with the FPC, appointing a Māori ward councillor to a 'Flaxmere champion' role to support the Flaxmere councillor, and establishing a Flaxmere standing committee.
52. Clearly the FPC is a highly engaged community committee that has developed strong two-way communication with the Council. As such, it has a vital advocacy role for Flaxmere in supporting valuable outcomes for the community. The Council confirmed the FPC currently oversaw community plans, events, park upgrades, and other projects the community wanted prioritised through the community plan. In response to questions at the hearing, the FPC Chair explained that the FPC valued its independence from Council but supported the Council's provisional plans to establish a standing committee dedicated to Flaxmere issues.
53. The Council advised work was already underway to establish a standing committee for Flaxmere. We would like to see that work progressed with clear

recommendations for the incoming council and will be interested to observe how it is implemented.

54. It must be noted that the alternative mechanisms discussed above are not within the powers of the Commission to determine and their implementation rests solely with the Council. We commend the Council's intentions and encourage it to continue actively working to implement them.
55. In summary, we consider the Council has undertaken a robust review and consideration of its communities of interest. Outside of the scope of a representation review, the Council is also developing other means for enhancing the representation of Flaxmere. On balance, we acknowledge the concerns and aspirations of the Flaxmere community but are satisfied that the Council's representation proposal, together with the alternative mechanisms outlined, will result in an appropriate balance of fair and effective representation for Flaxmere.

Over-representation for Kahurānaki General Ward

56. The proposed Kahurānaki General Ward is a small (by population) rural ward. It contains areas of relative isolation served by rural roads and is represented by one councillor. To achieve compliance with the '+/-10% rule' it needs to gain 121 people.
57. In resolving and notifying its final proposal the Council noted that achieving compliance for Kahurānaki would require transferring parts of the horticultural and Heretaunga Plains communities of interest from the Heretaunga General Ward. In the Council's view, this would limit effective representation by splitting those communities of interest across two wards.
58. It is noted that the Council's final proposal transfers four meshblocks, with an estimated population of 215 out of Kahurānaki and into Heretaunga. These meshblocks, known as the "Ngātarawa Triangle", are part of the Heretaunga Plains and predominantly used for viticultural and horticultural purposes. They therefore have stronger commonalities with land uses in the Heretaunga General Ward than the predominantly rural Kahurānaki General Ward. Had these meshblocks remained in Kahurānaki, it would have complied with the '+/-10% rule' but may not have achieved effective representation.

Over-representation for Heretaunga General Ward

59. The Heretaunga General Ward comprises an identifiable set of communities of interest, based around horticultural and viticultural land-use, lifestyle blocks, and plains and coastal villages that have been grouped together for electoral purposes for a significant period. To achieve compliance with the "+/-10% rule", it needs to gain 142 people.
60. In resolving and notifying its final proposal the Council noted that achieving compliance for Heretaunga would require transferring parts of the urban communities of the Flaxmere and/or Hastings-Havelock North General Wards, or parts of the rural community from the Kahurānaki or Mohaka General Wards. In the Council's view this would limit effective representation by splitting those communities of interest across wards and combining them with plains and coastal communities with which they have few commonalities.

61. The Council's final proposal transfers 10 meshblocks into Heretaunga General Ward with an estimated population of 290. However, it also transfers three meshblocks out of Heretaunga into Hastings-Havelock North, with an estimated population of 336. These meshblocks are urban in nature, some of which have been urbanised since the last representation review and include two retirement complexes. This indicates the Council has given a significant degree of consideration into aligning ward boundaries with communities of interest.
62. We consider the Council has explained its reasoning clearly and endorse the proposed arrangements for the Kahurānaki and Heretaunga General Wards.

Communities and community boards

63. Section 19J of the Act requires every territorial authority, as part of its review of representation arrangements, to determine whether there should be community boards in the district and, if so, the nature of those communities and the structure of the community boards. The territorial authority must make this determination in light of the principle in section 4 of the Act relating to fair and effective representation for individuals and communities.
64. The particular matters the territorial authority, and where appropriate the Commission, must determine include the number of boards to be constituted, their names and boundaries, the number of elected and appointed members, and whether the boards are to be subdivided for electoral purposes. Section 19W also requires regard to be given to such of the criteria as apply to reorganisation proposals under the Local Government Act 2002 as is considered appropriate. The Commission sees two of these criteria as particularly relevant for the consideration of proposals relating to community boards as part of a representation review:
 - Will a community board have an area that is appropriate for the efficient and effective performance of its role?
 - Will the community contain a sufficiently distinct community or communities of interest?
65. In the current review, the council has proposed to retain the Rural Community Board. The Council officers' report on the initial proposal notes the following background to the establishment of the Community Board:

The representation of the rural areas of the district has an important historical context. Following the formation of the Hastings District Council in 1989 as part of the then Government's local government amalgamation programme, there was a period of considerable rural community disquiet over Council decision-making, rating and representation. This led to a 'Rural Revolt' in the early 1990s in protest at the perceived unfairness in arrangements. In response to the concerns of the rural communities of the district, the Council, its then Chief Executive and rural community leaders negotiated a set of arrangements that successfully addressed rural community concerns.
66. The Council is proposing that the Community Board area will continue to reflect the Kahurānaki and Mohaka General Wards including the boundary alterations proposed for those wards in this review. The proposal also increases the number of appointed members from two to three, being one councillor each from the Mohaka General,

Kahurānaki General, and Takitimu Māori Wards. A small boundary alteration is proposed to move two meshblocks from the Poukawa Subdivision to the Maraekākaho Subdivision to assist in providing fair representation and continue to provide effective representation for communities of interest.

67. The Council’s consultation indicated clear support for the retention of the Rural Community Board and the proposed minor alterations to boundaries and membership. We determine accordingly.

Commission’s determination

68. Under section 19R of the Local Electoral Act 2001, the Commission determines that for the general election of the Hastings District Council to be held on 8 October 2022, the following representation arrangements will apply:
- a. Hastings District, as delineated on Plan LG-030-2022-W-1 deposited with the Local Government Commission, will be divided into six wards.
 - b. Those six wards will be:
 - (i) the Takitimu Māori Ward, comprising the area delineated on Plan LG-030-2022-W-2 deposited with the Local Government Commission
 - (ii) the Mohaka General Ward, comprising the area delineated on Plan LG-030-2022-W-3 deposited with the Local Government Commission
 - (iii) the Heretaunga General Ward, comprising the area delineated on Plan LG-030-2022-W-4 deposited with the Local Government Commission
 - (iv) the Flaxmere General Ward, comprising the area delineated on Plan LG-030-2022-W-5 deposited with the Local Government Commission
 - (v) the Hastings-Havelock North General Ward, comprising the area delineated on Plan LG-030-2022-W-6 deposited with the Local Government Commission
 - (vi) the Kahurānaki General Ward, comprising the area delineated on Plan LG-030-2022-W-7 deposited with the Local Government Commission
 - c. The Council will comprise the mayor and 15 councillors elected as follows:
 - (i) 3 councillors elected by the electors of the Takitimu Māori Ward
 - (ii) 1 councillor elected by the electors of the Mohaka General Ward
 - (iii) 2 councillors elected by the electors of the Heretaunga General Ward
 - (iv) 1 councillor elected by the electors of the Flaxmere General Ward
 - (v) 7 councillors elected by the electors of the Hastings-Havelock North General Ward
 - (vi) 1 councillors elected by the electors of the Kahurānaki General Ward
 - d. There will be a Hastings District Rural Community, comprising the area delineated on LG-030-2022-Com-1 deposited with the Local Government Commission, and including the areas of the Mohaka and Kahurānaki General Wards.

- e. The community will be subdivided into four for electoral purposes. Those four subdivisions will be:
 - (i) Tūtira Subdivision, comprising the area delineated on SO Plan 386138 deposited with Land Information New Zealand
 - (ii) Kaweka Subdivision, comprising the area delineated on Plan LG-030-2022-S-1 deposited with the Local Government Commission
 - (iii) Maraekākaho Subdivision, comprising the area delineated on Plan LG-030-2022-S-2
 - (iv) Poukawa Subdivision, comprising the area delineated on Plan LG-030-2022-S-3
- f. The membership of the Hastings District Rural Community Board will be as follows:
 - (i) 1 member elected by the electors of the Tūtira Subdivision
 - (ii) 1 member elected by the electors of the Kaweka Subdivision
 - (iii) 1 member elected by the electors of the Maraekākaho Subdivision
 - (iv) 1 member elected by the electors of the Poukawa Subdivision
 - (v) 3 members of the Council representing the Mohaka General, Kahurānaki General, and Takitimu Māori Wards and appointed to the Community Board by the Council

69. As required by section 19T(b) of the Local Electoral Act 2001, the boundaries of the above wards coincide with the boundaries of current statistical meshblock areas determined by Statistics New Zealand and used for Parliamentary electoral purposes.

Local Government Commission



Commissioner Brendan Duffy (Chair)



Commissioner Janie Annear



Commissioner Sue Piper

4 April 2022