



OPIKI AND TOKOMARU TO REMAIN PART OF HOROWHENUA DISTRICT

The Local Government Commission has issued its decision on the request for Opiki and Tokomaru to become part of Palmerston North City. The Commission has decided to not adopt a reorganisation plan and to complete its investigation. This means that Opiki and Tokomaru will remain part of Horowhenua District. This represents the end of a process that began in October 2018 when the Commission received an application for a boundary alteration from a group of Opiki and Tokomaru residents.

The Commission's investigation confirmed that many Opiki and Tokomaru residents have strong ties with Palmerston North and a close affinity to the City. However, it also showed that the requested alteration would not support the range of criteria that must be considered and would not provide benefits on the scale required to warrant a change in boundaries.

The Commission has made two recommendations as part of its decision. It has recommended that the Horowhenua District Council and the Palmerston North City Council work together to explore ways to enhance local government services in Opiki and Tokomaru. It has also recommended that the Horowhenua District Council provide clearer information to residents on its assets and services in Opiki and Tokomaru and how these are funded.

The Commission acknowledges that its decision will be disappointing for the applicants and some other residents in Opiki and Tokomaru. It also acknowledges that the applicants have worked long and hard on submitting and supporting the application.

It is important that both councils think creatively about opportunities to enhance services in Opiki and Tokomaru. It is also important that residents are provided with clearer information on how their rates are used, what services are planned for the future, and how they can have a role in decisions on the future of those assets and services.

The Commission's decision is available on its website at www.lgc.govt.nz under the local government reorganisation tab.

Penny Langley
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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