



Report 06.446
Date 1 September 2006
File E/01/04/01

Committee Policy, Finance and Strategy Committee
Author Margaret Shields, Chairperson, Representation Review Subcommittee

Final representation proposal

1. Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to set out:

- the key issues raised by submitters on the Council's initial representation proposal
- the representation options from which the Council can choose its final proposal
- the final representation proposal the Representation Review Subcommittee (the Subcommittee) is recommending to the Council
- the reasons the Subcommittee is recommending that proposal.

2. Significance of the decision

The matters for decision in this report are of significance. The Local Electoral Act 2001 sets out the consultation process that the Council must follow when deciding on its representation arrangements, including public notification of proposals, a formal submissions process and an objection and appeal process.

3. Background

This is the first representation review the Council has conducted under the new Local Electoral Act 2001 (the "Act"). The new Act contains a number of requirements that differ from previous legislation governing local authorities' representation arrangements. The Council's current representation arrangements, which comprise six constituencies and 13 councillors, do not comply with the +/- 10% population formula set out in the new Act (**Attachment 1**). This was the impetus for change from the Council's current arrangements and led to the Council's initial proposal.

On 1 June 2006, the Council decided on its initial representation proposal for public consultation. Greater Wellington received 84 written submissions and

12 oral submissions on the Council's initial proposal. The Subcommittee has now heard and considered these submissions. At its meeting 1 September 2006, the Subcommittee evaluated the Council's representation options in light of submitters' comments and agreed on a recommendation for Council's final representation proposal.

At its meeting on 12 September, the Council needs to decide whether or not to amend its initial proposal, either as recommended by the Subcommittee, or otherwise.

It is important to note that the Local Government Commission will finally determine the Council's representation arrangements. This is because the Council's final representation proposal will not comply with the population formula because of the Wairarapa. This is the case regardless of whether the Council's final proposal provides for one or two elected members in the Wairarapa constituency. The Commission will make its determination after objections and appeals have been received on the Council's final proposal.

4. Comment

4.1 Initial proposal

It is important that the Council is reminded of why it chose its initial proposal, before deciding whether or not to amend the initial proposal. The Council's initial proposal comprises four constituencies and 14 elected members. **Attachment 2** sets out the initial proposal in full.

The Council settled on its initial proposal for the reasons noted in the bullet points below. Some of the reasons are based on conclusions drawn as a result of councillors' experience, rather than a statement of fact. As recognised at the time, and again later in this report, it is difficult to find concrete evidence on the effect of more or fewer councillors on effective representation.

- Representation is more effective with a greater number of councillors. It is more likely to result in a diversity of councillors who can represent the range of views within the region.
- More councillors will also reduce councillors' workload, enabling them to meet and hear community views more often and from a wider variety of groups or individuals.
- Larger constituencies align with councillors' focus on the regional perspective and will help people move away from the idea that local regional councillors are the spokespeople for the territorial authority area with which their constituency is aligned.
- Larger constituencies result in an increase in the number of councillors that electors can vote for.
- Joining Kapiti and Porirua together, and Lower Hutt and Upper Hutt together, does not destroy those communities of interest. Each area has

a lot in common, especially in a regional council context, such as major roads, public transport, flood protection and natural features such as the coastline.

- Basing constituencies on territorial authority areas or unified territorial authority areas recognises the importance of territorial authority areas in providing a sense of community. Who picks up one's rubbish and recycling, provides sewerage facilities and provides building consents is a big part of identifying where one's community of interest lies.
- The proposal provides for 8.3% over-representation in the Kapiti-Mana constituency. This may be helpful in the future as it will help to cater for the population growth that is predicted for the Kapiti Coast and reduce the likelihood that the constituency boundaries would have to change in the near future.
- The number of representatives in each constituency is relatively even. This could help to ensure balanced, region-wide decision-making, as there would not be the opportunity for the members of one constituency to vote one way and sway a decision of Council.
- The Wairarapa requires two councillors to ensure the effective representation of communities of interest. It is a distinct community of interest with a large land area and scattered population with a diversity of views and a high number of meetings because of the river and catchment schemes.

4.2 Amendments to initial proposal must be made in light of submitters' comments

The Council needs to be aware that any amendments made to the Council's initial proposal must be based on the comments made by submitters. Both the Act and the Local Government Commission's guidelines state that a council must be able to demonstrate that:

- it has considered all the submissions it has received on its initial proposal by providing reasons for the acceptance or rejection of submissions, and
- its final proposal is made in light of the submissions it received on its initial proposal.

4.3 Submitters' comments on the initial proposal

In deciding on the final proposal to recommend to Council, the Subcommittee took great care to consider all points raised by submitters. All but three submissions were opposed to the Council's initial proposal. The main themes were:

- Separate constituencies and representation for Kapiti and Porirua

- Separate constituencies and representation for Lower Hutt and Upper Hutt
- One or two representatives for the Wairarapa
- Fewer councillors
- The name of the “Kapiti-Mana” constituency.

Submitters’ comments on each of these points are evaluated in the sub-sections below.

4.3.1 Merging of current constituencies

The majority of submitters were concerned with the merging of Upper Hutt with Lower Hutt, and Kapiti with Porirua. Fifty-one submissions opposed merging Upper Hutt with Lower Hutt to form one large constituency. Eighteen submissions opposed joining Kapiti and Porirua to form one large constituency.

All submitters argued strongly that all four areas were separate communities of interest. While the Council had identified many aspects that align Kapiti and Porirua, and Lower Hutt and Upper Hutt, in a regional council context when deciding on its initial proposal, submitters pointed out numerous differences between the communities (**Attachment 3, pages 2-5**).

Submitters also argued that each community of interest required a guaranteed representative. They reasoned that they needed a representative from their community to ensure that their unique needs would be heard in the regional context, that is, that they got the required attention and action. Many submitters were concerned that the merged constituencies would result in members being elected from only one part of the constituency. They stated that the only way to have guaranteed representation was to have separate constituencies.

In assessing these claims, the Subcommittee posed the following questions:

- What is the likelihood of not having a representative from each of the four communities should the constituencies remain as they are in the Council’s initial proposal?
- Does there need to be separate constituencies for Porirua, Kapiti, Upper Hutt and Lower Hutt to ensure that each community is effectively represented?

The Subcommittee also noted that separate constituencies would mean that voters would not be able to vote for as many candidates as they could under the initial proposal. The initial proposal provides voters with the opportunity to vote for three representatives in the Kapiti-Mana constituency and four representatives in the Hutt Valley constituency.

What is the likelihood of not having a representative from each community?

Voting is determined by a number of factors, many of which cannot be known in advance of an election and can change from election to election. These factors include:

- The voting population.
- The number of candidates. If there are a large number of candidates then voters have more choice. This could result in voters from a particular community splitting their votes between several candidates and not electing anyone from their area.
- Who stands for election. A candidate who is well-known could receive the majority of votes regardless of where they live in the constituency.
- Voter turnout. This can change depending on a variety of factors, including voters' level of interest and the demographics of a community e.g. younger people are less likely to vote than older people.
- How strategically people vote.

Submitters were particularly concerned that the population imbalances across the constituencies would result in those communities with smaller populations, for example Kapiti and Upper Hutt, losing a direct representative.

The Subcommittee notes that while Porirua has a larger voting population than Kapiti, Kapiti generally has a higher voter turnout. This was reflected in the voter turnout at the 2004 elections. Information provided by Porirua City Council shows that in Porirua, only 13,398 residential voters turned out to vote, compared to 16,869 in Kapiti. Given the populations of Kapiti and Porirua are not significantly different this could mean that similar numbers of people vote from each area.

Upper Hutt has only 28 percent of the voting population in the Hutt Valley. This voting population imbalance may not be easily overcome by other factors. Although, it still remains that someone who was well-known standing in Upper Hutt, or several people from Lower Hutt standing and only one from Upper Hutt, could result in a representative being elected from Upper Hutt.

All of these uncertainties make it difficult to predict the outcome of elections should Upper Hutt and Lower Hutt be merged, and Kapiti and Porirua be combined.

Does there need to be separate constituencies for Porirua, Kapiti, Upper Hutt and Lower Hutt to ensure that each community is effectively represented?

Submitters talked in terms of the need to have a “guaranteed, direct representative”. They said that failure to provide for this by having larger constituencies would lead to a “loss of representation”. But does it necessarily

follow that no representative elected from a particular community equals no representation for that community?

The Subcommittee points out that it is the Council's role to make decisions that are in the best interests of the region as a whole. Each councillor signs a declaration to say they will do this when they are sworn in at the beginning of each triennium. Regional councillors are often working on issues that cross several communities of interest (and territorial authority boundaries) e.g. water supply, roads, passenger transport, flood protection and catchment management.

Almost without exception, however, submitters were of the view that their needs would not be effectively represented if they did not have a representative that lived in their area. They stated that someone who lived elsewhere would naturally be more interested in, exposed to, or understand the issues arising from the community in which they live.

Submitters also considered that elected members would not be easily accessible in a bigger constituency. They said that they would be less likely to have face-to-face meetings, casual meetings and attend events because of the great deal of travel and diversity across a large area.

The Subcommittee notes that it is difficult to find concrete analysis of such matters. It follows that a bigger constituency area and living outside of a community could lead to diluted opportunities for direct interaction and result in elected members having less accountability to the public. The Subcommittee believes, however, that how effective a councillor is at representing the area they are elected from is largely dependent on the person who is elected, that is, how dedicated they are, how much effort and time they put in and how open they are to others' views. It is not possible to ensure that all elected members have these traits, whether they are elected by a smaller or larger constituency.

4.3.2 Two councillors from the Wairarapa constituency

Four submissions supported two councillors in the Wairarapa while four submissions opposed it.

As noted in Porirua City Council's submission, two members in the Wairarapa would create hugely disproportionate representation across the region in terms of the number of people per councillor. The Council needs to consider whether it is necessary to depart significantly from the population formula to ensure the effective representation of the Wairarapa community.

When deciding on its initial proposal the Council determined that a second representative was required because the Wairarapa is a large land area (74% of the region) that is sparsely populated and has a high number of meetings because of the river and catchment schemes.

Effective representation for farmers

The Council's reasons for proposing two representatives in the Wairarapa were strongly supported by Federated Farmers - Wairarapa. They made the point

that the population formula does not account for geographical size or corresponding rating capital value and that it disadvantages rural communities. They stated that “it is extremely important that councillors are able to communicate their knowledge, concerns, and experience and are given the best possible opportunity to engage with the ratepayers who they represent . . . elected councillors from Wellington city wards (excluding rural areas) can achieve this just as effectively when representing a higher population per councillor, simply because of the logistical ease of attending meetings, functions, and meetings with groups of constituents.”

The role of the Masterton office and the Rural Services and Wairarapa Committee

One submitter commented that the Wairarapa issues that are relevant to Greater Wellington are covered by Greater Wellington’s Masterton office and the Rural Services and Wairarapa Committee.

Greater Wellington’s Masterton office is a service centre, which provides regional services that have a Wairarapa focus. The Subcommittee makes the point that, while staff in the Masterton office are responsible for implementing policies at an operational level and for providing advice to relevant committees on their areas of expertise, they do not set the policy or outcomes – that is the responsibility of elected members.

The Rural Services and Wairarapa Committee certainly has input into the policies and outcomes. It also provides an opportunity to interact with the public. Not only do its appointed members bring the views of those they interact with in the community to the committee table, the meetings are generally open to the public and provide for public participation.

The Subcommittee argues, however, that the final decision-maker is the Council, which is the body of elected members. The Council has ultimate decision-making power. It sets the rates and overarching policy and outcomes of the Council e.g. the Long-term Council Community Plan and Annual Plan. The Wairarapa councillors are elected by the community and, therefore, have the mandate to make such decisions, along with the other councillors.

Comparison with parliamentary electorates

Another submitter said that effective representation could be achieved with one councillor. The submitter provided parliamentary electorates as an example of large areas covered by one representative.

The Subcommittee believes that this point is debateable, as there is little information which assesses whether or not such electorates are effectively served. In fact concerns have been expressed by the public about the size of these electorates too.

It is also difficult to compare parliamentary electorates with regional council constituencies, as constituency Members of Parliament usually have at least one office in their electorate and two full time staff members to help with their

local duties. In addition, they often have help from list members, who also work to represent local communities or special communities.

Relationship with ratepayers and the river and catchment scheme meetings

One submitter noted that there is no requirement for the Wairarapa elected members to attend river and catchment scheme meetings and that one of the current Wairarapa members of this Council has attended only four such meetings in the last 18 months alone. The submitter went on to say that this demonstrates there is no need for two Wairarapa representatives.

The Subcommittee stresses that it is important that the representation arrangements in the Wairarapa enable elected members to have a close relationship with the Wairarapa constituents. The Council carries out activities in the Wairarapa, such as flood protection, biosecurity (1080) and soil conservation (planting and land retirement), which directly impact on many individual landowners to a great extent.

While there is no statutory requirement to attend the river and catchment scheme meetings, it is the point at which the elected members can engage face-to-face with the people that are being rated. These people pay relatively high rates because there are a small number of ratepayers in the area for significantly costly activities.

4.3.3 Fewer councillors from more constituencies

Thirteen submissions supported the status quo, which provides for 13 elected members, three supported the Council's proposal, which provides for 14 councillors, and five submissions (7, 10, 61, 37, 83) supported a reduction to ten councillors. In general, those who supported a reduction in councillors suggested options that had more than four constituencies.

Some submitters said that the workload did not require more than ten representatives and that this would save ratepayers money. The Subcommittee points out that the pool of money allocated to pay elected representatives is determined by the Remuneration Authority. This pool is not influenced by the number of elected representatives, so having less councillors would not result in less money in terms of the total remuneration pool. It is noted, however, that a smaller number of representatives could possibly result in a smaller number of committees and meetings which may reduce the costs a little, that is, catering costs, printing of agendas and staff time to service meetings.

The Subcommittee feels that a smaller number of councillors is likely to result in a higher workload in terms of number of community meetings to be attended etc. However, the impact this has on effective representation, especially when we are talking about the difference between ten and 14 members, is unclear.

One submitter stated that many Council and committee meetings over the past few years have had little business and that this was not surprising given that councillors' true business is the development and monitoring of the ten-year plan. The Subcommittee recognises that the business of the Council ebbs and

flows. While some committees have had less work to do at times, the workload of others has increased, for example, to consider urgent transport matters.

The same submitter also noted that when the Council moved from 14 to 13 councillors there was no sense of extra workload. The Subcommittee notes that there is no concrete evidence which assesses this. It is difficult to judge as it depends on what activities the Council is undertaking at the time, changes to legislative requirements, prioritisation of tasks, and the level of input of individual councillors.

It is interesting to note, however, the comments made by the mayor of one of the region's territorial authorities who has had a reduction in the numbers of councillors at an earlier point in this review process. He said that the reduction had not resulted in any increase in workload, as the committees structure had been changed and the number of meetings reduced.

4.3.4 Constituency name

One submitter recommended that the proposed name of the Kapiti-Mana constituency be changed to Porirua-Kapiti because:

- most people know the area as Porirua, not Mana, and
- Porirua should go first as they have the largest population.

The Subcommittee agrees that the name Porirua-Kapiti would be more appropriate, as it is more reflective of the full breadth of the area and the communities the constituency encompasses. However, in order to recognise the fact that the constituency is made up of two different communities, the Subcommittee proposes that the hyphen be replaced by the word "and".

4.4 Representation options considered

The Subcommittee considered the Council's options in light of what submitters had said. It was discussed that the Council could remain with its initial proposal or it could consider one of the following options:

- **Option 1** - Ten councillors and six constituencies, where the constituency boundaries remain the same as they are currently (**Attachment 4**). In this option Upper Hutt falls outside the +/-10% population formula (over-represented by 17.7%). The Council would be required to put forward a compelling argument in terms of the effective representation of the Upper Hutt community to the Local Government Commission.
- **Option 1a** – The same as 1 above, but with an additional representative in the Wairarapa (**Attachment 5**). The Council would be required to put forward a persuasive argument in terms of the Wairarapa and the corresponding under-representation in Wellington, Porirua, Upper Hutt Kapiti.

- **Option 2** - Thirteen councillors and five constituencies, where the current Upper Hutt and Lower Hutt constituency remain separate (as they are currently), but Kapiti and Porirua are merged to form one large constituency (**Attachment 6**).
- **Option 2a** – The same as 2 above, but with an additional elected member in the Wairarapa (**Attachment 7**). The Council would be required to put forward a persuasive argument in terms of effective representation of the Wairarapa community and the corresponding under-representation in Upper Hutt and Wellington.
- **Option 3** - Ten councillors and five constituencies, where Kapiti and Porirua are separate, but Lower Hutt and Upper Hutt are merged to form the Hutt Valley constituency (**Attachment 8**).
- **Option 3a** - The same as 3 above, but with an additional representative in the Wairarapa (**Attachment 9**). The Council would be required to put forward a persuasive argument in terms of the Wairarapa and the corresponding under-representation in Kapiti, Porirua and Wellington.
- **Option 4** - Four constituencies and 13 councillors (**Attachment 10**).

4.5 The dilemma

In considering the above options it became clear to the Subcommittee that no option that is reasonably available to Council can meet all of the submitters' requests. The final proposal, therefore, depends on the weighting given to the following:

- separate constituencies and representation for Kapiti and Porirua
- separate constituencies and representation for Lower Hutt and Upper Hutt
- one or two representatives for the Wairarapa
- fewer councillors.

There is limited concrete evidence on which to measure the impact of these factors on effective representation. As such, councillors will have to make judgements based on their experience and that of the submitters.

4.5.1 One or two representative in the Wairarapa

If Council decides it is essential to have two representatives in the Wairarapa, then the Council should opt for a scenario that consists of 14 councillors, that is, the current proposal or option 2a. This is because there would be significant discrepancies in the number of people per elected member in each constituency in options that consist of 11 councillors in total. Officers feel that it is highly unlikely that the Local Government Commission would support such a proposal.

The current proposal recognises communities of interest from a regional council perspective and aims to be consistent in approach across the region in terms of communities of interest. Option 2a provides for separate constituencies for Upper Hutt and Lower Hutt, but Kapiti and Porirua remain joined together as one constituency. In essence, Option 2a pits the needs for two representatives in the Wairarapa against the requests for separate constituencies for Kapiti and Porirua.

If the Council decides that only one representative is required in the Wairarapa then the Council could choose between options 1, 2, 3 or 4.

4.5.2 More councillors or direct representation?

When considering options 1, 2, 3 and 4, the preferred option will depend on whether the Council thinks representation is going to be more effectively served by:

- more councillors or direct representation, and
- whether separate representation is equally required for all four communities (Kapiti, Porirua, Upper and Lower Hutt), or whether there is a higher need for direct representation in Upper Hutt and Lower Hutt, or Kapiti and Porirua.

Options 2 and 4 provide for 13 councillors. Option 2 also provides for separate representation for Upper Hutt and Lower Hutt, but not Kapiti and Porirua. This begs two questions: Is direct representation necessary (if not, choose option 4) and does Upper Hutt and Lower Hutt need direct representation more than Kapiti and Porirua (if yes, choose option 2)?

Options 1 and 3 provide for ten councillors. Option 1 provides for separate constituencies for Upper Hutt, Lower Hutt, Porirua and Kapiti. Option 3 provides for separate constituencies for Porirua and Kapiti, but Upper Hutt and Lower Hutt are joined together to form one constituency.

4.6 Recommended final proposal

The Subcommittee recommends that the Council adopts the following arrangements as its final representation proposal:

<i>Wellington constituency</i>	<i>Based on the current boundary of the Wellington City Council</i>	<i>5 elected members</i>
<i>Upper Hutt constituency</i>	<i>Based on the current boundary of the Upper Hutt City Council</i>	<i>1 elected member</i>
<i>Lower Hutt constituency</i>	<i>Based on the current boundary of the Hutt City Council</i>	<i>3 elected members</i>
<i>Porirua and Kapiti constituency</i>	<i>Based on joining the current boundaries of the Kapiti Coast District Council and Porirua</i>	<i>3 elected members</i>

City Council

*Wairarapa
constituency*

*Based on joining the current
boundaries of South Wairarapa
District Council, Carterton
District Council and Masterton
District Council, and the area of
the Tararua District Council
that is just South of the
Owahanga River catchment*

*2 elected
members*

This is option 2a (**Attachment 7**). It is based on 13 elected members and five constituencies (**Attachment 6**), but provides for an additional elected member in the Wairarapa.

In making its decision the Subcommittee noted the following key points:

- a) The requirement in the Act to comply with the +/-10% population formula has presented difficulties in relation to ensuring the effective representation of communities of interest.
- b) The Wairarapa is a distinct community of interest and two elected members will ensure the effective representation of the Wairarapa community. The Wairarapa comprises a large land area (74% of the region) that is sparsely populated, which makes it logistically more time-consuming for elected members to engage with their constituents. It is important that elected members are able to have a close relationship with constituents, given the kind of activities the Council carries out in the Wairarapa, such as flood protection, biosecurity (1080) and soil conservation (planting and land retirement), which directly impact on many individual landowners to a great extent. The numerous river and catchment scheme meetings are the point at which elected members can engage face-to-face with the people that are being rated.
- c) A proposal that is based on 13 elected members, plus an additional member in the Wairarapa constituency (14 elected members in total), ensures that there is relative homogeneity in terms of the number of people per elected member across the whole region. A proposal that comprises ten members, plus an additional member in the Wairarapa constituency (11 elected members in total), would result in significant differences in the number of people per elected member across parts of the region.
- d) The Council's initial proposal, which comprises four constituencies and 14 elected members, and provides for a relatively even number of elected representatives in each constituency, helps to ensure balanced, region-wide decision-making. This is because there would not be the opportunity for the members of one constituency to vote one way and sway a decision of Council.

- e) The initial proposal combined Kapiti with Porirua, and Lower Hutt with Upper Hutt, because they are linked by factors which relate to Council functions i.e. roads, rivers and rail.
- f) While the Subcommittee contends that the different needs of separate communities of interest could be represented in the regional context by members elected from the merged Hutt Valley constituency, this would largely depend on the individuals who were elected e.g. how dedicated they are, how much effort and time they put into representing the views of those across the entire constituency and how open they are to others' views. A strong case was made by submitters that separate communities of interest would be best served by a separate constituency, as this would guarantee at least one representative is elected from their area.
- g) While the Council had identified many aspects that align Kapiti and Porirua in a regional council context when it decided on its initial proposal, submitters feel strongly that there are a variety of differences which make Kapiti and Porirua separate communities of interest, including:
 - o Kapiti and Porirua have different interests and focuses on key issues of concern to Greater Wellington i.e. harbour management, water supply, separate water catchments, flood protection, environmental concerns, river and wetland management and transport. Kapiti and Porirua are differently affected by flooding and sea level rise. Kapiti suffers from inadequate rail infrastructure, poor internal connectivity and lack of rail passenger services up North.
 - o Kapiti and Porirua are geographically separated between Pukerua Bay and Paekakariki. There will never be adjacent housing. The Transmission Gully road will result in further separation.
 - o Kapiti sees its closest kinship with Horowhenua, not Porirua. Porirua links with Tawa, Wellington and the Hutt Valley.
 - o Porirua is city focused while Kapiti is more coastal and rural.
 - o Kapiti has a larger, older population and Porirua has a higher number of Māori and Pacific Island people. This results in different social and cultural issues.
- h) While it generally agrees with submitters' comments on separate constituencies for Kapiti and Porirua, after exploring all the possible representation options, the Subcommittee has concluded that no representation option can accommodate having separate Kapiti and Porirua constituencies if the Council is to make every effort to comply with the requirements set out in the Act and provide for the effective representation of the Wairarapa.

- i) While the Council had identified many aspects that align Upper Hutt and Lower Hutt in a regional council context when it decided on its initial proposal, submitters feel strongly that there are numerous differences which make Upper Hutt and Lower Hutt separate communities of interest, including:
- Upper Hutt has large rural areas and a provincial character.
 - Lower Hutt has the sea and Upper Hutt is inland.
 - Upper Hutt people identify with the facilities and services available within their community.
 - Upper Hutt has significant regional resources, many of which are important for the whole region e.g. water supply, forestry, regional parks, transport link between Wellington and Wairarapa.
 - Lower Hutt and Upper Hutt have different needs and views on key matters of concern e.g. flood protection and transportation.
- j) The Subcommittee generally agrees with submitters' comments on separate constituencies for Upper Hutt and Lower Hutt, and notes that this can be achieved without compromising the effective representation of the Wairarapa and the Council's efforts to comply as best it can with the requirements set out in the Act.
- k) The constituency name of "Porirua and Kapiti" would be a more appropriate name for the merged constituency because:
- most people know the area as Porirua, not Mana
 - Porirua should go first as they have the largest population
 - The word "and" signifies that there are two communities in the one constituency.

5. Communication

5.1 Public notice of final proposal

Once the Council has made its decision, a public notice will be placed in the region's main newspapers. Section 19N of the LEA states that this public notice must:

- Incorporate any amendments resolved
- State both the reasons for the amendments and the reasons for any rejection of submissions
- Specify the right of appeal and objection, including the place and closing date for the receipt of appeals.

Given the level of interest in the review, the Council may want to consider placing similar information in the region’s community newspapers.

5.2 Replies to submitters

Formal replies will also be sent to submitters once the Council has decided on its final proposal. These will be signed by the Council Chairman. The replies will note why the Council chose its final proposal, outline the appeal process and note the fact that the Local Government Commission will make the final determination.

5.3 Media release

A media statement will be prepared for release after the Council meeting on 12 September.

6. Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. **Receives** the report.
2. **Notes** the content of the report.
3. **Recommends** that the Council chooses the following representation arrangements as the Wellington Regional Council’s final representation proposal:

<i>Wellington constituency</i>	<i>Based on the current boundary of the Wellington City Council</i>	<i>5 elected members</i>
<i>Upper Hutt constituency</i>	<i>Based on the current boundary of the Upper Hutt City Council</i>	<i>1 elected member</i>
<i>Lower Hutt constituency</i>	<i>Based on the current boundary of the Hutt City Council</i>	<i>3 elected members</i>
<i>Porirua and Kapiti constituency</i>	<i>Based on joining the current boundaries of the Kapiti Coast District Council and Porirua City Council</i>	<i>3 elected members</i>
<i>Wairarapa constituency</i>	<i>Based on joining the current boundaries of South Wairarapa District Council, Carterton District Council and Masterton District Council, and the area of the Tararua District Council that is just South of the Owahanga River catchment</i>	<i>2 elected members</i>

4. **Recommends** that the Council chooses the final proposal in 3 above for the following reasons:
- a) *The Wairarapa is a distinct community of interest and two elected members will ensure the effective representation of the Wairarapa community. The Wairarapa comprises a large land area (74% of the region) that is sparsely populated, which makes it logistically more time-consuming for elected members to engage with their constituents. It is important that elected members are able to have a close relationship with constituents, given the kind of activities the Council carries out in the Wairarapa, such as flood protection, biosecurity (1080) and soil conservation (planting and land retirement), which directly impact on many individual landowners to a great extent. The numerous river and catchment scheme meetings are the point at which elected members can engage face-to-face with the people that are being rated.*
 - b) *A proposal that is based on 13 elected members, plus an additional member in the Wairarapa constituency (14 elected members in total), ensures that there is relative homogeneity in terms of the number of people per elected member across the whole region. A proposal that comprises ten members, plus an additional member in the Wairarapa constituency (11 elected members in total), would result in significant differences in the number of people per elected member across parts of the region.*
 - c) *While the Council contends that the different needs of separate communities of interest could be represented in the regional context by members elected from the merged Hutt Valley constituency, it acknowledges that this would largely depend on the individuals who were elected e.g. how dedicated they are, how much effort and time they put in to representing the views of those across the entire constituency and how open they are to others' views. A strong case was made by submitters that separate communities of interest would be best served by a separate constituency, as this would guarantee at least one representative is elected from their area.*
 - d) *While the Council had identified many aspects that align Kapiti and Porirua in a regional council context when it decided on its initial proposal, submitters feel strongly that there are numerous differences which make Kapiti and Porirua separate communities of interest, including:*
 - *Kapiti and Porirua have different interests and focuses on key issues of concern to Greater Wellington i.e. harbour management, water supply, separate water catchments, flood protection, environmental concerns, river and wetland management and transport. Kapiti and Porirua are differently affected by flooding and sea level rise. Kapiti suffers from inadequate rail infrastructure, poor internal connectivity and lack of rail passenger services up North.*

- *Kapiti and Porirua are geographically separated between Pukerua Bay and Paekakariki. There will never be adjacent housing. The Transmission Gully road will result in further separation.*
 - *Kapiti sees its closest kinship with Horowhenua, not Porirua. Porirua links with Tawa, Wellington and the Hutt Valley.*
 - *Porirua is city focused while Kapiti is more coastal and rural.*
 - *Kapiti has a larger older population and Porirua has a higher number of Māori and Pacific Island people. This results in different social and cultural issues.*
- e) *While the Council generally agrees with submitters' comments on separate constituencies for Kapiti and Porirua, after exploring all the possible representation options, the Council has concluded that no representation option can accommodate having separate Kapiti and Porirua constituencies if the Council is to make every effort to comply with the requirements set out in the Act and provide for the effective representation of the Wairarapa.*
- f) *While the Council had identified many aspects that align Upper Hutt and Lower Hutt in a regional council context when it decided on its initial proposal, submitters feel strongly that there are numerous differences which make Upper Hutt and Lower Hutt separate communities of interest, including:*
- *Upper Hutt has large rural areas and a provincial character.*
 - *Lower Hutt has the sea and Upper Hutt is inland.*
 - *Upper Hutt people identify with the facilities and services available within their community.*
 - *Upper Hutt has significant regional resources, many of which are important for the whole region e.g. water supply, forestry, regional parks, transport link between Wellington and Wairarapa.*
 - *Lower Hutt and Upper Hutt have different needs and views on key matters of concern e.g. flood protection and transportation.*
- g) *The Council generally agrees with submitters' comments on separate constituencies for Upper Hutt and Lower Hutt, and notes that this can be achieved without compromising the effective representation of the Wairarapa and the Council's efforts to comply as best it can with the requirements set out in the Act.*
- h) *The constituency name of Porirua and Kapiti would be a more appropriate name for the merged constituency because:*

- *most people know the area as Porirua, not Mana*
 - *Porirua should go first as they have the largest population*
 - *The word “and” signifies that there are two communities in the one constituency.*
5. ***Recommends*** that Council notes that the above proposal differs from the Council’s initial proposal in that it has separate constituencies for Upper Hutt and Lower Hutt, with 1 and 3 elected members respectively, and the constituency name *Kapiti-Mana* has been changed to *Porirua and Kapiti*.
 6. ***Notes*** that the Council’s final proposal will be forwarded to the Local Government Commission for its determination, after appeals and objections have been received have been received from the public.
 7. ***Confirms*** whether or not it recommends that the Council also places information on the Council’s final representation proposal in the region’s community newspapers.

Report by:

Councillor Shields

Chairperson, Representation Review Subcommittee

Attachment 1: Current representation arrangements

Attachment 2: Initial proposal

Attachment 3: Report summarising submitters comments on initial proposal (06.401)

Attachment 4: Option 1

Attachment 5: Option 1a

Attachment 6: Option 2

Attachment 7: Option 2a

Attachment 8: Option 3

Attachment 9: Option 3a

Attachment 10: Option 4