

PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

Why are these changes proposed?

- The significant challenges coming up for Wellington councils are regional rather than local, and require a regional response.
- The current council structures make it difficult to achieve co-ordinated responses.
- The region is connected by strong economic and cultural factors, such as patterns of work, travel, spending, recreation, and settlement.

What challenges lie ahead?

Economic priorities include developing transport and replacing ageing infrastructure. For example, almost 50 percent of water pipes and 40 percent of wastewater pipes across the region need replacing, with an estimated cost of \$1.7 to \$2.6 billion.

Councils also need to:

- prepare for natural hazards like storms and earthquakes
- upgrade information technology
- encourage region-wide growth
- respond to higher regulatory standards for water quality, and
- enhance cultural and recreational facilities for residents.

What are the key issues?

The new council would have to consider five important issues:

- rating systems
- condition of assets
- level of council services
- nature of council investments, and
- future development plans.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Public submissions can be made up to **2 March 2015**. After this date, the Commission will hold public hearings, and then decide whether to issue a final proposal or remain with the existing council arrangements.

If the Commission issues a final proposal, voters can demand a poll. A poll will be held if ten percent of voters in any affected council area sign a petition. The vote would be held across the whole region and the result would be binding.

If more than fifty percent of those who vote support the proposal, the transition begins to a new council. The first elections for the new council would be in October 2016.

MAKE A SUBMISSION

More information is on the website
www.lgc.govt.nz



Please send your submission to:

POST TO: Local Government Commission
PO Box 5362
Wellington 6145

EMAIL: submissions@lgc.govt.nz



Local Government
Commission
Mana Kāwanatanga ā Rohe

Draft proposal for local government in the Wellington region

A guide
December 2014

AT A GLANCE

What is being proposed?

The proposal is for one council, Greater Wellington Council, to replace the existing nine councils. The new council would be a unitary authority, which means it combines the functions of city councils, district councils, and the regional council. A diagram of the new council structure is on the interior of this brochure.

The affected councils are Kapiti Coast District, Porirua City, Wellington City, Hutt City, Upper Hutt City, South Wairarapa District, Carterton District, Masterton District, and the Regional Council.

Greater Wellington Council would have shared decision-making. The mayor and councillors would be responsible for high-level matters affecting the whole region. They would share power with eight local boards, which would be responsible for the council budgets and decisions that affect local communities.

A Māori Board and a Natural Resources Management Committee, made up of council and iwi representatives, would ensure Māori participation in decision-making and advice to the council.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What would happen to my rates?

The current rating systems would remain in place until an integrated rating system came into force on 1 July 2019. The new council would moderate the impact of changes, and rates would be based on capital value.

ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

Mayor, wards and councillors

Everyone in the Wellington region would elect the **mayor**.

The Greater Wellington Council would be divided into eight areas or **wards**:

- Wairarapa
- Upper Hutt
- Lower Hutt
- Kapiti Coast
- Porirua-Tawa
- Ohariu
- Lambton, and
- Rongotai.

The **councillors** on the Greater Wellington Council would be elected from the wards. The number of councillors elected from each ward is based on one councillor for about 23,000 people.

The mayor and councillors are responsible for matters that relate to the region as a whole.

Local boards and local board members

The eight **local boards** have the same boundaries as the eight wards. Each board has six to ten elected **local board members**, and two appointed councillors (to ensure good coordination within the whole council).

How would I access council services?

The council headquarters would be in Wellington city. All services would be available at area offices in Paraparaumu, Porirua, Wellington City, Lower Hutt, Upper Hutt and Masterton. Smaller service centres would be in Otaki, Waikanae, Featherston, Martinborough, Greytown and Carterton.

The number of local board members would be based on a combination of how many people are represented, and the size of the area. For example, each local board member in the Wairarapa would represent an average of 4,239 people; in Ohariu it would be 11,627.

The **purpose** of the local boards is to ensure the council remains close to communities and individual neighbourhoods. They would operate with their own budgets and powers.

The local boards would carry out the **responsibilities** and powers of the new council, unless the matters were regional, when they would be the responsibility of the mayor and the councillors.

Local boards would be responsible for local parks and reserves, recreational centres, arts and cultural facilities and libraries, community and cultural events, decisions about public spaces such as town centres and main streets, and grants to local groups. Local boards are also expected to be responsible for some local transport infrastructure, waste and recycling facilities, and economic development initiatives.

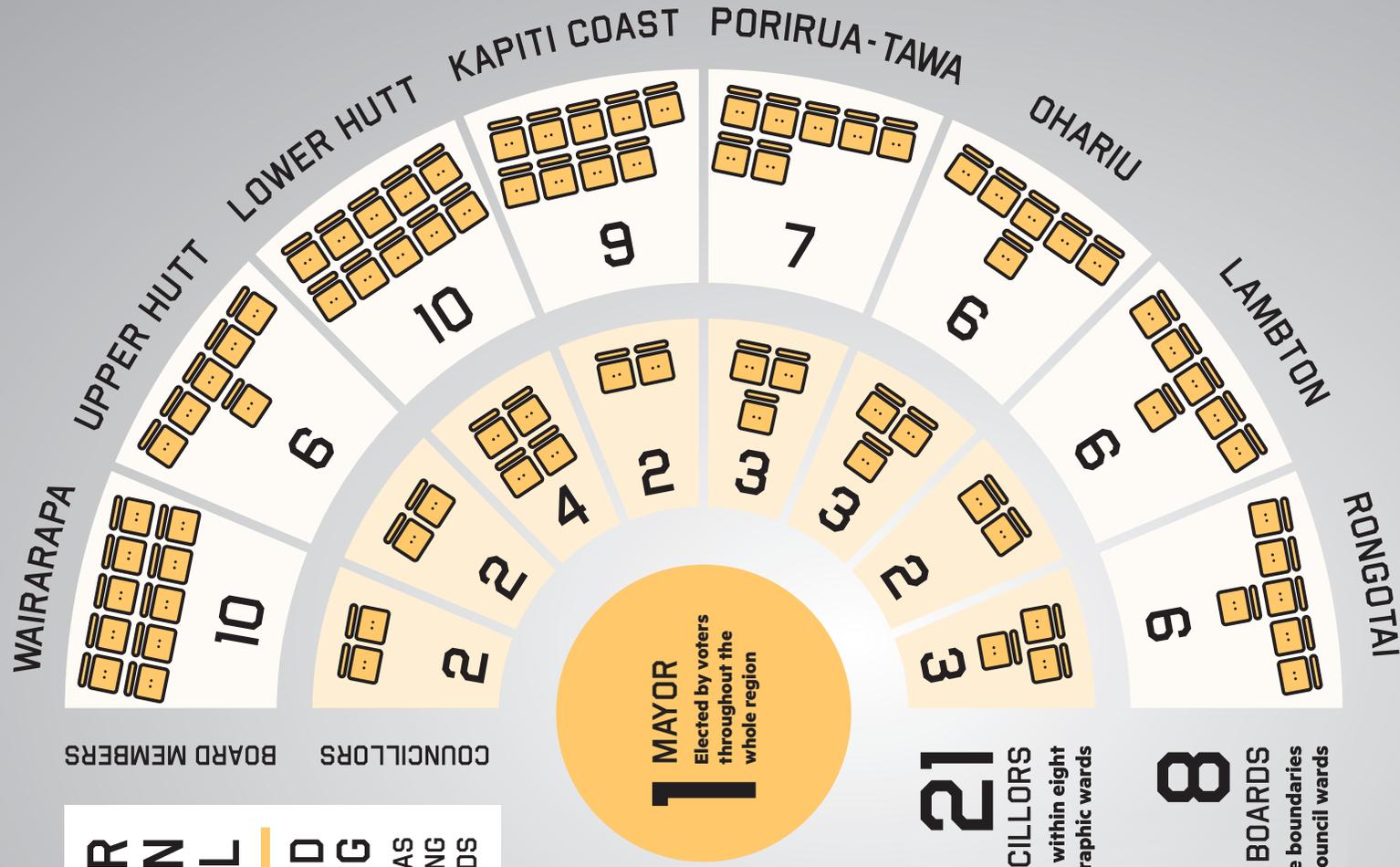
How does the proposal compare?

Elected representative	current	proposed
Mayors and regional chair	9	1
Councillors	95	21
Community board members	57	0
Local board members	0	60
Total	161	82

GREATER WELLINGTON COUNCIL

SHARED DECISION-MAKING

THE MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS AS THE GOVERNING BODY, SHARING DECISIONS WITH LOCAL BOARDS



1 MAYOR
Elected by voters throughout the whole region

21 COUNCILLORS
Elected by voters within eight geographic wards

8 LOCAL BOARDS
with the same boundaries as the council wards

THE MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS
RESPONSIBLE FOR HIGH-LEVEL MATTERS AFFECTING THE WHOLE REGION.

THE LOCAL BOARDS
RESPONSIBLE FOR DECISIONS AFFECTING LOCAL COMMUNITIES.

* TWO COUNCILLORS FROM EACH WARD WILL BE APPOINTED TO THE RELEVANT LOCAL BOARD TO ENSURE GOOD COORDINATION.