



**Report**            **06.251**  
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**Committee**       **Ara Tahi**  
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## **Greater Wellington's representation review**

### **1. Purpose**

To advise Ara Tahi about the review of Greater Wellington Regional Council's representation arrangements.

### **2. Significance of the decision**

The matters for decision in this report **do not** trigger the significance policy of the Council or otherwise trigger section 76(3)(b) of the Local Government Act 2002.

### **3. Background**

#### **3.1 What are representation arrangements?**

Under the Local Electoral Act 2001 (LEA 2001) councils are required to review their representation arrangements at least once every six years, with the first review taking place in either 2003 or 2006. This is the Council's first review of its representation arrangements under the LEA 2001. Representation arrangements are:

- The number and boundaries of constituencies
- The name of each constituency
- The number of members to be elected by the electors of each constituency.

Under the LEA 2001, the Council must decide on its proposed representation arrangements by 31 August 2006. The proposal must then go out for public consultation. The Council decided on its proposed arrangements for public consultation on 1 June 2006.

### 3.2 Legal requirements

There are a number of legal requirements that must be taken into account when determining representation arrangements. Key requirements are fair representation, (which is based on the number of people per councillor), and effective representation of the region's communities of interest.

The Council may only depart from the population rule required for fair representation where it is necessary to do so to ensure the effective representation of communities of interest. A decision by the Council not to comply with the population rule must be referred to the Commission for determination. If the Local Government Commission does not deem the Council's reasons for its proposal to be robust then they may impose different representation arrangements.

The representation arrangements proposed by the Council on 1 June 2006 do not comply with the requirement for fair representation under the LEA 2001 because of the Wairarapa. This means the Council will have to make a special case for the Wairarapa.

## 4. Comment

The Council is proposing representation arrangements that constitute four constituencies and 14 councillors, as outlined in the table below. This is different from the Council's current arrangements which are based on six constituencies and 13 councillors.

<i>Constituency name</i>	<i>Constituency boundary</i>	<i>No. of members</i>
<i>Wellington Constituency</i>	<i>Remains unchanged. Based on the current boundary of the Wellington City Council</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Hutt Valley Constituency</i>	<i>Based on joining the current boundaries of the Hutt City Council and Upper Hutt City Council</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Kapiti-Mana Constituency</i>	<i>Based on joining the current boundaries of the Kapiti Coast District Council and Porirua City Council</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Wairarapa Constituency</i>	<i>Remains unchanged. 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</i>

Four key options were considered by the Council, but members decided on the above option for the following reasons:

- 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.
- Kapiti-Mana is over-represented by 8.3%. 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 in turn help 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, diversity of views and high number of meetings because of the river and catchment schemes.

## **5. Communication**

A public notice which outlines the proposal and the submission process is being placed in the main newspapers on 14 June 2006.

## 6. Recommendations

*That the Committee:*

1. ***Receives the report.***
2. ***Notes the content of the report.***

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