



REPRESENTATION REVIEW 2018

Initial proposal for representation for the 2019 local election

PROPOSAL

Proposed number of elected members

- 11 councillors (plus the Mayor)

Proposed Wards

- *Northern* (3 elected members) – Taihape, Mangaweka, Utiku, Ohingaiti, Mataroa, Moawhango
- *Central* (5 elected members) – Marton, Hunterville
- *Southern* (3 elected members) – Scotts Ferry, Bulls, Turakina, Ratana, Koitiata, Kauangaroa

The population that each member will represent is as follows:

| Ward | Population (2017 estimates) | Members | Population per member |
|---------------|--------------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|
| Northern Ward | 3,700 | 3 | 1,233 |
| Central Ward | 7,410 | 5 | 1,482 |
| Southern Ward | 3,890 | 3 | 1,297 |
| Total | 15,000 | 11 | 1,364 |

Proposed Community Boards

- *Taihape* – whole ward. With four members elected and two members appointed (rotated around the three Northern Ward councillors).
- *Ratana* – existing Ratana Community Board area. With four members elected and one member appointed (one of the Southern Ward councillors).

Background

Council is required to undertake a representation review once every six years. The review is important for ensuring effective and fair representation of the District's communities. The initial proposal includes – the number of elected members, the ward structure, community boards.

The existing structure is 11 elected members (plus the Mayor), two community boards (Taihape and Ratana), and five wards as follows:

- Bulls – 2 elected members
- Turakina – 1 elected member
- Marton – 4 elected members
- Hunterville – 1 elected member
- Taihape – 3 elected members

Council has considered a range of options and is proposing the current ward structure is changed.

Pre-consultation

During early 2018, Council undertook pre-consultation with the community to help them decide what to propose. The following issues were covered:

- Whether the Taihape community wanted to retain the Taihape Community Board.
- Whether the Ratana community wanted to retain the Ratana Community Board.
- Which option – out of the amended status quo, and a new three ward structure the community preferred.

The results showed a preference from both Taihape and Ratana for retaining their community boards (75%, 80%), but a mixed response for which ward structure option communities preferred (50% each option).

Reasons for the proposal

Council considered a wide range of proposals in developing the initial proposal and believes the proposal is the best option for effectively representing the District's communities of interest. When making a decision on the initial proposal Council was required to consider the following aspects:

- Distinct communities of interest
- The number of elected members
- The basis of election – wards, at-large (i.e. whole-of-District), mixed
- The fairness of the proposed structure
- Effectiveness of the proposed representation
- Community boards

Communities of interest

Council considered that it had the following communities of interest (*communities that have a distinct identity and experience similar issues*).

- Marton
- Bulls including Scotts Ferry
- Taihape
- Hunterville
- Western Villages - Koitiata, Ratana, Turakina, Kauangaroa, Whangaehu
- Northern Villages - Mangaweka, Moawhango, Mataroa, Pukeokahu, Utiku

Number of elected members

Given the size and diversity of the District, Council decided retain the status quo - 11 elected members (plus the Mayor).

This number has provided effective representation in the past. Additional councillors were not considered necessary to increase Council's ability to effectively represent its communities. Likewise, reducing the number of elected members was considered to have the potential to negatively affect the representation of the District's smaller communities. Reducing the number of elected members would not save money.

The basis of election – wards, at-large or mixed

A ward structure was considered as being the most effective way to ensure the District's distinct communities would be most effectively represented by elected members who could understand the unique traits and issues of each ward.

Effectiveness and fairness of the proposed 3 ward structure

Changes

The main changes from the current situation include:

- Reducing the number of wards from 5 to 3.
- Bringing the boundary of the Northern ward south.
- Combining the Marton and Hunterville communities into one ward.
- Combining the Bulls and Western communities into one ward.

Why has Council made these changes?

To represent these communities of interest fairly (as required by legislation) the wards have to have a certain ratio of elected members to the number of people they represent. For this Council (with 11 elected members) each councillor must represent between 1,228 – 1,500 residents. Given the District's changing populations it had the following effect on the status quo (5 wards):

- The Taihape Ward extended south

- The Marton Ward needed to reduce in size – with further rural properties from the Marton Ward being moved into the Hunterville and Turakina Wards.

Even under the current ward structure, there are a number of rural Marton residents whose community of interest is Marton that are located in the Hunterville Ward.

Council had significant concerns about these required changes, further fragmenting the Marton community of interest and combining them with communities which do not have similar issues, so looked at a range of different options to see whether there could be a better solution for representing the District's communities.

Of all the options considered, Council believes that the three ward structure would provide the most effective representation for the District for the following reasons:

- The communities of Marton and Hunterville are combined, but share common interests and issues. The number of elected members for the ward means that there is potential that a candidate from Hunterville could be elected to this ward.
- The proposal groups together the Bulls community of interest and the group of communities of interest in the western portion of the District. These communities do not relate to each other from a functional perspective. However, these communities have a range of common features and issues (sand country, flooding issues, are on the edge of the District and relate more with larger areas outside the District). There is the opportunity for a councillor to be elected from the western area of the District.

Community Boards

Given the pre-consultation with the Taihape and Ratana communities on retaining their boards was in favour of retaining the boards, Council has decided to retain these community boards in their initial proposal. No additional community boards have been proposed.

Have your say

Written submissions from the community are open until **9am 17 September 2018**.

Parties who make a written submission may also make an oral submission. Oral submissions are scheduled for 27 September 2018 at the Council Chambers in Marton. You need to indicate on your submission form if you wish to speak to your submission.

Further information

Further information, including a submission form, is available at the following places:

- Council's website www.rangitikei.govt.nz
- Council's libraries in Marton, Bulls and Taihape
- Council's Main Office in Marton
- By calling 0800 422 522

If you have any questions please contact Katrina Gray, Senior Policy Analyst/Planner.

Next steps

Once Council has considered submissions, it will adopt its final proposal. This proposal is subject to appeal/objection. Any appeals/objections lodged will be considered by the Local Government Commission who will make a binding decision.

