

Final proposal for representation arrangements - 2025 local elections

Submissions

On 13 August 2024, Whanganui District Council reviewed the written and oral submissions received on its initial proposal regarding representation arrangements. These arrangements are intended for the Council and its community board and the proposal will apply to the local elections to be held on 11 October 2025.

The council received 190 submissions on its initial proposal – 111 submitters supported retaining 12 councillors, 127 supported retaining the community board and 75 supported the overall proposal.

Objections raised by submitters, and the reasons these were not accepted by the council, are as follows:

Reduction to a smaller number of councillors would be more effective

The council considers the current number of councillors is appropriate to provide effective representation, particularly with district-wide representation

Reduction to a smaller number of councillors would lead to increased remuneration

The Local Government Commission advises it does not consider representation reviews an appropriate mechanism to address remuneration issues

Reduction to a smaller number of councillors would reduce cost to ratepayers

Remuneration for elected members is based on a total pool set independently by the Remuneration Authority. Any change in the number of councillors would have no impact on rates as the full remuneration pool must be distributed among elected members

Rural Community Board is not required as urban councillors are capable of addressing rural issues

The Whanganui rural community represents a significant and distinct community of interest, and retaining a community board provides effective representation and voice for this group

Rural Community Board does not contribute sufficiently to its sector

There has been strong community support for retaining the community board in consultation and in earlier engagement

Opposition to the establishment of a Māori ward

Under the Local Electoral Act 2001, the council's decision to establish a Māori ward is not within scope of this review

Final proposal

Having considered all of the submissions, the council resolved on 3 September 2024 to adopt its initial proposal as its final proposal with no amendments. Therefore the final proposal is as follows:

- The Council comprises 12 members elected from two wards and the mayor who will be elected at large
- The two wards reflect the general roll and the Māori electoral roll.

Council representation

It is proposed that the council comprises 12 members elected from two wards, and the mayor, who will be elected at large. The two wards reflect the general electoral roll and the Māori roll.

Ward	Communities of interest
Whanganui General Ward	Comprising the whole of the Whanganui District area
Whanganui Māori Ward	Comprising the whole of the Whanganui District area

The population that each elected member will represent is as follows:

Ward	Population	No. of councillors	Population per member
Whanganui General Ward	40,200	10	4020
Whanganui Māori Ward	8720	2	4360
District total	48,290	12	

Community Board representation

It is proposed that the following Whanganui Rural Community Board be elected, comprising the rural areas of the Whanganui District area outside of the Whanganui urban area. The Whanganui Rural Community Board will be subdivided for electoral purposes as follows:

Subdivision	Area of subdivision (see map below)
Kaitoke subdivision	The Kaitoke subdivision is in the south-eastern region of the district – the boundary finishes just beyond the Whangaehu River
Kai Iwi subdivision	The Kai Iwi subdivision is in the south-western region of the district – the boundary finishes just before the Waitotara River

Whanganui
subdivision

The Whanganui subdivision is in the northern region of the district and covers the remaining rural community to the district boundary line

The population that members of each subdivision will represent is as follows:

Subdivision	Population	No. of councillors	Population per member
Whanganui subdivision	1710	2	855
Kai Iwi subdivision	2560	3	853
Kaitoke subdivision	1940	2	970
Total	6210	7	887

The population each member of the Whanganui Rural Community Board represents falls within the range of 887 +/- 10% (798 - 976) in accordance with section 19V(2), Local Electoral Act 2001. Two additional members will be appointed by the council, representing the Whanganui General Ward and/or the Whanganui Māori Ward.

Appeals

Any person who made a submission on the council's initial proposal may lodge an appeal against the council's decision. An appeal must relate to the matters raised in that person's submission.

Appeals must be made in writing and must be received by the council no later than Sunday, 6 October 2024.

Appeals are to be forwarded to:

- Address – 101 Guyton Street, Whanganui 4541
- Email – democracy@whanganui.govt.nz

Further information

Any queries regarding the council's decision should be directed to the Democracy Services Team via [email](#).

David Langford, Chief Executive, 4 September 2024