

Media information

13 November 2012

Working party proposes Wairarapa governance structure

The working party representing Wairarapa's three district councils is proposing a single Wairarapa Council with an elected Wairarapa mayor, 12 councillors and five community boards. Two advisory committees – one for rural people and one for Maori – would enhance local decision making and democracy.

Wairarapa councillors would be elected from seven wards – five from Masterton, two from Carterton, one each from Greytown, Featherston and Martinborough; plus two rural wards with one councillor each. Current ward boundaries for Masterton urban, Martinborough, Greytown and Featherston would be retained. The existing Carterton urban, Carterton rural and Masterton rural wards would be replaced with one Carterton ward and two rural wards.

An expanded community board structure would allow effective local input into decision making. The three existing community boards in Martinborough, Featherston and Greytown would be retained with five instead of six members. Community boards for Carterton and Masterton would be established with six and seven members respectively.

"This would be a council fully elected by, fully representative of and fully accountable to Wairarapa residents – a true, grass-roots democracy," Wairarapa mayors Adrienne Staples, Ron Mark and Garry Daniell said.

"The Wairarapa working party is proposing a vastly different approach to democracy than the single Wellington council recommended by the Wellington Review Panel last month," the mayors said. Under that proposal, Wairarapa would have a single councillor on a Wellington-based council and become one of six 'constituencies' under the single council led by a 'Lord Mayor'.

"The panel's proposal, if adopted, leaves only two realistic options for Wairarapa – a single Wairarapa council responsible for everything, or becoming part of super-city style council with a

Wairarapa sub-council with decision making limited to activities such as dog control, liquor licensing and gambling.”

Neither option includes a regional council. A Wairarapa District Council with a separate regional council would not be possible because the present regional council would disappear under both proposals.

Wellington City Council is considering two councils - one for metropolitan Wellington (combining Wellington City, Lower and Upper Hutt, Porirua and Kapiti councils) and one for Wairarapa. Again, there would be no regional council.

“In considering the options the working party has listened to feedback from Wairarapa people who favour a single Wairarapa council and have been very clear that they do not want to be governed from Wellington.”

“Wairarapa now needs to decide whether it wants to elect its own mayor, councillors and community boards to govern Wairarapa’s planning, assets, finances and services; or transfer all of that to Wellington and replace it with one Wairarapa representative on the decision-making body.”

New laws expected to be passed by Christmas have sped up the process with councils throughout the Wellington region considering their futures.

The working party is finalising its work which it will complete after a hui with all Wellington and Wairarapa councils on 21 November. It will then present its final recommendations to individual Wairarapa councils for consideration after which it will consult widely with Wairarapa people on any proposal for change.

You can find further information, have your say and ask questions on the working party’s website www.wairarapasfuture.govt.nz and at district council offices in Wairarapa.

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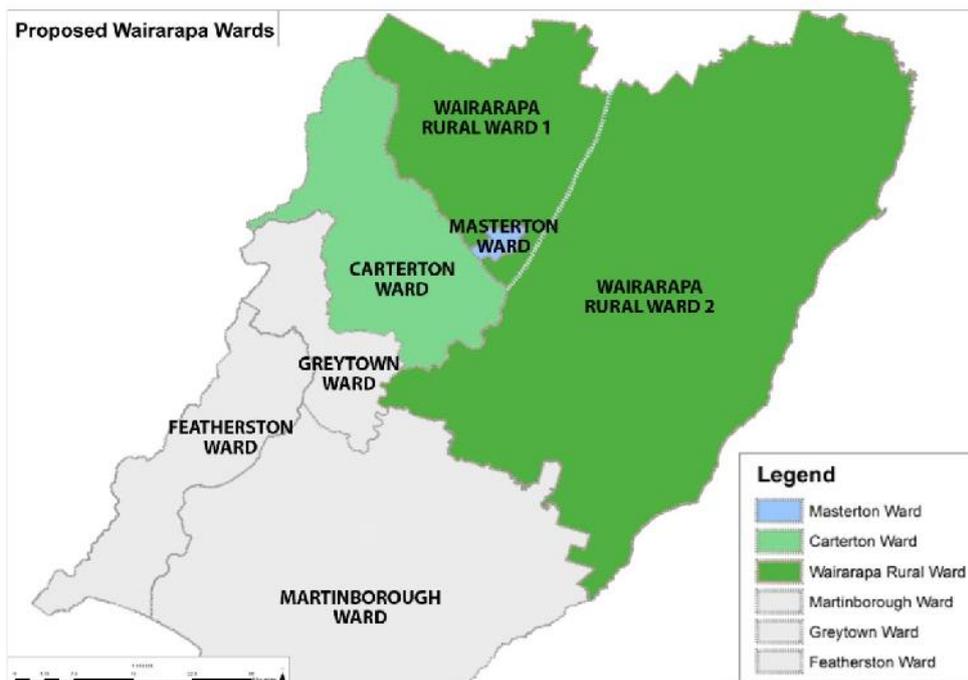
The attached map shows proposed council showing ward boundaries. The rural ward boundary is approximate only.

Background tables and statistics

The following three tables summarise the Working Party’s proposed governance structure for a single Wairarapa council.

Summary of Wairarapa Governance Review Working Party proposed representation structure

Governance Issue	Preferred Option
Number of councillors	12 (plus mayor)
Basis of representation	Ward based
Number of wards	Seven wards, with the current Carterton rural ward redistributed across an expanded Carterton urban and Masterton rural wards. The remaining wards to approximate their respective current ward boundaries
At large component	Nil
Community boards	Retention of the current three community boards at Martinborough, Featherston and Greytown, plus an additional community board for each of Carterton and Masterton. Community board boundaries are to coincide with ward boundaries.
Ward committees	Not considered necessary under the proposed community board structure
Rural advisory committee	Recommend a rural advisory committee given the preference for a unitary authority and that the rural wards sit outside the proposed Masterton community board
Maori advisory/liaison committee	Recommend a Maori advisory/liaison committee, with the final form and function to be decided following consultation with local iwi



Summary of proposed basis of election for a Wairarapa unitary authority

(*Variance note: the Local Electoral Act 2001 requirement for fair and effective representation is that the population of each ward is not more or less than 10% of the population of the district divided by the total number of elected members (excluding members elected at-large e.g. the mayor)

Ward	Current ward population	Proposed ward population	Proposed distribution of councillors.	Population per councillor	Variance*
Masterton (ex MDC urban ward)	18,250	18,250	5	3,650	+7.8%
Masterton rural (ex MDC rural ward)	5,290	-	-	-	-
Carterton rural (ex CDC rural ward)	3,280	-	-	-	-
Carterton urban (ex CDC urban ward)	4,370	-	-	-	-
Carterton	-	6,641	2	3,321	-1.9%
Wairarapa Rural (1)	-	3,149	1	3,149	-7.0%
Wairarapa Rural (2)	-	3,150	1	3,150	-7.0%
Greytown	3,070	3,070	1	3,070	-9.3%
Featherston	3,110	3,110	1	3,110	-8.1%
Martinborough	3,250	3,250	1	3,250	-4.0%
Total	40,620	40,620	12		

Distribution of proposed rural ward population (to be divided into 2 rural wards)

Area segment	Description	Mesh Block Pop - 2006 Census	% Rural ward Population
1	CDC residual rural area	1,009	17%
2	MDC rural - CDC boundary to Tauweru River	1,053	18%
3	MDC rural - Tauweru River to Whangaehu River	561	10%
4	MDC rural – Whangaehu River to Ruamahanga River	881	15%
5	MDC rural - Waingawa River to Ruamahanga River	2,363	40%
	Total	5,867	100%

Having two rural wards would therefore require the dividing boundary to be located between the Ruamahanga and Whangaehu Rivers.

The final location of ward boundaries must ultimately coincide with the current statistical mesh block areas determined by Statistics NZ and used for Parliamentary electoral purposes. Aligning ward boundaries with rivers makes wards more readily definable for electors and generally achieves this requirement.