

# Wairarapa's Future

## Local Government Reform



# WHAT DO YOU THINK?

The shape of local government in NZ is changing. In the past two years the Auckland super city has been formed. The debate about how the greater Wellington region should be governed is now well underway. This involves Wairarapa and its three district councils.

The changes are potentially major, they will have big effects and they could happen quickly - possibly for the local government elections in October 2013.

A range of options and questions are emerging about how local government could be organised in future. Change is almost inevitable and Wairarapa communities of interest have a real opportunity to get involved in shaping their own future. Otherwise it will be decided for us by others.

Our three district councils strongly agree there is a need for change. We are working closely together to identify a local government structure that will support a strong, friendly, thriving Wairarapa that values community and environment. This is the aim adopted by all three councils following consultation this year with 22 groups representing iwi, business, farming, environmental, social, health, sporting and arts interests.

We have done a lot of work already but have more to do so that well-informed, sound decisions can be made. This work is underway now.

Options range at one end from sharing more council services through to joining all nine councils into one authority – or 'super city'.

Working more closely together and the idea of one council for Wairarapa are not new ideas. Our three councils are already sharing services such as rural fire, civil defence and waste management. They have a Combined District Plan. What is new is the option to incorporate Wairarapa into a larger Wellington council.

The Wairarapa Governance Review Working Party wants to involve as many people as possible in deciding

Wairarapa's future. No decisions have been made and we have open minds. We look forward to hearing your views, questions and comments.

***A strong, friendly, thriving Wairarapa, valuing community and environment*** – the vision for Wairarapa adopted by Carterton, Masterton and South Wairarapa District Councils in consultation with 22 Wairarapa organisations – April 2012



Ron Mark  
Carterton Mayor



Garry Daniell  
Masterton Mayor



Adrienne Staples  
South Wairarapa Mayor

Visit our new website to find out more and have your say.  
[www.wairarapasfuture.govt.nz](http://www.wairarapasfuture.govt.nz)

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## What We've Done so Far

Wairarapa councils have been considering this issue for some time.

**October 2010** - as part of the Wellington Mayoral Forum commissioned a governance review of Wellington and Wairarapa councils.

**July 2011** - consulted with our communities on the above report. Most submitters to Wairarapa and Wellington councils had the view that Wellington and Wairarapa's local government should remain separate.

**May 2012** - received an independent high-level report on future governance options for Wairarapa. The report concluded that the best local government arrangements for Wairarapa were likely to be:

- a single Wairarapa District Council with existing regional functions provided by a Wellington-based council **OR**
- a single Wairarapa Council responsible for all local government functions including those of the regional council.

## What Next?

The Wairarapa Governance Review Working Party is working towards identifying a preferred option for the future of local government in Wairarapa and consulting with the public on that specific proposal. As part of this it is:

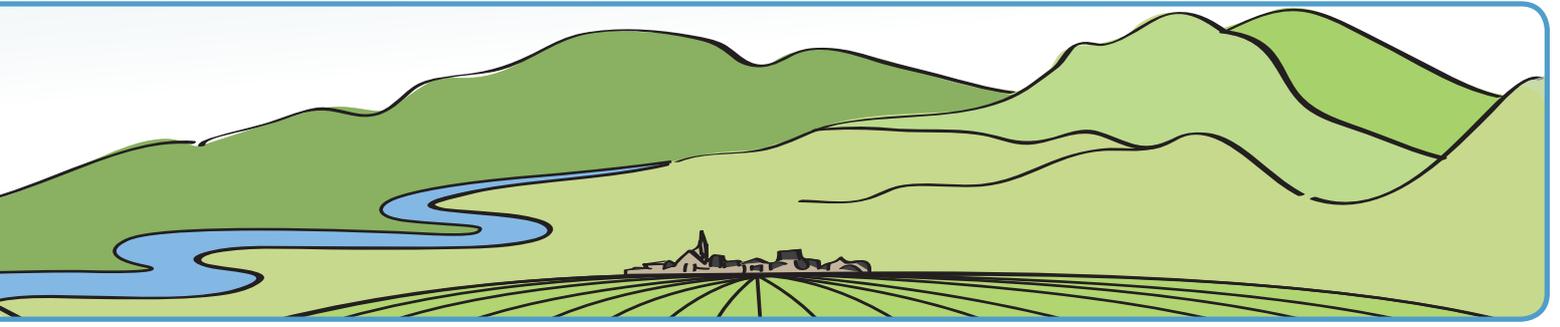
- encouraging community feedback and questions
- together with Wellington councils, conducting an opinion survey by Colmar Brunton covering the entire wider-Wellington region. Between 26 June and 24 July 1,200 Wairarapa people will be surveyed - 400 from each district council area.
- assessing the option of a single Wairarapa Council in more detail
- continuing discussions with other Wellington councils
- meeting with the Wellington Review Panel set up by Greater Wellington Regional Council and Porirua City Council

## Have Your Say

We encourage your views and questions about how our region should be governed in future. While we are not currently undertaking a formal consultation process, we expect to do so in the near future.

In the meantime let us know what you think by:

- Emailing the Working Party at [feedback@wairarapasfuture.govt.nz](mailto:feedback@wairarapasfuture.govt.nz)
- Visiting our Facebook Page 'Wairarapa's Future'
- Talking to any member of the Wairarapa Governance Review Working Party
- Talking to your councillor/community board member
- Writing to your council
  - Carterton District Council, P O Box 9, Carterton 5743
  - Masterton District Council, P O Box 444, Masterton 5840
  - South Wairarapa District Council, P O Box 6, Martinborough 5711

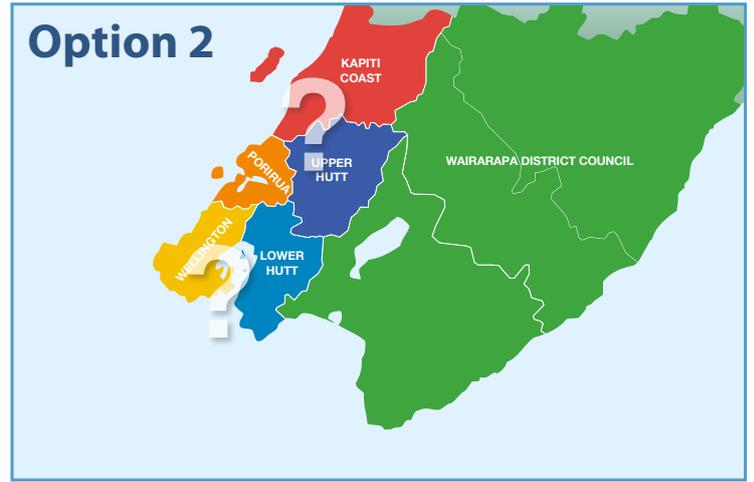


## Broad Options for Reform

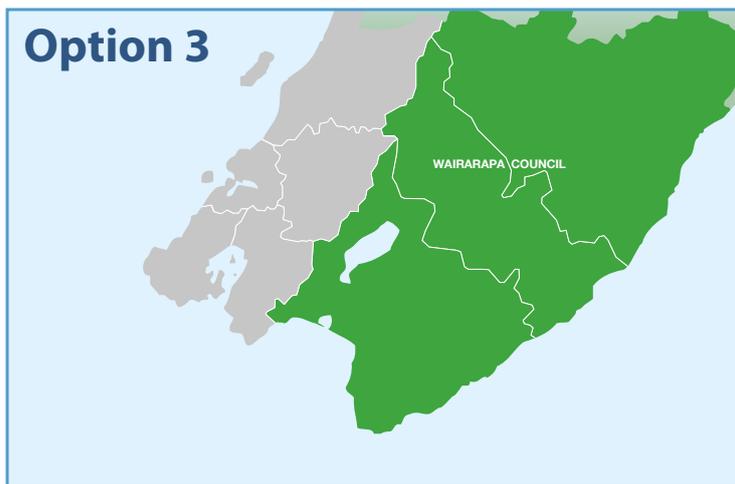
The four options broadly described below are based on the work done by Wairarapa councils and options identified by other councils in the region. There may be other options.



No council mergers but more shared services amongst councils. Does **not** involve any change to existing council boundaries. Councils would agree to share more services such as office-functions, road maintenance, water, parks and libraries.



A single Wairarapa District Council. All existing regional functions would continue to be provided by a Wellington-based council. What this Wellington council looks like depends on any changes in the Wellington, Hutt, Porirua and Kapiti areas.



A single Wairarapa Council running all local government functions including those currently managed by the Regional Council. One Wairarapa Council would become a standalone authority. Any Wairarapa council would work very closely with any council on the western side.



One authority for the whole Wellington/Wairarapa region with local boards/councils. This merges all **nine** councils in the region into **one** authority. Similar to Auckland, the new council would be responsible for setting rates and making major decisions across the region. Local boards/councils would be set up for local services, including in Wairarapa. What makes up a local service would need to be worked through.

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## Wairarapa Governance Review Working Party

The Wairarapa Governance Review Working Party represents the Carterton, Masterton and South Wairarapa district councils. It has delegated authority to investigate future options for governing Wairarapa. Members are:

- **Carterton** Mayor Ron Mark, Deputy Mayor Elaine Brazendale, Councillor Jill Greathead and CEO Colin Wright
- **Masterton** Mayor Garry Daniell, Deputy Mayor Jane Terpstra, Councillor Lyn Patterson (Chair), CEO Wes ten Hove
- **South Wairarapa** Mayor Adrienne Staples, Deputy Mayor Vivien Napier, Councillor Max Stevens, CEO Dr Jack Dowds
- **Greater Wellington Regional Council**, Wairarapa Councillor Gary McPhee

## How It Works Now

Currently there are nine councils in the greater Wellington region – eight local councils (city and district councils) and the Greater Wellington Regional Council.

Wairarapa is served by three district councils – Masterton, Carterton and South Wairarapa - and the Regional Council. South Wairarapa also has three community boards that advocate on behalf of local communities.

Wairarapa currently has a combined total of three mayors and 27 councillors who are elected every three years. It has one elected representative on the Greater Wellington Regional Council.

## District councils & the regional council have different roles. In Wairarapa:

**Local councils** are responsible for positioning communities to thrive in future and for services such as:

- planning and consenting
- maintaining roads and footpaths
- drinking water, waste water, water races, storm water
- parks, swimming pools, community centres, libraries, cemeteries
- dog control, liquor licences, food premises, rubbish collection
- supporting events, tourism promotion, economic development

**The Regional Council** provides services that extend across local boundaries including:

- regulating use of natural resources - water, air and land
- funding and managing Wairarapa's rail and bus service
- pest and plant control
- building and maintaining flood protection works

## Why is the Debate Happening?

The last time any major changes were made to the structure of local government across New Zealand was in 1989.

However, in the last couple of years we have seen the advent of the Auckland 'super city'. A number of councils, including the Auckland Regional Council, were merged to form a single Auckland Council representing around 1.5 million people. 21 local boards were also set up to oversee local services.

In March this year the Government proposed a series of local government reforms. This is a response to the tough global economic environment and, consequently,

a drive for the public sector to provide better services while keeping costs down.

The Government says these aims may in part be achieved through the amalgamation of councils, the process for council reorganisation will also change.

The Government plans to legislate for these changes before the end of 2012 – allowing time for any new council arrangements to be in place for the October 2013 local body elections.

Councils in the Wairarapa and Wellington regions are currently considering how they might best be organised in future.