

# Representation Review Update

Community Board Briefing  
5 August 2021

# Purpose of briefing

Councillors and staff update to Community Boards on:

- Development of the Council's initial proposal for representation for public consultation
- Next steps and public consultation

# Mayor's introduction

# Elected member input and direction

- Briefings on 1 June for Councillors and Community Boards to provide overview of preliminary engagement and to seek input
- Councillor briefings on 29 June and 27 July to explore different options and provide a steer on preferences based on the feedback from the preliminary engagement and design principles

# Recap of approach

1. Targeted **research and preliminary engagement to understand the community voice**
2. Led to us establishing some **design principles and alternative options**
3. Councillors **explored different options** to achieve fair and effective representation and best represent our communities of interest

# What we have done



- Engaged the community, listened to their perspective
- Engaged Councillors, gained their input
- Engaged Community Board Members, gained their input
- Updated Youth Council, Older Persons' Council, Accessibility Advisory Group
- Updated Iwi Partners



- Considered what we heard
- Considered ways to meet the brief – high-level conceptual approaches, with some technical work to ensure feasibility



## **1 June : Briefings**

- Updated Councillors and Iwi Partners on work to date, got direction on principles and approaches
- Updated Community Board Members on work to date, got input on principles and approaches



- Followed the direction given, worked up options and maps in detail



## **29 June : Briefing**

- Present Councillors and Iwi Partners with detailed options – maps and numbers – based on earlier direction provided
- Councillors provide direction on which option to progress, provide further direction for refinement



## **27 July : Briefing**

- Present Councillors with refinements and finer details of option



## **5 August : Briefing – Council and Community Boards**

- Update Community Board Members on direction and progress

# Our approach

- Design research approach – supported by external experts
- Meaningful engagement with more than 150 people – 5 activities across 3 phases
- Focus on:
  - understanding people's context and how it shapes their behaviours, beliefs and attitudes
  - understanding people's underlying needs and wants
  - using these insights to shape options
  - not "tell us what you think"

# It's complicated

- There is some tension within the design principles
- A "perfect" solution that meets all design principles won't be possible
- The focus needs to be on finding a solution that, on balance, best meets the community's requirements



# Design principle

**Reflect distinct geographic communities of interest**

*Perception:*

*Achieved through smaller wards, and careful placement of boundaries*

# Design principle

**Help ensure high-calibre representatives**

*Perception:*

*Achieved through bigger wards, at-large*

# Design principle

**Don't spread councillors too thin**

**Ensure they can get across the people and issues**

*Perception:*

*Achieved through small wards, more councillors*

# Design principle

**Support councillors' responsibility to reach out and hear from the community**

*Perception:*

- *Achieved through small wards*
- *Some perception this could be achieved through community panels, community boards, Council officers*
- *Some concerns with that too*

# Design principle

**Ensure minority voices are heard, not overshadowed**

*Perception:*

*Achieved through careful boundary placement, and/or at-large and not spreading councillors too thin*

# Design principle

**Support the likelihood of councillors coming from across the district**

*Perception:*

*Achieved through small wards*

# Design principle

**Give more focus to in-need suburbs**

**Tackle inequity, foster equity**

*Perception:*

*Achieved through ward councillors who see local issues, and at-large councillors who look across the district*

# Design principle

**Build barriers to parochialism**

**Support ability to look across the district**

**Make it easier to do what's best for Kāpiti as a whole**

*Perception:*

*Achieved through councillors coming from across the district yet not having to answer to their wards*



# Design principle

**Ensure councillors hear from a diverse range of community voices, not just one type**

## Perception:

- *Majority perception this is not achieved through another layer of elected representatives*
- *Minority perception this could be achieved by strengthening the role of community boards*

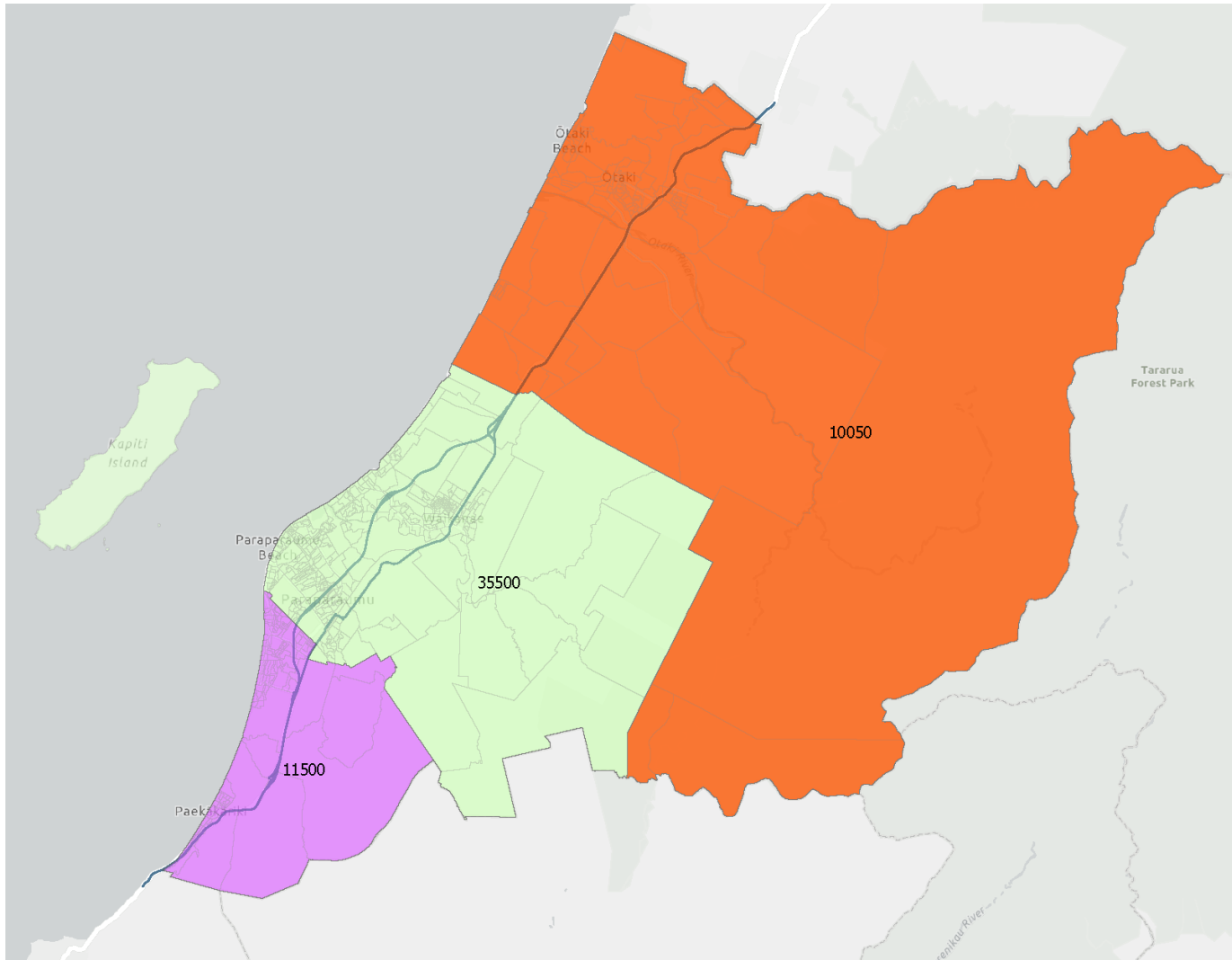
# Options overview

- Staff developed 4 options for councillors to consider that drew on:
  - the design principles from the preliminary engagement,
  - legislative requirements for fair and effective representation that represents communities of interest
- Options explored:
  - different ward size and boundaries,
  - number and mix of councillors, and
  - community boards

# Considerations

- All wards, all district wide or mixed model?
- Smaller wards or larger wards?
- Community boards
  - across the district?
  - for distinct communities of interest only?
  - not at all?
- How many councillors:
  - more?
  - fewer?
  - about the same as now?

# Preferred option: Large Wards - mixed-model



# Large Wards – mixed-model

- The mixed model helps council stay close to the people at a local level and see the big picture to do what's best for Kāpiti as a whole
- The size of council is within the range perceived as being big enough for diversity yet small enough for efficiency
- Ōtaki is one of the very distinct communities of interest so it is good that they are essentially a separate ward
- Larger wards have a bigger pool of candidates – supports diversity and quality of representation
- Community boards not included in the model

# Why no community boards?

- Research suggested current approach to community boards wasn't adding to effective and efficient representation of communities of interest
- Relevant research findings:
  - Our communities want a democratic model that brings them closer to their elected representatives and decision-makers
  - Currently hard for council to hear from a diverse range of voices
  - Concern that community boards could amplify the voices already heard rather than bringing new perspectives
  - Barriers to people engaging with council likely exist for community boards too

# Ensuring strong local voices

- The proposed model focuses on strengthening local representation by:
  - removing confusing layers of representation and barriers to engagement
  - strengthening councillors' ability to know and understand their communities
  - empowering existing or new community groups to do more to foster community-led development without the barriers/layers that exist for community boards

# Supporting a more direct relationship between councillors and communities

- Establish a secretariat to support councillors in the community
- Meeting space/neighbourhood clinics
- More communications and engagement support
- Strengthened local outcomes approach – follow through/case management
- Neighbourhood fora or community panels
- Better insights from new voice of the customer programme



# Empowering communities

- Do more to foster community-led development to support new representation model
- Possible examples:
  - Enhanced grants programme
  - Increased funding and staff support for existing community groups to lead initiatives
  - Support establishment of new types of community groups where needed
  - Enhanced local outcomes focus

# Where to from here



## 5 August : Briefing – Council and Community Boards

- Update Community Board Members on direction and progress

## 10 August : Briefing

- Present Councillors with Initial Proposal (draft), identify required tweaks

## 13 August

- Council Report finalised and into peer review process (agenda dispatched 20 August)

## 26 August : Council Meeting

- Present Councillors with Initial Proposal for approval to go out for public consultation

## Public Submissions

- Receive public submissions (one month – 1 September to 4 October)
- Consider submissions (Hearings 19 October)

## 26 October : Briefing

- Discuss submissions, determine changes (if any)

- Update Community Board Members
- Update the public

## 11 November : Council Meeting

- Present Councillors with Final Proposal for approval

## Appeals/Objections

Receive any appeals or objections (one month)

Send to Local Government Commission for determination if we receive an appeal or objection, and/or if Final Proposal is outside of guidelines

# Comments from the Mayor