

Report 12.337
Date 24 July 2012
File E/01/10/03

Committee Representation Review 2012 Hearing Committee
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Summary of submissions on proposed representation arrangements

1. Purpose

This report provides an overview and highlights the key issues contained in the submissions that Greater Wellington received on the Council's initial representation proposal for the 2013 elections.

This report complements Report 12.336 which sets out the process for handling submissions, both at this meeting and following the consideration of submissions.

2. The decision-making process and significance

Officers recognise that the matters referenced in this report may have a high degree of importance to affected or interested parties.

The matter requiring decision in this report has been considered by officers against the requirements of Part 6 of the Local Government Act 2002 (the Act). Part 6 sets out the obligations of local authorities in relation to the making of decisions.

2.1 Significance of the decision

Part 6 requires Greater Wellington to consider the significance of the decision. The term 'significance' has a statutory definition set out in the Act.

Officers have considered the significance of the matter, taking the Council's significance policy and decision-making guidelines into account. Officers recommend that the matter be considered to have low significance.

Officers do not consider that a formal record outlining consideration of the decision-making process is required in this instance.

3. Background

On 13 June 2012 the Council approved its initial representation proposal for the 2013 elections for consultation. Greater Wellington received 10 submissions on its initial proposal. A full copy of the submissions is attached to this report as **Attachment 1**.

Five submitters have also asked to be heard in support of their written submission.

4. Comment

4.1 Origin of submissions

Of the 10 submissions received by Greater Wellington five were from individuals in the region and five were from local government.

Location of submitter	Number of submissions
Wellington	2
Lower Hutt	4
Upper Hutt	1
Porirua	0
Kapiti	0
Wairarapa	3

4.2 Key themes

4.2.1 Against two councillors from the Wairarapa Constituency

Seven submitters did not support the Council's proposal to increase the number of elected representatives in the Wairarapa to two.

Several submitters stated that the Local Electoral Act 2001 (LEA) makes no provision for representation based on land area or work undertaken in the constituency. It was suggested that most of the work to be done in the constituency could be undertaken by council officers rather than needing full councillor involvement. It was also submitted that the urban environments within the Wellington region are as complex and challenging as land management in the Wairarapa, therefore negating the argument for an extra councillor based on land management issues.

Three submitters argued that if representation in the Wairarapa is to be determined on land area then the rest of the region should be calculated in the same way. One submitter suggested that if the Wairarapa representation is calculated using a ratio of one Councillor per 20,300 population then this should be extended across the region, resulting in a total of 23 Councillors.

However, section 19D of the LEA does not allow for membership of a regional council to exceed 14 members so the Council is unable to consider this option.

One submitter proposed reinstating the Council's Wairarapa Committee (which was disestablished in 2007) as a more effective way to provide elected member involvement and representation in the Wairarapa. The submitter clarified that if the Wairarapa Committee was to be reinstated it would need clearer guidelines for reporting to the Council. The same submitter supported reducing the number of Councillors to 11.

4.2.2 Support for two councillors from the Wairarapa Constituency

Three submitters stated their support for two representatives in the Wairarapa. All three submitters consider that having two representatives is necessary to ensure effective representation, given the large land area (74% of the region) with its diverse and widely spread communities and Greater Wellington's activities in the Wairarapa.

4.2.3 Lower Hutt to be divided in to three single-member constituencies

Three submitters proposed that the Lower Hutt constituency should be divided in to three single-member constituencies. The submitters stated that this would provide increased accountability to constituents and therefore more effective representation for the residents of Lower Hutt City.

5. **Communication**

Once the Council has made its decision on its final representation arrangements on 21 August 2012, a public notice will be placed in the region's main newspapers outlining the decision and setting out the reasons for it. In addition, each submitter will be sent a letter advising them of the Council's decision. They will also be notified that they can lodge an appeal and/or objection.

6. **Recommendations**

That the Committee:

1. ***Receives the report.***
2. ***Notes the content of the report.***
3. ***Considers the information in this report in determining its findings and recommendations to Council.***

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Attachment 1: Submissions received on the Council's initial representation proposal.