

MĀORI REPRESENTATION POLL

Additional Information

Māori Wards for Wairoa District Council?

Wairoa District Council has the opportunity to introduce designated Māori representation through the setting up of one or more Māori wards (in addition to general wards). This is permitted under the Local Electoral Act 2001.

Representatives for Māori wards would be elected by people who are enrolled on the Māori Parliamentary Electoral Roll. Electors of these wards would not be able to vote for members of the general wards. Similarly, people who are enrolled on the General Parliamentary Electoral Roll would vote for members of the general wards but not for members of the Māori wards. All electors would still vote for the Mayor.

Poll on Māori Representation

The Wairoa District Council is holding a poll, as part of the 2016 Local Authority Elections, to see whether it should introduce one or more Māori wards for at least its next two triennial elections. Those eligible to vote in the poll are:

- all residential electors (electors who live in the Wairoa District, from both the General and Māori Parliamentary Electoral Rolls); and
- all non-resident ratepayer electors (electors who live outside of the Wairoa District but own property within the District).

Poll Results

The result of this poll will be binding on the Council for at least the next two triennial elections in 2019 and 2022.

If the majority of voters is in favour of introducing one or more Māori wards, Council will undertake a detailed review of its representation arrangements (number of wards, elected members etc.) including:

- the number of general and Māori wards;
- the number of representatives to be elected for general and Māori wards;
- the ward boundaries and names.

The review must be completed by 31 August 2018. There will be a right to make submissions on the Council's proposals and a right of appeal to the Local Government Commission.

The number of Māori ward representatives would be determined by a formula based on the 'Māori electoral population' of the Wairoa District Council, as defined in legislation. Based on the size of the present Council (six members plus the Mayor), there would be three members elected from one or more Māori wards and three members elected from one or more general wards. All elected members, whether elected from general or Māori wards, represent the entire community.

If the majority of voters is not in favour of introducing one or more Māori wards, Council is not required to undertake a detailed review of its representation arrangements.

Legislative Background

The following legislative references are provided for information:

- A principle of the Local Electoral Act 2001 is to implement '(a) fair and effective representation for individuals and communities' (Section 4(1)(a) Local Electoral Act 2001).
- The purpose of local government is – (a) to enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of, communities; and (b) to meet the current and future needs of communities for good-quality local infrastructure, local public services, and performance of regulatory functions in a way that is most cost-effective for households and businesses.' (section 10 Local Government Act 2002).
- A local authority must – (a) establish and maintain processes to provide opportunities for Māori to contribute to the decision-making processes of the local authority; and (b) consider ways in which it may foster the development of Māori capacity to contribute to the decision-making processes of the local authority' (section 81 (1) (a)(b) Local Government Act 2002).

Considerations on Māori Wards

Considerations include:

- approximately 58.6% of the Wairoa District's population is Māori;

- the Wairoa District Council is required to establish and maintain processes to provide opportunities for Māori to contribute to its decision-making processes and to consider ways in which it may foster the development of Māori capacity to contribute to these;
- Wairoa District Council has a Māori Standing Committee and a Māori Relationships Manager;
- once elected, Māori ward representatives have the same responsibilities as other councillors to act in the best interests of the entire community, not just for their own ward;
- only electors on the Māori Electoral Roll can vote for Māori ward candidates. These electors would not be able to vote for general ward candidates. All electors can vote for Mayoral candidates;
- anyone can stand as a candidate for a Māori ward, but cannot stand for both a general and a Māori ward at the same time;
- Māori ward representatives may better relate to and understand Māori communities, and provide the Council with a greater understanding of Māori issues and concerns;
- Māori wards may encourage more Māori to participate in Council by standing for office and voting at local elections.

Have your say

The result of the Māori Representation Poll is important for determining how members will be elected to the Wairoa District Council at the 2019 and 2022 elections.

Please complete and return your voting document as soon as possible. It must be received by the Electoral Officer no later than

12 noon, Saturday 8 October 2016.

For more detailed information, please contact:

**Wairoa District Council
on phone (06) 838 7309**

Wairoa District Council



**KIA TŪ,
KIA MĀIA**

Vote and be
counted Wairoa!