



Community voices at the council table

2024 REPRESENTATION REVIEW



*You can help decide how your voice
will be heard at the council table.*

The role of elected members (our mayor, councillors and community board members) is to be a voice for the local community.

Council voted to implement Māori wards in 2023, so we now need to consider how we represent community voices at the council table with Māori wards included. This is our Representation Review.



What we have now

As at 2022, we had 6,378 electors (people enrolled to vote on either the Māori Roll or General Roll) in the Ōpōtiki District.

Currently, we elect:

- A mayor (at large)
- 1 councillor from the Coast Ward
- 3 councillors from the Ōpōtiki Ward
- 2 councillors from the Waioeka-Waiōtahe-Otara Ward

We also have one community board – the Coast Community Board – with 4 elected members.

Why do things need to change?

Council must review, from time to time, how well people and communities in the district are represented. With the decision to include Māori wards, we now need to do that this year so that it can be in place for the 2025 elections.

The number of Māori ward councillors is set in legislation using a formula based on the ratio of Māori electoral population to the total electoral population.

Based on the formula, Ōpōtiki would likely have 3-4 councillors from Māori wards and 3-4 councillors from General wards (depending on the number of councillors we choose to have on council). You can read more details on this on the council website.



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What needs to change?

In light of these changes, we must make sure our arrangements are:

1. Effective | Whakamana

Effective means the system should be practical and work. Thinking about questions like: do we have the right number of councillors? Should they be elected from wards or “at large”? How many wards and where? Should we have community boards and how many?

2. Representative | Hei Mangai

Representative means our structure must bring different “communities of interest” to the table. Questions about where people feel like they belong. Where you might feel like your community has distinct needs that should be heard at the council table.

3. Fair | Matatika

In this process, ‘fair’ generally means each elected member represents about same number of people (within +/- 10%).

Can we keep things the same?

No. With the introduction of Māori wards, none of our wards meet the “+/- 10% rule”. For example, if we just layered Māori wards over top of our current ward structure, some of the councillors would represent around 600 people and other councillors would represent almost 3000. So some change is necessary.

What do we need to decide?

We need to consider questions like:

- how many councillors we want
- whether we have one or more General wards
- whether we have one or more Māori wards
- where we draw ward boundaries and their names (if we choose to have them)
- and whether we want community boards (and their boundaries, membership, and names if we do)

How will the process work?

Early Feedback closes	30 APRIL 2024
Council develops preferred option (initial proposal)	30 JULY
Public Submissions Open on preferred option	6 AUGUST
Public Submissions Close	6 SEPTEMBER
Public hearings	17 & 18 SEPTEMBER
Council adopts final proposal	30 NOVEMBER
Appeal/objection period	
Determination (if required)	BY 10 APRIL 2025

How can you have your say?

We have a few hui and events where you can find out more and share your views.

You can find more, check event dates, and share your feedback at www.connect.odc.govt.nz

Or you can email info@odc.govt.nz or provide your feedback in hardcopy to our offices.



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**Hono
mai
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Ōpōtiki District Council
108 St John Street,
PO Box 44, Ōpōtiki.
Phone: 07 315 3030

Email: info@odc.govt.nz

Web: www.odc.govt.nz

 [ŌpōtikiDistrictCouncil](https://www.facebook.com/OpotikiDistrictCouncil)