

5. REVIEW OF BASIS OF 2001 LOCAL BODY ELECTIONS: COMMUNITY BOUNDARIES AND COMMUNITY BOARD MEMBERSHIP

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Corporate Plan Output: Public Accountability	

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to invite Community Boards to consider any possible changes in community boundaries and/or Community Board membership which they would like to see implemented at the next Christchurch City elections in October 2001. Proposals for changes in either of these two areas should be finalised by the relevant Boards by 30 June 2000.

The Local Government Act 1974 requires the Council to review, by 31 August 2000:

- (a) the basis upon which the 2001 elections are to be held for the Council; and
- (b) to review the elected membership of Community Boards.

Regarding (a), this review is separate from the work that the Council carried out in 1999 when it appointed three commissioners to consider the number of Councillors and ward boundaries in relation to the proposed amalgamation with Banks Peninsula District.

BACKGROUND

By way of background to this electoral review there are three matters which are relevant:

- (a) The Council's 1997 resolution (which provided for the same electoral structure as at present to be used for the 1998 elections), was subject to an appeal to the Local Government Commission.

In its decision dated 27 March 1998 on that appeal the Commission stated that prior to the 2001 election the Council should make a thorough investigation of its existing wards to ascertain what changes should be made to the existing structure.

That thorough investigation was carried out last year by the three commissioners in the context of the amalgamation proposal. However, the statutory framework the commissioners were required to work within is the same as the Council is now required to consider with this electoral review.

- (b) In June 1999 the three commissioners presented to the Council a report entitled "Christchurch City Council – Community Areas and Wards: A Report on Future Options".

Regarding that part of the report dealing with wards in Christchurch City, the commissioners' recommendations were not accepted by the Council at its special meeting on 26 August 1999.

- (c) In its Final Reorganisation Scheme dated 14 December 1999, the Local Government Commission adopted the existing ward structure of Christchurch City for that part of the new Council's proposed district.

The Final Scheme noted:

“The Commission considers that the membership structure of the Council and the provision for community boards will ensure effective representation for all communities in the new City.”

COMMUNITY BOARD MEMBERSHIP

In addition to reviewing its own membership and basis for election, the Local Government Act requires the Council, not later than 31 August 2000:

- (a) To review the number of elected members of the Community boards; and
- (b) The Council may, with the consent of, or at the request of, a Community Board, by resolution, alter the number of elected members of a Community Board.

Therefore there must be agreement between the Council and the Community Board if there is to be any alteration in the number of elected community board members.

The legal requirements for elected members of Community Boards is no less than four and no more than 12 members. Councillors will recall that the number of **appointed** Councillor members of Community Boards cannot be more than half the number of elected members. As the current number of elected members for each community board is six, then the maximum number of appointed Councillors is three.

This review of the number of **elected** members has no application to the number of appointed members. The number of appointed members will be a decision for the new Council after the 2001 election.

There is no public right of objection on appeal regarding the number of elected community board members.

COMMUNITY AREA BOUNDARIES

A community area may be abolished, united with another community, or the boundaries altered by a reorganisation scheme or by a resolution of the Council with the consent of the Board/s affected. Where there is no agreement, a determination may be made by the Local Government Commission. A plan of proposed new boundaries is to be made available for public inspection for 28 days before the required resolution approving the changes is considered by the Council, and it is implicit that submissions may be made by the public for consideration before a final decision is reached.

Community Boards are requested to advise whether there are any desired community boundary alterations. Although not technically part of the current review, the Council has traditionally considered such alterations as part of the review.

Circulated separately, are maps showing:

- 1996 Census meshblocks and 1998 Council wards
- 1996 Census meshblocks and 1998 community boundaries

Larger scale maps will be tabled at the Board meeting.

The Council, based on past experience, will only consider changes to community boundaries where the Community Boards involved are in agreement. Any changes will also need to coincide with Census meshblock boundaries.

The 1999 report prepared by the commissioners recommended quite substantial changes to the present community boundaries, which were not supported at that time by either the Community Boards or the Council. For that reason, the commissioners' recommendations have not been reiterated in this present report. However, some Boards (as in the past) may wish to consider other alterations to community boundaries. For example, the Spreydon/Heathcote Community Board may wish to pursue the previous suggestion that the Sydenham commercial area be included in the Heathcote Ward, and that Westmorland be transferred from the Wigram to the Heathcote Ward.

Recommendation: That each Community Board consider these two issues and advise the Council by 30 June 2000 of any desired changes in either Community Board membership or the boundaries of community areas.

Chairperson's

Recommendation: For discussion.