

Local government reform: update

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Recap

The reform landscape

- Corporatisation of drinking, waste and storm water services
 - Councils must choose whether to “opt out” later this year
- New planning system
 - Regionalisation of spatial planning
- Centralisation of health services
 - Four sub-national offices with locality health plans

“(Councils) are now facing a wave of reforms that will significantly affect their traditional roles and functions. They have told us the timing is right to determine what our system of local democracy should look like to make sure it is fit for the future, and I agree.”

(Minister Mahuta)

Other reasons to establish an Inquiry

- Since 2008 the LGA 2002 has increased by more than 350 pages
 - Contradictory
 - Complex and difficult to interpret
 - Costly
- Population tourism growth has highlighted councils' narrow range of fundign and financing tools

Minister's view

- independent review of local government will explore how councils can maintain and improve the wellbeing of New Zealanders in the communities they serve long into the future.
- I have asked the review panel to consider what local government does, how it does it, and how it pays for it. From there, they will explore what local government's future looks like, including:
 - roles, functions and partnerships
 - representation and governance
 - funding and financing.
- This also offers an important opportunity to explore how we can embody the Treaty partnership through the role and representation of iwi/Māori in local government.

Overall purpose

- The sector is calling for a programme of work to **‘re-imagine the role and function of local government’**, in order to build a sustainable system that delivers enhanced wellbeing outcomes for our communities.
- **The overall purpose - to identify how our system of local democracy and governance needs to evolve over the next 30 years, to improve the wellbeing of New Zealand communities and the environment, and actively embody the Treaty partnership.**

The Minister is seeking recommendations that look to achieve

- a resilient and sustainable local government system that is fit for purpose and has the flexibility and incentives to adapt to the future needs of local communities;
- public trust/confidence in local authorities and the local regulatory system that leads to strong leadership;
- effective partnerships between mana whenua, and central and local government in order to better provide for the social, environmental, cultural, and economic wellbeing of communities; and
- a local government system that actively embodies the Treaty partnership, through the role and representation of iwi/Māori in local government, and seeks to uphold the Treaty of Waitangi (Te Tiriti o Waitangi) and its principles through its functions and processes.

Members

- Cabinet has confirmed Jim Palmer as Chair of the review panel, who will be joined by four members: John Ombler QSO, Antoine Coffin, Gael Surgenor and Penny Hulse.
- Secretariat
 - Executive director appointed
 - Possibly 20 – 30 staff

Time frame

- May 2021 – September 2021
 - Engage with the sector
 - Issue an interim report on the probable direction of the Review
- September 2022
 - Publish a draft report for public consultation
- April 2023
 - Final report.

Next steps

- How should CBEC and community boards contribute to the engagement phase?
- What issues should CBEC highlight?



**Who's
looking after
our
communities'
future?**