

INTRODUCTION

1. We appreciate the opportunity to submit on Council’s Initial Proposal for the 2022 Representation Review – Te Taura Hou Kia Whakatakoto.
2. Te Tatau o Te Arawa (Te Tatau) is lodging this submission on behalf of the hundreds of Te Arawa uri and those enrolled on the Māori roll who provided feedback directly to Te Tatau during our own engagement process on Māori wards and the Representation Review as well as the many Te Arawa uri represented by the Te Arawa mandated entities (including hapū, iwi and marae trusts, land trusts, incorporations and pan-iwi rūpū) that endorse this submission.
3. Te Arawa mandated entities in support of this submission include:

▲ Te Pūkenga Koeke o Ngāti Pikiao	▲ x
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4. As such, we consider this submission to be one made on behalf of Te Arawa whānui i te rohe o Rotorua (Te Arawa whānui).
5. This submission is also made in alignment with the Te Arawa 2050 Vision, in particular the Te Arawa Rangatiratanga | Leadership and Influence whāinga tawhiti of:
 - ▲ Our future has the best leaders making and effectively implementing the best decisions about our resources to continuously achieve the best outcomes for our people. We lead, create and shape kōrero, partnerships and opportunities that bring about positive change on kaupapa that affect us.
6. Below we set out the Te Arawa whānui response to the proposed new model.
7. We wish to speak to our Submission.

TE TAUIRA HOU KIA WHAKATAKOTO | THE PROPOSED NEW MODEL

8. Te Arawa whānui do not support Council’s proposed new model of 4 General Ward councillors elected by ward, 4 “at large” councillors elected across the district and 2 Māori Ward councillors elected by one district-wide ward, plus the Mayor elected at large.

9. Te Tatau o Te Arawa undertook its own engagement process on the same three shortlisted models Council canvassed prior to reaching its proposed model.
10. Council's proposed new model was the least supported of the three.
11. While the proposed new model did score second in Te Tatau's online survey at 13.7%, overwhelmingly, feedback directly received from Te Arawa uri and those enrolled on the Māori electoral roll during Te Tatau's engagement on Māori Wards and the Representation Review did not show support for any model that reduces the number of Māori ward councillors around the Council table.
12. The greatest concern is that the proposed new model limits Māori Ward seats to two when the 28% population on the Māori electoral roll should provide for three dedicated Māori Ward seats on council.
13. We acknowledge that Council has tried to design a model that "aims to restore equity" for those enrolled on the Māori Electoral Roll following the Council's 21 May 2021 decision to introduce Māori Wards.
14. It seems then, that through Council's lens, 'equity restoration' is made by maximising the number of votes possible that can be cast by those enrolled on the Māori roll at election time – across both Māori Ward seats and At Large seats.
15. However, the Te Arawa whānui lens (informed by feedback, a survey and polls open to all those in the rohe enrolled on the Māori roll), has maximising the number of Māori ward seats around the Council table as the best means of achieving 'equity restoration' for those on the Māori roll.
16. We would suggest to Council that the lens of those for whom 'equity restoration' is being sought, should be the guiding perspective when making decisions on matters of this nature.

TE ARAWA WHĀNUI PREFERRED MODEL

17. The Te Arawa whānui preferred model is of 6 General Ward councillors elected by ward, 1 "at large" councillor elected across the district and 3 Māori Ward councillors elected by one district-wide ward, plus the Mayor elected at large.
18. From the online survey alone, 77.4% of participants preferred this model. Additionally Te Arawa uri and those enrolled on the Māori electoral roll who directly provided their feedback supported this model above the other two.
19. Endorsement of this model has been received from a range of Te Arawa entities – pan-iwi, iwi, hapū, marae and whenua Māori based.
20. The Te Arawa whānui preferred model is one of the three shortlisted models already canvassed with the public by Council, therefore there is already some community awareness of the model and Council will likely have already considered operational implications – thereby likely making it as easy as Council's proposed model to implement.

FALLBACK MODEL

21. If asked to provide a fallback model (i.e. an alternative model should the Te Arawa whānui preferred model not be adopted), we still could not support Council's proposed option as it is the least supported by Te Arawa whānui (and those on the Māori roll who participated during our engagement process)
22. The remaining shortlisted model - 7 General Ward councillors and 3 Māori Ward councillors, plus Mayor, was the least popular of the surveyed three options, coming in at only 8.9%. However, direct feedback indicated that a minimum of 3 Māori ward councillors was preferred.
23. We would therefore instead recommend as a fallback, that Council is reduced from 10 councillors plus Mayor to 9 councillors plus Mayor. Councillors to then be made up of 6 General Ward councillors and 3 Māori Ward councillors. It is noted that this 6:3 model most closely resonates with the Governance proportions of the Fenton Agreement.
24. This fallback model would maximise the number of seats around the council table and their level of influence thus aligning with the Te Arawa whānui perspective on 'equity restoration' and with closely related feedback directly received from Te Arawa uri about the need for Council - in its governance structure, to better reflect Te Tiriti o Waitangi (and He Whakaputanga o te Rangatiratanga o Nu Tirene) by recognising tino rangatiratanga of Māori.
25. As stated in the Report of Matike Mai Aotearoai,¹ there needs to be equal and equitable political relationships between Māori and the Crown. Indeed, it was accepted that without such relationships Te Tiriti could not be honoured and a stable and respectful way of governing according to Te Tiriti would be impossible to achieve. This equal and equitable political relationship is just as relevant at the local government level as it is at the Crown level.
26. While a 50/50 split of power would be preferred we recognise that such a change to local government arrangements is out of scope of this Representation Review and representation legislation under the Local Electoral Act.

¹ The Independent working group on Constitutional Transformation