2018 HAMILTON CITY COUNCIL REPRESENTATION REVIEW

This is a joint submission made by candidates of the Hamilton City Council East Ward by-election 2018. Deborah Fisher, Ross McLeod, Matthew Small, Maxine van Oosten, Horiana Henderson & Meleane Burgess.

We are making this submission to urge the Council to consider the following points our group has debated:

Representation:
- We do not see our Communities represented on Council.
- The current two ward system creates barriers to participation and representation from our Communities.
- The current East Ward groups two very different communities with opposite demographics together.

Number of Wards:
- Increase the current 2 wards to 3 as follows: Hamilton West, Hamilton East & a new Hamilton North Ward (suburbs identified as E1, E2, E3 and W1)
- Smaller wards would reduce the allowance for campaigning.
- There is a correlation between smaller wards and increased voter participation and turnout.

Representation
We do not feel that our communities are adequately represented. Public concerns regarding representation appear to centre on the quality of candidates, diversity and areas of underrepresentation. Large Wards (such as the current 2 wards) or At-Large voting make it impossible for candidates to be known by the Ward. Candidates are unable to walk the entire area to make contact with voters and communities, resulting in elections often hinging on campaign spending and name recognition. Neither of which is a particularly good way to qualify a candidate's suitability for the role. Nor does it address the issue of diversity.

A high campaign spending cap does not result in a better quality candidate and definitely does not help achieve diversity. It does however hinder those that would bring diversity from within communities without sufficient financial support from standing or getting elected.

We agree with the Councils proposal to retain the current number of Councillors set at 12 (4 from each ward). However we note that Candidates can stand in a Ward that they are not resident in and we feel this is not in the interests of our City or its communities. Current East Ward Councillors are concentrated in the northern suburbs of Hamilton. A 3 ward split would allow those that feel it is important a candidate be local to better identify whether they are or not.

Smaller Wards would result in less campaign spending by candidates, higher voter turn-out and higher chances of diversity.

Local Government Commission - Guidelines: Representation Review

<u>Key considerations</u>
In reviewing their representation arrangements, local authorities must provide for 'effective representation of communities of interest' (ss19T and 19U) and 'fair representation of electors' (s19V). Therefore, there are three key factors for local authorities to carefully consider.
<u>They are:</u>
• communities of interest
• effective representation of communities of interest
• fair representation of electors

The perceptual and functional aspects can be extended to define a community of interest as having:
• a sense of community identity and belonging reinforced by:
    ○ distinctive physical and topographical features (e.g. mountains, hills, rivers)
    ○ **similarities in economic or social activities carried out in the area**
    ○ **similarities in the demographic, socio-economic and/or ethnic characteristics of the residents of a community**
    ○ distinct local history of the area
    ○ the rohe or takiwā of local iwi and hapū
• dependence on shared facilities and services in an area, including:
    ○ **schools, recreational and cultural facilities**
    ○ retail outlets, transport and communication links.

When practicable, the following factors need to be considered when determining effective representation for the local authority:
• **avoiding arrangements that may create barriers to participation,** for example, not recognising residents' familiarity and identity with an area during elections
• not splitting recognised communities of interest between electoral subdivisions
• **not grouping together two or more communities of interest that have few common interests**
• accessibility, size, and configuration of an area, including:
    ○ the population's reasonable access to its elected members **and vice versa**
    ○ the elected members' ability to:
        - effectively represent the views of their electoral area
        - attend public meetings throughout the area, and provide reasonable opportunities for face-to-face meetings.

Decisions relating to the representation of communities of interest (the political dimension) need to reflect these interests and needs.

In respect of territorial authorities, section 19V(3)(a) provides four grounds for not complying with the fair representation requirements of section 19V(2).

These grounds are:

• to provide for effective representation of communities of interest within:
    ○ island communities
    ○ isolated communities
• where compliance would limit effective representation of communities of interest by:
    ○ dividing a community of interest
    ○ **grouping together communities of interest with few commonalities of interest.**

Number of Wards

Staff papers identify 12 communities of interest that closely resemble those identified by survey respondents. These areas are detailed by deprivation, ethnicity, age, home ownership and general shopping and recreational trends. Despite this it is stated that Hamilton does not have any clearly defined communities of interest. Although not clearly defined communities within Hamilton can be defined. Using the information provided on the 12 communities identified it soon becomes clear that northern communities share very different characteristics to those in the south. There is a clear difference between the northern suburbs and the rest of the city. These differences clearly lend themselves to further consideration of Option 4 and 3 wards.

Characteristics of Northern Communities

Flagstaff North, Flagstaff South, Flagstaff East, Rototuna North, Rototuna Central, Rototuna South, Huntington, Te Manatu, St James, Queenwood, Chartwell, Chedworth, Miropiko, Te Rapa North, Te Rapa South, Pukete West, Pukete East, St Andrews West, St Andrews East, Forest Lake and Beerescourt

Deprivation:	characterised by having low to medium levels of deprivation.
Age structure:	have a higher median age, and a higher proportion of people aged 65+
Cultural Diversity:	have a high proportion of people of European descent, and less overall ethnic diversity with pockets that have higher proportions of people who identify themselves as Asian.
Income:	have higher median incomes, and higher proportions of people on incomes over $50,000
Home Ownership:	Average 54%
Family Trust:	Average 18%
Renters	Average 25%

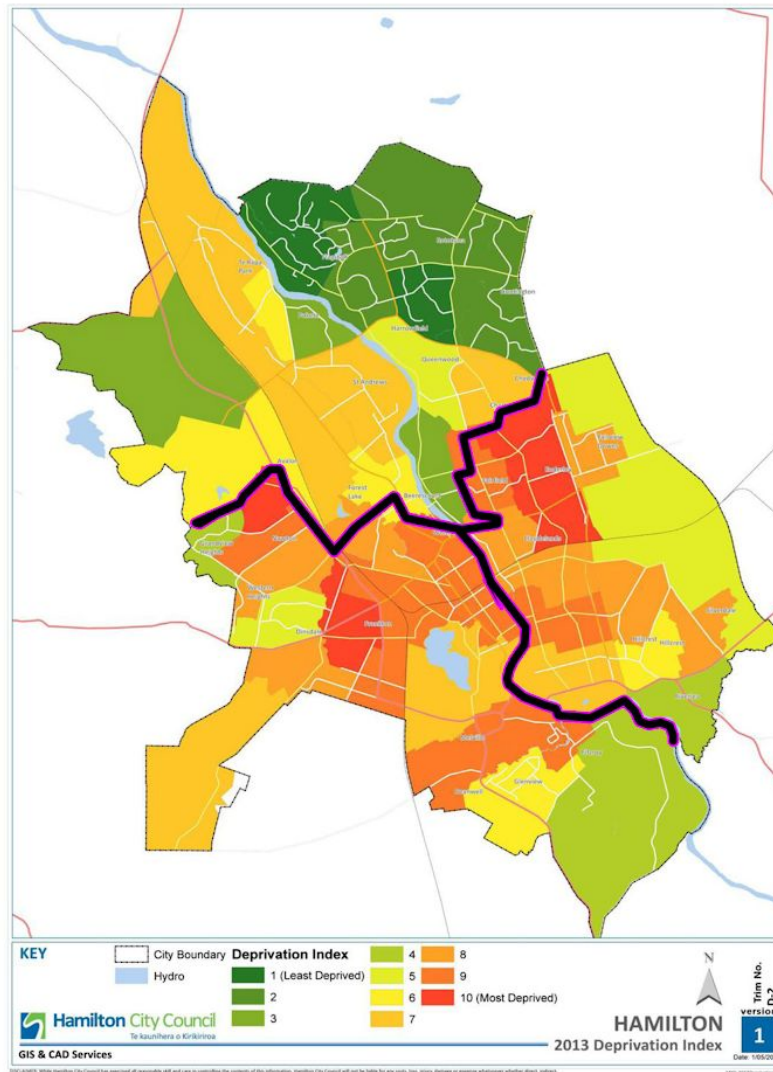**Characteristics of Western and Eastern Communities**

Porritt, Fairfield, Enderly North, Enderly South, Fairview Downs, Claudelands, Peachgrove, Hamilton East Village, Hamilton East Cook, Hamilton East, Greensboro, Hillcrest West, Hillcrest East, Silverdale, Riverlea, Ruakura, Crawshaw, Western Heights, Nawton West, Nawton East, Dinsdale North, Dinsdale South, Templeview, Maeroa, Swarbrick, Kahikatea, Frankton Junction, Whitiora, Kirikiriroa, Hamilton Lake, Hamilton Central, Hamilton West, Melville North, Melville South, Bader, Glenview, Resthills, Fitzroy and Peacocke

Deprivation:	characterised by having medium to high levels of deprivation
Age structure:	*South-eastern areas* have a younger population overall, and a lower proportion of people aged 65+
	South-western areas have a similar age profile to the Hamilton average.
Cultural Diversity;	are characterised by having larger proportions of ethnic diversity than the northern areas. There are pockets with a high proportion of people who identify as Maaori and Asian.
Income:	*South-eastern areas* have the lowest median incomes, and the highest proportion of people on incomes below $20,000
	South-western areas have similar median incomes to the Hamilton average and higher proportions of low to middle income earners ($20,000-$50,000)
Home Ownership:	Average 38% West 40% East 34%
Family Trust	Average 8% West 8% East 8%
Renters	Average 47% West 45% East 50%

New Zealand Deprivation Index (Census 2013)

The New Zealand Deprivation Index is updated after each census and combines census data relating to income, home ownership, employment, qualifications, family structure, housing, access to transport and communications. The country is then profiled (from 1-10) based on deprivation scores, with 1 representing the areas with the least deprived scores, and 10 the areas with the most deprived scores *(this is the reverse of the school decile rating system)*.

- Northern areas of Hamilton including East Areas 1, 2 and 3 and West Area 1 are characterised by having low to medium levels of deprivation.

- Southern areas of Hamilton including East Area 4, 5 and 6 and West Areas 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 are characterised by having medium to high levels of deprivation.