

## Frequently asked Questions - Maaori representation

### **Why are we being asked about Maaori representation now?**

Council wants to understand the views of the community about how best to represent Maaori in our decision-making processes before we confirm what's in place now or introduce any new approaches. Council needs to make a decision about whether it will introduce one of the Maaori representation options – Maaori wards – by 21 May. This is because of a change in legislation which means councils can introduce Maaori wards for the 2022 local government elections without the potential of 5% of electors challenging that decision and forcing a binding poll.

### **Didn't Council already make a decision about Maaori representation?**

Yes. On 1 April, Council unanimously voted to strengthen Maaori representation and participation, including the consideration of Maaori wards, strengthening the role of Maangai Maaori and/or other means, following the adoption of the He Pou Manawa Ora strategy.

This decision was met with disappointment by those who it impacts the most – our Maaori community and stakeholders. As a result, Council is seeking the community's views on how to best represent Maaori in the decision-making process before revisiting the issue on 19 May.

### **What is He Pou Manawa Ora and how does it relate to Maaori wards?**

Council is in the process of finalising He Pou Manawa Ora - Pillars of Wellbeing, a strategy which outlines our vision for a city that celebrates its whole history, including its unique Maaori heritage and ensures everyone has a voice in developing its future.

Council's initial decision was to consider Maaori wards following the adoption of He Pou Manawa Ora. Community feedback on He Pou Manawa Ora and the updated strategy will be considered by Council's Community Committee on 18 May 2021. Council needs to make the decision on whether to introduce Maaori wards for 2022 by 21 May. This means there wouldn't be an opportunity to engage with the community on Maaori wards between these dates, and Maaori wards wouldn't have been in place for 2022.

### **Why are we not being asked about representation of other ethnicities?**

Under Te Tiriti o Waitangi/The Treaty of Waitangi, the Local Government Act and other legislation, councils are required to provide opportunities for Maaori to contribute to decision-making processes, as well as other obligations. This is in recognition of Maaori as taangata whenua (indigenous people) of Aotearoa New Zealand and the Crown's partner in Te Tiriti o Waitangi/The Treaty of Waitangi.

Council considers how other communities (ethnicity/age group/location) are represented in the decision-making process through the work of its Community Development Team. Click [here](#) for more information about what the Community Development Team does.

### **How do other councils give effect to Maaori representation in their decision making?**

Maaori representation arrangements may take many forms, from dedicated Maaori standing committees to joint entities, special advisor positions, Maaori ward seats, or a combination of any or all of these.

### **What are the next steps?**

Consultation on Maaori representation closes on 10 May 2021. The results and analysis of the feedback from the community will then be considered by Elected Members and the decision on whether to introduce Maaori wards for 2022 made on 19 May.

## **If Maaori wards were to be established**

### **Who can stand for election in a Maaori ward?**

To be eligible to stand for election, a candidate must be:

- a New Zealand citizen (by birth or citizenship ceremony)
- enrolled as a Parliamentary elector (anywhere in New Zealand)
- nominated by two electors whose names appear on the electoral roll within the respective area that a candidate is standing for. As such, candidates in Maaori Wards do not have to be of Maaori descent.

Candidates cannot stand for General and Maaori Wards at the same time.

### **At election time who can vote for Maaori ward candidates?**

Electors on the Maaori electoral roll can vote for candidates standing for Maaori ward places.

Electors on the General electoral roll can only vote for candidates from the General wards.

### **Who votes for the Mayor?**

The Mayor is elected 'at large' by all electors (eligible voters). This means all electors from General and Maaori wards vote for the Mayor.

### **Do Maaori ward elected members only represent Maaori?**

No. All Elected Members, whether elected from General or Maaori wards, represent the entire community.

### **What is the difference between Maaori wards and Maangai Maaori?**

Maangai Maaori are nominated by Waikato-Tainui and Te Rūnanga o Kirikiriroa (TeROK) to represent the interests of iwi, mana whenua and maataa waka (Maaori who live in Hamilton, but whose traditional rohe is elsewhere) with voting rights on all Council committees, but not full Council.

On the other hand, candidates elected to a Maaori ward seat represent electors on the Maaori roll, may act independently of iwi, mana whenua and maataa waka, and are obligated to represent the interests of all Hamiltonians, not only Maaori Hamiltonians.

### **Do organisations that represent Maaori in Hamilton Kirikiriroa support the establishment of Maaori wards?**

Yes. Iwi, mana whenua and maataa waka partners have expressed strong support for the following:

- the establishment of Maaori wards
- to be in place by 2022 in time for the next local government elections
- and retaining the role of Maangai Maaori alongside Maaori wards should these be established.