

Kōrero mai
Let's get
talking

Māori wards for Kawerau District Council?

Council is keen to hear your thoughts on whether Kawerau District Council should establish Māori wards in addition to the current general ward in future council elections.

In 2020, Council made a decision not to introduce Māori Wards. Council subsequently heard from submitters in 2021, during our Representation Arrangements Review, that people wanted to have their say on Māori Wards for our rohe.

Council wants to carry out a more robust review and hear the views of our community this time.

We are engaging with our community now to build knowledge of what Māori wards will mean for Kawerau District Council so people are in a good position to give their feedback before a decision is made. Council has engaged Election Services' Electoral Officer Dale Ofoske to present the facts about Māori wards. There are a number of community hui for Tangata Whenua Iwi and the community to attend (see overleaf).

There will be an opportunity for everyone to share their views via an online survey, and/or a feedback form that Council will deliver to all residents with the Community Update newsletter. The feedback from this engagement and the survey will assist elected members in making a decision on Māori wards.

kaweraudc.govt.nz/haveyoursay

What are wards?

Wards are areas of a city or a district identified for electoral purposes. They work in the same way as seats in a general election. In Kawerau, we have one 'at large' area for the entire district. Everyone who stands for Council represents the 'at large' area.

Currently, electors (people who are enrolled) can vote for any of the candidates who are standing. And, everyone gets to vote for who they want as Mayor.

What about Māori wards?

Māori wards sit alongside general wards in a district. They allow voters on the Māori roll to elect a representative or representatives to their local council.

Māori wards work in a similar way to Māori seats in Parliament. The aim of Māori wards is to make sure Māori are represented in local government decision-making.

How many Māori wards for us?

If Māori wards are established, the number of Māori ward Councillors is determined by a legislative formula based on the Māori and General electoral populations of the Kawerau district.

If Māori wards are established in Kawerau, its likely there would be four Māori ward Councillors and four general 'at large' ward Councillors based on this formula.

When would the change happen?

The decision must be made by 23 November 2023. If Council decides to have Māori wards this will be included in the Representation Review in 2024 and will be in place for the 2025 and 2028 Local Elections.

Council has resolved to carry out a representation review in 2024 which will go through a formal consultation process with the Kawerau community in the first quarter of 2024. It must be completed by 31 July 2024 and will be in place for the 2025 elections.



Who can vote in the Māori wards?

People enrolled on the Māori electoral roll for the area can vote for candidates standing in their Māori ward.

People on the Māori electoral roll can only vote for candidates in a Māori ward – plus the Mayor.

People on the general electoral roll can only vote for candidates from a general ward – plus the Mayor.

People are able to move to the Māori roll during the next Māori Electoral Option in 2024. This is in time for the local elections in 2025.

Council's current engagement with Māori

Māori wards may be a pathway to increase Māori participation in decision-making, however Council recognise that there are other opportunities where Council can enable this to occur.

There are other representation models in place in other Councils, such as Te Mana Whenua Forum Committee. However, these other models are not formalised and Tangata Whenua Iwi representatives do not have voting rights.

Standing for election in a Māori 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); and
- Nominated by two electors whose names appear on the electoral roll within the ward a candidate is standing for. (i.e., nominated by two people on the Māori roll).

Things to consider

- All elected members must make decisions in the best interests of the whole of the Kawerau District, not just for their own ward.
- In the 2018 census, approximately 63.3% of people in the Kawerau district affiliated as Māori.
- About half of the district is on the General electoral roll and about half is on the Māori electoral roll.
- Māori wards could provide more effective, direct representation for Māori in Council decision-making processes as required by law.
- Kawerau district voter turnout is a little above the national average, but at 42% it's still very low. Māori wards may encourage more people to participate in local government, by standing for office and/or voting at local elections.
- Māori ward representatives could better relate to the needs of Māori communities and provide the Council with a greater understanding of Māori issues and concerns.
- Candidates would not be able to stand for both a General ward and a Māori ward at the same time.

7,760

Kawerau population

(Infometrics Estimated Population)

63.3%

Māori descent

(2018 Census Data)

How would Māori wards look for Kawerau?*

1

Mayor

4

Māori Ward
Councillors

4

General 'At Large'
Ward Councillors

*Using our current representation arrangements

Engagement Hui | Meetings

Council will be engaging with Tangata Whenua and the community as follows:

Who	Venue	Time
Tangata Whenua Iwi Hui	Tūwharetoa ki Kawerau Hauora	Fri, 22 September
Community	Rautahi Marae, Kawerau	1:00pm Mon, 25 September
Community	Concert Chamber, Kawerau	5:30pm Mon, 25 September
Tauira Students and Staff	Tarawera High School	1:00pm Mon, 9 October
Kura Whānau, Community	Tarawera High School	5:15pm Mon, 9 October

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For more information visit our website www.kaweraudc.govt.nz or call 07 306 9009

