

2.1 Representation review update on Māori wards

TO Thames-Coromandel District Council
FROM Aileen Lawrie, Chief Executive, Dale Ofsoske
DATE 19/10/2023

1 Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is decide whether Māori wards will be established for the 2025 and 2028 local election.

2 Summary

Under the Local Electoral Act 2001 ('the Act') the Council can decide whether to divide the District into one or more Māori wards for election purposes. Having Māori wards is optional, the Council is not obliged to consider the matter and a decision on Māori wards can be made at any time. This report is being provided now because a full representation review for the Thames-Coromandel District is not due until 2027, so, unless decided sooner, Māori wards will not be in place for the 2025 local election. To have Māori wards for the 2025 and 2028 election, the Council needs to make a decision under the Act by 23 November 2023.

The Local Government Commission recommends informal preliminary public consultation be carried out about establishing Māori wards before a decision is made. The Act does not require this consultation, however, the Council is required to comply with the decision-making requirements of the Local Government Act 2002 when it makes any decision, including a decision empowered by another Act. Those requirements include obtaining community views on a matter before a decision is made. The report describes the engagement the Council has already carried out about establishing Māori wards.

If the Council decides to have Māori wards for the 2025 election, that decision will trigger the requirements in the Act to carry out a full representation review. That review process is heavily prescribed under the Act and involves considerable public consultation. However, the review process does not revisit the decision to have Māori wards, rather the review will consider the detail of the wards, such as how many and their names and boundaries. Attachment A comprehensive report outlines the process, engagement and options for consideration.

3 Suggested resolution(s)

That the Thames-Coromandel District Council:

1. Receives the 'Representation Review Update on Māori wards' report dated 19 October 2023.
2. Determines whether Māori wards are established to progress a representation review in 2024.

References-Tabled/Agenda attachments

1. Attachment A - Comprehensive Report Representation Review Update on Māori Wards