

REPORT

TO: Chief Executive

FOR: Council Meeting – 25 August 2021

FROM: Deputy Electoral Officer

DATE: 16 August 2021

SUBJECT: REPRESENTATION REVIEW: INITIAL PROPOSAL FOR CONSULTATION

RECOMMENDATION

That the Council adopts for consultation the following proposal as its initial proposal for representation arrangements for the local authority election to be held in 2022 and subsequent elections, until altered by a subsequent decision:

- (a) That the Council comprise 10 members elected from four wards, and the Mayor, elected at large;*
- (b) That the four wards be known as Ellesmere, Malvern, Rolleston, Springs;*
- (c) That the proposed boundaries of the four wards be as shown on the map attached to this report (Appendix 1);*
- (d) That the population each member will represent is as follows:*

	Population	Members	Population per Member
Ellesmere Ward	12,700	2	6,350
Malvern Ward	14,900	2	7,450
Rolleston Ward	22,390	3	7,463
Springs Ward	19,690	3	6,563
TOTAL	69,680	10	6,968

- (e) That a Community Board be elected representing the Malvern ward:*
 - (i) That the name of this Board be the Malvern Community Board;*
 - (ii) That the Malvern Community Board comprises five elected members;*
 - (iii) That the Malvern Community Board have three subdivisions, namely the Hawkins, Tawera and West Melton Subdivisions, with the boundaries as shown in a map attached to this report (Appendix 1);*
 - (iv) That the population each member will represent is as follows:*

	Population	Members	Population per Member
Hawkins Subdivision	6,000	2	3,000
Tawera Subdivision	3,030	1	3,030
West Melton Subdivision	5,870	2	2,935
TOTAL	14,900	5	2,980

- (f) That public notice be given of the proposals contained in this resolution;*
(g) That the Council will hear submissions on the initial proposal.

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present to the Council the recommendation of the Representation Review Subcommittee, for the initial proposal for representation arrangement for the 2022 and subsequent local elections.

2. SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT/COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

The proposal has been assessed against the Council's Significance and Engagement policy and is assessed as being of high significance. Local elections are of significant impact to the population of the entire district, and processes are governed by statutory requirements. The Council is following all legislative requirements for consultation throughout the Representation Review process.

3. BACKGROUND

Councils are required under the Local Electoral Act 2001 to review their electoral representation arrangements at least once every six years. The Council last undertook a representation review in 2015 in preparation for the 2016 elections.

The process for the review is set out in the Local Electoral Act 2001. The Council must provide for effective representation of communities and their interests and fair representation of electors. Some of the factors the Council must consider include:

- Communities of interest
- Effective representation of communities of interest
- Number of elected members
- Fair representation of electors

A statutory requirement of fair representation is that the population of each ward, divided by the number of members to be elected by their ward, must produce a figure no more than 10% greater or smaller than the population of the district, divided by the total of elected members.

Selwyn's population has been growing rapidly in recent years. However, population growth has not occurred evenly across the district. This means the existing ward boundaries are no longer appropriate as they do not provide effective representation across the district. The current ward boundaries must be reviewed to provide for fair and effective representation.

Table 1 below shows the district population change from the last representation review until 2020 with the current +/-10% rule shown in the last column.

Table 1: Population increase by Ward

Existing Wards	Population 2014	Population 2020	Increase	+/-10% Rule
Ellesmere Ward	7,480	9,620	29%	-24.1%
Malvern Ward	8,460	9,320	10%	-26.4%
Selwyn Central Ward	19,450	30,640	58%	20.9%
Springs Ward	14,050	20,100	43%	5.8%
Total	49,440	69,680	41%	

In reviewing population and representation, the Council is required to use the latest population data or estimate from Stats NZ. Each ward is broken down into meshblocks and for this representation review the Council is using Stats NZ estimated meshblock population data as at June 2020.

While the individual ward percentage increases have been significant, further complicating matters has been the extreme variation at meshblock level with some meshblocks increasing by 400% while others show minimal growth. The extreme growth has occurred around the district's townships and this makes it difficult to effectively gain compliance with the +/-10% rule without significant boundary changes or changes in representation.

With the changes in population, significant work has been completed to better understand which representation scenario or scenarios best provides for fair representation of electors.

Initial analysis included:

- Subcommittee workshops to review scenarios
- discussions with two other councils
- qualitative and quantitative research commissioned to canvass residents' views of communities of interest, and fair and effective representation
- a workshop with the Malvern Community Board.

The Subcommittee has reviewed a range of scenarios presenting different mechanisms for meeting the requirements of effective representation and compliance with the +/-10% rule.

These have encompassed the full range of options from no wards (election at large) through to two, three, and four wards; and with the number of councillors ranging from seven to 11.

4. PRELIMINARY CONSULTATION

At its meeting of 23 June 2021, the Subcommittee confirmed four main options to be the basis for preliminary consultation. These were:

- Option 1: Four wards, 10 councillors
- Option 2: Three wards (Springs/Ellesmere combined), 10 councillors
- Option 3: Three wards (Springs/Ellesmere combined), 9 councillors
- Option 4: Four wards, 7 councillors

No specific community board options were presented in the preliminary consultation. The Subcommittee instead agreed to include a general question asking respondents to indicate whether they would like to have a community board in their ward.

A copy of the consultation document, including details of the four options, is attached at Appendix 2.

Preliminary consultation was undertaken with the Selwyn community to seek residents' views on which of the four options best meet their preferences for representation and which they would prefer to see put in place for the 2022 and subsequent elections.

Consultation was undertaken through an informal preliminary consultation process. Although preliminary consultation is not required as a statutory process, it is encouraged under the Local Government Guidelines (Ch8).

8.4 Some local authorities undertake preliminary consultation before beginning the formal statutory representation review process, including community surveys or referenda, discussion documents, newspaper advertising, focus groups, email groups of interested citizens, and public workshops and meetings. These activities are often led or facilitated by local councillors, community boards, or other community groups. Targeted consultation may also be appropriate, including with iwi and hapu.

8.5 Preliminary consultation may seek views on particular representation options as well as on factors such as current communities of interest. This consultation can assist local authorities to identify issues relevant to the review process and enable them to consider a wider range of representation options when developing their formal proposal.

Consultation activity

Preliminary consultation was open from Monday 5 July to Friday 30 July 2021.

Consultation activity included:

- Online survey through the Council's engagement website YourSay Selwyn.
- Printed handout and feedback forms
- Public drop-in sessions (five)
- Workshop with the Malvern Community Board

The consultation was promoted through a variety of channels including:

- News media articles
- Council Call articles
- Newspaper advertising
- Social media
- Council website

Drop-in sessions were held at:

- Leeston
- West Melton
- Rolleston
- Lincoln
- Darfield

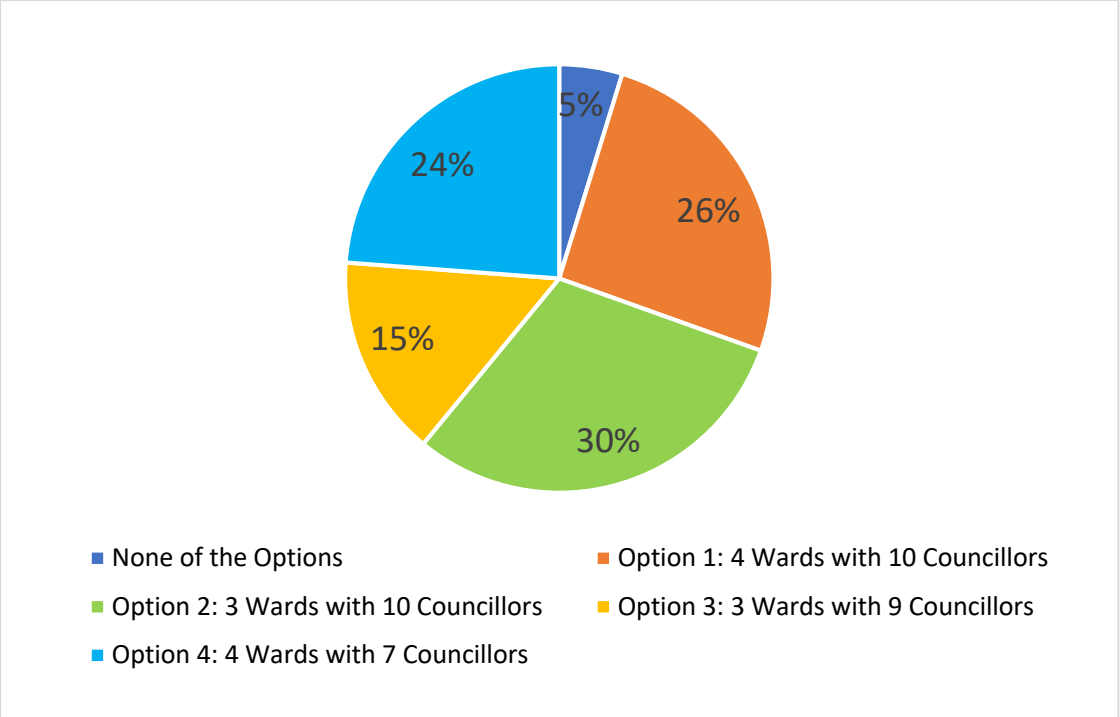
Although attendance at the drop-in sessions was low, those attending engaged in productive discussions with councillors, and a number of feedback forms were completed by attendees.

5. SUBMISSIONS AND FINDINGS

A total of 106 submissions were received, with one deleted as it contained no information. Of these, 79 were submitted online, and 26 on printed forms. This consultation was non-statutory and no formal hearings were required.

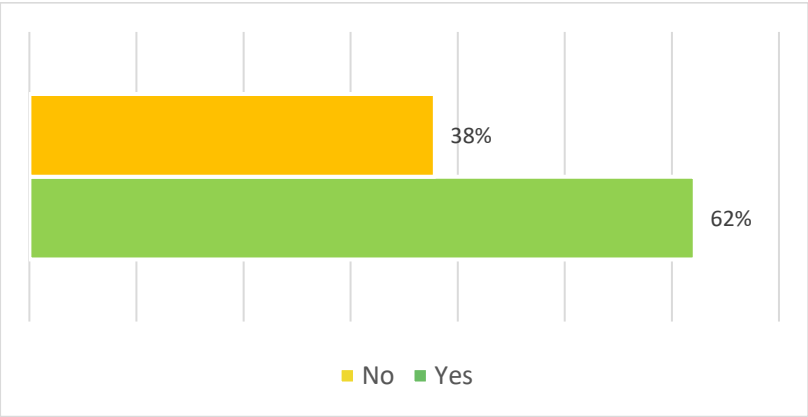
Of the four proposed options, options 1, 2 and 4 scored within 6% of each other: option 2 (three wards, 10 councillors) was supported by 30% of respondents; option 1 (four wards, 10 councillors) was supported by 26%; and option 4 (four wards, 7 councillors) was supported by 24%.

Chart 1: Election Arrangement Options



In relation to community boards, 62% of respondents indicated that they favoured having a community board in their ward, compared to 38% who did not.

Chart 2: Percentage of Respondents wanting Community Boards.



Do you want a community board (based on the option you selected)?

Preference for a community board was highest among respondents in the Malvern ward.

6. SUBCOMMITTEE DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Subcommittee reviewed the findings of the preliminary consultation, also taking account of the statutory principles set out in legislation, of fair and effective representation of communities of interest in the district.

The Subcommittee further noted the guidance of the Local Government Commission that public opinion “should not be used as the only justification of a particular ward/constituency configuration” and that it should “not be limited to reflecting majority community views on particular aspects of arrangements”. (Local Government Commission, Representation Review Guidelines, 8.6)

After initial discussion options 3 and 4 were discounted. A range of views were expressed on options 1 and 2, noting that either option carried an element of compromise in relation to communities of interest or fair and effective representation. Taking account of the members’ preferences the Subcommittee’s recommendation, by majority, was option 1.

The Subcommittee also considered options for community boards, and noted that under option 1 a case could be made for retaining a community board in Malvern. Members supported proposing a community board for Malvern as a way to encourage further public feedback as to the level of support for a community board.

7. CONSULTATION AND NEXT STEPS

The recommendations of the Representation Review Subcommittee will be considered by the full Council meeting of 25 August 2021, which must formally adopt the initial proposal (including any community boards, their subdivisions and number of elected members) for consultation.

It is a statutory requirement that the initial proposal must be publicly notified no later than 8 September 2021.

The initial proposal will be publicly notified on 3 September 2021. Public consultation on the Initial Proposal will open on that date, and close on 4 October 2021.

Staff propose to undertake a consultation process including:

- Online engagement through the Council’s YourSay platform
- Printed information and feedback forms
- Public meetings/drop-in information sessions

Information and awareness will be provided through:

- News media/Council Call articles
- Social media activity
- Council website

Following consultation on the initial proposal, the Council will review the public submissions, hold hearings (if required) and deliberations, and make a resolution

determining its final proposal. The Council may resolve to make amendments to the initial proposal, following consideration of submissions.

The Council must give notice of its final proposal within six weeks of the close of public submissions.

The final proposal is subject to appeal, and the Council must forward any appeals or objections to the Local Government Commission no later than 15 January 2022. The Commission will make its determination by 11 April 2022.

Timeline:

25 August 2021	Council adopts initial proposal for consultation
3 September	Public notice – initial proposal
	Initial proposal consultation opens
4 October	Initial proposal consultation closes
14 October	Council hearing of submissions Council deliberations on submissions
15 October	(Additional day if required)
27 October	Council meeting to resolve final proposal
10 November	Public notification of final proposal
20 December	Appeals and objections close
15 January 2022	Appeals and objections forwarded to Local Government Commission
By 11 April	Local Government Commission considers and makes final determination



Stephen Hill

Group Manager Communication and Customers/Deputy Electoral Officer

Appendix 1: Maps of proposed Ward boundaries; proposed Malvern Ward and Community Board subdivisions

Appendix 2: Preliminary consultation document *'Help us redraw the lines'*