

# Local elections – what's changing?

Representation Review 2021

## Initial Proposal Consultation Document

The way your Council is structured is changing.

Selwyn District Council is undertaking a representation review, which will result in changes to the way the Council is elected and structured in the future.

This consultation document provides an overview of the review to date, detail on the initial proposal and how you can make a submission.

The review has looked at changes to the number of wards (electoral areas within Selwyn), ward boundaries, the number of councillors that represent your ward, and whether there should be community boards.

In July, the Council asked the community for feedback on four options for future representation. The Council's Representation Review Subcommittee has considered this feedback and the Council has now adopted an initial proposal for formal public consultation.

Consultation is open until **5pm on Monday 4 October**.

More information and updates, especially on potential changes to any face-to-face engagement due to COVID-19 restrictions, are available at [www.selwyn.govt.nz/representation](http://www.selwyn.govt.nz/representation).

## Background

### What is the representation review?

Local elections are held every three years so you can decide who will represent you around the Council table. To make sure that residents have fair and effective representation, councils must review their representation arrangements at least every six years. Selwyn last undertook a representation review in 2015, in preparation for the 2016 elections.

The Local Electoral Act 2001 sets out how the review is undertaken. Some of the factors the Council must consider include:

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

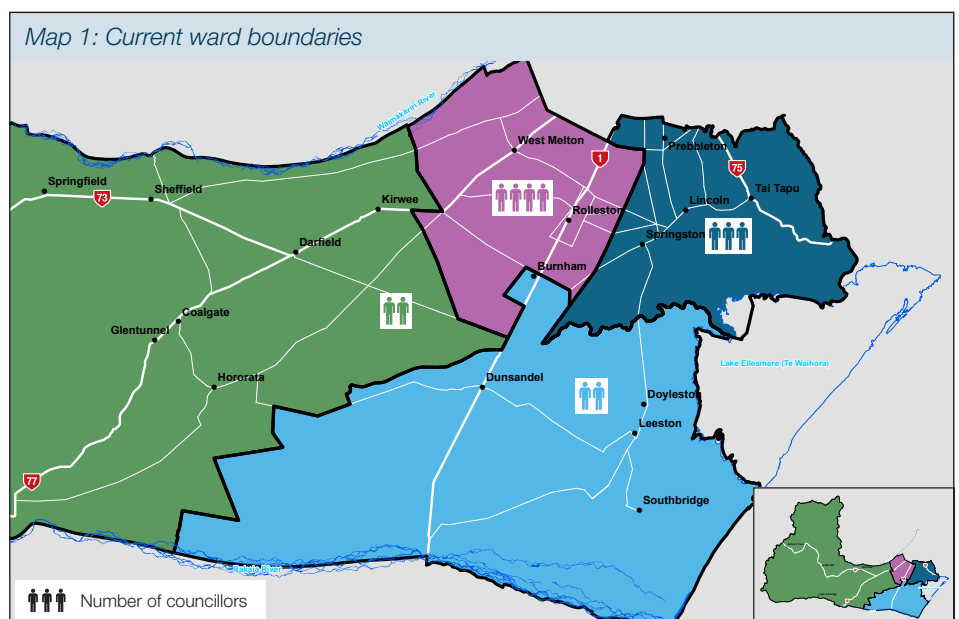
The Council must also consider whether community boards are appropriate to provide fair and effective representation for individuals and communities within our district.

Other matters the Council can consider are whether there should be a change to the method of voting, or to ward names, and whether there should be a Māori ward.

### What's the current situation?

At present, the Council is made up of the mayor, who is elected at large – by all voters across the district, and 11 councillors, who are elected by voters within each of the four existing wards: Ellesmere (2), Malvern (2), Selwyn Central (4), and Springs (3).

There is one community board, in the Malvern Ward, which has five elected members across two subdivisions: Tawera (2) and Hawkins (3).



## What's changed since 2015?

Selwyn's population has grown rapidly in recent years. However, population growth has not occurred evenly across the district, with much faster growth in the Selwyn Central and Springs wards.

One of the key requirements for fair and effective representation is that each elected member should represent roughly the same number of people. The population per member in each ward must be within 10% (greater or lesser) of the population per member across the entire district.

For example, at the time of the last Representation Review in 2015, the district population was 49,440. With 11 councillors, each councillor represented around 4,494 people.

Ward	2014 estimated population^	2020 estimated population^	% increase
Malvern Ward	8,460	9,320	10%
Selwyn Central Ward	19,450	30,640	58%
Ellesmere Ward	7,480	9,620	29%
Springs Ward	14,050	20,100	43%
<b>Total</b>	<b>49,440</b>	<b>69,680</b>	<b>41%</b>

<sup>^</sup>Provided by Statistics New Zealand

Because of the rapid but uneven growth in Selwyn over recent years, the ratio of population per councillor no longer meets the +/-10% requirement. In particular, the ratio in Selwyn Central is now well above the average, which means councillors in this ward represent a higher number of people than councillors in other wards, such as Malvern and Ellesmere wards, where the ratio is significantly lower.

The Council also noted that the high level of growth which has occurred around the district's townships makes it difficult to effectively gain compliance with the +/-10% rule without significant boundary changes or changes in representation.

This means the current ward boundaries and number of councillors must be reviewed to provide for fair and effective representation.

## Community feedback to date

The Council's Representation Review Subcommittee has been working over the past 18 months to identify representation arrangements that better provide for fair representation of electors. This has included:

- subcommittee workshops
- discussions with other councils
- in-depth research to explore residents' views
- a workshop with the Malvern Community Board
- preliminary consultation on four options.

Early in-depth research conducted via a community workshop and an online survey identified three key themes:

- Residents identify more with the township they live in, than the ward
- Local representation is important
- There is no strong desire for substantial change.

Overall this research indicated that residents generally preferred retaining the status quo in relation to the number of wards, the number of councillors and retaining community boards.

### Preliminary consultation – what you told us

In June 2021 the Subcommittee developed four 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, but residents were asked to indicate whether or not they would like to have a community board in their ward.

Preliminary consultation took place in July 2021. Information was available online and through Council service centres, drop-in sessions at five locations, news media, and through digital and social media.

A total of 106 submissions were received. 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%.

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.

### How would the proposed changes affect my rates?

Councillors are funded from district rates, but changes to the ward boundaries or the number of councillors will not have a significant impact on rates. Councillors' remuneration is based on a fixed pool of funds which is set independently by a government agency, the Remuneration Authority. This amount does not go up or down in relation to the number of councillors. It also means that any change in the number of councillors would not affect the total amount paid to councillors overall, as the total is divided between the number of elected members.

Community boards are funded by a targeted rate within the respective ward. Under this proposal the current targeted community board rate for the Malvern Ward would be retained.

### Other representation matters

The following matters have already been considered and decided by the Council as part of the current representation review:

- Electoral system: The Council has resolved to retain the 'first past the post' voting system.
- Māori wards: Following consultation with local rūnanga, the Council has resolved not to establish Māori wards at this time.

# Initial proposal – what changes are proposed?

On 25 August 2021 Selwyn District Council reviewed its representation arrangements, and resolved that the following proposal apply for the Council and its community boards for the elections to be held on 8 October 2022:

## Council representation

The Council is proposing that the Council comprise 10 members elected from four wards, and the mayor.

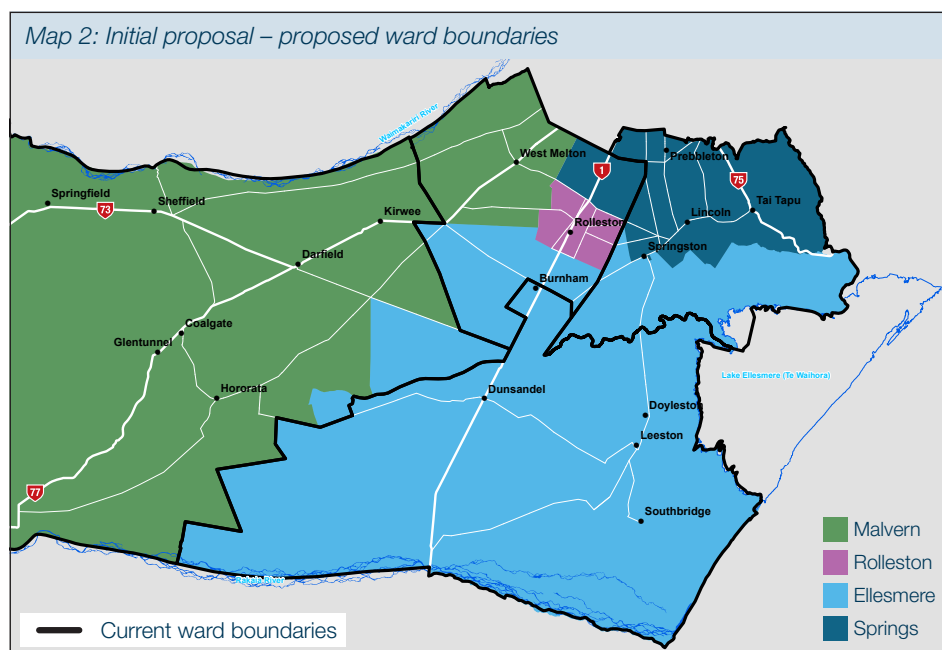
The population that each member will represent is as follows:

Ward	Population (2020 Estimate <sup>^</sup> )	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
<b>Total</b>	<b>69,680</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6,968</b>

<sup>^</sup> Provided by Statistics New Zealand

In accordance with section 19V(2) of the Local Electoral Act 2001 the population that each member represents falls within the range of 6,968 +/- 10% (6,271 to 7,665).

The proposed boundaries of the four wards are as shown in Map 2 on the below:



Under this proposal the existing ward structure would largely be retained, with the major changes including:

- West Melton moving from the current Selwyn Central Ward to the Malvern Ward
- The area between Burnham and Rolleston moving from the current Selwyn Central Ward to the Ellesmere Ward
- An area east of Rolleston moving from the current Selwyn Central Ward to the Springs Ward.

The total number of councillors would reduce from 11 to 10.

## Community board representation

The Council must also consider whether community boards are appropriate to provide fair and effective representation for individuals and communities within our district.

Community boards are often established in wards which cover a wide geographical area and contain groups with significantly different communities of interest. Currently, only the Malvern Ward has a community board.

The Council proposes that a community board be elected representing the Malvern Ward. The Malvern Community Board will elect five members, and will be subdivided into three subdivisions for electoral purposes: Hawkins, Tawera and West Melton.

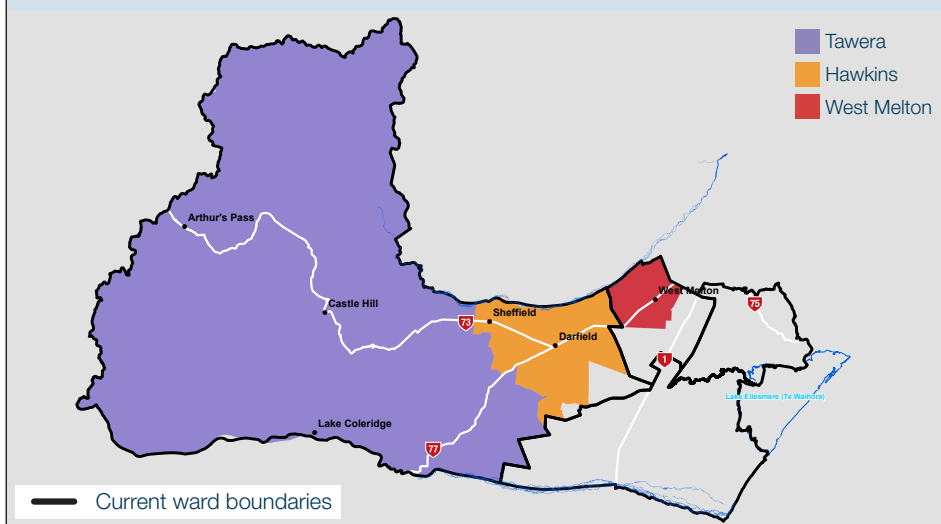
The population that the members of each subdivision will represent is shown below:

Subdivision	Population (2020 Estimate <sup>^</sup> )	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
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,900</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2,980</b>

<sup>^</sup> Provided by Statistics New Zealand

The population each member of the Malvern Community Board represents falls within the range of 2,980 +/- 10% (2,682 – 3,278) in accordance with section 19V(2) of the Local Electoral Act 2001.

Map 3: Proposed Malvern Community Board electoral subdivisions



The proposed boundaries of the three electoral subdivisions are as shown in Map 3 on the left:

## Have your say

The Council is now seeking public submissions on the proposed arrangements for local elections, as outlined in this document. Submission forms are available at the Council offices and service centres\*. If you would like a submission form sent to you please phone the Council on 0800 SELWYN (735 996). Submissions can also be completed online at [www.selwyn.govt.nz/representation](http://www.selwyn.govt.nz/representation). Submissions can be forwarded:

- By post to Freepost 104 653, Representation Review, Selwyn District Council, PO Box 90, Rolleston 7643
- By email to: [representation@selwyn.govt.nz](mailto:representation@selwyn.govt.nz)
- By hand to Selwyn District Council service centres or the Council offices, Rolleston\*.
- Online using the online submission form at [www.selwyn.govt.nz/representation](http://www.selwyn.govt.nz/representation).

**Submissions are open until 5pm, Monday 4 October 2021.**

## Public hearings

Public hearings on submissions to the Representation Review will be heard by the Council on Wednesday 13 October 2021\*. Anyone who has made a submission is welcome to speak to their submission at the hearing. If you wish to speak to your submission at the hearing please indicate this on the submission form.

## Final proposal

After the public hearing of submissions on the initial proposal, the Council will deliberate and make a resolution determining the final proposal. The Council may resolve to make amendments to the initial proposal, following consideration of submissions. The Council expects to publicly notify its final proposal on 10 November 2021.

The final proposal is subject to appeals and objections, which close on 20 December 2021, 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.



## Drop-in information sessions\*

We are running drop-in information sessions at different venues around the district, so that you can come and talk to local councillors about the proposed changes. Please check our website at [www.selwyn.govt.nz/representation](http://www.selwyn.govt.nz/representation) for the latest dates and venues.

## More information

Background information, including previous research and consultation, and copies of minutes and agendas of the Representation Review Subcommittee, is available on the Council's website [www.selwyn.govt.nz/representation](http://www.selwyn.govt.nz/representation).

\* Subject to COVID-19 Alert Level restrictions. Check for updates on [www.selwyn.govt.nz/representation](http://www.selwyn.govt.nz/representation).

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