

Minutes of a meeting of the Representation Review Advisory Group held in the Council Chambers, 10 Gorge Road, Queenstown on Monday, 24 May 2021 beginning at 10.00am

Present:

Mr Bruce Robertson (Chair), Mr Clive Geddes, Mr John Glover, Mr Ian Hall, Professor Janine Haywood (via Zoom), Ms Viv Milsom and Mr Dean Whaanga (via Zoom)

In attendance:

Mr Naell Crosby-Roe (Governance and Stakeholder Services Manager), Mr Brendan Peet (Legal Counsel) and Ms Jane Robertson (Senior Governance Advisor/Electoral Officer)

Previous minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 March 2021 were noted.

1. Update on actions

The Electoral Officer detailed work undertaken since the last meeting with an updated representation model presented for consideration which had been compiled from Stats NZ mesh block and population figures. She summarised the process from this point forward as being:

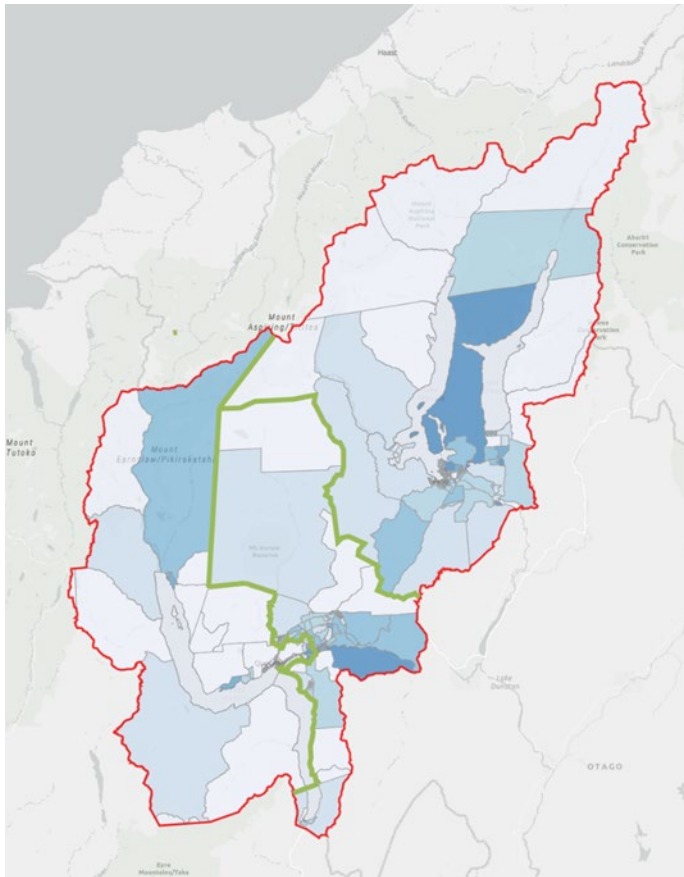
1 June 2021	Council workshop re advisory group recommendations
4 June 2021	WCB workshop with Mayor re advisory group recommendations
30 June 2021	Ordinary Council meeting to adopt proposal for consultation
5 July 2021 to	Consultation period on initial proposal
6 August 2021	
26 August 2021	Hearing of submissions by full Council
16 September 2021	Adoption of final proposal (followed by appeal/objection process)

2. Effect of future local government reform

There was discussion about the government's reform programme for local government. Members observed that it was already clear that three waters services and assets would most likely be divested from councils. Mr Crosby-Roe noted that central government advice was for councils to plan as if everything would continue to exist. Further, there was no pre-commitment to any changes and organisationally three waters was not major, although it did represent significant expenditure. It was also likely that councils would continue to take on more devolved duties from central government. Accordingly, the same advice to carry on planning for the future as usual would also hold true for the Representation Review.

3. Updated three ward model

The following new proposal was presented for discussion:



Ward	Population	Members	Population: member ratio	Difference from quota	% difference from quota
Whakatipu Ward	12,774	4	3,194	-67	-2%
Kawarau Ward	13,308	4	3,327	66	2%
Wānaka-Hāwea Ward	13,050	4	3,263	2	0%
Total	39,132	12	3,261		

Staff had worked on creating three wards of reasonably equal size. The community of interest in the new eastern ward ('Kawarau') was the existence of a number of new and developing communities where growth was anticipated (e.g. Kingston, Hanleys Farm, Lake Hayes Estate/Shotover Country, Jacks Point, Ladies Mile, Gibbston Valley). It absorbed the former Arrowtown Ward but overcame the problem of its ongoing non-compliance because of limited population growth. The data used was from Stats NZ meshblock and population figures, which incorporated 2020 updates.

Mr Glover stated that he was now uncomfortable about the idea of two wards in the Whakatipu.

Mr Robertson observed that to his mind the new proposal 'felt right' and the intent of the two ward approach over the Whakatipu Basin was to achieve a sense of equivalence so that Wānaka would not feel out-voted. Mr Geddes also favoured the approach because it resolved the problem with the non-complying Arrowtown Ward and provided voters in that area with a choice that they had not often had in the past. There was a sense of commonality amongst the small, new lakeside communities and new and growing communities (Shotover Country, Lake Hayes Estate and Ladies Mile).

There were also advantages in splitting the ward in two as electing eight members from a large Whakatipu was not a good idea under FPP.

Members observed that the results presented an astonishing equity for all voters across the district.

There was further discussion about whether many election candidates did not live in the ward in which they stood, as this was not a legal requirement. The Electoral Officer confirmed that this had occurred occasionally in the past but was not a common practice.

Mr Glover asked whether splitting the existing Queenstown-Wakatipu ward would require budgets to be split, as he understood QLDC split its budgets by ward. The staff view was that rates were split by community rather than by ward with rates targeted to pay for particular assets and further, were determined by Asset Management Plans. Regardless of any eventual representation decision, it was expected that the financial planning for two Whakatipu wards would remain the same.

There was further discussion about whether an increased size of Council would affect remuneration. Staff advised that councillor remuneration was currently under review by the Remuneration Authority and QLDC sat about half way down the list (#28 of 61). Remuneration did not reflect the hours worked but was assessed on such factors as:

- Population (all councils)
- Operational expenditure (all councils)
- Asset size (all councils)
- Number of guest nights (all councils)
- Social Deprivation (Territorial Authorities and unitary authorities only)

The Remuneration Authority allocated the pool but each council decided how the pool was allocated.

Any disbanding of the WCB would not automatically mean the elected members remuneration pool increased by the amount saved.

Mr Whaanga confirmed that iwi were comfortable with the proposed ward names 'Kawarau' and 'Whakatipu'.

It was moved (Mr Robertson/Mr Geddes):

"That the Advisory Group agree its recommendation to Council as being a three ward model with the names of 'Wānaka-Hāwea', 'Whakatipu' and 'Kawarau', with each ward electing four Councillors."

Motion carried.

4. Future of Wānaka Community Board

In regard to the question of fair and effective representation across the district, it was noted that Wānaka was the only community board in the district. Mr Robertson advised in terms of equity, the position initially reached by the advisory group was that the Wānaka Community Board be disestablished.

Ms Milsom spoke to a paper she had prepared which set out her reasons for retaining the Wānaka Community Board. She considered that discussions held with the current Board chair showed that the Board was serving a useful purpose and should be retained for the reasons outlined in her paper. She had identified two issues on which Council had not consulted the Board (changes to speed limits in Wānaka and the future of the Wānaka Airport) but considered that these were only two issues of many where Wānaka had not been fairly or well served by QLDC. Keeping the Wānaka Community was a way of addressing this inequity and ensuring localised communication. The Board had extensive delegations and could allocate \$1.4M to local roading safety projects and she believed there was value in increasing this to \$2M.

She considered that having all Wānaka Councillors as appointed Community Board members was problematic because this altered their viewpoint. The Board should be retained but restructured so that only one Councillor was appointed at a time, as this would provide more opportunity for the Board to act as an independent body.

Mr Hall considered that the Board's value to the governance of the district was questionable, but any move to abolish the Board would receive push back from the Wānaka community.

Ms Milsom asserted that the Wānaka Community Board's effectiveness had been compromised because the Council had not upheld the Governance Protocol. If it had been adhered to, the Board would have been included in the debate about Wānaka Airport.

Mr Geddes considered that the Wānaka community needed to demonstrate the value of the Board and this would only be possible if the advisory group recommended that the Board be disestablished. He considered that without the Board, the Wānaka community would still have representation on the Council through its Councillors.

Mr Whaanga stated that he did not know the Upper Clutha community well enough to form a view on this issue, so would abstain from voting.

Mr Glover considered that Wānaka represented a community of interest that required the Wānaka Community Board to be retained. He believed that the Upper Clutha community felt disconnected from decision-making in Queenstown and was a distinct and close knit community characterised by different lifestyle, ambience and different aspirations. He did not consider that the added level of representation for the people of the Upper Clutha was detrimental to other governance arrangements in the district.

Professor Hayward questioned the discussions about community of interest suggesting that it was important to distinguish this from a distinct regional identity. She considered that it was more than "people thinking differently" but needed to be a distinct community with its own identity that without additional representation could not be effectively represented. Whether that representation was effective was not the business of the representation review. Further, if Wānaka met the threshold necessitating extra representation, it raised the question of whether there were other areas in the district in the same position.

There was further discussion about whether Wānaka was a special case that needed more representation than the rest of the district. Points supporting this stance were the geographic separation, distinct culture and one third of the population. There were also suggestions that Wānaka was not fairly funded, in particular the \$90M of government funding that had not been used for Wānaka projects. In defence of this assertion it was noted that the Queenstown projects in receipt of funding were already agreed and had been put forward because they were 'shovel-ready' and the decision on which of the projects put up (which included Wanaka projects) was a central government decision, not local.

**It was moved (Mr Robertson/Mr Geddes):
That the recommendation of the Advisory Group to Council is
that a three Ward model be adopted for the Queenstown
Lakes District that does not include any Community Boards.**

Motion carried.

In favour: Clive Geddes, Ian Hall and Bruce Robertson

Opposed: John Glover and Viv Milsom

Abstain: Janine Haywood and Dean Whaanga

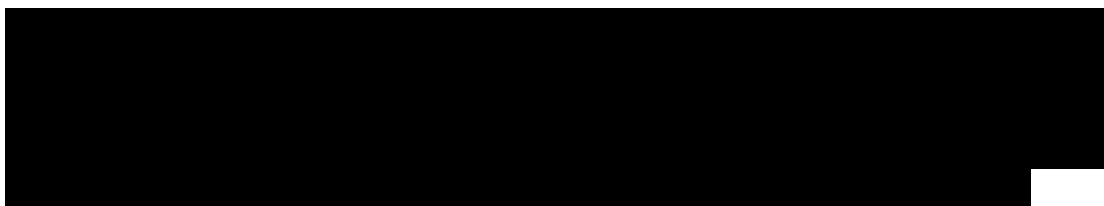
5. Other Recommendations

It was noted that the Council had already resolved to retain the FPP electoral system for the 2022 election. This had impacted the direction taken by the advisory group with the ward structure proposed.

It was agreed:

**That the Advisory Group confirm an earlier recommendation
that the Council reconsider the introduction of STV and the
establishment of a Māori Ward prior to the 2025 local
election.**

Mr Whaanga advised that a preferred method of achieving iwi representation on the Council was via appointed iwi members to standing committees. Mr Crosby-Roe noted that after the present by-election in Queenstown-Wakatipu, the Mayor planned to review the membership of all standing committees in order to place the new member. He may also look at possible iwi representation on standing committees at the same time.



Members were asked not to speak publicly about the advisory group's recommendations because it was a Council matter and up to the Council to decide how it would release the information.

The Chair thanked members of the Committee for their participation and staff for their support of the Committee's work.

The meeting concluded at 12.00pm.