

Representation Review 2024

PRELIMINARY FEEDBACK

Have your say | **Kōrero Mai**

KEY INFORMATION

Our Council is reviewing how our local communities are represented. This is called a Representation Review and it will come into effect for our October 2025 local body elections. We are keen to hear from our communities to understand how you feel about some key parts of Council’s structure.

At its 31 October 2023 meeting, our Council unanimously voted to establish one or more Māori Wards for the 2025 Local Elections. This is what has triggered the representation review process, to make sure our communities are fairly and effectively represented at Council. The review does not revisit the decision to establish Māori Wards.

You can pick up a hardcopy of the survey at our Council offices and District Libraries, or visit **www.tcdc.govt.nz/repreview**

Below, you’ll find the information you need to give feedback on the review.

The survey will be open until Sunday 31 March 2024. Everyone who completes the survey can go in the draw to win one of two \$100 Prezzy Cards.

Your feedback will help to inform our proposal, which will go out for formal consultation later this year.

If you have any questions, feel free to email repreview@tcdc.govt.nz You can stay up to date on this and other Council projects with our weekly newsletter: **www.tcdc.govt.nz/subscribe**

WHAT’S THE PROCESS?



www.tcdc.govt.nz/repreview



What are Representation Reviews?

A representation review addresses the total number of councillors there should be for the district or region and the way they are elected.

This involves deciding whether councillors are elected from wards, or by a mix of both wards and 'at large'.

A review also covers the boundaries of wards, Community Boards and their names.

Why have a Representation Review?

To ensure councils retain effective and fair representation for the community, all territorial authorities are required under the Local Electoral Act 2001 to review their representation arrangements at least every six years. The last representation review was undertaken in 2021 however, as Council resolved to establish Māori Wards for the 2025 local elections we must undertake a representation review in 2024.

Representation reviews offer a chance for us to look at the current local boards and wards to make sure that they are represented fairly and effectively.

What are wards?

Wards are areas of a district identified for electoral purposes. They work in the same way as seats in a general election.

Currently in the Thames-Coromandel we have a ward system where candidates stand in a ward area and people living in that area get to vote for them.

Our four election wards are: Thames, Coromandel-Colville, Mercury Bay, South Eastern. Currently people can only vote for candidates in their ward, but everyone gets to vote for who they want as Mayor.

Although candidates stand for their ward area, when voted on to council, councillors swear an oath to work for the district as a whole.

You can find out more about our current ward structure on our website at www.tcdc.govt.nz/wards

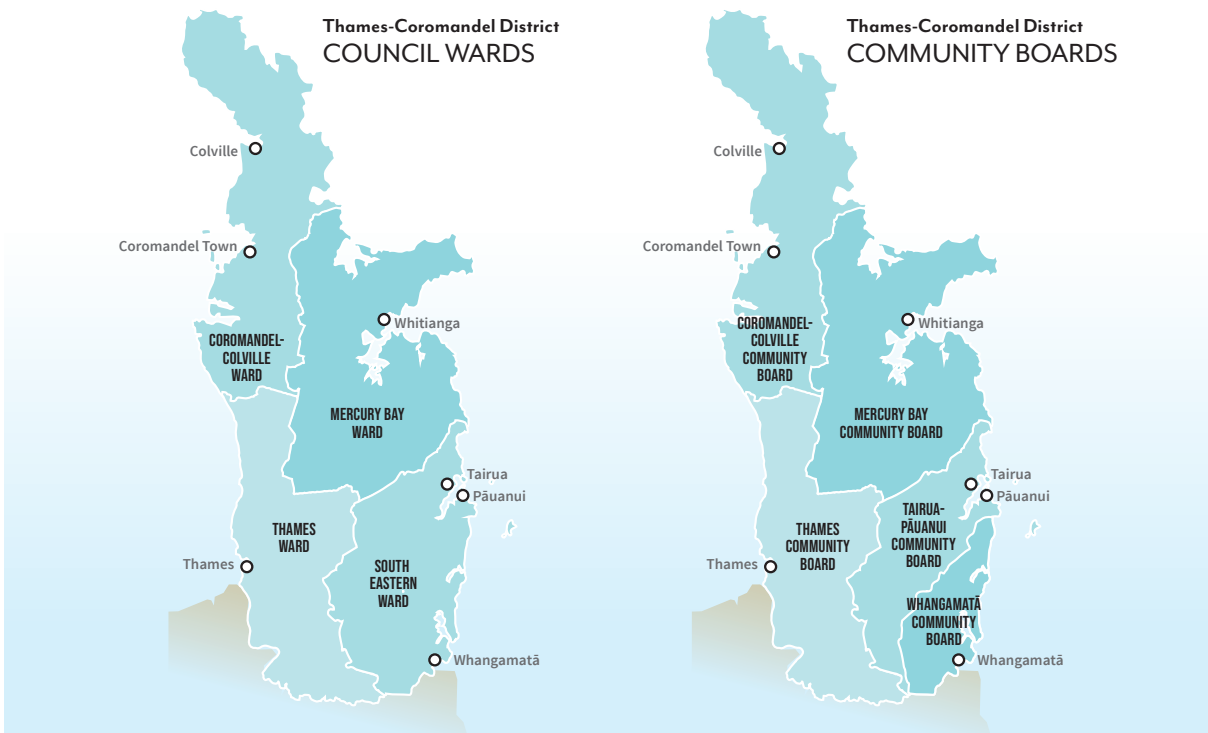
Current situation: Councillors and boundaries

The review would consider how many elected members are required to represent the needs of the Thames-Coromandel District.

The current model for the district is:

- **One Mayor elected from across the district ('at large').**
- **Nine Councillors elected from four wards (Each Councillor currently represents between 3500 and 4100 residents and ratepayers.).**
 - **Coromandel-Colville Ward** – Represented by one Councillor.
 - **Mercury Bay Ward** – Represented by three Councillors.
 - **South Eastern Ward** – Represented by two Councillors.
 - **Thames Ward** – Represented by three Councillors.
- **20 Community Board members elected from five Community Boards.**
 - **Coromandel-Colville Community Board** – Four Board Members and one appointed Ward Councillor.
 - **Mercury Bay Community Board** – Four Board Members and three appointed Ward Councillors.
 - **Tairua-Pāuanui Community Board** – Four Board Members and two appointed Ward Councillors.
 - **Whangamatā Community Board** – Four Board Members and two appointed Ward Councillors.
 - **Thames Community Board** – Four Board Members and three appointed Ward Councillors.

Current ward and community board boundaries



Current Community Board boundaries and names

Coromandel-Colville Community Board



Mercury Bay Community Board



Current Community Board boundaries and names

Tairua-Pāuanui Community Board



Thames Community Board



Whangamatā Community Board



For more information
on our wards,
Community Boards
and Council, visit
www.tcdc.govt.nz/ourcouncil

How do we keep things fair?

The number of councillors is based on population equity, generally it means each elected member represents about the same number of people.

What is a Māori ward?

Māori wards provide a way for Māori to contribute to decision-making and have representation at council. Thames-Coromandel District Council Māori ward/s will represent Māori in our community so that our decision-making is fairer and more inclusive. Electors enrolled on the Māori electoral roll will vote for candidates standing for Māori wards.

Similarly, electors enrolled on the general electoral roll will vote for candidates standing for general wards. A Māori ward candidate will become a councillor at council. Councillors have a responsibility to represent their communities.

Māori ward councillors will have a particular responsibility to represent people of Māori descent and bring forward Māori views and aspirations. However, they also represent the entire community in our District. “Wards” are the parts of a council area that have been determined by population and communities of interest. These can be either general wards or Māori wards.

You can find out more at www.cdc.govt.nz/maoriwardvote or www.votelocal.co.nz

Structure for electing Councillors

What we need to consider

The review will consider how Councillors can be elected and whether we vote for them ‘at large’, by ward system or a mixture of both.

At large: Councillors can be elected ‘at large’ which means they are elected by all electors on the General electoral roll and the Māori electoral roll within the district.

The ‘at large’ system can lead to a situation where a large number of candidates are elected from a specific area of the district, resulting in an imbalance in the representation of different areas.

Elected from wards: Councillors can be elected from wards. The ‘elected from wards’ option could include councillors elected from a ward (or wards) within the district (like our current arrangement) and/or a ward covering the entire district (district-wide ward).

In this structure:

- Electors on the General Electoral Roll vote for the Mayor, Councillors in their respective Wards, and their respective community board members.
- Electors on the Māori Electoral Roll can vote for the Mayor, Councillor/s who are standing for Māori ward/s, any Councillors who are elected ‘at large’, and their respective community board members.

Mixed model: Councillors can be elected from a mixture of wards and ‘at large.’

In this structure:

- Electors on the General Electoral Roll vote for Mayor, councillors in the General Ward(s) and respective community board members.
- Electors from the Māori Electoral Roll vote for Mayor, councillors from the Māori Ward(s) and respective Community Board members.
- All voters, on the General and Māori Electoral Roll, can vote for councillors ‘at large.’

A mixed system where some Councillors are elected from Wards, and some from across the District can be seen to provide a balance between representation of District-wide interests and local concerns.

If choosing a ward-based system, the number of Councillors needs to comply with the population vs member ratio requirements.

What decisions have already been made?

At its 8 August 2023 meeting, Council resolved to retain First Past the Post Electoral System (the way votes are counted). This means the highest polling candidates will be elected.

At its 31 October 2023 meeting, Council resolved to establish at least one Māori Ward. This decision to have at least one Māori Ward will not be reconsidered however how Māori Ward/s are structured will be considered through this process.

Number of Elected Members: Potential Scenarios

The number of councillors is based on population member ratio, generally it means each elected member represents about the same number of people. Each currently represents between 3500 and 4100 residents and ratepayers.

We have provided a few scenarios to show compliance with population vs member ratio requirements and we welcome additional options.

SCENARIO ONE:

If we retain nine Councillors, our current general ward boundaries, with one Māori Ward (one Councillor) and four general wards (eight Councillors).

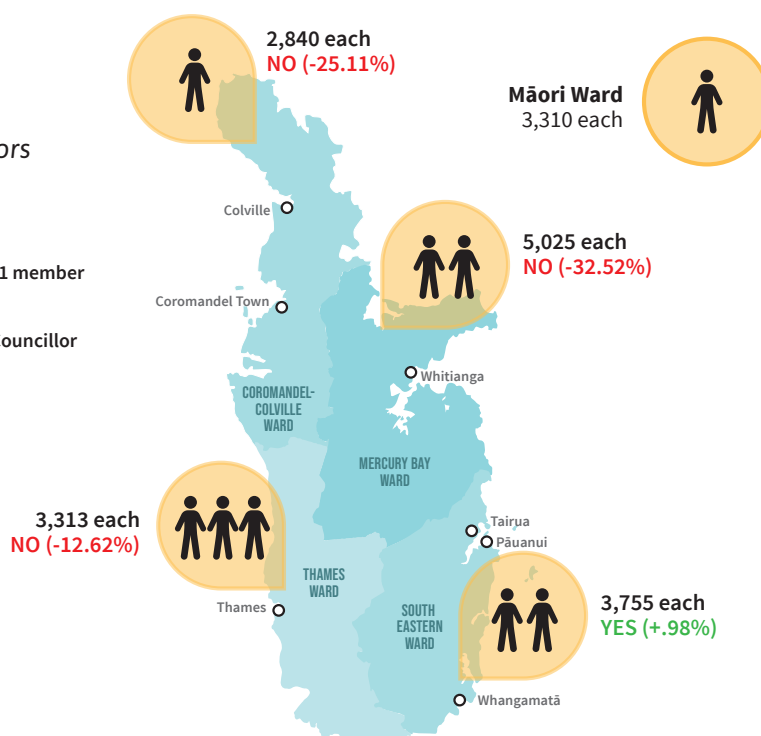
30,340/8 general ward Councillors – 3,792 +/- 10 percent = 3,413 – 4,171.

Ward	Population	No. Councillors	Average	Fits Rule	% Variation
Coromandel-Colville General	2,840	1	2,840	No	-25.11%*
Mercury Bay General (-1)	10,050	2	5,025	No	-32.53%*
Thames General	9,940	3	3,313	No	-12.62%*
South East Ward	7,510	2	3,755	Yes	0.98%
Māori Ward	3,310	1	3,310		

ARRANGEMENTS

8 General Ward Councillors
1 Māori Ward Councillor

Māori Electoral Population 3,310 = 1 member
General Electoral Population
33,340/8 Councillors = 3,792
Range +/- 10% = 3,413 – 4,171 per Councillor



* If a Thames Councillor was removed and the Mercury Bay was left as three, the outcome would be the same with Thames Wards not fitting the rule.

SCENARIO TWO:

If we increase to 10 Councillors, keep the current general ward boundaries, with one Māori Ward (one Councillor) and four general wards (nine Councillors).

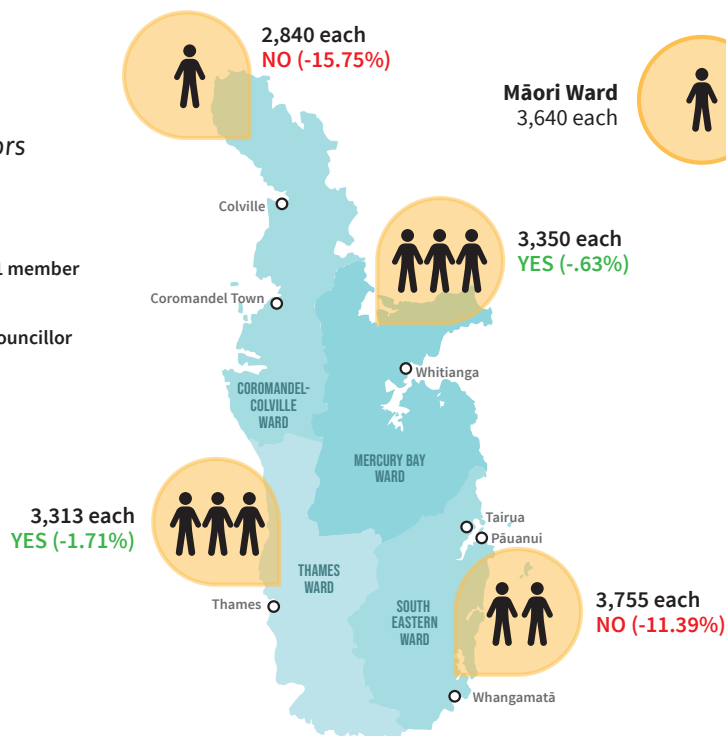
30,340/9 general ward Councillors = 3,371 +/- 10 percent = 3,034 – 3,708.

Ward	Population	No. Councillors	Average	Fits Rule	% Variation
Coromandel-Colville General	2,840	1	2,840	No	-15.75%*
Mercury Bay General (-1)	10,050	3	3,350	Yes	-0.63%*
Thames General	9,940	3	3,313	Yes	-1.71%*
South East Ward	7,510	2	3,755	No	11.39%*
Māori Ward	3,310	1	3,310		

ARRANGEMENTS

9 General Ward Councillors
1 Māori Ward Councillor

Māori Electoral Population 3,310 = 1 member
General Electoral Population
33,340/9 Councillors = 3,371
Range +/- 10% = 3,034 – 3,708 per Councillor



SCENARIO THREE:

If we increase to 10 Councillors, combine current general ward boundaries, with one Māori Ward (one Councillor) and two general wards (nine Councillors).

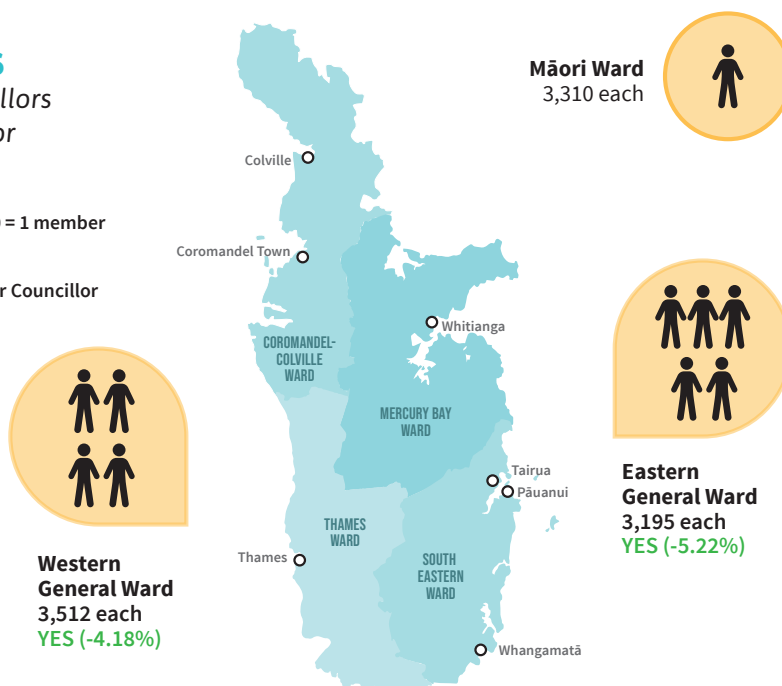
30,340/9 general ward Councillors = 3,371 +/- 10 percent = 3,034 – 3,708.

Ward	Population	No. Councillors	Average	Fits Rule	% Variation
Eastern General (combine existing Mercury Bay & South East Wards)	17,560	5	3,512	Yes	+4.18%
Western General (combine existing Coromandel-Colville & Thames Wards)	12,780	4	3,195	Yes	-0.63%
Māori Ward	3,310	1	3,310		

ARRANGEMENTS

9 General Ward Councillors
1 Māori Ward Councillor

Māori Electoral Population 3,310 = 1 member
General Electoral Population
33,340/9 Councillors = 3,371
Range +/- 10% = 3,034 – 3,708 per Councillor



What are communities of interest?

When looking at boundaries for local representation, we are required to consider ‘communities of interest’. This term can be subjective, however we generally consider three factors:

1. A sense of belonging to an area
2. An ability to meet the community requirements for services
3. An ability politically to represent the interest of the community.

For updates on this project and to complete our survey, visit

www.tcdc.govt.nz/repreview

Sign up to our weekly newsletter at www.tcdc.govt.nz/subscribe

You can also email any questions on this process to repreview@tcdc.govt.nz

Call our friendly customer services team on **07 868 0200**

