
Governing Body Workshop

MINUTES

Minutes of a meeting of the briefing held in the Meeting Room, Level 26, 135 Albert Street at 12.12pm

PRESENT

Mayor Phill Goff
Deputy Mayor Cr Bill Cashmore
Cr Cathy Casey
Cr Efeso Collins
Cr Ross Clow
Cr Linda Cooper
Cr Chris Darby
Cr Alf Filipaina
Cr Christine Fletcher
Cr Richard Hills
Cr Penny Hulse From 12.19pm
Cr Denise Lee
Cr Daniel Newman
Cr Desley Simpson
Cr Sharon Stewart
Cr Wayne Walker From 12.33pm
Cr John Watson

APOLOGIES

Cr Mike Lee
Cr Dick Quax
Cr Greg Sayers

ALSO PRESENT

Angela Dalton Chair, Manurewa Local Board
Lisa Whyte Chair, Upper Harbour Local Board

Note: No decisions or resolutions may be made by a Workshop or Working Party, unless the Governing Body or Committee resolution establishing the working party, specifically instructs such action.

Purpose of workshop:

The workshop has a specific focus on working through options for the election of governing body members including:

- whether they are elected from wards or at large, or a combination of the two;
- if they are elected from wards, how many wards there should be; and
- what voting system would work best with each of the options.

Apologies

Apologies from Cr M Lee, Cr D Quax and Cr G Sayers were noted.

Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Workshop notes:

Additional material had been circulated prior to the meeting and is attached to the workshop minutes as a minutes attachment.

Linda Taylor, Warwick McNaughton and Phil Wilson

A PowerPoint presentation was given. A copy has been attached to the workshop minutes as a minutes attachment.

Cr P Hulse entered the meeting at 12.19pm.

Cr W Walker entered the meeting at 12.33pm.

Mayor Phil Goff left the meeting at 12.50pm.

Cr C Darby left the meeting at 1.09pm.

- It was noted by the Governance Director that looking at these representation issues is a statutory requirement at least every six years.
- There was general consensus at the meeting that governing members supported the retention of the current electoral arrangements, being twenty members elected from 13 wards by the First Past the Post voting system. The most prevalent reason given was that six years after amalgamation was too soon to make further change.
- Other reasons given were that:
 - the problem of role confusion between local boards and ward councillors was not of sufficient magnitude to warrant this level of change
 - that the issues were largely about relationships and communication and could be resolved through other means
 - that it was possible to be elected on a local basis and still act in the regional interest, using local members of parliament as an example
- There were a number of concerns about a fully at large model including:
 - candidates and those elected would lack diversity due to the costs of campaigning and the voter turnout in different parts of the region

- it would risk creating a very hierarchical governance model with too much distance between the governing body and local boards
- it would lean more towards candidates aligning themselves along party lines
- it was noted that costs of campaigning are likely to diminish with new technology
- it was also noted that existing wards are already large and the challenges of connecting with constituents that would result from either larger wards or election at large
- There was discussion about legislative issues that councillors would like to see resolved including:
 - the fixed number of governing body members in legislation
 - the ability of councils to create Māori wards without requiring complex and expensive processes
 - the ability to change local board boundaries in a representation review
- Local Board Chairs present at the meeting (who are also members of the political working party on the governance framework review) were asked if they wanted to speak.
- They noted that it was a valuable conversation to have even if it can be uncomfortable, as was a recent debate about the number of local boards.
- The Chairs felt that the work coming out of the governance framework review project will also go some way to improving relationships and clarifying the respective roles of the two arms of governance.

The workshop closed at 1.18pm.

Representation options

Governing Body workshop

30 May 2017

Background

- Representation review required by statute in 2018
- Can consider a range of representation options
- Governance framework review also considering some representation issues
- GFR recommended consideration of how governing body members are elected
- GFR decision will inform 2018 representation review proposals, which require public consultation

Problem definition

- Governing body members elected locally to make regional decisions
- Potential misalignment between local accountabilities and regional priorities
- Perception by some that GB members cross into local board members' roles
- Some public confusion between respective roles of governance arms
- Are these issues sufficient to warrant change?

Options

- Electing all governing body members at-large
- Having fewer wards with more members per ward
- Having some members elected at large and some elected from local wards
- Retaining the status quo of twenty members elected from thirteen wards (with greater clarity around role protocols)
- Voting system (FPP or STV) also needs to be considered
- Issue of Māori ward needs consideration – would affect general ward councillor numbers

All elected at large

- Incentivises regional representation but reduces accessibility to electorate
- Works for those with existing name recognition and/or well resourced to campaign regionally
- Tends to work against minorities and reduce representativeness
- STV a more appropriate voting system for at large
- Voting papers could potentially have large numbers of candidates to be ordered

Fewer, but larger wards

- Larger multi member wards encompassing multiple local board areas
- Creates greater level of separation from local board issues
- Could result in distance between governing body members and their communities
- Multiple member wards (4-6 members) could confuse the public
- Costs of campaigning higher than status quo

Mix of at large and ward based

- Recommended by the Royal Commission – 10:10 split
- Formal mix of local and regional perspectives
- Ward based members could formally represent local views, while at large focus on regional
- This could incentivise tensions between local and regional issues at the governing body level
- Likely to be confusing to voters given different roles of members

Status quo

- Twenty governing body members from thirteen wards, some single member wards
- Determined by Local Government Commission in 2010
- First past the post voting system
- Reasonably close alignment between wards and local board areas – six wards cover a single board area
- Some ward boundary adjustment already indicated to maintain +/- 10 percent ratio (Waitematā)
- Could look at options to improve role clarity

Discussion points

- Does the problem definition align with your experience?
- Could perceived issues be addressed through other options e.g. greater role definition?
- What are the most important considerations to take into account from a GB member perspective?
- Is there any support for a fully at large system?
- What are your views on voting systems?
- Any other options?