



**BULLER**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL  
Te Kaunihera O Kawatiri

Have  
your say!

**Initial proposal  
for representation  
arrangements for the 2025  
and 2028 local elections**  
Consultation Document



# Representation arrangements for the 2025 and 2028 local elections

## What is it about?

**Under sections 19H and 19J of the Local Electoral Act 2001 (the Act), all territorial authorities must review their representation arrangements at least every six years.**

These reviews determine the number of councillors to be elected, the basis of election for councillors, and, if this includes wards, the boundaries and names of those wards.

Reviews also include whether community boards are to be established and, if so, membership arrangements for those boards.

Representation arrangements must be determined to provide fair and effective representation for individuals and communities.

Buller District Council last reviewed its representation arrangements before the 2019 local authority elections.

Therefore, Council is required to undertake a review before the next triennial elections in October 2025.



# Council representation

## *Giving a voice to our community*

### Review process

Under the Act, the review of representation arrangements every six years starts with Council developing an Initial Proposal for consultation with the community.

Council will consider the submissions to the Initial Proposal, and listen to people who wish to speak to their submissions during a hearing. Council will then adopt a Final Proposal which is made available for public objections and appeals.

If no objections or appeals are received the Final Proposal becomes the Representation Arrangement for the 2025 and 2028 triennial elections.

If objections or appeals to the Final Proposal are received, then the Final Proposal and the objections or appeals are forwarded to the Local Government Commission for a final determination.

### How did Council develop its Initial Proposal?

Council considered the options for representation arrangements in workshops in 2023. Key factors discussed in the workshops were whether the current arrangements:

- › Recognised the district's communities of interest
- › Provided for an effective representation
- › Fairly represented the electors (electors are those people resident in the location over 18 years of age) in the district.

Based on the discussions at the workshops, Buller District Council formally reviewed its representation arrangements under section 19H of the Local Electoral Act 2001 in a Council meeting on 29 May 2024.

Taking into consideration the latest information about Buller's population, Council decided that the status quo still provides fair representation for Buller's residents in these three key areas. Also, importantly, the current wards will still adhere to the '+/-10% rule'.\*

Council resolved that the status quo should be adopted as the Initial Proposal for the 2025 and 2028 local government elections for public consultation.

*\*Under section 19V(2) of the Local Electoral Act 2001, fair representation for electors is met when the membership of wards provides approximately the same population equality per member; that is, all votes are of approximately equal value (no more than 10% greater or smaller than the population of the district divided by the total number of members).*

# Council representation

## Giving a voice to our community

### What is Council’s Initial Proposal?

It is proposed, that the district keeps its existing representation arrangements (the status quo) for the local government elections in 2025 and 2028.

The Initial Proposal (status quo) proposes that:

- ▶ Council will comprise ten (10) members elected from three (3) wards and the Mayor elected at large.
- ▶ The district will be divided into three (3) wards: the Seddon Ward, represented by two (2) Councillors; the Inangahua Ward, represented by two (2) Councillors; and the Westport Ward, represented by six (6) Councillors.
- ▶ There will be an Inangahua Community, comprising the area of Inangahua Ward.
- ▶ The Inangahua Community Board will comprise four elected members and two members appointed by the council representing Inangahua Ward.

### Why is the status quo still the best representation arrangement?

- ▶ Population growth in the district and the demographic split have seen minimal change since 2019 (Statistics New Zealand latest population projections).
- ▶ Changes to settlement patterns, development activity and transportation links have been minimal since 2019.
- ▶ The current ward structure ensures that each geographical area of the district is represented in the best way possible.
- ▶ The current ward boundaries and allocation of councillors per ward are within the +/-10% threshold for fair representation.

Ward	Estimated residential population*	Current number of Councillors	Population - Councillor ratio**	Deviation from district average population per Councillor	Percentage deviation from district average Population per Councillor
Seddon Ward	1,780	2	890	-78	-8.06%
Inangahua Ward	1,830	2	915	-53	-5.48%
Westport Ward	6070	6	1,012	+44	+4.51%
TOTAL	9,680	10	***968		

\*Estimated Resident Population on 30 June 2023, based on the 2018 census, usually resident population counts (Source: Statistics New Zealand).

\*\*Population per Councillor, based on estimated residential population divided by ten members

\*\*\*Population per Councillor across the whole district.

### What are we not consulting on?

Whether or not to have Māori electoral wards is not part of this review. Council has already determined not to have Māori electoral wards.

The choice of electoral system is not part of this review. The council has already determined to retain the “First-Past-the-Post” electoral system.

# We are seeking submissions

Have  
your say!

Council wants to hear from our community regarding Council's Initial Proposal for its representation arrangements in the Buller District - that is to retain the status quo for the local government elections in 2025 and 2028.

The submission period is from Monday, 5 August, to Thursday, 5 September, 4:30 pm. There are various ways to participate and have your say. Filling in the submission form or using the online submission process will only take about 10 minutes.

We are seeking your views about Council's Initial Proposal to keep the status quo. You will be asked if you support the Initial Proposal and if you have any comments on the Initial Proposal.



#### Email

Email [info@bdc.govt.nz](mailto:info@bdc.govt.nz) with the subject Representation Review if you have any questions.



#### Online

Submissions can be made online by visiting Council's website or scanning the QR code.



#### Paper copy

Submission forms and this Consultation Document can be obtained from Councils' offices and libraries in Westport or Reefton. You can drop off your completed submission form at Councils' Westport offices and the Reefton Visitor and Service Centre.



#### Post

Send your submission form to Council's office in Westport Buller District Council, PO Box 21, Westport 7866.



#### Find out more

Visit Council's website or get more information from Council's offices and libraries in Westport and Reefton.



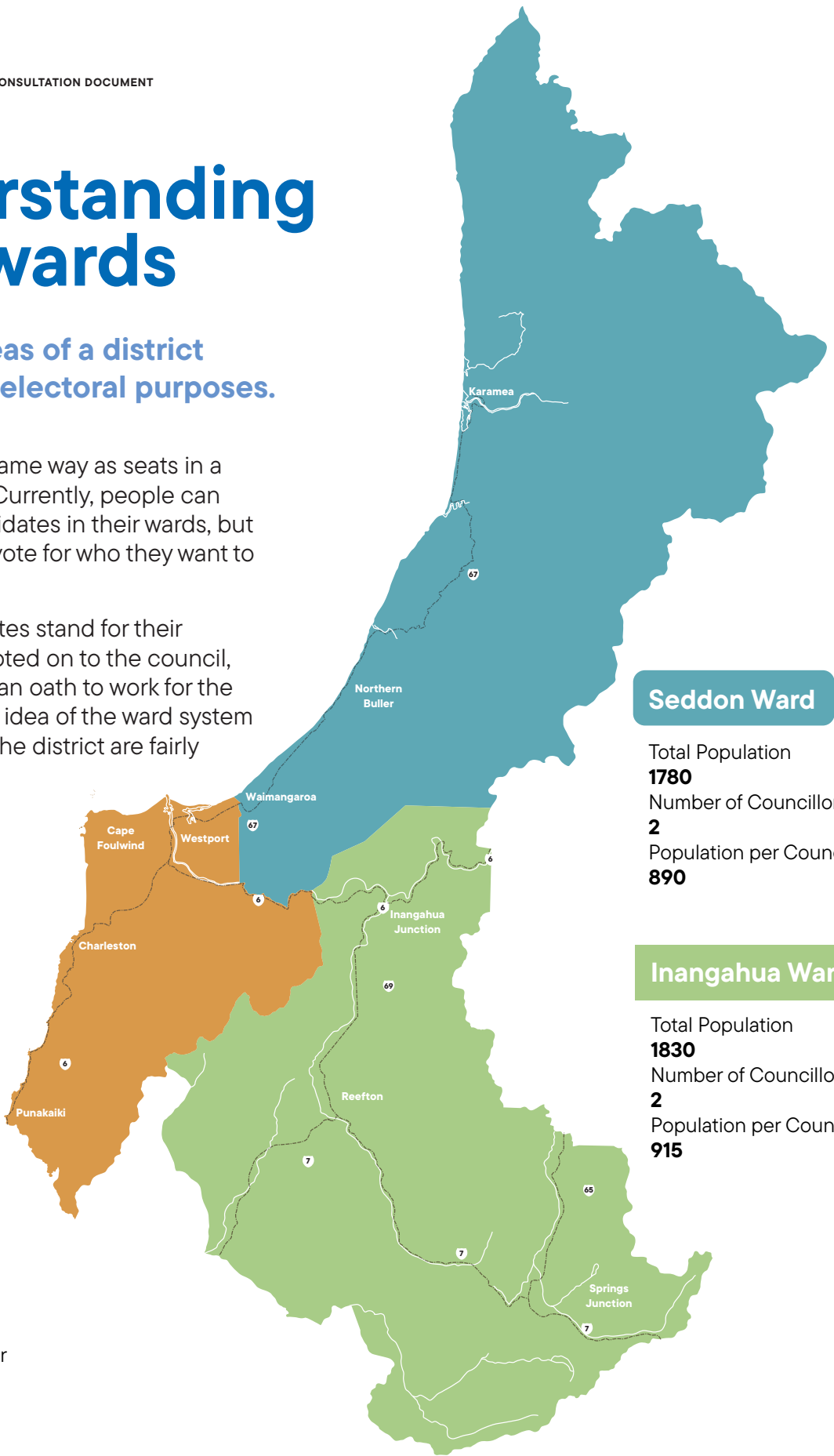
The submission period is from Monday, 5 August, to Thursday, 5 September, 4:30pm. Submissions received outside these dates will not be accepted. Please note that submissions must be made using the paper or online form.

# Understanding your wards

Wards are areas of a district identified for electoral purposes.

They work in the same way as seats in a general election. Currently, people can only vote for candidates in their wards, but everyone gets to vote for who they want to be mayor.

Although candidates stand for their ward area when voted on to the council, councillors swear an oath to work for the entire district. The idea of the ward system is that all parts of the district are fairly represented.



## Seddon Ward

Total Population  
**1780**  
Number of Councillors  
**2**  
Population per Councillor  
**890**

## Inangahua Ward

Total Population  
**1830**  
Number of Councillors  
**2**  
Population per Councillor  
**915**

## Westport Ward

Total Population  
**6070**  
Number of Councillors  
**6**  
Population per Councillor  
**1012**

## Further information

If you want more information about the Representation Review and the Local Government Elections, please visit the Local Government Commission's website.



# Timeline

## for the Representation Review



5 August 2024  
Submission period opens.



5 September 2024  
Submission period closes.



September 2024  
Council will hear from people who want to speak to their submissions at the hearings.

Council will deliberate and consider all the community's feedback for the final proposal.



September 2024  
Final Proposal drafted.



November 2024  
If no appeals or objections are received\*, the final proposal for the local government elections in 2025 and 2028 will be adopted by Council in early 2025.



October 2024  
People can object to or appeal the final proposal for one month after it has been made public.



Early 2025  
Final Proposal adopted by Council.

*\*If objections or appeals are received, they will be passed on to the Local Government Commission for consideration and final decision. This decision and the final representation arrangement for Buller District Council will be notified by April 2025.*



**BULLER**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL  
Te Kaunihera O Kawatiri

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