



Media Release

12 December 2017

Poll rejects new council

The electors of Wairarapa have rejected the proposal for a combined Wairarapa District Council. Today Warwick Lampp, Electoral Officer for the Wairarapa, issued progress results of the Wairarapa reorganisation poll: with an estimated 97 per cent of the votes counted, 59 per cent of those who voted opposed the proposal; 41 per cent supported it.

The result is binding and brings to an end the Local Government Commission's proposal for a combined Wairarapa District Council. South Wairarapa, Carterton and Masterton district councils will continue to represent the local government interests of the residents and ratepayers of their respective districts.

Commission Chair Sir Wira Gardiner thanked the public of the Wairarapa for their participation in the poll and the constructive nature of the debate that preceded it.

"Ever since the Commission began working with the communities, councils and iwi in the Wairarapa we have enjoyed a positive relationship. People have engaged with us in a constructive and welcoming manner.

"Notwithstanding today's result, I believe that our work has highlighted the need for the three councils to find efficient ways to work together to deliver better, more cost-effective and resilient services for their ratepayers.

"Our involvement in local government matters and possible options for the communities of South Wairarapa, Carterton and Masterton has brought critical issues into focus and underlined the need for, and advantages of, collaborating to meet shared challenges," Sir Wira said.

The process had also stimulated considerable public discussion and strengthened community involvement in local democracy, he said.

“We know that the strong relationships we have built will endure and hope that councils will feel free to call on us if they require assistance or guidance in the future.”

Sir Wira added that there were no statutory provisions preventing further Wairarapa reorganisation applications. However, applications must meet criteria set out in the Local Government Act 2002, and the Commission has some discretion in whether or not to assess them if the proposals cover similar matters to those previously considered.

“The Wairarapa has been through more than five years of active and at times robust discussion on its local government arrangements. I’m sure mayors and councils now want to focus on providing the most effective local government they can within the existing system,” Sir Wira said.

“We wish them, and the people of the Wairarapa, every success.”

Any residual queries relating to the conduct of the Wairarapa reorganisation poll should be addressed to:

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