



Submission: Auckland Council Representation Review 2024

7th August 2024

Business North Harbour Incorporated

Kevin O'Leary – General Manager
PO Box 303 126
North Harbour 0751
Phone 09 968 2222 or 0274 799 563

Email: kevin@businessnh.org.nz

Local Board Representation: Upper Harbour Local Board

7th August 2024

Auckland Council Representation Review
Freepost Number 190198
Private Bag 92300
Victoria Street West
Auckland 1142

representationreview@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz

Submission to Auckland Council Representation Review 2024

Auckland Council is seeking feedback on the Auckland Council Representation Review 2024.

Introduction

Business North Harbour (BNH) representing the North Harbour Business Improvement District welcomes the opportunity to make this submission on the Auckland Council Representation Review 2024.

BNH is a significant commercial and industrial Business Improvement District (BID), representing over 4,500 commercial property owners and businesses within the North Harbour area. Collectively they employ over 35,000 Auckland residents and ratepayers. The organisation is located within the Upper Harbour Local Board area, which remains one of the fastest growing areas in the country, in both absolute and percentage population terms, which brings both challenges and opportunities to the North Harbour business district.

BNH represents and works with a wide range of businesses comprising of a mix of sole traders, Small Medium Enterprises (SME), through to multi-national organisations, representing sectors such as ICT, business services, specialist manufacturing, light – medium warehousing, logistics, retail and hospitality. In addition, we have key educational institutions within or on our boundary, including Massey University Albany and AUT Millennium, along with a variety of primary and secondary schools including Rangitoto College, the largest secondary school in New Zealand.

Our primary interests are decisions within the Auckland Council Representation Review 2024 which:

- Impact on the cost of business – across a short to medium timeframe
- Impact on economic development and the ability to leverage value from location
- Support or restrict business growth opportunities
- Impact on access to both regional and localised transport hubs
- Impact on R&D and investment – sector development and capability
- Provide the scope to leverage natural assets for economic development across the leisure and tourism sectors – enhancing Auckland's reputation

Background:

Every six years Auckland Council must review representation arrangements including Governing Body and Local Boards, to ensure that they are fair and effective and are keeping pace with Auckland's growth. Auckland is currently divided into 13 Wards with 20 Councillors representing these Wards, who along with the Mayor, make up the Governing Body. Additionally, there are 21 Local Boards made up of a total of 149 Members, who are responsible for making decisions specific to the communities in their geographic areas.

Currently, some Councillor Wards do not meet the requirement that elected representatives must represent a similar number of people (within 10 per cent of the average). This is called the 'fair representation' rule which also applies to subdivisions within Local Boards.

The Council is also required to make sure that the election of Members provides effective representation of communities of interest. In simple terms, communities of interest are groups of people who feel connected to a place, use the same services, and who have similar issues that require representation at the decision-making table.

Auckland Council is proposing to maintain the current number of Wards and Councillors, while making adjustments to Ward boundaries, especially in the North Shore, Albany, and central Auckland areas. Changes to some Local Board subdivisions are also being proposed.

Auckland Council is seeking feedback on a number of different proposals. Our response, which is limited to those proposals affecting our area, is set out below and covers:

- (1) Changes To The North Shore And Albany Ward Maps (Question 2B)
- (2) Saunders Reserve Will Be Fully In The Upper Harbour Local Board (Question 5A)
- (3) Moving Kereru Reserve Fully To The Upper Harbour Local Board (Question 5B)
- (4) Shifting The Section Of The Upper Harbour/Kaipātiki Boundary (Question 5C)
- (5) Aligning Bayview To The Kaipātiki Local Board (Question 5D)
- (6) Any Other Feedback

(1) Changes To The North Shore And Albany Ward Maps (Question 2B):

The council proposes to move an area around Bayview currently in the Albany Ward to the North Shore Ward to reduce non-compliance with the fairness of representation rule and move an area to its east from North Shore to Albany Ward to align with minor changes to local board boundaries. With these changes the boundary between the Albany and North Shore wards will fully align with local board boundaries.

BNH supports these proposed changes as they help to address the current discrepancy in the fairness of representation rule and the alignment of the Ward and Local Board boundaries is logical. Whilst these changes will not see the ten per cent rule satisfied, the rationale of excluding other areas from moving due to their community of interest status in the Albany Ward is also a logical approach.

Feedback question 5 states:

We propose minor changes to local board boundaries across the Devonport-Takapuna, Upper Harbour, Kaipātiki, Puketāpapa and Maungakiekie-Tāmaki local boards to better align community areas and reserves.

(2) Saunders Reserve Will Be Fully In The Upper Harbour Local Board (Question 5A):

BNH supports the proposal that the boundary between the Upper Harbour and Devonport-Takapuna local boards is changed so that all of Saunders Reserve is in the Upper Harbour Local Board area, as it aligns with the criteria in the legislation that enables Auckland Council to include minor changes to Local Board boundaries to address minor issues and it also aligns with the legislation criteria surrounding the number of people affected. Both pieces of legislation are outlined on page 8 of the Initial Proposal Document.

(3) Moving Kereru Reserve Fully To The Upper Harbour Local Board (Question 5B):

BNH supports the proposal to move part of Kereru Reserve, currently split across Kaipātiki and Upper Harbour Local Boards, to the Upper Harbour Local Board. This proposal again aligns with the criteria in the legislation that enables Auckland Council to include minor changes to Local Board boundaries to address minor issues and it also aligns with the legislation criteria surrounding the number of people affected. Both pieces of legislation are outlined on page 8 of the Initial Proposal Document.

(4) Shifting The Section Of The Upper Harbour/Kaipātiki Boundary (Question 5C):

BNH supports the proposal to shift the section of the Upper Harbour / Kaipātiki boundary that lies between Caribbean Drive and Albany Highway southwards, so it follows a road boundary, as the road forms a logical and easy to identify boundary. Additionally, the proposal again aligns with the criteria in the legislation that enables Auckland Council to include minor changes to Local Board boundaries to address minor issues and it also aligns with the legislation criteria

surrounding the number of people affected. Both pieces of legislation are outlined on page 8 of the Initial Proposal Document.

(5) Aligning Bayview To The Kaipātiki Local Board (Question 5D):

BNH supports the proposal to align Bayview, currently split across Upper Harbour and Kaipātiki Local Boards, to the Kaipātiki Local Board as it seems logical to have a suburb contained in one Local Board area so that everyone in that suburb is dealing with the same Local Board and its representatives. This removes the possibility that a suburb and the people in it may receive differing support if they are represented by different Local Boards who have different priorities. Furthermore, the proposal again aligns with the criteria in the legislation that enables Auckland Council to include minor changes to Local Board boundaries to address minor issues and it also aligns with the legislation criteria surrounding the number of people affected. Both pieces of legislation are outlined on page 8 of the Initial Proposal Document.

(6) Any Other Feedback:

BNH supports any changes that ensure that Councillor Wards and Local Boards comply as far as is practicable with the fairness of representation rule and its ten percent variation.

That said, we believe that it is of paramount importance that whatever changes to Ward and Local Board boundaries are implemented, Auckland Council must develop the most effective governance and operational structure that will enable local representatives at Ward and Local Board level, to achieve optimum outcomes for their local communities, which are in line with the identified needs of their communities. Local Boards need to be given decision-making abilities and financial resources that support their ability to develop thriving local communities that have adequate housing, infrastructure and community facilities, all located within an aesthetically pleasing environment.

Furthermore, these local communities need to support and be supported by local business communities that provide local employment opportunities. Auckland Council and any relevant CCOs must ensure that their locally-based representatives have access to key stakeholders and resources that can assist in the development and implementation of local economic development initiatives that support local business and economic growth. A successful local economy will not only contribute individually towards a thriving local community, but also collectively towards the economic growth of Auckland as a whole.

The city, via its local communities and business communities, must continue to work to attract new businesses and employment opportunities, customers and visitors so that our local communities and Auckland in general may enjoy sustainable economic growth whilst providing a city that is both a pleasure to live in and affordable.

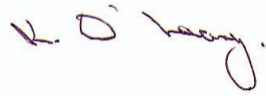
BNH asks that when considering the representation changes that it is asking for feedback on, Auckland Council goes further than simply moving some boundary lines on a map and fully investigates its central and local structure to ensure that programmes, services, infrastructure and economic development are all both effective and efficient. It could well be that more significant changes need to be made to achieve these outcomes.

Conclusions:

BNH fully supports fairness and equity which produces equality across every Ward and Local Board area in the city. We believe that Auckland Council must develop a representation and operational structure at its own central and local government levels based upon fairness and equity that enables, as far as is practicable, city-wide equality to be achieved.

Should there be any questions or other matters arising from this Submission, we would be pleased to respond to these.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "K. O'Leary". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped "O" and a trailing flourish.

Kevin O'Leary
General Manager