

Briefing Paper

Representation Review

Workshop 8 July 2021

Statutory Requirements

The statutory requirements for undertaking representation reviews are set out in the Local Electoral Act 2001.

The purpose of the representation review is to ensure effective and fair representation of communities.

Throughout the review Council must consider:

- The number of elected members.
- The basis of election – wards, at-large, or mixed.
- The fairness of the proposed structure (plus/minus 10%).
- Effectiveness of the proposed representation.
- Distinct communities of interest.
- Community boards.

Electoral System

Council's Electoral system is First Past the Post.

Maori Wards

Council has decided to introduce Maori Wards.

Communities of Interest

For the Representation Review completed for the 2019 Local Government Election, Council considered what communities were 'communities of interest' through a workshop process following the guidance set out by the Local Government Commission. The key matters considered in determining the communities of interest for the Rangitikei District were:

- Perceptual – sense of belonging
- Functional – services
- Political – representation of interests

The results were that elected members considered that the District has many similar small communities which are self-sufficient, have a high sense of local pride, have limited Council services and some local organisations but relate to different places:

- Koitiata, Ratana, Turakina, Kauangaroa, Whangaehu → Whanganui
- Mangaweka, Moawhango, Mataroa, Pukeokahu, Utiku → Taihape
- Scotts Ferry → Bulls, Palmerston North, Feilding

The District also has larger communities, which are distinct and have a wider range of services, however, still rely on bigger places such as Palmerston North or Whanganui:

- Marton, Bulls, Taihape.
- Hunterville is smaller, yet is distinct, but some services are drawn from Marton (doctor).

Number of Elected Members

Effective representation must be achieved with between 5 and 29 members (excluding the Mayor). The Rangitikei District Council currently has 11 elected members (excluding the Mayor).

The following factors should be considered by elected members for deciding the appropriate number of elected members to represent the Rangitikei District:

- The size, nature and diversity of the District.
- A range of different options, and the advantages and disadvantages of each.
- Structure considerations for fair representation.

Basis of election

Council should consider whether the basis of election should be at large, by ward or a combination of both.

Māori Ward structure options

Two Councillors would be elected from Māori Wards. The feedback staff have had is for both Māori Ward Councillors to be elected from the District as a whole (as opposed to a north/south split).

General Ward structure options

Four options are provided for consideration:

- Option 1: Amended 3 Ward – 11 Councillors total (9 General, 2 Māori).
- Option 2: Amended 3 Ward – 10 Councillors total (8 General, 2 Māori).
- Option 3: North/South Ward – 9 Councillors total (7 General, 2 Māori).
- Option 4: Existing Wards (non-compliant) – 10 Councillors (8 General, 2 Māori).

Criteria to assist with the assessment of these options should include:

- Avoiding arrangements which create barriers to participation.
- Not splitting communities of interest.
- Not grouping together two or more communities of interest with few common interests.
- Accessibility, size, and configuration.

Option 1. Amended 3 Ward – 11 Councillors

Note. Following confirmation of numbers with StatsNZ, further parcels were required to be moved from the southern ward to the northern ward to achieve compliance. Therefore, some of the numbers identified below are indicative only.

Minimum: 1,290

Maximum: 1,577

Ward	Electoral Population	Number of councillors per ward	Population per councillor	Deviation from average (%)
Northern	2,800	2	1,400	-2.42%
Central	6,977	5	1,395	-2.75%
Southern	3,123	2	1,562	9.31%
Total General	12,900	9	1,433	-
Maori Ward/s	2,870	2	1,435	-
Total	-	11	-	-

Option 2. Amended 3 Ward – 10 Councillors.

Note. These numbers have been confirmed by StatsNZ.

Minor non-compliance noted. The nature of the meshblocks in the area would require the moving of large areas from central to northern to achieve compliance.

Minimum: 1,451

Maximum: 1,774

Ward	Electoral Population	Number of councillors per ward	Population per councillor	Deviation from average (%)
Northern	2,890	2	1,445	-10.38%
Central	6,670	4	1,668	3.41%
Southern	3,340	2	1,670	3.56%
Total General	12,900	8	1,613	-
Maori Ward/s	2,870	2	1,435	-
Total	-	10	-	-

Option 3. North/South Option – 9 Councillors

Note. These numbers have been confirmed by StatsNZ.

It is noted that for this option communities are being split differently to the existing 3 ward structure, so consideration would need to be given to the criteria identified above:

- Avoiding arrangements which create barriers to participation.
- Not splitting communities of interest.
- Not grouping together two or more communities of interest with few common interests.
- Accessibility, size, configuration.

Minimum: 1,659

Maximum: 2,027

Ward	Electoral Population	Number councillors ward	of per	Population councillor per	Deviation from average (%)
Northern	3,600	2		1,800	-3.66%
Southern	9,290	5		1,858	1.29%
Total General	12,900	7		1,843	-
Maori Ward/s	2,870	2		1,435	-
Total	-	9		-	-

Option 4. Existing general ward structure without amendment (non-compliant), but 10 councillors.

Note. These numbers have been confirmed by StatsNZ.

Council has the ability to propose a ward structure that does not meet the “fairness” test of +/-10%. However, in proposing this option, it means that the decision on the final proposal will automatically be made by the Local Government Commission. If there is an appeal/objection to the final proposal the Local Government Commission will also make the decision.

Minimum: 1,451

Maximum: 1,774

Ward	Electoral Population	Number councillors ward	of per	Population councillor per	Deviation from average (%)
Northern	2,800	2		1,400	-13.72%
Central	6,750	4		1,688	4.84%
Southern	3,340	2		1,670	3.71%
Total General	12,900	8		1,613	-
Maori Ward/s	2,870	2		1,435	-
Total	-	10		-	-

Community Boards

Council is required to decide whether it should have community boards, the number of members, and the number of members elected and the number to be appointed (note at least 4 members must be elected), and whether the members are elected as a whole or by subdivisions.

Since the Rangitikei District Council was established (in 1989) it has had community boards for Ratana and Taihape.

Taihape Community Board

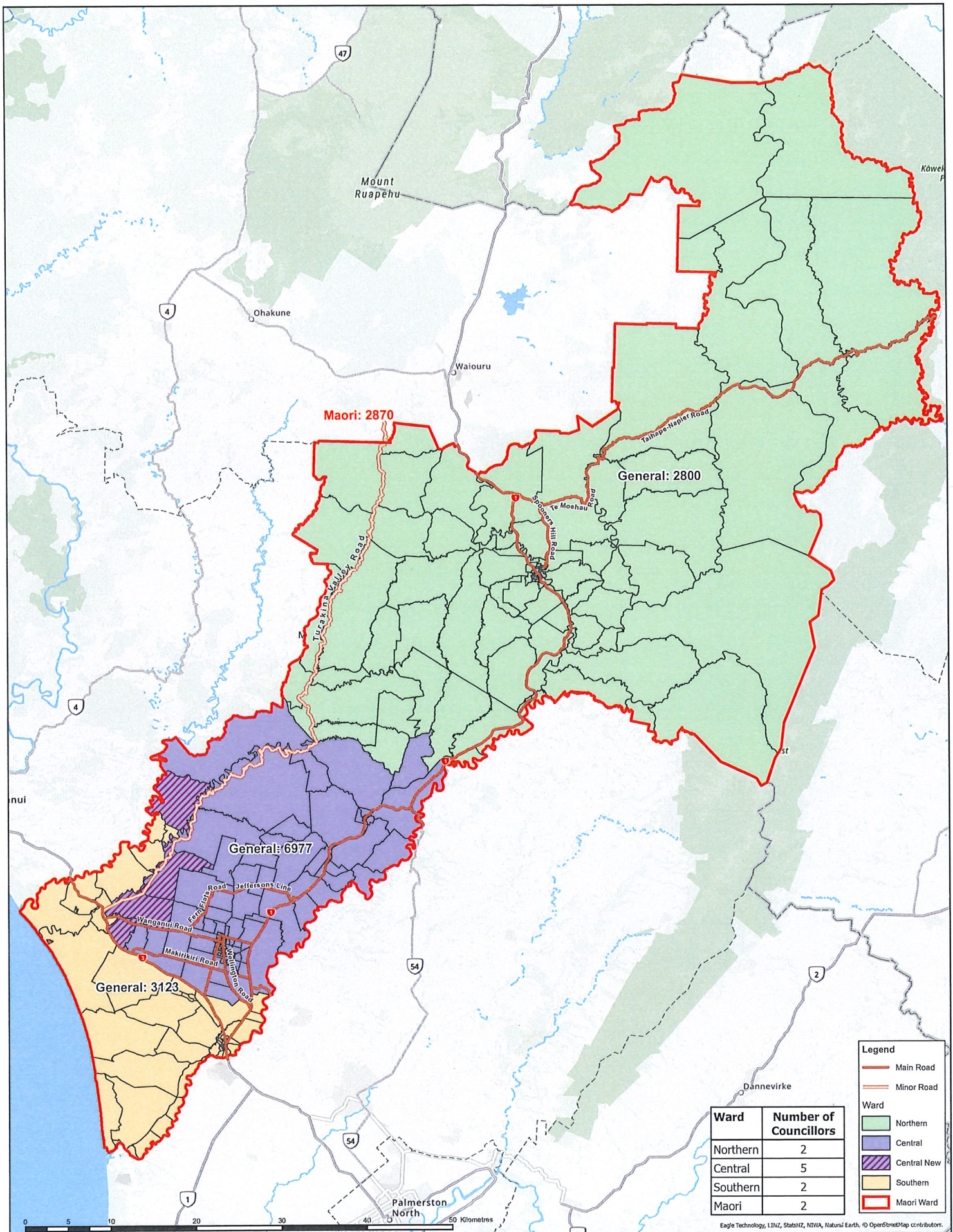
- Four members elected by the whole Taihape Ward.
- Two members appointed (from the Northern Ward Councillors).

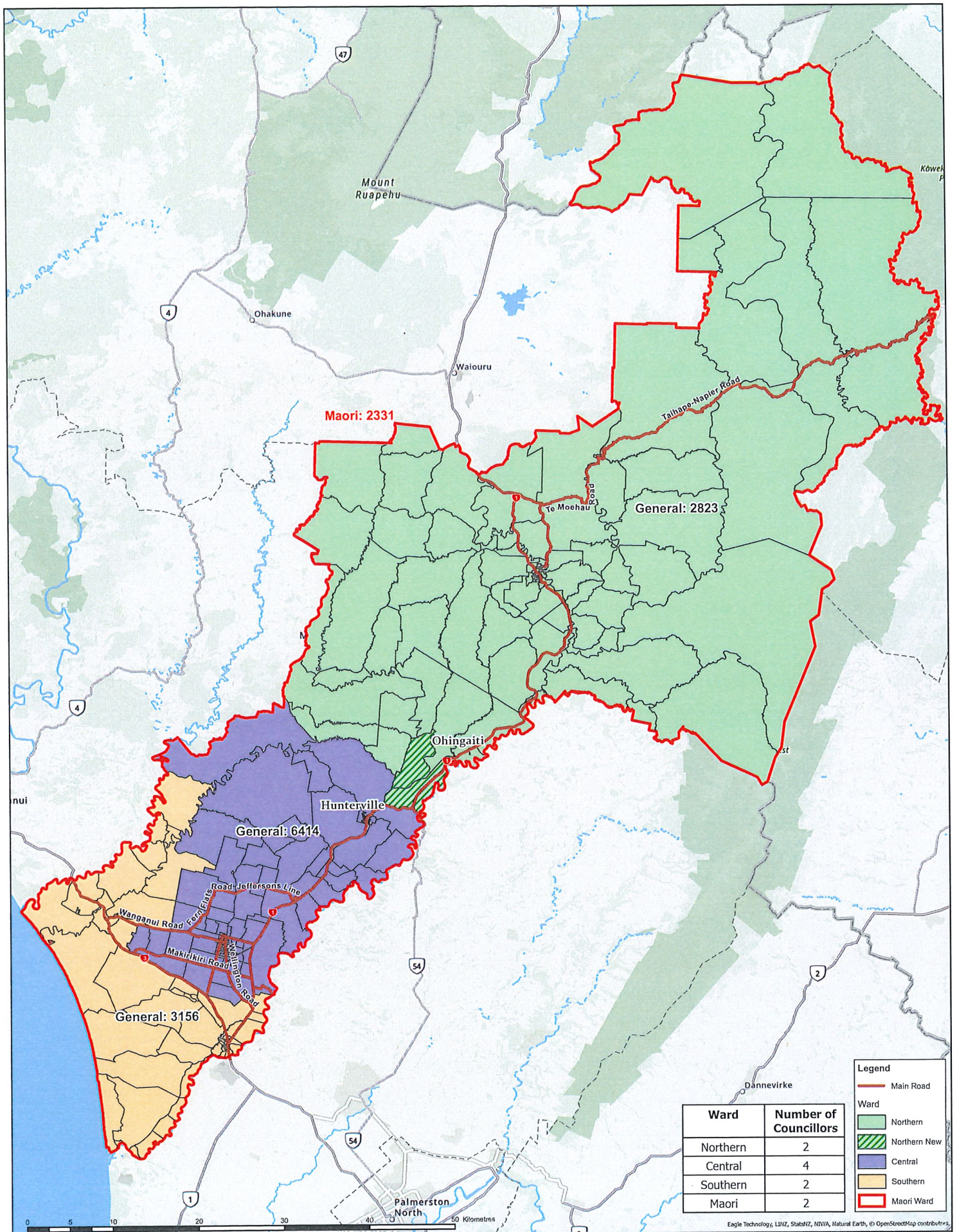
Ratana Community Board

- Four members elected by the Ratana Community Board area.
- One member appointed (from the Southern Ward Councillors).

In 2018, Council undertook pre-consultation with both of these communities understand if the communities wished to retain them. The results were in favour of retaining the community boards for these areas (Ratana 80%, Taihape 75%).

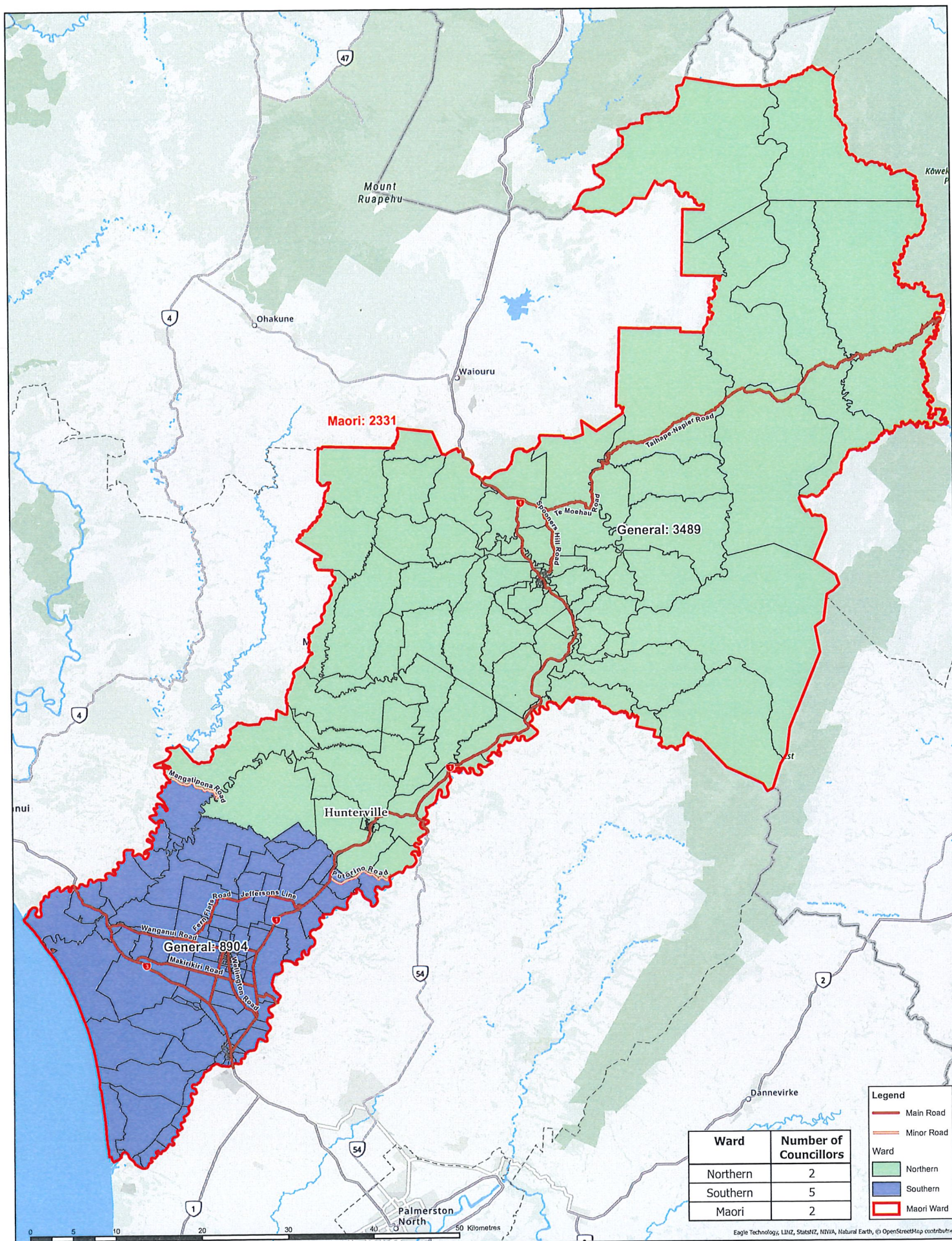
Council has community committees which are established by Council for Bulls, Turakina, Marton and Hunterville.

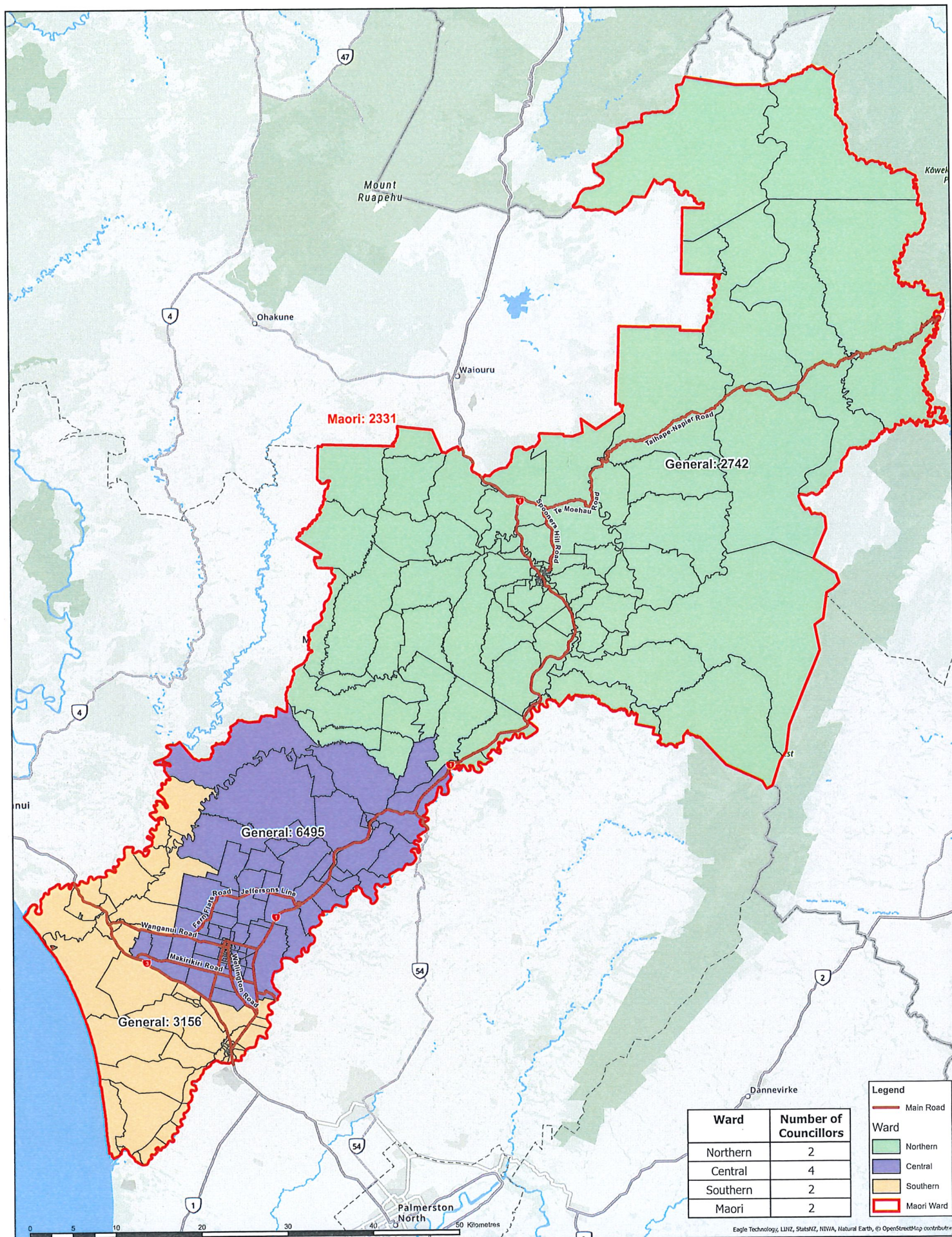




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Ward	Number of Councillors
Northern	2
Central	4
Southern	2
Maori	2

Legend
Main Road
Ward
Northern
Central
Southern
Maori Ward

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