

SIMPLIFYING LOCAL GOVERNMENT

# RANGITĪKEI AT THE TABLE

Decisions about us should be  
made with us.



# RANGITĪKEI AT THE TABLE

Local government in Aotearoa New Zealand is changing. Rangitīkei may have a chance to help shape what comes next, or we wait for a later Government-led process.

But before Council decides what path to take, we want to hear from you.

Rangitīkei is a large rural district with a small population. What works for a city or a larger urban area may not automatically work here. Our district needs a strong voice in any amalgamation conversation because decisions could affect:

- **Your local services** – including roads, parks, pools and community facilities.
- **How Rangitīkei plans for the future** – including town development, our economy, housing and civil defence.
- **How Rangitīkei is represented** – including how much local voice our communities have in decision-making, and how easy it is for residents and ratepayers to speak with decision-makers.

[www.rangitikei.govt.nz/simplifying-local-government](http://www.rangitikei.govt.nz/simplifying-local-government)



Scan the QR code to complete our online survey.

# THAT IS WHY BEING “AT THE TABLE” MATTERS.

We want to know what local  
decision-making means to you.

- Do you value having elected representatives advocating for the needs of your town or ward?
- Or would you be comfortable with representation at a wider district level?



# WHERE THINGS ARE AT

## Council is looking at the Government's Head Start pathway, but no decisions have been made about whether to support or join a proposal.

We are talking with other councils in the Horizons Region to understand our options, but our priority is to understand Rangitikei interests first, so we can make sure they are clearly understood in any future amalgamation conversations.

### What is the Head Start Pathway?

The Government has introduced a "Head Start" pathway for councils that want to amalgamate and form larger unitary authorities.

*Councils that want to take part must submit a proposal for the new, larger entity by Sunday 9 August 2026.*

Final decisions are expected in 2027. If a proposal is accepted, the Government is currently indicating that implementation would be timed around the 2028 local elections. This is separate from the Government-led backstop process, which is expected to begin in October 2028.

Councils that do not take part in the Head Start pathway will be included in a compulsory "backstop process". There is limited information about what the backstop process looks like, but the indication is that the Government would step in and decide how councils are amalgamated.

**We want to know whether you think Rangitikei should take part in the Head Start pathway, or wait for the backstop process.**

#### **Definition: Amalgamation**

*Bringing two or more councils together to form a new, larger organisation.*



For more information on a **Unitary Authority** see page 10..

### QUESTION 1.

Where do you live?

---

### QUESTION 2.

Which town(s) or area(s) do you most commonly travel to for shopping, healthcare, schooling, and other regular services?

---

### QUESTION 3.

Should Council put together a proposal for amalgamation?

- Yes** - put together a 'head start' proposal
- No** - wait for the government-led 'backstop' process
- Other** - (please specify)

---

---

---



Please include more pages if required

### QUESTION 4.

When thinking about the possibility of amalgamation, what are your biggest concerns?

---

---

---

---



### KEEP IN TOUCH

Feedback is anonymous. However, if you would like to receive updates about this reform, please add your name and email address.

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email** \_\_\_\_\_



The information you provide will be held by Rangitikei District Council for the purpose of the Council's Simplifying Local Government proposal only.

PULL OUT FORM

## QUESTION 5.

If we were to amalgamate who should we work with?  
(Select one)

- All councils in the Horizons Region**  
(e.g. Manawatū, Ruapehu, Whanganui, Palmerston North, Horowhenua, Tararua)
- Go East** (e.g. Manawatū, Horowhenua, Palmerston North, Tararua)
- Go West** (e.g. Whanganui, Ruapehu)
- Split the District** (e.g. part(s) to East, part(s) to West)
- Go Rural** (e.g. join with other small councils in the region)

or something else: (please specify)

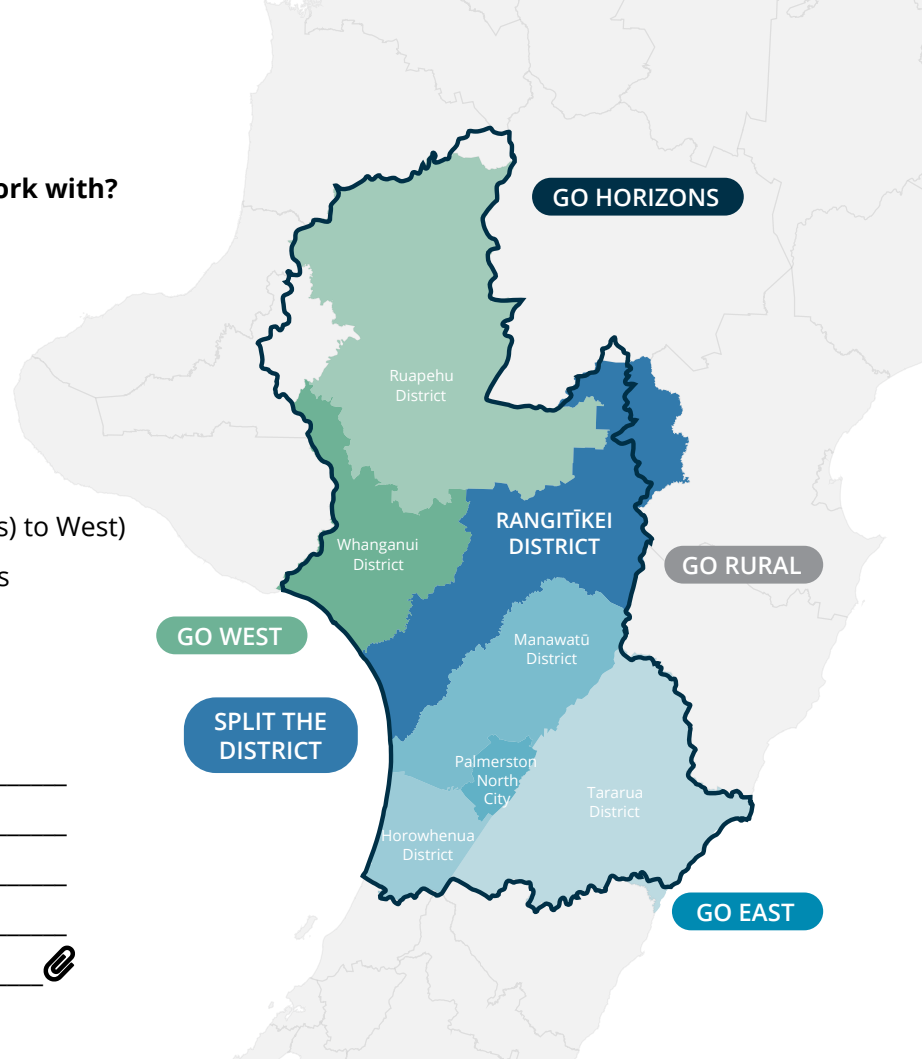

---

---

---

---

---



## QUESTION 6.

**What level of local representation matters to you?**

When decisions are made about council services, places, and priorities, what matters most to you? (Please choose one).

- A representative for my town or local area**  
(i.e. Someone specifically representing Taihape, Marton, Bulls, Hunterville, Rātana, Koitiata etc.)
- A representative for my ward or a section of Rangitīkei District**  
(i.e. Someone representing multiple communities within Rangitīkei such as the Southern Ward)
- One or more representatives for the whole Rangitīkei District**  
(in this instance, Rangitīkei would have elected members who represent the district as a whole, rather than specific towns or wards).
- I would be comfortable being represented as part of a larger sub-regional grouping**  
(Representation shared across a much bigger council area, not specifically focused on Rangitīkei – an example could be representatives who advocate for the interests of both Rangitīkei and Ruapehu).
- I'm not sure yet.**



# PUBLIC MEETINGS

Pull up a chair and have a chat with Mayor Andy and your Councillors at one of our public meetings:

LOCATION	VENUE	DATE	TIME
Hunterville	The Argyle (restaurant side room)	Wednesday 3 June	4:45-5:30pm
ONLINE MEETING	Facebook Live Stream	Thursday 4 June	6:30-7:30pm
Rātana	ICT Hub	Tuesday 9 June	6.15-7pm
Taihape	Kokako Street Hall	Wednesday 10 June	4:45-5:30pm
Turakina	St Andrew's Presbyterian Church	Thursday 11 June	6:15-7pm
Marton	RSA and Citizens' Marton Memorial Hall (also live streamed to Facebook)	Tuesday 16 June	6-7pm
Bulls	Te Matapihi - Bulls Community Centre (Town Hall)	Wednesday 17 June	5:15-6pm

# KŌRERO MAI - HAVE YOUR SAY

This is your chance to help shape the position Rangitīkei takes. Because decisions about us should be made with us.

1 June 2026

Community feedback opens

5pm, 22 June 2026

Community feedback closes

9 August 2026

Head start proposals are due

Council will use your feedback to decide whether we submit a proposal for early amalgamation with the Head Start pathway, and if so, what that proposal should be.

## Kōrero mai - Have your say

How to share your feedback:

-  **Complete** the *middle section* of this booklet and return to one of our community hubs or our head office.
-  **Scan the QR code** to complete our online survey.
-  **Provide feedback** to your local Councillor.
-  **Email** us at [info@rangitikei.govt.nz](mailto:info@rangitikei.govt.nz)



Scan the QR code to complete our online survey.

## WHAT IS A UNITARY AUTHORITY?

Right now, many parts of Aotearoa have two layers of local government:

### LAYER ONE

A district or city council, which looks after local roads, community facilities, libraries, parks, building consents, waste, and other local services.

### LAYER TWO

A regional council, which covers multiple districts/cities and looks after regional transport, river management, flood protection, environmental monitoring, and regional planning.

**A unitary authority combines those roles into one council.** It could mean:

- One council instead of two layers of local government.
- Fewer councils overall.

We want to know whether you think a unitary structure would work for Rangitikei, and if so;

- How big should it be?
- Who should we partner with?

## HOW ARE OTHER COUNCILS RESPONDING?

**Councils around the country are responding to the Head Start pathway in different ways.**

Some are moving quickly to understand whether they should be part of a Head Start proposal.

Some, like us, are starting community conversations. Others are standing firm and pushing back on the Government due to the short timeframe and the risk of rushed decisions.

**The common theme is that all councils are trying to understand two things at once:**

1. What the Government's reform pathways require,
2. What their communities value, want protected, and want changed.

# NEED MORE INFORMATION?

Read about how we got here:

SIMPLIFYING  
LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT



COUNCILS INVITED  
TO FAST-TRACK  
LOCAL REFORM



ABOUT  
THE 'HEAD START'  
PATHWAY





# Kōrero mai - Have your say

## HOW TO SHARE YOUR FEEDBACK:

-  **Complete** the middle section of this booklet and return to one of our community hubs or our head office.
-  **Scan the QR code** to complete our online survey.
-  **Provide feedback** to your local Councillor.
-  **Email us** at [info@rangitikei.govt.nz](mailto:info@rangitikei.govt.nz)



Scan the QR code to complete our online survey.