

29 September 2021

Hon Nanaia Mahuta
Minister of Local Government
Parliament Buildings
WELLINGTON

Email: n.mahuta@ministers.govt.nz

Dear Minister

FEEDBACK FROM COUNCILS IN THE PROPOSED ENTITY B AREA

We hope this letter finds you well. You will recall a letter sent earlier this month from the proposed Entity B Councils' Working Group outlining a proposed course of action to be completed by 30 September.

This letter and the attached survey report represent the various views provided through councils' best endeavours, based on a digital survey that was shared with the proposed Entity B grouping. In most cases these observations have not been made formal by council resolutions.

Each council will make its own submission and any communication from the proposed Entity B does not replace or alter that individual council's feedback. We know that Government will acknowledge each council's unique and individual submission.

Our process to date:

- As per our previous letter, representatives of the 22 Councils in the proposed Entity B area met in Tāupo on 5 August 2021. As a result of that meeting a working group was established. The working group was tasked with development of a collaborative process to identify the individual views of the 22 Councils related to the proposed reforms and then to report back to Councils for further instructions.
- The working group also met with the Entity B Iwi group and agreed on a process to share information related to this work, reflecting the desire of all Councils to maintain good relationships with Mana Whenua through this process.
- The working group developed a digital survey. 21 Councils provided feedback through the survey and the 22nd Council provided feedback via a letter. A report summarising the feedback from all 22 Councils was developed and is attached with this letter.
- Representatives of the Councils in the proposed Entity B area met again on 22 September in Tāupo. The meeting was also attended by two Iwi representatives from the proposed Entity B Iwi leaders group.

- At that meeting it was agreed by all present to draft this letter, dated 29 September 2021, and that Mayors of those Councils involved would sign the letter reflecting their participation in the process.

Please see attached the survey report based on responses from all 22 Councils at a moment in time.

There are a number of key points from the survey, set out in the executive summary.

We understand the intention of the reforms has been to improve water service delivery and appreciate the significant volume of work completed to date. However, there is room to improve the quality of the process including a fully transparent options analysis on each of the material issues of the reforms.

As this is Government's proposed reform, effective government-led consultation/engagement with Iwi /Mana Whenua and communities needs to occur.

There are a significant number of issues to resolve and we invite the Minister to attend a meeting with the Mayors and CEO's of the 21 councils that currently comprise the proposed Entity B grouping to hear directly from them about the issues that need to be addressed.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this letter and accompanying report and we look forward to discussing these matters with you in due course.

Yours sincerely



Neil Holdom
Councils' Working Group Chair

Mayor Neil Holdom (New Plymouth) Working Group Chair, Mayor Andy Watson (Rangitikei), Mayor Paula Southgate (Hamilton), Mayor Toby Adams (Hauraki), Mayor Max Baxter (Otorohonga), Mayor Garry Webber (Western Bay of Plenty), Mayor Judy Turner (Whakatane), Mayor Don Cameron (Ruapehu), Mayor Phil Nixon (South Taranaki), Mayor Jenny Shattock (South Waikato), Mayor Neil Volzke (Stratford), Mayor David Trewavas (Taupo), Mayor Sandra Goudie (Thames Coromandel), Mayor Hamish McDouall (Whanganui), Mayor Allan Sanson (Waikato), Mayor Jim Mylchreest (Waipa), Mayor John Robertson (Waitomo), Mayor Steve Chadwick (Rotorua), Mayor Lyn Reisterer (Opotiki), Commissioner Anne Tolley (Tauranga), Mayor Malcolm Campbell (Kawerau).

Cc Hon Jan Tinetti, Minister Internal Affairs
Hon David Parker, Minister Environment
Paul James, Chief Executive, DIA
Stuart Crosby, President, LGNZ
Susan Freeman-Greene, CE, LGNZ

PS: If in reading this letter you concluded that it was drafted by a committee – you would be correct.