

## Initial Desktop Analysis of Local Governance Options for Canterbury

- This analysis is intended to provide very high-level initial insights into the possible impacts of three models of future local governance for Canterbury.
- It has been developed using a Christchurch lens so may miss matters of importance to councils and communities in the rest of Canterbury.
- All options are potentially disruptive in terms of transition. These issues and the impact on communities needs to be more fully explored.
- The colour coding used below is a somewhat blunt attempt to summarise the efficacy of each of the models to deliver benefits on a range of key attributes of local governance. These are complex matters, and it is not possible to show the degree of complexity and nuance associate with each, and it is not necessarily the case that all criteria have equal weighting. The colour coding is a rough guide only.

	Model is likely to deliver positive benefits for this attribute
	Model is likely to deliver some positive benefits but also some challenges possible
	Model is unlikely to deliver many positive benefits and/ or may present significant challenges

	Business as Usual	Combined Network Authority	Unitary Authority
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canterbury Regional Council delivering services largely based on environmental regulation – land, air and water.</li> <li>• Local Authorities continue delivering services largely in line with current provision.</li> <li>• Could include 2 or 3 waters reform with services no longer directly provided by TLAs.</li> <li>• Could include some reorganisation particularly if water reform makes some councils unviable in their current form.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local authorities remain much as they currently are.</li> <li>• Regional authority continues largely with current functions plus takes on strategic leadership functions.</li> <li>• Regional authority members are representatives from each local authority plus an elected chairperson/ leader.</li> <li>• Similar to metropolitan/ area council models in the UK such as for Greater Manchester.</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Combine the functions of city/ district and regional councils into one entity.</li> <li>• A range of geographic options available: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Christchurch/ Rest of Canterbury</li> <li>- Greater Christchurch/ Rest of Canterbury</li> <li>- North Canterbury/ South Canterbury</li> <li>- All of Canterbury</li> <li>- Canterbury/ West Coast</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><i>The analysis below is based on the Greater Christchurch/ Rest of Canterbury option. Note that this could be two unitary authorities or could be a Greater Christchurch unitary authority and a Rest of Canterbury combined network authority. Both options also provide the opportunity for some/ all current regional council functions to be provided by the two entities via shared services.</i></p>
Impact on key attributes of local governance in Canterbury			
Local representation and decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canterbury is NZ's largest region and some districts are large in comparison with other parts of NZ. Does result in some communities feeling remote and/ or underrepresented.</li> <li>• Some councils have community boards others don't.</li> <li>• Generally community boards don't have significant decision-making powers. Reform to increase community board delegations may be desirable to enhance local decision-making within this model.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District councils remain largely intact with local decision-making potentially left as is.</li> <li>• Largely the same as for the BAU option including retention of community boards.</li> <li>• Reform to increase local decision-making may be desirable – see BAU option.</li> <li>• Stronger links between local and regional decision-making may eventuate due to regional representatives also being local representatives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local representation would be provided via community boards/ local boards.</li> <li>• May still result in some communities feeling remote and/ or underrepresented.</li> <li>• Community board/ local board delegations could be reviewed to provide greater local decision-making to offset centralisation of decision-making inherent in this model.</li> </ul>
Democratic/ civic engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has been on a downward trajectory over past 15 years or so.</li> <li>• Hard to know if the current structure of local government is part of the problem or not.</li> <li>• Increased local decision-making in this model may attract civic engagement.</li> <li>• FfLG report also recommends changes to voting to stimulate engagement – although there is no clear evidence the changes recommended will have any significant effect over time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could complicate local civic engagement. Need to have well-designed engagement opportunities at the local level.</li> <li>• Local representation and decision-making arrangements likely to be critical.</li> <li>• FfLG report also recommends changes to voting to stimulate engagement – no evidence this will work though.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenge to increase local decision-making and civic engagement at the same time as scaling up the main governance institution.</li> <li>• Local representation and decision-making arrangements likely to be critical.</li> <li>• FfLG report also recommends changes to voting to stimulate engagement – no evidence this will work though.</li> </ul>
Partnerships with Central Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Likely to remain problematic with the high number of small councils for central government to engage with.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could be significantly improved if the number of councils engaging with Central Government is significantly reduced – e.g. Canterbury</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Likely to be significantly improved if the number of councils engaging with Central Government is significantly reduced – e.g. Canterbury could move from 11 councils to 1, 2 or 3.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could be improved via bespoke regional programmes though these are likely to be difficult to establish and maintain.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• could move from 11 councils engaging directly with the Government to 1 or 2.</li> <li>• However, the Combined Authority wouldn't deliver all services with potential for partnership.</li> <li>• May be difficult to get consensus among councils re what to partner with central government on.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides scale for proof of concept for innovative service delivery options.</li> </ul>
Te Tiriti relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District councils have relationships with Papatipu Runanga while Ecan have relationships with Papatipu Runanga and Ngāi Tahu.</li> <li>• Relationships likely to be at varying levels of complexity and effectiveness.</li> <li>• Ecan often picks up a regional coordination role with Ngāi Tahu.</li> <li>• Ngai Tahu favour a whole of takiwā council model though it is not clear how Papatipu Runanga might engage efficiently if this was implemented.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Largely as for the BAU option.</li> <li>• With the combined authority taking the lead on strategic issues there could be a shift in the nature of the regional/ Ngai Tahu relationship.</li> <li>• Ngai Tahu favour a whole of takiwā council model though it is not clear how Papatipu Runanga might engage efficiently if this was implemented. This option provides a degree of scale that may be favoured.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depending on the level(s) unitary authority operates at the focus could shift to a more regional Ngai Tahu relationship rather than with multiple Papatipu Runanga.</li> <li>• Community boards/ local boards would need to be resourced to maintain effective relationships with local Papatipu Runanga.</li> <li>• Ngai Tahu favour a whole of takiwā council model though it is not clear how Papatipu Runanga might engage efficiently if this was implemented. This option provides a degree of scale that may be favoured.</li> </ul>
Economic efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some minor efficiencies and cost savings may be possible through use of shared services/ shared procurement.</li> <li>• Central government transfers and councils having wider ability to set new rates would increase revenue.</li> <li>• Some small councils may not be viable if water reform results in services and assets shifting to new entities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Largely as for the BAU option.</li> <li>• Some efficiencies may be possible due to increased economies of scale and of scope in activities that shift from local to regional delivery.</li> <li>• May result in new services being provided to some parts of the region.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some efficiencies are possible due to increased economies of scale and of scope.</li> <li>• May result in new services being provided to some parts of the region.</li> <li>• No clear evidence that bigger councils are significantly more efficient than smaller ones.</li> </ul>
Best for Christchurch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doesn't provide any new benefits for Christchurch.</li> <li>• Efficiencies from any shared service/ shared procurement initiatives are likely to be extremely modest and may have a net cost due to establishment complexity.</li> <li>• Still don't have optimal influence over the integrated growth and functioning of Greater Christchurch.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Largely as for the BAU option.</li> <li>• Could include reconfiguration of current representation arrangements to include some sort of Greater Christchurch council.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Greater Christchurch unitary authority provides the best possible approach for sustainable, efficient and effective integrated planning and service delivery.</li> <li>• Still able to explore shared service options with the Rest of Canterbury entity if desirable.</li> <li>• Single point of contact for Greater Christchurch residents and businesses for council services.</li> </ul>
Pros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little change/ disruption to established organisations, processes and service delivery.</li> <li>• Local representation continues as now.</li> <li>• Some opportunities for improving alignment and efficiency of service delivery.</li> <li>• Opportunity for incremental improvement in Te Tiriti and Central Government partnerships.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional council responsible for regional strategic leadership is more likely to attract central government partnership/ collaboration opportunities than local councils/ current regional council model.</li> <li>• Opportunity for Regional Deals – similar to UK City Deals</li> <li>• Largely maintain current council responsibilities – little disruption.</li> <li>• Scope to share service delivery/ procurement with Rest of Canterbury.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single point of contact for residents for council services.</li> <li>• Provides economies of scale and scope post water and resource management reform – if these eventuate.</li> <li>• Councils of scale more likely to attract central government partnership/ collaboration opportunities – similar to UK City Deals.</li> <li>• Better influence over sustainable growth of Greater Christchurch – assuming RPC is at unitary council level rather than remaining at whole of (current) region.</li> <li>• Better for planning and delivery of public transport in Greater Christchurch.</li> <li>• Ability to share service delivery/ procurement with Rest of Canterbury.</li> </ul>
Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current issues regarding funding, community trust, efficiency are unlikely to be meaningfully addressed.</li> <li>• No improvement in our ability to influence the future direction of Greater Christchurch.</li> <li>• Continued fragmentation of service delivery between regional and local councils.</li> <li>• May lead to a slow and painful end for smaller councils.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Won't provide economies of scale or scope for local councils – some available for services where delivery shifts to the regional council.</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quite significant reorganisation requirements, particularly for the councils and communities making up the Rest of Canterbury unitary authority.</li> <li>• Local communities may feel as though they are losing local representation.</li> <li>• Rest of Canterbury unitary authority has very large area and modest population – may be some tyranny of distance.</li> </ul>