

What other options did Council consider?

Council has held a number of workshops to discuss and consider the relevant issues when undertaking a review and considered many different possible structures. The following 3 options were then discussed in more detail and given further consideration, these are outlined below:

Option 1 - Decrease members to 8, same wards and structure (Matamata 3, Morrinsville 3, Te Aroha 2)

| Ward | Population | Councillors | Average People Per Councillor | Deviation from Average Population per Councillor | % Deviation from Average Population per Councillor |
|---------------|---------------|-------------|-------------------------------|--|--|
| Matamata | 13,800 | 3 | 4,600 | 259 | 5.97% |
| Morrinsville | 12,700 | 3 | 4,233 | -108 | -2.49% |
| Te Aroha | 8,230 | 2 | 4,115 | -226 | -5.21% |
| Totals | 34,730 | 8 | 4,341 | | |

In considering a reduction in the number of Councillors the advantages and disadvantages could be:

| Advantages | Disadvantages |
|--|---|
| More efficient decision making | The Elected Members' workloads could become excessive |
| Councillors may be perceived as being more accountable to the community. | A reduced number of Elected Members may limit the likelihood of diversity of opinion and less understanding of the issues confronting the local community |
| May provide for more electoral contest – less positions for candidates to be elected to. | The meeting quorum would be 4 excluding the Mayor– which could be viewed as a relatively small number and if a Councillor is absent for any reason the ward representation could be compromised |

Option 2 - Increase members to 13, same wards and structure (Matamata 5, Morrinsville 5, Te Aroha 3)

| Ward | Population | Councillors | Average People Per Councillor | Deviation from Average Population per Councillor | % Deviation from Average Population per Councillor |
|---------------|---------------|-------------|-------------------------------|--|--|
| Matamata | 13,800 | 5 | 2,760 | 88 | 3.29% |
| Morrinsville | 12,700 | 5 | 2,540 | -132 | -4.94% |
| Te Aroha | 8,230 | 3 | 2,743 | 71 | 2.66% |
| Totals | 34,730 | 13 | 2,672 | | |

In considering an increase in the number of Councillors the advantages and disadvantages could be:

| Advantages | Disadvantages |
|---|--|
| There is an increasing workload for Councillors driving the need for more Councillors | Could be seen as over representation of the community |
| May provide for diversity in Councillor skill sets, experience and backgrounds. People may have more opportunity to contact their local Councillors. | Costs to the community would increase (more elected members) |
| This option may be the most equitable in terms of fair representation (the number of people per Councillor is the closest across the 3 wards than the other options considered) | Due to a lack of candidates at the 2016 election (with two of the three wards and Mayoralty having candidates elected unopposed) there may be difficulty filling Councillors positions, without incurring the expense of a by-election. By increasing the number of Councillors, Council is more exposed to the costs of a by-election if Councillor roles are not filled at the triennial election. |

Option 3 - Elect some Councillors by ward and some at large (Matamata – 3, Morrinsville – 3, Te Aroha – 2; some at large (number to be determined))

| Ward | Population | Councillors | Average People Per Councillor | Deviation from Average Population per Councillor | % Deviation from Average Population per Councillor |
|------------------------------|---------------|-------------|-------------------------------|--|--|
| Matamata | 13,800 | 3 | 4,600 | 259 | 5.97% |
| Morrinsville | 12,700 | 3 | 4,233 | -108 | -2.49% |
| Te Aroha | 8,230 | 2 | 4,115 | -226 | -5.21% |
| Totals | 34,730 | 8 | 4,341 | | |
| Councillors elected at large | 34,730 | TBC | | | |

In considering a change to a mixed system of wards and elected at large the advantages and disadvantages could be:

| Advantages | Disadvantages |
|--|---|
| The +/-10% rule only applies to the wards, not the at large component so provides flexibility for future population changes - for example, an extra at large member could be established in the future if warranted. | Contesting 'at large' elections could require more costly campaigning across the entire district. Under this model there would still be an option for candidates to stand in a Ward area at potentially lower cost. |
| The lines of communication between Council and the community could be perceived to be enhanced given that members of the community can consult with their specific Ward Councillors as well as members elected at large. | Ward Councillors are required to act in the district best interests anyway, and if some at large seats are established people may question what the value is. |
| It could be argued there is a shared common community of interest at the district level warranting members elected at large. | This approach could possibly be confusing to people and possibly decrease voter turnout. People would have the option to vote for their preferred ward candidates and at large candidates. |

You can explore the possible options using this [spreadsheet](#). The spreadsheet allows you to change the number of councillors or the ward populations to see what how many people each Council would represent and whether this falls within the allowable range.