



Generation Zero

This is Generation Zero's submission on the Wellington City Council's proposal to establish a Māori ward for the 2022 local authority elections.

We would like to speak at a hearing on this if one does occur.

Generation Zero strongly supports the implementation of Māori wards at Wellington City Council. Our organisation recently made a verbal submission to council regarding support for iwi representation on council subcommittees and the lack of Māori representation appeared as a dramatic symbol of neglect of councils obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Council must acknowledge their constitutional responsibility under the Local Government Act 2002 by making meaningful steps towards ensuring Māori representation is continually improved. More importantly this must be observed as a moral responsibility, a process of addressing a deep imbalance in what is meant to be a partnership under Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Generation Zero recognises councillors as key community leaders and we wish to continue working meaningfully with the council to create positive outcomes for all, hence we expect leadership when addressing Te Tiriti o Waitangi obligations. We want Te Tiriti principles of partnership and tino rangatiratanga to be recognised by council by ensuring Māori ward details are determined and led by mana whenua. Ensuring a design that is for Māori, by Māori. We request the council, as part of their implementation process, continue to work with iwi and hapū to ensure the new wards best represent their people and interests, and continue to enhance their mana.

Generation Zero wants Wellington City Council to acknowledge mana whenua as kaitiaki of Te Whanganui-a-Tara, with extensive tikanga-based expertise that we will all benefit from. The privileging of the Western worldview over indigenous epistemologies is evident in the current demographics of our council and must be addressed on a structural level. Māori wards is a step council must take to ensure greater Māori representation, in addition to iwi representation on council committees and subcommittees. A council that is representative of the rich diversity of its population will produce better policy and better community outcomes.

Generation Zero members are on our own journey of decolonisation as an organisation and we understand that addressing decolonisation must occur at an individual level to make meaningful and effective steps on a structural level. Hence Generation Zero supports regular and compulsory Te Tiriti o Waitangi learning for all councillors. This will ensure a culturally safe space for Māori councillors to work, and will ensure the minimising of emotional and cultural labour that Māori councillors bear from navigating structures that have typically excluded them. Tikanga Māori and Mātauranga Māori must become guiding principles in the building of local solutions, and every councillor has a role in making that a reality. It is a

matter of council honouring their obligations to Te Tiriti under the Local Government Act 2002, but more importantly it is the right and just thing to do.

Generation Zero wants a continued commitment from Wellington City Council to support Māori ward representation through collaborative implementation of the Māori ward mandate and future operational methods to build more Māori representation at council and co-governance with Māori. Before the new laws for Māori wards were implemented, other local councils found alternative ways to include Māori and mana whenua representation in council decision making. This shows that there are multiple ways in which Māori and mana whenua can be represented at council and participate in the decision making. We support an ongoing commitment by Wellington City Council to make further structural transformations beyond the establishment of Māori wards, to ensure Māori representation is realised under an equal power-sharing co-governance model.

Generation Zero looks forward to supporting Wellington City Council in their ongoing process of becoming honourable treaty partners.

Ngā mihi,

Generation Zero Wellington