

LOCAL GOVERNMENT FORUM

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESTRUCTURING: BETTER LOCAL GOVERNMENT?

The Local Government Forum has today released a [discussion paper](#) on local government restructuring, announced Forum Chair Michael Barnett.

All around the country debates, many of them heated, are taking place as to whether, for example, to merge with neighbouring councils to form bigger regional entities”, said Mr. Barnett.

“The Local Government Commission is currently consulting on reorganisation proposals for Northland and Hawkes Bay, and is considering applications from Wellington and Wairarapa.

“The structure of local government is an important issue and there are many perspectives on whether structural change is a good or a bad thing. The Government has taken the approach not to impose a single solution, instead wanting to enable local communities to determine their future local government arrangements. This is wholly appropriate.

“Consistent with this approach, the Local Government Forum does not have a formal position on local government restructuring. Individual members of the Forum have their own views on the issue, with many of them taking locally determined positions on a case-by-case basis and consistent with the principle of local democracy.

“What our discussion paper aims to do is provide information on the process for restructuring and to discuss some of the issues people should bear in mind when considering whether to put forward a proposal to restructure local government or when responding to a particular proposal.

“Rather than seeking to push opinion in any particular direction for or against we want to give people something to think about and pose some questions they could ask so they can come to their own conclusions,” said Mr. Barnett.

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ABOUT THE FORUM

The Local Government Forum comprises organisations that have a vital interest in the activities of local government. Its members include BusinessNZ, the Electricity Networks Association, Federated Farmers of NZ, NZ Initiative, NZ Chambers of Commerce, and NZ Retailers’ Association. The Forum was established in 1994 to promote greater efficiency in local government and to contribute to the debate on policy issues affecting it.

For more information on the Forum, see www.localgovtforum.org.nz