



**(Review into the Future for
Local Government, 2023)**

20 June 2023

Media Release: Local communities deserve better from both central and local government, says independent panel

**The Review into the Future for Local Government releases its final
report: He piki tūranga, he piki kōtuku.**



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- Local communities are not well served by the relationship between local and central government and a reset in the relationship is required.
 - Local government and communities must be empowered to build local solutions, with support and funding from central government.
 - The Local Government Act should be amended to embed intergenerational wellbeing as a core function of councils, establish a new department to coordinate resources, roles and funding between central and local government and recognise councils as partners to Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Local communities are not well served by the current relationship between central and local government and changes must be



released its final report – *He piki turanga, he piki kotuku*, which includes a package of recommendations to deliver better outcomes for local communities.

This is the most significant review of local government since the 1989 reforms and the 2002 Local Government Act and arrives at a time when New Zealand is responding to economic, social and environmental challenges, which are exacerbated by climate-related events and severe infrastructure deficits.

Chair Jim Palmer says the panel has spent two years listening to local councils, central government, iwi leaders, community and business representatives, rural communities, minority and interest groups, and the public to identify what they want, need and expect from their local government system.

“Local government and communities must be empowered to build local solutions for national level problems, with vital collaboration and funding from central government,” he says.

“We recommend a new Crown department is established to manage the relationship between central and local government that clarifies roles, allocates resources and together deliver greater value for communities.

“We also recommend the Local Government Act is updated to embed intergenerational wellbeing as a core function of councils and to recognise local government as a Tiriti partner.”

Mr Palmer adds that councils also need to change how they operate and the Panel recommends a redesign of councils’ operating models, new approaches to leadership, and new council structures.

“Councils are doing innovative and impactful work in their communities, but are hampered by a lack of funding and day-to-day pressures.”



They were tasked with identifying how our system of local democracy and governance needs to change to improve the wellbeing of communities and the environment and embody the Treaty of Waitangi partnership.

“During the review we saw many examples of successful partnerships between mana whenua and local councils which provide a template for future partnerships between iwi and local government,” says Mr Palmer.

The report includes a package of 17 recommendations designed to be implemented together, along with a roadmap with suggestions on the first steps forward for local and central government. It is supported by an 800-page technical report.

“Advancing the recommendations is critical to making sure local government can deliver the services and infrastructure needed for healthy, thriving and resilient communities for years to come,” adds Mr Palmer.

“This will require strong commitment from both local and central government to re-examine how our institutions work together.”

The recommendations also provide an opportunity to align many of the current reforms affecting local communities, including water reforms and the Resource Management Act reforms, which are all happening in parallel.

The panel expects these conversations to continue and broaden with the recent release of the Productivity Commission Fair Chance for All Report.

The Future for Local Government Final Report has been received by the Minister and Local Government New Zealand.

A livestream of the release will take place on 21 June at 11.30 am.

Please click the link below to join: