

REPORT

TO: GB Community Board

FROM: Board member McLellan

REFERENCE: E855

DATE: 4th April 2005

SUBJECT: Investigation into Amalgamation – Local Government Reorganisation

PURPOSE/REASON FOR REPORT

Follow-up requested by the GB Community Board at its March 2005 meeting.

SUMMARY

I spoke to Donald Riezebos CEO Local Government Commission.

He spoke about who can initiate a proposal to alter boundaries. These can be initiated by:

1. An affected local authority;
2. The Minister of Local Government; or
3. A petition signed by at least 10% of electors of the area concerned.

He is currently involved in the Christchurch City/ Banks Peninsula proposal which he said failed the first time around. This time the newly elected Council of Banks Peninsula was elected on the ticket of pursuing amalgamation.

For Nelson /Tasman the proposal would need to have the agreement of both Councils or under Schedule 3 LGA 10% of electors of both councils could request a referendum. Each council would be required to meet their share of referenda costs. For any initiative to proceed it would need to be put forward by the ratepayers.

The Local Government Commission has commissioned a financial analysis of Banks Peninsula/Christchurch councils – this is being done by Beattie Rickman of Hamilton, (they are extremely experienced in this type of financial analysis) and the cost is approximately \$65,000.

Mr Riezebos believes any study would need to be undertaken by a professional body very familiar with local authorities.

Beattie Rickman also did the previous study Waitomo/Otorohanga reorganisation in 2004. Waitomo/Otorohanga both put it to the ratepayers at the last election in a referendum; Waitomo voted for it and Otorohanga against so it didn't happen.

Mr Riezebos is aware of one other study that was done; this involved Hawkes Bay Regional Council/Hastings City/Napier City. They looked at various options but did not go ahead.

There has not been an amalgamation since 1989.

Carolyn McLellan