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Simplifying Local Government

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Overview

- “Simplifying Local Government” is a draft proposal for public discussion. It is not Government policy.
- The proposals stated aims are to **simplify local government** and **improve efficiency**.
- The reasons for change in the proposal are because:
 - The current system is complex, confusing, and costly.
 - There is a duplication of governance roles.
 - Resource management reform and other changes require a review of council operations.

Question 1: Do you agree there is need to simplify local government?





What is being proposed at a regional level?

- The proposal has two steps:

Step 1: Replace regional councillors with a Combined Territories board (CTB) made up of mayors



Step 2: CTBs develop regional reorganization plans (RRPs) to improve service delivery.

Question 2: What do you think of the proposed approach overall?





Rapid review of regional council roles and functions

- Starting immediately, relevant government agencies will rapidly review the roles and statutory functions of regional councils
- This is to identify if any roles and functions could be ceased or returned to central government
- Any changes to regional functions would need to be communicated to Combined Territories Boards before the Regional Reorganisation Plans process starts.





Combined Territories Board (CTB)

- Once established, CTBs would govern all roles and functions of regional councils.
- CTBs would meet regularly, like a council meeting.
- CTBs would be able to establish committees, with mayors delegating roles to councillors to share workload.

Question 3: Do you agree with replacing regional councillors with a CTB?

Question 4: What do you like or dislike about the proposal to replace regional councillors with a CTB?





Other considerations *not* in the proposal

- Potential for an independent CTB chair and/or mana whenua representation on the CTB.
- Work of the CTB, including developing the Regional Reorganisation Plan, would use regional council funding.
- CTBs would be able to establish committees, with mayors delegating roles to councillors to share workload.





Crown Participation Options

- The government's preferred option is for CTBs to be comprised of mayors.
- The proposal document does include alternative models for consideration:
 - Crown Commissioner without voting rights
 - Crown Commissioner with veto power
 - Crown Commissioner with a majority vote
 - Crown Commissioner instead of a CTB

Question 5: What level of Crown participation in regional decision-making do you prefer?





Voting

- Voting under a CTB structure would reflect the population each mayor represents, adjusted for effective representation.
- The Local Government Commission would determine the formula for each region.
- The principle of ‘effective representation’ is already used by local authorities in representation reviews.

Question 6: Do you agree that mayors on the CTB have a proportional vote adjusted for effective representation?

Question 7: What do you like or dislike about the voting proposal for the CTB?





Cross-Boundary issues

- A small number of districts have their boundaries split across two or more regions
- The proposal offers two options for the smaller populations of these councils to be represented under the CTB model:
 - ‘adoption’ by an adjacent district’s mayor, with voting rights adjusted accordingly
 - the mayor (or delegate) attends both regions’ CTBs.
- E.g. Waitaki’s mayor would sit on the Otago CTB as a default, with arrangements made to represent the Canterbury population.

Question 8: What do you think about the ways that communities crossing regional boundaries could be represented?





Regional Reorganisation Plans

- Step 2 of the proposal would see CTBs develop Regional Reorganisation Plans (RRPs).
- Each RRP would:
 - Map current council functions
 - Set out future delivery options
 - Meet the assessment criteria (see next slide)
 - Involve post-settlement governance entities in relation to Treaty settlements
 - Include a transition plan
 - Have undergone public consultation.

Question 9: Do you support the proposal to require CTBs to develop regional reorganisation plans?





Regional Reorganisation Plans - continued

- The Minister for Local Government would be the decision-maker on RRP, with advice from the Local Government Commission and in consultation with other relevant ministers.

RRP Assessment Criteria:

Big picture fit

Affordable now and in the future

Better services

Clear leadership

Local say

Treaty arrangements

Can it be done?

Question 10: What do you think about the criteria proposed for assessing RRP?





Treaty of Waitangi and Māori Representation

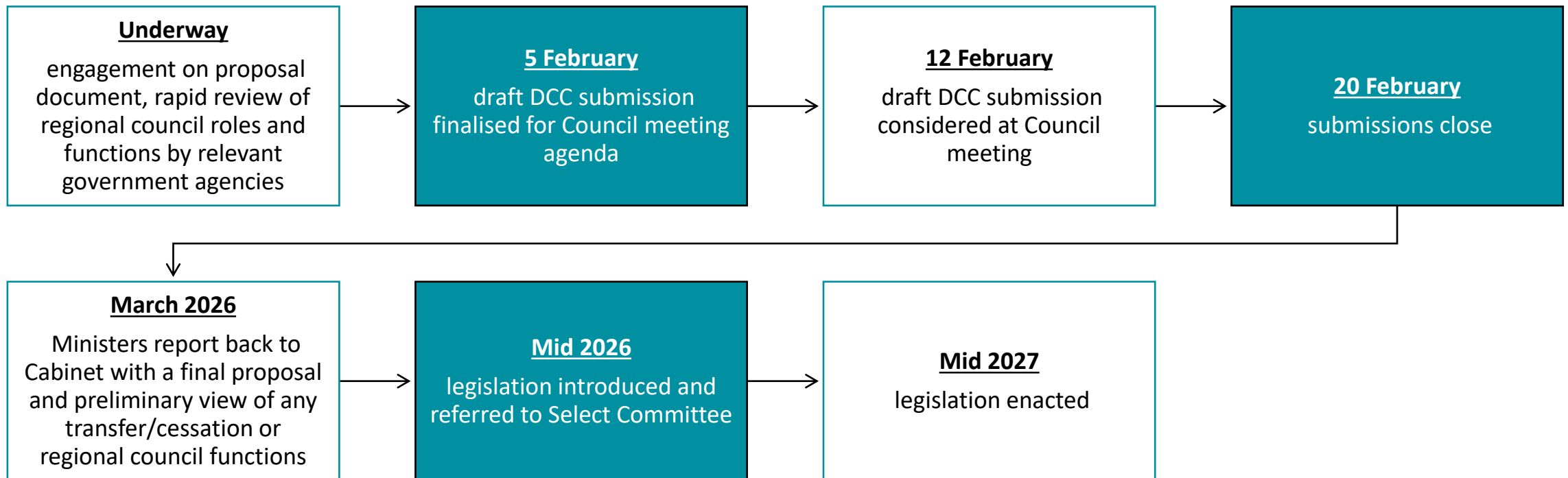
- CTBs will inherit regional councils' obligations under Treaty settlements.
- Existing arrangements for Māori engagement will continue.
- Regional constituencies, including Māori constituencies, will no longer exist.
- The proposal does not include consideration of the potential for mana whenua representation on the CTB.

Question 11: What do you think about how the proposal provides for iwi/ Māori interests and Treaty arrangements?





Timeframes and Next Steps





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