

Simplifying Local Government

SURVEY

TOI MOANA
BAY OF PLENTY
REGIONAL COUNCIL

Please complete this survey to help Bay of Plenty Regional Council understand community views on Simplifying Local Government. All feedback will be used to support the Head Start process. No individuals will be identified in our reporting.

The first question is required to ensure we hear from residents and ratepayers. All other questions are optional. If you chose to provide an email address a copy of your responses will be sent to you. This survey will take 5-10 minutes to complete.

This survey will close at 11:59pm on Sunday 12 July 2026.

This survey is for people who live in a certain area, so please tell us where you live below.

1. What's your post code?

_____

Please write in numbers

Not sure what your postcode is?
www.nzpost.co.nz/postcode

Values

Some council services in the Bay of Plenty are best run locally, close to the community. Others need to be planned and managed across the whole region to work properly. Things like rivers, flood protection, pest control, public transport, and environmental monitoring don't stop at council borders, so they need good coordination and the right expertise.

As changes to local government are being looked at, it's important to think about what matters most to the Bay of Plenty. It's not just about making things look simpler it's about getting better results, being clear about who is responsible, and making sure services are fair and work well over time. Your feedback will help identify what is most important, so any future changes will serve the whole Bay of Plenty well.

2. When you think about changes to local government, which outcomes matter most to you?
Please rank the following outcomes from most important to least important. 1 = most important; 8 = least important.

- ☐ Simpler processes and systems (less confusion and administrative replication)
- ☐ Lower costs (which might mean reduced levels of service)
- ☐ Value for money and efficiencies but not reducing levels of service
- ☐ Relationships that honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi through partnerships with Te Iwi Māori
- ☐ Improved levels of service
- ☐ Delivering services at the most effective level (ie flood management regionally and community facilities locally)
- ☐ Protecting and improving the environment
- ☐ Strong local community representation

Financial implications

The reason why we rate how we do is because our services generate regional benefit, and the consequence of service failure also has regional consequences. Changes to how councils are set up could also change how services are paid for in each area/sub-region.

- Some services that currently use targeted and general rates (like rivers and drainage schemes and public transport) may no longer be funded across the whole region. Instead, each area may have to cover its own costs.
- In some cases, the place where the work happens would pay for it. For example, Rotorua might have to fully fund work on its lakes.

Overall, this could mean smaller or less populated areas either have to pay more to keep the same services or pay the same for a reduced level of service. You can read more about this in the 25 June Council agenda report, which is available on our website at **www.boprc.govt.nz/simplifying-local-government**

What this means

Three structural models are included for discussion later in this survey. These figures are indicative only. Full financial modeling will only be able to take place after a direction has been decided for the region.

- Under the regional unitary option - Model 1 - funding would stay broadly the same as it is now (though savings would be made through bringing back office functions together)
- Under the three-council option - Model 2 - costs for regional services would shift between areas:

  - Western Bay could pay about 16% less overall
  - Eastern Bay could pay about 58% more overall
  - Rotorua could pay about 16% more overall

- There are no examples for Model 3 yet, as it's unclear which services would sit at a regional level versus local level. Decisions would still need to be made through this process about how debt from one city or district council is managed under a new system.

3. If changing the structure of local government means some communities may pay more for services they rely on, what should councils prioritise? Select one answer only.

- ◯ Keeping costs low for each local area
- ◯ Sharing costs across the whole region
- ◯ Improving service quality, even if costs increase
- ◯ Keeping local control, even if it costs more
- ◯ Keeping regional services joined up to benefit the whole region

Potential models for the region

On the next pages are three structural models for discussion. These have been developed with the Government's Head Start pathway assessment criteria in mind. For each model, there are key implications that need to be considered for what would best benefit the Bay (both financial and non-financial).

You can find more information about each of these models on our website at **www.boprc.govt.nz/simplifying-local-government**

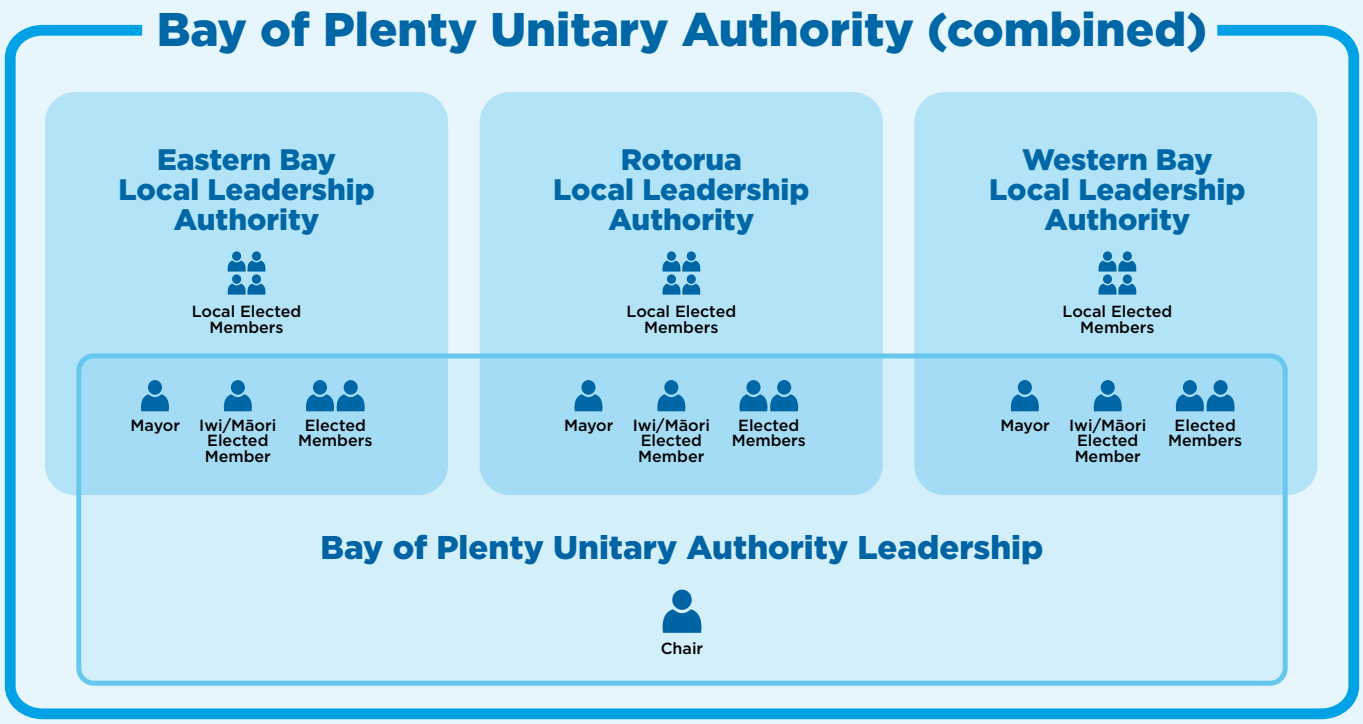
Model One: one regional unitary authority

In this model, one council would deliver both local and regional services across the whole Bay of Plenty.

This means decisions about things like roads, rubbish, public transport, flood protection and the environment would all sit within one organisation.

This approach keeps services together and makes it easier to plan and deliver things across the whole region. It may also reduce replication of back-office functions and improve efficiency

It also ensures that local communities still have a voice, but decision-making would be more centralised at a regional level.



PREFERRED OPTION

Key implications

- Keeps regional services together (not split up)
- Services stay the same or improve
- Strongest financially
- Keeps both local and regional voices
- Best long term financial option
- Iwi and Treaty Settlement areas/rohe not split
- Consistent with new planning system

4. Any comments on Model One i.e. any advantages or disadvantages

Model Two: three sub-regional unitary authorities

In this model, the region would be divided into three areas, each with its own council delivering both local and regional services.

Each council would make decisions for its own area, with a stronger focus on local control and local identity.

This means decision-making is closer to communities. It also means that services and planning that currently operate across the whole region may be split up.

This may lead to replication of back-office functions, higher costs, and less coordination across the Bay of Plenty.



REGIONAL FUNCTIONS WILL BE SPLIT AND REPLICATED WITHIN EACH AUTHORITY

Key implications

- Expensive and not viable for some areas
- Limited efficiency gains
- Regional services get split up
- Fewer benefits from simplifying the system
- Simpler structure
- Risk of losing a strong regional/national voice
- Some Iwi and Treaty Settlement areas/rohe may be split
- Greater cost to implement new planning system

5. Any comments on Model Two i.e. any advantages or disadvantages

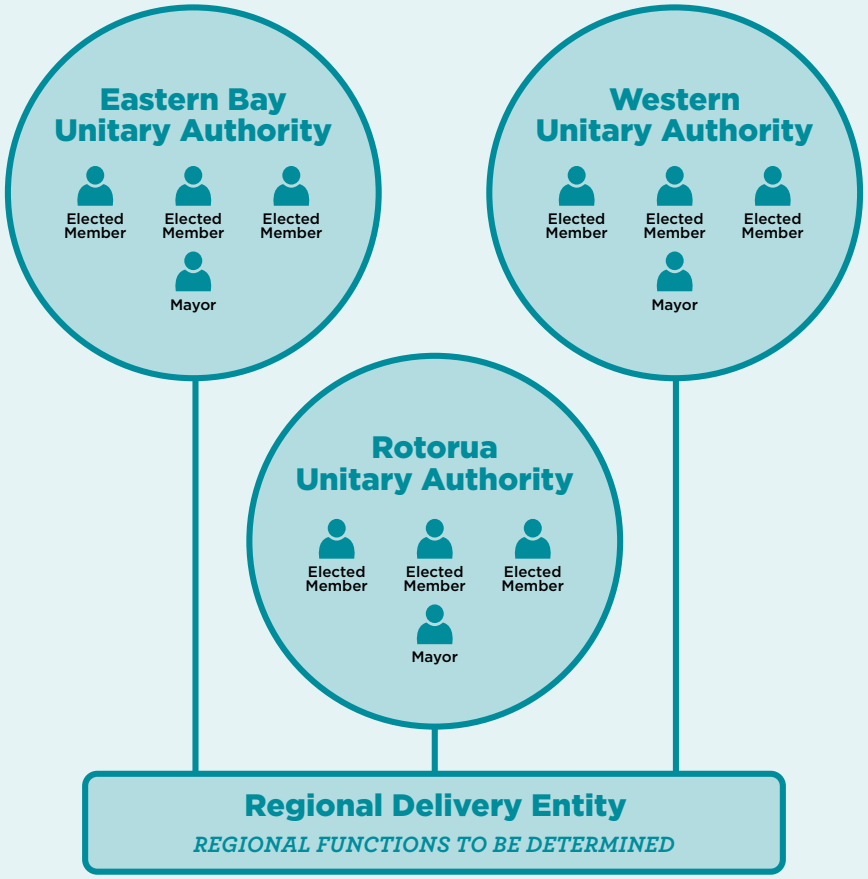
Model Three: three unitary authorities and one regional entity

In this model, there would be three councils managing local services, alongside a separate regional organisation responsible for delivering region-wide services.

What sits where in terms of regional delivery would still need to be decided.

This keeps a regional delivery layer, but splits responsibilities and decision making across multiple separate organisations.

This can make coordination more complex and may affect how clearly decisions are made, how accountable organisations are, and how services are funded over time.



Key implications

- Regional services are split across organisations
- Less efficiency and higher costs
- Regional decision-making is more distant from communities
- Less accountability for regional services
- Funding for the regional entity could be unstable
- Some Iwi and Treaty Settlement areas/rohe may be split
- Greater cost to implement new planning system

6. Any comments on Model Three i.e. any advantages or disadvantages

Any further comments

7. Do you have any concerns about the changes to local government and what it means for the regional functions?

8. What opportunities do you see about the changes to local government and what it means for the regional functions?

9. Please share any further feedback you have about changes to local government.

Understanding our community

As part of our commitment to inclusivity, we request demographic information such as age, gender, ethnicity, and location. This information will be treated with the utmost confidentiality, stored securely, and used solely for statistical analysis. Your privacy is our priority, and we adhere to stringent data protection measures.

10. How do you identify your gender? Select one answer only.

- ◯ Male / Tāne
- ◯ Female / Wahine
- ◯ Another gender / He ira kē anō
- ◯ Prefer not to say

11. Year of birth. This answer must be between 1900 and 2019.

_____

12. What is your ethnicity? Please select all that apply.

- ☐ Māori
- ☐ NZ European/ Pākeha
- ☐ Samoan
- ☐ Cook Islander
- ☐ Tongan
- ☐ Niuean
- ☐ Chinese
- ☐ Indian
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Other - e.g. Dutch, Japanese, Tokelauan etc

13. Do you, or does a member of your household, own a property in the Bay of Plenty region? Select one answer only.

- ◯ Yes, I own a property
- ◯ Yes, a member of my household owns a property
- ◯ No (do not own a property)
- ◯ Don't know
- ◯ Prefer not to say

14. Thinking about the place or area where you live, which of the following best describes where you live? Select one answer only.

- ◯ In a town or city, for example an urban area
- ◯ On the outskirts of town such as a semi urban or lifestyle area
- ◯ In a rural area or small settlement

Keeping you updated

Please provide your name and email address below if you wish to receive a summary of the results of this survey. This information will only be used for this purpose unless you specify otherwise.

15. Name

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16. Are you completing this survey for yourself or on behalf of someone else? Select one answer only.

○ For myself ○ On behalf of another individual ○ On behalf of a group or organisation

17. Please provide a name of the person completing the form

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18. Please provide the name of your group or organisation (if applicable)

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19. Email address

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20. I would also like to receive the Regional Council Kōrero e-newsletter (please provide your email address above)

○ Yes

Please return your survey by **Sunday 12 July 2026** to your nearest Bay of Plenty Regional Council office or mail to:

Freepost 122076
Bay of Plenty
Regional Council
PO Box 364
Whakatāne 3158

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