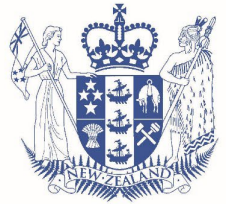


# Hon Simon Watts

Minister of Climate Change  
Minister of Local Government  
Minister of Revenue  
Minister for Auckland



3 June 2026

Dear Mayors

## **Council Committee voting to be restricted to elected members**

Yesterday I announced the Government is amending the Local Government Act 2002 so that only elected members of councils will hold voting rights at council committee meetings.

Councils and the public nationwide have raised concerns about non-elected individuals holding voting rights on council committees. While it is useful and appropriate for councils to make appointments of professional advisors or individuals that bring skills, attributes, and knowledge, those individuals are not elected by ratepayers and therefore have no democratic accountability to voters.

Under the new law, councils will still be able to appoint non-elected members to offer professional advice and represent communities. However, those appointments will not come with voting rights and will not count towards a quorum. This ensures that expert input and community perspectives can still be heard, while protecting the integrity of democratic decision-making by elected representatives.

I want to be clear that this change does not prevent councils from engaging with iwi, young people, or other community representatives. Their advice and input remain valuable and welcome. The reform simply ensures that the power to vote on committee decisions rests with those who have been democratically elected by their communities.

Statutory committees and appointments, including those agreed as part of a Treaty settlement, will be excluded from this change. Committee members appointed under Acts other than the Local Government Act 2002 will also retain their voting rights.

These changes will be included in the Local Government (System Improvements) Bill currently before Parliament. Once the Bill is passed, councils will have six months to review their delegations and appointments before the law change takes effect.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Watts'.

**Hon Simon Watts**  
Minister of Local Government