

South Wairarapa District Council Community Boards (Ngā Poari Hapori)

Terms of Reference (2025–2028 Triennium)

The South Wairarapa District Council (council) has three community boards established under sections 49–54 of the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA 2002), representing the communities of Featherston, Greytown and Martinborough.

Each board consists of four elected members and two appointed ward councilors. Boards meet at least four times per year. Each board elects a chairperson and deputy chairperson at its first meeting. The quorum is three (3) members. Boards operate under Council's Standing Orders, Code of Conduct and Terms of Reference. Members must also declare any conflicts of interest.

1. Purpose

Community boards play an essential role in connecting local communities and the South Wairarapa District Council (SWDC). Council and community boards will follow a “high trust and transparency” model and will encourage shared ownership of challenges and opportunities to achieve outcomes that strengthen the district.

Boards will:

- a) represent and advocate for community interests in a constructive, solutions-focused way
- b) develop positive relationships and communicate with local organisations, interest groups, iwi, residents and businesses
- c) maintain an overview of services provided by Council within the community
- d) provide local insights to inform Council from the community
- e) consider and report on all matters referred to it by Council
- f) support emergency preparedness and resilience in the community
- g) prepare an annual submission to Council relating to proposed or potential work for expenditure within the community
- h) undertake any other responsibilities that are delegated to them by Council.

2. Delegations from Council

Within their community areas, boards have the power to approve community grants within their allocated budgets and guidelines.

During the triennium, boards may undertake any other responsibility appropriately delegated by Council and agreed by boards.

Boards operate within defined boundaries. They are not authorised to enter into contracts, employ staff, or take actions that would exceed their approved budgets or contravene Council policy.

3. Community engagement

In order to optimise the delivery of their mandate, boards facilitate collaboration between the community and Council including feeding back community insight in an organised, data-informed way.

Council and boards work together to ensure that community engagement is discussed, coordinated and planned.

4. Civil defence and emergency readiness

Community boards will activate local civil defence readiness as their principal leadership responsibility.

They will:

- a) work with Council and WREMO to ensure every community is fit for emergency response and recovery
- b) promote local emergency preparedness through education, coordination, and communication
- c) identify community leaders and volunteers who can assist during emergencies
- d) oversee the appointment and support of local emergency centre coordinators
- e) support, provide and lead community-specific communications before, during and after civil defence and emergency situations, as defined in the standard operating procedures (SOP)
- f) provide regular readiness assessments to Council as part of annual reporting.

This responsibility builds community resilience and provides a clear, shared focus that benefits both Council and residents.

Council will provide planning and operational support to assist the boards, to ensure the appropriate plans and community-specific SOP are in place, and work in partnership with the boards to support coordinated emergency management across the district and region.

5. Advisory

Boards recommend to Council or relevant committees on:

- a) local road priorities, traffic management, and street facilities
- b) prioritisation of footpath renewals and maintenance
- c) easements and reserves management plans
- d) services feedback and recommendations.

To support this, Council will provide high-level advanced plans for works in the board area, with enough detail for practical consideration, and allow reasonable time for prompt community and board feedback.

Boards will also provide feedback to:

- a) Council's long-term plan and annual plan
- b) district plan reviews and bylaw changes
- c) strategies and policy development relevant to their areas.

The boards will support Council community consultation on the above plans and reviews, raising issues that they identify are of concern to the community. To assist with this, the Council will provide relevant significant proposals and draft plans in a timely way, other than

when deemed to be outside of the board or community interest, when the issue is commercial in confidence or where time required for the process demonstrably impacts the outcome.

6. Accountability and reporting

Boards are accountable to the community they represent. In all its actions, a board will be aligned with the Council's vision, mission and values, and contribute to the achievement of the Council's long-term plan.

In allocating funding and grants, and other delegated responsibilities, the boards are accountable to Council. They develop an annual work plan aligned with Council's strategic priorities. Boards will make a submission to Council's annual and long term plans.

Boards will ensure that their communication with, and information and operational requests of Council, are appropriate in terms of timeliness, role and good practice. As part of this, ward councillors will share information to Council about the board activities.

To support this, Council will provide timely, relevant and accurate support, advice, guidance and feedback on information sought by boards.

Council will also provide and support a clear process for raising issues, and a path of escalation where required.

7. Review of terms of reference

These terms of reference may be reviewed by the Council in consultation with community boards at any time, with a formal review to occur before June 2027.

8. Working together for the district

This framework strengthens the partnership between Council and community boards. By focusing the boards on community resilience and structured engagement, SWDC ensures both entities work as a cohesive team — each informed by data, grounded in shared responsibility, and committed to delivering the best outcomes for South Wairarapa's people.