



LOCAL GOVERNMENT

United**Future** recognises that it is through local government that communities provide for their social, environmental, economic and cultural needs in the first instance.

It is United**Future** policy to:

- Review the funding and purpose of Local Government;
- Reduce the financial pressure on local authorities by increasing the central government's Financial Assistance Rate for the maintenance and construction of local roads up to 80% of their total cost;
- Investigate alternative local body funding arrangements with the aim of abolishing rates on domestic and commercial properties;
- Reduce the number of Territorial Authorities by incentivising local government councils to come together;
- Ensure an emphasis is placed on increasing shared services for Local Authorities;
- Require the Ministry for the Environment to take a more active role in ensuring that Regional Councils perform their environmental monitoring and enforcement responsibilities under the Resource Management Act;
- Conduct regular reviews of the Resource Management Act's operation, and ensure that local authorities are given the necessary resources and administrative support to carry out their statutory role;
- Align the electoral boundaries for all other elected bodies such as District Health Boards and Conservation Boards with those of Regional Councils;
- Collect EQC and fire levies as a component of property owner's rates instead of their insurance premiums (to prevent 'free riding' on the system by the uninsured);
- Assist poorer communities and local authorities with the improvement (or provision) of wastewater and sewerage treatment scheme facilities by expanding the Sanitary Works Subsidy Scheme and increasing the maximum financial assistance rate to 80%of total cost;
- Initiate a programme of citizenship and civics education in schools and communities to address low voter participation;
- Continue to support to the Mayors' Taskforce for Jobs so it can continue addressing the local employment needs of youth.