



**Decolonised** [dē-kōl'e-nīz'ed]

*verb*

Cities that are equitable places for *all* whānau, reflecting Māori values and identity.

## A POLITICAL SNAPSHOT OF PORIRUA

The following political snapshot section provides an overview of major political actors in Porirua, their roles and influence. Key actors include the city council and mayor, the DHB, iwi and other political actors. It is not an exhaustive list of all political activities in Porirua.

### PORIRUA COUNCIL & MAYOR

The Porirua City Council is elected to advocate for the community's social, economic, environmental and cultural needs through democratic decision making processes for the wellbeing of Porirua today, and for Porirua's future (Porirua City Council, n.d.-b).

The Council's roles and responsibilities range from advocacy for the local community, development and management of local resources and infrastructure, planning and environmental management among others (Porirua City Council, n.d.-b). They also perform a variety of services such as the provision of public amenities such as parks, beaches and reserves (Porirua City Council, n.d.-b). They also provide for the city's welfare and vitality while looking after its environment, economy and community (Porirua City Council, n.d.-b).

The Porirua City community is represented by ten council members and its mayor. These representatives are democratically elected every three years. The city is divided into three wards: the Eastern Ward, the Northern Ward and Western Ward. Of these wards, 4 councillors represent the Eastern Ward, 4 represent



**Figure 1: Porirua City Council ward boundaries**  
(Source: <http://www.pcc.govt.nz/Your-Council/Democratic-Process/Elections-2016/Ward-Boundaries>)

the Northern Ward and 2 represent the Western Ward (Porirua City Council, n.d.-e). Figure 1 shows the boundaries for each of the wards throughout Porirua City.

Porirua City recently held its elections on the 8th of October 2016 (Porirua City Council, n.d.-c). Voter turnout was down 1.43 % compared to the last election with 35.12% of the population in Porirua voting (Maxwell, 2016). Councillor Izzy Ford, Councillor John Burke, Councillor Faafoi Seiuli and Councillor Kylie Wihapi were elected to represent the Eastern Ward which contains Ranui, Cannons Creek, Waitanairua, Ascot Park and Aotea (Porirua City Council, n.d.-c).

The Northern Ward contains the suburbs of Camborne, Plimmerton, Pauatahanui, Paremata, Papakowhai, Pukerua Bay, Judgeford and Whitby (Porirua City Council, n.d.-j). These wards are now represented by Councillor Anita Baker, Councillor Ross Leggett, Councillor Beverley Wakem and Councillor Dale Williams (Porirua City Council, n.d.-c). The Western Ward contains the suburbs of Elsdon, Titahi Bay and Takapūwāhia and these suburbs as of the recent elections are represented by Councillor Ana Coffey and Councillor Mike Duncan (Porirua City Council, n.d.-c).

## **PORIRUA MAYOR**

The mayor is the leader and official spokesperson of the council and city, and has a number of formal roles within the council as well as in the community (Porirua City Council, n.d.-k). The Porirua Mayor's civic roles relate to the promotion of the community and the representation of the city's interests at the regional, national and international level (Porirua City Council, n.d.-k).

The current Mayor of Porirua City is Mike Tana who was elected by Porirua City on the 8th of October 2016 for the 2016-2019 triennial term (Porirua City Council, n.d.-f). Mike Tana's victory was described by some media outlets as a 'surprise' or 'shock' and Mr Tana was referred to as a 'dark horse' 'under-dog' and 'political newcomer' (Fallon, 2016a; Maxwell, 2016; Rerekura, 2016). This reaction has been attributed to the fact that he began his campaign very late and had a small budget (Fallon, 2016a). His victory is even more momentous given he is only the 5th mayor of Porirua since its history as a city (Fallon, 2016a) and the first Māori mayor for Porirua (Rerekura, 2016). He believes that due to the cultural diversity within Porirua and the large Māori and Pacific populations, citizens will be able to relate to him (Rerekura, 2016).

## **MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT**

Kris Faafoi (See Kris Faafoi's profile and thoughts in the Resources section) is a member of the Labour Party and the elected MP for the Mana area (New Zealand Parliament, 2017). This means he is elected to take the issues of the Mana area to Parliament. The other MP in Porirua is Hon Hekia Parata who is a National list MP and the Minister of Education (New Zealand Parliament, 2016). She is based in Mana and as such can also take issues from the Mana area to Parliament. However she is not required to do so.

## **DISTRICT HEALTH BOARD**

District Health Boards were established under the New Zealand Health and Disability Act 2000 (Capital & Coast District Health Board, n.d.-b). There are 20 DHB's across New Zealand, each tasked to plan and deliver a range of health services to their associated region (Capital & Coast District Health Board, n.d.-b). The Capital and Coast District Health Board (CCDHB) is the district health board which "receives funding to improve, promote and protect the health of around 300,000 people in Wellington City and its suburbs, Porirua and parts of the Kapiti Coast such as Waikanae" (Capital & Coast District Health Board, n.d.-b, p. 1). This DHB operates the Kenepuru Hospital in Porirua as well as a large mental health campus called Te Korowai-Whāriki (Capital & Coast District Health Board, n.d.-b). The Kenepuru Hospital has a range of services: providing maternity and child health services, medical and surgical services, services for the elderly as well as treatment and rehabilitation among other initiatives (Health Point, n.d.).

The DHB elections were also held in 2016 where 7 members of the total 11 members are elected during the Porirua City's elections (Capital & Coast District Health Board, n.d.-a). Major topics addressed by candidates in the media focussed on the need to increase the DHB's budget, preventative healthcare and the

importance of community engagement (Community Scoop, 2016). Anna Coffey who is Porirua's deputy mayor was particularly focussed on this idea of community engagement and representation within the DHB (Community Scoop, 2016). Those selected in the most recent elections were: Fran Wilde, Sue Kedgley, Eileen Brown, Ana Coffey, Kathryn Adams, Roger Blakeley and Sue Driver (Capital & Coast District Health Board, 2016).

## **IWI**

Ngāti Toa Rangatira are the mana whenua of Porirua City. Porirua City Council highlights their partnership with Ngāti Toa in their Porirua City Council Values poster, recognising Ngāti Toa's mana whenua status (Porirua City Council, n.d.-g). In a media release regarding harbour restoration, Nick Leggett (Porirua's previous mayor) stated that the city council's partnerships with "other council and Ngāti Toa Rangatira is crucial" if restoration of the harbour is to be successful (Porirua City Council, 2013).

## **BUSINESS**

The Porirua Chamber of Commerce appears to be an active political influence within Porirua. Whilst they are not affiliated to any political party they instead 'support policies rather than political parties' (NZ Chambers of Commerce Porirua, n.d.). The Porirua Chamber of Commerce is concerned with representing businesses within the area (NZ Chambers of Commerce Porirua, n.d.). In the past this branch has proposed questions to council candidates in order to garner ideas around governance and also to inform their members regarding political candidates' policies (NZ Chambers of Commerce Porirua, n.d.).

## **GREY POWER**

Grey Power is an advocacy organisation which was founded in February 1986 (Grey Power, n.d.-b). It was formed as a response to a surcharge being placed on New Zealand Superannuation (Grey Power, n.d.-a). Since then it has expanded its scope to "promoting the welfare and well-being of all those citizens in the 50 plus age group" (Grey Power, n.d.-a, p. 1). The organisation now has 76 associations throughout New Zealand and approximately 90,000 financial members (Grey Power, n.d.-b). Grey Power is not a political party nor are they affiliated to any party. The organisation's main concerns centre on health issues and electricity costs, topics in which they have managed to receive substantial media coverage for their vocal protests (Grey Power, n.d.-b).

The Grey Power association for Porirua is Mana Tawa, and this group meets monthly and is active in organising and hosting political forums (Dando, 2010; Tuckey & Dando, 2011). Mana Tawa Grey Power are also active at the national level and have produced a submission for the Local Government Act 2002 Amendment Bill (Mana-Tawa Grey Power, 2012). Their submission argued for income-related rates and spoke about the hardship rates currently pose for low income families (Mana-Tawa Grey Power, 2012).

## **CHURCHES**

There are a number of churches in Porirua. There is a Mormon church in Takapuwhia, to which a number of Ngāti Toa members belong. In addition, there are a number of other Christian based churches of a range of denominations in the area. The Wesley Community Action group appears to be an active religious group providing social services within Porirua. The Methodist Church established the Wesley Community Action group in 1952 and its focus centres on social justice issues and helping to create communities (Wesley Community Action, n.d.). They work with a range of ages from youth to the elderly and have a variety of initiatives (Wesley Community Action, n.d.). These include; counselling services in Porirua, a safe home for youth in Tawa (Te Whare Whakapakari), foodbank, and the Wesley Action Tauria Court Health (Wesley Community Action, n.d.). This Tauria Youth Court is an initiative where they have partnered up with the Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Social Justice among others to keep young offenders out of prison (Wesley Community Action, n.d.).

The Porirua branch of Wesley Community Action group is seen to provide "a wrap-around group of services to local people" (The Methodist Church of New Zealand, 2005). The Porirua branch has been in the media

recently for a new initiative aimed to help those in the community with meth addictions (Fallon, 2016). They cited a lack of services for helping individuals to get through the withdrawal period before they are able to enter rehab (Fallon, 2016b).

**Authored by Chantal Mawer, Tui Arona, Ryan Meachen and Damian White**