

West Coast Alternative Reorganisation Application – 14.3.17

Applicant: Deborah Hogan, [REDACTED]

Map:



Description of type of local government change proposed

I would like to see the amalgamation of the Westland, Grey and Buller district councils into one council, with a reduced number of councillors and one mayor for the West Coast.

The West Coast Regional Council would remain a separate entity, but would combine administration functions including rates collection.

[I'm against the idea of getting rid of the WCRC and dividing the WCRC functions across the 3 DCs because the WCRC functions very well and this would cause unnecessary churn and not tackle parochialism.]

What the changes are seeking to achieve and what improvements would result from them including how they promote good local government

1. Above all this amalgamation would provide consistency across the region. It would tackle the parochialism which currently sees our district councils only interested in dealing with issues that occur within their own boundaries.
2. More efficient operation, with the amalgamation of these types of services:
 - Planning – let's have one district plan for the region
 - Building permits – again we need consistency
 - Rates collection and finance/accounts
 - Administration (includes payroll, HR and IT)
 - Civil defence – it's really important we have a joined-up approach to this. We are vulnerable to a number of emergencies caused by the Alpine fault, plus rising sea levels and global warming causing more flood events.
 - Roothing
3. One mayor for the region would have a much stronger voice at a national level than the current 3.
4. Better quality outcomes due to staff doing the same work being collegial since they are in the same team/organisation, even if they are not based in the same office.
5. Fewer and better quality councillors. Currently a number of the candidates standing for election as councillors or even mayors do not understand how local government functions. We would get better quality candidates if there were fewer positions available. For the approx. 32,000 people in our region we are grossly overrepresented with our 3 mayors, 1 chairman and 36 councillors – that's more than one councillor per 1,000 people!