



WEST COAST
REGIONAL COUNCIL

REPRESENTATION REVIEW

**Initial
Proposal
2024**



Reviewing the Council representation of the community for the West Coast

On Tuesday 04 June 2024 the West Coast Regional Council reviewed its representation arrangements and resolved to consult on this proposal to apply to the Council for the local elections to be held in 2025.

The proposal

It is proposed that the Council continue to comprise seven (7) Councillors elected from three (3) general constituencies reflecting the following identified communities of interest.

- **Buller:** the constituency boundary being the same as that for the Buller District Council area, as delineated on SO-11950.
- **Grey:** the constituency boundary being the same as that for the Grey District Council area, as delineated on SO-11950.
- **Westland:** the constituency boundary being the same as that for the Westland District Council area, as delineated on SO-11950.

- West Coast Regional Council comprises 7 Councillors
- Elected from three constituencies:
 - Buller 2
 - Grey 3
 - Westland 2
- This representation is model unchanged from previous reviews (2012, 2018)





Māori constituencies

The Council is not proposing to implement any Māori constituencies.

Why are we undertaking a Representation Review?

- Representation Review is a statutory requirement for all the Councils under Local Electoral Act 2001.
- The purpose of the review is to consider whether current representation arrangements require any changes.
- These reviews are required at least every six years.
- Our last review was 2018/19.
- New arrangements will apply for local elections in 2025 and 2028.

What are the outcomes of a Representation Reviews

Representation arrangements determine:

- The number of electoral subdivisions (constituencies)
- The boundaries and names of constituencies
- The number of elected members

What is considered in a Representation Review?

- Whether communities of interest remain well represented; district boundaries being a key consideration.
- Whether there continues to be effective representation of the communities of interest; are there an appropriate number of Councillors in total.
- Whether there continues to be fair representation of electors; whether the Population:Councillor ratio is consistently spread across the region or is there more than 10% variance in the Population:Councillor ratio for one or more constituency.



What does it mean for my rates?

Councillors' remuneration is based on a fixed pool of funds determined independently by the Remuneration Authority, a government agency. This amount remains constant regardless of the number of the Councillors. Therefore, any change in the number of the Councillors will not affect the total amount paid to the Councillors, as the fixed sum is divided among the elected members.

Council's assessment

Communities of Interest

The Council believes that the current level and distribution of the Councillors effectively represent all communities of interest. Additionally, there have been no changes to District boundaries since the last Representation Review.

Effective representation

Information from StatsNZ indicates a population increase of 1,815 (+5.7%) across the region between 2018 and 2023 (refer Table 1).

Table 1 - Latest population statistics - West Coast Region

Constituency	2018	2023	Difference 2018-2023	% change 2018-2023
Buller District	9,591	10,446	855	8.9%
Grey District	13,344	14,043	699	5.2%
Westland District	8,640	8,901	261	3.0%
Total	31,575	33,390	1,815	5.7%

Acknowledging the population increase, the current number of Councillors results in a significantly better Population:Councillor ratio than in any other region.



Fair representation

The 2018 the number of people per Councillor in the region (regional Population:Councillor ratio) was 4,511:1 calculated from 2018 StatsNZ census data. For 2023, that ratio has increases to 4,770:1 (StatsNZ 2023 Census), refer Table 2.

Table 2 – Population:Councillor ratio, based on StatsNZ Census Actual (2023)

Constituency	Population	Councillors	Population -to- Councillor ratio	Difference from quota	% Difference from quota
Buller District	10,446	2	5,223:1	453	9.5%
Grey District	14,043	3	4,681:1	89	-1.9%
Westland District	8,901	2	4,450:1	320	-6.7%
Total	33,390	7	4,770:1		

The Population:Councillor ratio is within the +10% variability threshold expected in the Local Electoral Act 2001. Any amendment to the number or distribution of the Councillors will breach the fair representation (+10%) threshold.

A 'status quo' approach (number and distribution of Councillors) would therefore best meet the fair representation requirements under the Act.

The proposal

Overall, the 'status quo' for number and distribution of the Councillors is recommended, as it continues to allow for the most equitable, effective, and fair representation of the West Coast community.

What happens next?

Date	Event
4 June 2024	Council meeting to adopt Initial Proposal
18 June 2024	Public notice of Initial Proposal
19 July 2024	Close of consultation process
July 2024	Collate, analyse and summarise responses/submissions
6 August 2024	Hearing of submissions followed by deliberations
End of August 2024	Draft Final Proposal to the Council
3 September 2024	Council meeting to adopt Final Proposal
12 September 2024	Public notification of Final Proposal including ability to make appeals/ objections
No later than 20 December 2024	Act on any appeals, objections, or if none, publicly notify decision





Submissions are invited:

We want to hear from you! Have we got this right? Is there anything we've missed? Share your thoughts with us.

You can make a submission by:

- Emailing us at feedback@wcr.govt.nz
- Posting your submission to: Representation Review, West Coast Regional Council, PO Box 66, Greymouth 7840
- Handing us your submission at the Council office at 388 Main South Road, Greymouth.

Please get your submission to us **by 4pm on 19 July 2024.**

Finding out more

For more detail on the changes from the current representation arrangements and copies of the Council's resolution and maps setting out the areas of the proposed constituencies please visit wcr.govt.nz or email us at feedback@wcr.govt.nz.



