



WEST COAST
REGIONAL COUNCIL

01 November 2024

Correct procedure followed

West Coast Regional Council has followed correct procedure in managing a censured councillor.

An article by the West Coast Local Democracy Reporter yesterday claimed the Council had no right to exclude Cr Allan Birchfield from committee meetings.

Council chief executive Darryl Lew says he has spoken with Local Government NZ and clarified the details of Cr Birchfield's censure which had not been made clear to them by the reporter.

"LGNZ has endorsed the approach taken by WCRC. They have confirmed that how the council is dealing with Cr Birchfield, and attendance at meetings, is totally consistent with the legislation. His attendance is treated on the same basis as a member of the public.

"LGNZ's advice is that a councillor who is not a member of a specific committee has the right to attend that committee's meetings, but only on the same basis as a member of the public (except if it is public excluded).

"This means there is no right for a councillor who is not a member of a committee to sit at the table. The councillor may only sit at the table if invited by the chair, likewise, she or he can only take part in a committee discussion if the chair agrees."

"Cr Birchfield is allowed to attend committee meetings. Any member of the public is allowed to attend public meetings."

WCRC censured Cr Birchfield last year. The details of the censure are in the Council minutes of 8 August 2023. Council adjusted the censure on 5 March 2024.

–Ends–

Further information

WCRC Standing Orders: [WCRC Standing Orders December 2022.pdf](#)

LGNZ Guide to Standing Orders:

[Guide to standing orders template 2023.pdf](#)