

# Grey District Council **Local Governance Statement**

**Per Section 40 of the Local Government Act, 2002**

**Last reviewed November 2019**

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# Functions, Responsibilities and Activities of Grey District Council

The purpose of Grey District Council ("Council") is to enable democratic local decision-making and action on behalf of its community and to meet the current and future needs of communities for good quality infrastructure, local public services and to perform its regulatory functions in a way that is most cost effective for households and businesses. "Good quality" is particularly defined as effective, efficient and appropriate to the circumstance.

The role of Council is to give effect to the purpose as outlined above and to perform the duties and exercise the rights conferred to it by the Local Government Act 2002 and any other Act. There is a focus on "core services" with these defined in the Local Government Act 2002 as:

- network infrastructure
- public transport services
- solid waste collection and disposal
- the avoidance or mitigation of natural hazards
- libraries, museums, reserves, and other recreational facilities and community amenities

For Council, the focus is to provide strong, positive governance for the District in consultation with its community with emphasis on:

- Conducting its affairs in an open, transparent and democratically accountable manner.
- Giving effect to its identified priorities and desired outcomes in an efficient and effective manner
- Making itself aware of and have regard to the views of the community
- Also considering factors like diversity of communities, and community interests as well as the interests of future communities in making decisions and the impact of any decisions on such communities.
- Creating opportunities for Māori to make input.
- Actively collaborating with neighbouring local authorities in the promotion of the West Coast as a Region and as a means of seeking to be more efficient.
- Being a prudent and effective steward of Council's resources with an ongoing focus on efficiency.
- Focusing on sustainability both of communities and the natural environment, now and into the future.

Council is a creature of Statute and, as such is a body corporate with perpetual succession. It also has responsibilities in terms of a wide range of legislation, the more important being:

- The Resource Management Act
- The Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987
- Local Electoral Act 2001
- The Building Act 2004
- Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996
- Animal Welfare Act 1993
- Health Act 1956
- Health and Safety at Work Act 2015
- Commerce Act 1986
- Dangerous Goods Act 1974
- Dog Control Act 1996
- Employment Relations Act 2000
- Financial Reporting Act 1993
- Food Act 1981
- Local Government (Rating) Act 2002
- Local Electoral Act 2001
- Public Works Act 1981
- Rating Valuations Act 1998

- Rates Rebate Act 1973
- Reserves Act 1977
- Sale of Liquor Act 1989
- Transport Act 1962
- Trespass Act 1980

Only one local Act is still in existence, namely:

- The Greymouth Harbour Board Empowering Act, 1982. This Act authorises the Council to sell Harbour Board Endowment Land in Blaketown subject to all income accruing to the Port Account.

In some of its dealings, Council acts as a quasi-judicial body.

# The Electoral System and Representation Arrangements in Place

Council's electoral system provides for the following principles:

- Elections are held on a first past the post (FPP) basis. Whilst the Local Electoral Act 2001 provides for another option to be used, namely the single transferable vote (STV) system, Council does not deem it appropriate for the District.
- Councillors are elected on a ward basis, one for the Northern Ward, three for Central Ward, two for Eastern Ward and two for Southern Ward. Council deems that the ward system provides for a system of fair and effective representation for communities and there is no need for Community Boards to be created.
- Council has committed itself, as part of the upcoming Representation Review, to provide for one Māori seat. In the meantime the Kaiwhakahaere of Te Rūnanga O Ngāti Waewae does have a seat at the Council table as an informal arrangement, without voting rights.
- Per the local Government Act 2002, the Mayor is elected at large.

Given the commitment to provide for a Māori seat, a Representation Review will be undertaken in October 2020. Council's representation decisions are subject to appeal to the Local Government Commission. The process for this is outlined in the Local Electoral Act 2001. Council can have a Poll on the matter. Notwithstanding, a poll can be initiated by a minimum of 5% of electors signing a petition demanding that a poll be held. Once changed an electoral system must be used for at least the next two elections. This means a change cannot be made for one election and then change back for the next election.

## **Arrangements in Relation to Reorganisation**

The Local Government Act 2002 sets out procedures which must be followed during proposals to:

- Change the boundaries of the District.
- Create a new District.
- Create a unitary authority, i.e. create a single local authority by merging Grey District Council and West Coast Regional Council.
- Transfer a function or functions to another Council.

The process for attending to each of the above differs slightly. It normally starts with a proposal initiated by the Minister of Local Government, the local authority involved, or a petition signed by electors to the Local Government Commission.

An application to create a single local authority for the West Coast has recently been considered by the Local Government Commission and the Commission rather opted for a Combined District Plan for the three Coast Territorial Authorities.

# Bylaws in Place

Please refer the following:

<b>Name of Bylaw</b>	<b>General description</b>	<b>Adopted by Council</b>	<b>Date of last review</b>
<b>Access to Walkways and Cycleway Bylaw</b>	Prohibits use of motorised vehicles except motorised disability scooters and maintenance vehicles from accessing and using the track and provides for general conduct of users of such tracks.	June 2011	September 2018
<b>Amenity Protection Bylaw</b>	To assist Council to meet its obligations under Section 7(c) of the Resource Management Act 1991 and implement the policies of the Proposed Grey District Plan and its successors.	February 2002	May 2018
<b>Banning of Liquor in Public Places Bylaw</b>	To enhance the safety of citizens socialising in the CBD and other local venues by controlling the use and possession of liquor in those places.	June 2008	August 2017
<b>Dog Control Bylaw</b>	Supplements the provisions of the Dog Control Act 1996 for the care and control of dogs and gives effect to the Grey District Council's Policy on Dogs.	July 2008	May 2015
<b>Freedom Camping Bylaw</b>	To allow freedom camping on Council land in only mobile accommodation which are certified for purposes of NZS 5465 except in certain locations and subject to conditions.	September 2011	December 2014
<b>Greymouth Port Bylaw</b>	Standard terms and conditions of use for the Port.	December 2009	October 2014
<b>Street Signage Bylaw</b>	Governs use of temporary advertising boards.	August 2010	February 2019
<b>Solid Waste Bylaw</b>	To ensure refuse is collected and disposed of in the interests of public health in an efficient and cost-effective manner and at the same time ensuring that any obstruction of streets is kept to a minimum.	August 2012	-
<b>Traffic and Parking Enforcement Bylaw</b>	To assist with traffic and parking control in respect of roads, parking areas and other areas under Council's control.	July 2008	June 2015

# Council Members' Roles and Code of Conduct

Council places a strong emphasis on ethical and professional conduct on the part of Members and the dignity and professionalism of Council as a body. Whilst the roles of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor are reasonably clearly defined in legislation, the roles of individual members are more based on custom and good practice. This is not deemed an issue as Council acts as a body rather than as a group of individual members. It is important to note that certain roles and functions of notably the Mayor have become established through custom under the Westminster system.

The Council as body has the following roles:

- Setting the policy direction of Council.
- Monitoring the performance of Council.
- Representing the interests of the District (on election, members must attest to the fact that they will at all times perform their duties faithfully, impartially and to their best skill and judgement in the best interests of the District.
- Employing the Chief Executive and holding him/her responsible for the execution of Council's decisions and competent management of Council's activities including staff.

## Member Roles

### **The Mayor: (elected at large)**

The Mayor is elected by the District as a whole. Even though the Mayor has only one vote in Council (like any other Member), the incumbent has the following rights and responsibilities:

- To provide leadership to the members of Council and the wider community.
- To lead the development of Council's plans (i.e. LTP, Annual Plan, District Plan), policies and budgets for consideration by Council.
- To appoint the Deputy Mayor.
- To establish committees of Council, to appoint the Chairperson of each committee (before other members are appointed and the Mayor may appoint him/herself).

The Mayor can decline to exercise these powers, in which event Council as a whole will undertake it.

In addition to the above functions, the Mayor:

- Presides at Council meetings. In this role, the Mayor is responsible for the orderly conduct of business and the interpretation and use of Standing Orders.
- Advocates on behalf of the District and the community.
- Is the ceremonial head of Council.
- Leads Council delegations
- Is Council's primary spokesperson.
- Provides general leadership.

### **The Deputy Mayor: (appointed by the Mayor)**

If the Mayor is absent or incapacitated, or the office of Mayor is vacant, the Deputy Mayor must perform all the duties and may exercise all the powers of the Mayor. As stated, the Deputy is appointed by the Mayor (unless the Mayor decides to leave the appointment to the Council).

### **Elected members:**

- To, as a Council, develop and adopt Council policy.
- To, as Council, monitor the performance of the Council against its stated objectives and policies.



- To, as Council, act as prudent steward of Council's resources.
- To, as Council, appoint the Chief Executive.
- To, as Council, represent the interests of the residents and ratepayers of the District.

It is important to note that individual members of Council have no powers other than specific powers delegated to them in terms of a Council decision.

Council has approved an informal Portfolio system whereby individual members are given certain portfolios. This system is an alternative to the Committee system and leaves Council as committee with portfolio holders having the following delegated authority:

- To, make a recommendation on any matter falling within the ambit of his/her portfolio.
- To, when asked for comment, make comment to the media on any issue that falls within his/her portfolio.

In exercising the powers in terms hereof, Portfolio Councillors:

- May not become involved in the day to day administration of any municipal Department or function.
- Do not have any executive powers. This means that they cannot initiate any action without a clear mandate of Council.
- Must respect the provisions of amongst others the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act, 1987 and the Privacy Act, 1993.
- May not bind Council in any way.

In order to make roles and responsibilities under the portfolio system clear, Council passed a range of decisions which come down to:

- Focusing portfolios on key issues/challenges facing local government, our District or Council and allowing portfolio holders the opportunity to specialise in their portfolios.
- Continued support for the system with Council acting as Committee of Council.
- Recognition that the focus of any matter may develop beyond the portfolio involving another portfolio, in which case the new portfolio holder will liaise with the "previous" portfolio holder(s) in exercising his/her duties as portfolio Councillor.
- Recognition of the need to work co-operatively and to liaise amongst each other in order to present a single viewpoint/recommendation.

## Code of Conduct

A copy of the Code of Conduct for Elected Members is obtainable free of charge from Council's Offices. By way of summary, it contains the following:

The following principles of good governance will, at all times, be observed:

- Public interest without any personal or singular causes being promoted.
- Honesty and Integrity including avoidance of situations where this may be compromised or deemed to have been compromised.
- Objectivity with merit and not personal views as basis for decisions with bias and pre-determination absent.
- Accountability.
- Openness in respect of their actions and that of Council.
- Personal judgment on the basis of facts and not caucus pressure.
- Respect for Council as body and others including the impartiality and integrity of Council staff and equality of everybody.
- Duty to uphold the Law in accordance with the public trust in them and the fact that "illegal" Council decisions are unenforceable.
- Prudent and lawful use of Council resources.
- Leadership also on the form of a willingness to act decisively.

## General Provisions Applicable to Council and Council Members

- Council maintains positive relationships with
  - various other bodies:
  - other members
  - Council staff
  - the community
  - the media where:
    - the Mayor is the first source for an official viewpoint but she can refer the matter to the Portfolio Councillor
    - any comments made by portfolio Councillors other than personal comments, be “cleared” with the Mayor
    - individual Councillor comment is in order subject that it is clearly qualified to represent a personal view and not that of Council
- Confidentiality will at all times be respected and maintained. Council members will be privy to information that should be dealt with in confidence and will not breach that confidentiality. Members recognise that breaches impede the performance of Council and may lead to civil action against Council. On this basis, all information, including Council agendas are confidential to members even though they may be public documents.
- Conflicts of interest should be managed. Should there be any possibility or perceived possibility of any such conflict, the member should declare an interest and not participate in or vote on the matter.
- Council seeks to promote the highest standards of ethics amongst members and this is reflected in the way members will claim legitimate expenses, a prohibition on any influencing of Council as a body or its employees for personal gain, a prohibition against the use of Council resources for personal business including campaigning, not soliciting, demand or request any gift, reward or benefit by virtue of position and to notify the Chief Executive of any gift accepted especially where the gift value is deemed such that it should be recorded in the publicly available Register of Interests of Members.

The Council and, in practical terms its members, have specific obligations as to their conduct in terms of its obligation to be a Good Employer in respect of its employment of the Chief Executive Officer and through the Chief Executive Officer of its other staff. Similarly, it has obligations in relation to Equal Employment.

# Governance Structures, Membership, Processes and Delegations

The governance structure comprises the Mayor, elected at large, and eight (8) Council members elected in ward context.

Council has a portfolio system but has the following Standing Subcommittees in place:

- The Tenders subcommittee
- The CE and Council Employer obligations subcommittee
- The Joint Floodwall Committee (jointly with WCRC)

## Council Members

Mayor Tania Gibson	Mayor
Cr Anton Becker	Councillor, Eastern Ward
Cr Allan Gibson	Councillor, Eastern Ward
Cr Rosemary Green	Councillor, Northern Ward
Cr Peter Haddock	Councillor, Southern Ward
Cr Murray Hay	Councillor, Central Ward
Cr Patrick McBride	Councillor, Central Ward
Cr Rex MacDonald	Councillor, Southern Ward
Cr Rev. Tim Mora	Councillor, Central Ward

## Public Participation

Council is proud of its ongoing efforts to involve its community in its decision-making and sees it as contributing significantly to the integrity of the local democratic process. The following is pointed out:

### Access to Council: (for political aspects)

- Input into Council consultative processes.
- Phone or talk to your Council member. This person will arrange for the portfolio holder to also become involved.
- Phone or talk to the Mayor.
- Appointments with either of the above.
- Participation in the Public Forum (meeting before Council meetings).
- Written inputs via the Chief Executive.
- Asking for speaking rights at Council meetings. Three requirements apply, namely application to the Mayor at least 10 days before the meeting, a 10-minute time limitation, and the need for the focus of your address to be an item on the agenda without being offensive.

### Access to Staff: (for operational aspects)

- Phone or talk to a staff member
- Appointments with Managers or the Chief Executive
- Written inputs to the Chief Executive

Council and staff, as far as practically possible, maintain an open door policy. However this makes them unavailable from time to time and phoning to make an appointment is advised.

# Significance and Engagement Policy

A copy of Council's Significance and Engagement Policy is obtainable from Council offices free of charge. The salient principles in the policy are as follows:

- The purpose of the policy is to provide for an open, honest and accountable relationship between Council and its Ratepayers in a way that facilitates community engagement and ownership of Council decisions.
- The policy enables Council and its communities to identify the degree of significance attached to particular issues, proposals, assets, decisions and activities. It informs Council from the beginning of a decision-making process about the extent, form and type of engagement required and provides clarity about how and when communities can expect to be engaged in decisions made by Council.
- The policy recognises the need to consult with:
  - Local Māori per the provisions of the Local Government Act, 2002. Council has in place a Memorandum of Understanding with Te Rūnanga O Ngāti Waewae and is proud to have this association.
  - Those most affected/potentially affected by an issue.
  - The community on issues of significance in line with Council's significance policies.
  - Special interest groups.
- Engagement and consultation will be done on the following basis:
  - Facts and options will be clearly, objectively and neutrally stated.
  - Adequate notice and time for responses will be given.
  - Provision for submitters to speak to their submissions will be available.
  - Inputs will be considered with an open mind.
  - Interested parties will be advised of the outcome of the consultation undertaken.
  - We will adhere to legal requirements, i.e. in respect of process and intent.

In addition to the Significance and Engagement Policy, it is important to note that Council under certain circumstances is required to use the Special Consultative Procedure. This procedure is prescribed in the Local Government Act 2002 and involves:

- Step One:** Preparation of a Statement of Proposal and a Summary of Proposal. The Statement outlines what is to happen as subject of the consultation whilst the Summary is a short version which provides the reader with sufficient information to make an informed submission or will prompt a person to ask for a copy of the Statement of Proposal. Copies are obtainable free of charge from Council offices. The Summary must be distributed as widely as Council considers to be practicable.
- Step Two:** Public notice. Council must publish a notice in one or more daily newspapers of the proposal and of the consultation undertaken and invite public submission.
- Step Three:** Receive submissions. Council must acknowledge all submissions and offer submitters a reasonable opportunity to make an oral submission. Council must allow at least one month from the date of the notice for submissions.
- Step Four:** Hear submissions. Council must set aside sufficient time to hear all submitters who wish to speak. Council must also be seen to carefully consider all other submissions received.
- Step Five:** Deliberate. The meeting where Council deliberates the submissions received and decides on the outcome must be open to the public unless good reason

under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 exist to do so behind closed doors. All submissions must be made public.

**Step Six:** Follow-up. A copy of Council's decisions and the reasons for it must be provided to submitters.

By law, Council must follow the Special Consultative procedure before it:

- Adopts a Long Term Council Plan (LTP)
- Amends an LTP
- Adopts, reviews or revokes a Bylaw
- Changes the mode of delivery for a specific activity or the standard of the service if not signaled in the LTP

Council's Significant and Engagement Policy also provides for the Special Consultative Procedure to be used if the matter involved is significant or should be treated as significant.

# Meeting Processes

## Council

Council meets in accordance with an approved meeting schedule which is every second Monday of every month of the year with the exception of January. This arrangement may change and it is strongly advised that the community notes the formal advertisements advising meetings on Council's website and in the local press. Council normally is in recess after its December meeting until its February meeting, with only urgent matters being attended to.

The Mayor chairs meetings and, in her absence, the Deputy Mayor. As a local authority, Council is bound by the Standing Orders. Council adopted Standing Orders and a copy can be viewed at council offices. The purpose of the Standing Orders is to structure and bring order to meetings. It inter-relates closely with the Local Government Act and the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act, 1987. The Standing Orders, amongst others, provide for:

- Quorum requirements
- Notification of meeting requirements
- Special and Emergency meeting provisions
- Accessibility to public requirements
- Exclusion of public provisions
- Conduct at meetings
- Order of Business requirements
- Rules of debate
- Motions and Amendments
- Qualified privilege
- Minutes
- Deputations and speaking rights

Meetings are open to the public with the exception of those items that Council designate to be dealt with in the public excluded section. Only matters that meet the requirements of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act, 1987, in respect of confidentiality are dealt with in confidence. The decision whether any matter is dealt with in confidence or not is, however, contestable by means of a motion by any member. All members are bound by any decision re confidentiality and is subject to censure if not prosecution if this confidentiality is breached. If the confidentiality arises from any Privacy Act issue or where commercial sensitivity is involved, any breach may result in civil claims against Council and the member having breached confidentiality. Agenda, notification and other such requirements per the Local Government Official Information and Meeting Act, 1987 are also strictly adhered to.

Anyone can request speaking rights and three requirements apply:

- Application to the Mayor at least 10 days before the meeting
- A time limit of 10 minutes with the option of an extension subject to Council approval
- The theme of the speaking rights must appear as an item on the Agenda

Members of the public wishing to address more general issues can apply to do so at the Public Forum which takes place on a monthly basis immediately before the commencement of the Council meeting.

## **Policies for Liaison with Māori**

Council has in place a formal Memorandum of Understanding with Te Rūnanga O Ngāti Waewae. In addition, Kaiwhakahaere Francois Tumahai representing local Iwi has a seat at the Council table by means of an informal arrangement. Council is already committed to formalise this arrangement as part of the next Representation Review. Council is justifiably proud to have put this arrangement in place and treasures the input made by the Kaiwhakahaere.

In addition, Council is fully aware of its statutory requirements in relation to consultation with Māori and to create processes for Māori to participate in local decision-making. Notwithstanding, Council's strong commitment to establish and maintain a constructive and productive association with local Māori is rather based on respect for the premise that they are the people of the land and deserve to be specifically consulted on issues that relate to them.

Council's association with Māori has principally been via Te Rūnanga O Ngāti Waewae and, to a lesser extent, Mawhera Inc. as the commercial arm of the Rūnanga. Some of the principles involved are:

- Council recognises that Māori have cultural and other interests not in keeping with the other residents in our community.
- Council also acknowledges that cultural processes of decision-making may be different and that such processes must be respected.
- Te Rūnanga O Ngāti Waewae as local Iwi represent local Māori on all issues involving Māori.
- Council encourages Māori to stand as candidates for municipal elections.
- Council has a Māori Affairs portfolio in recognition of its acknowledgement of Māori and promotes regular interface between the Portfolio Councillor and the Rūnanga.

# Systems for Public Access

## Contacting Council

<b>Post</b>	Grey District Council PO Box 382 Greymouth 7840
<b>In person</b>	Council Offices 105 Tainui Street Greymouth 7805
<b>Phone</b>	03 769 8600
<b>Email</b>	<a href="mailto:info@greydc.govt.nz">info@greydc.govt.nz</a>
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.greydc.govt.nz">www.greydc.govt.nz</a>

<b>Runanga Service Centre &amp; Library</b>	25 Carroll Street, Runanga Phone 03 762 7813
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<b>Grey District Library</b>	18 Albert Street, Greymouth Phone 03 768 5597
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## Complaints

Council takes complaints seriously and encourages people to report any concerns that they may have immediately. Council uses complaints to further improve both standards and services. As a general rule:

- Complaints are dealt with in confidence. This means that the name and address of the person making the complaint is not revealed.
- Council normally does not deal with anonymous complaints.
- Direct your concerns to the relevant Departmental Manager or, if the complaint is about the Manager, to the Chief Executive Officer. It is preferable to put complaints in writing.
- If you are not satisfied with how your complaint is being handled, write to the Chief Executive Officer.
- Complaints about something or someone in the community not directly related to Council should be put to the Chief Executive Officer.
- Complaints about the Chief Executive Officer should be put to the Council via the Mayor.
- Complaints against Council members should be put to the Mayor.
- Complaints about the Mayor should be put to Council via the Chief Executive Officer.

It is important to note that Council will normally not get involved in disputes between neighbours or residents and see it as a civil matter unless it relates to a Council matter.

Complaints against Council can be directed to the Chief Ombudsman, at [info@ombudsman.parliament.nz](mailto:info@ombudsman.parliament.nz) or 0800 802 602.

## Contacting Council members

Elected member contact details are on Council's website, [www.greydc.govt.nz](http://www.greydc.govt.nz). They are also obtainable from Council offices.

The Mayor occupies an office in the Council Offices. She can be contacted at 03 769 8600 through her Personal Assistant or by contacting her on 027 296 7526.

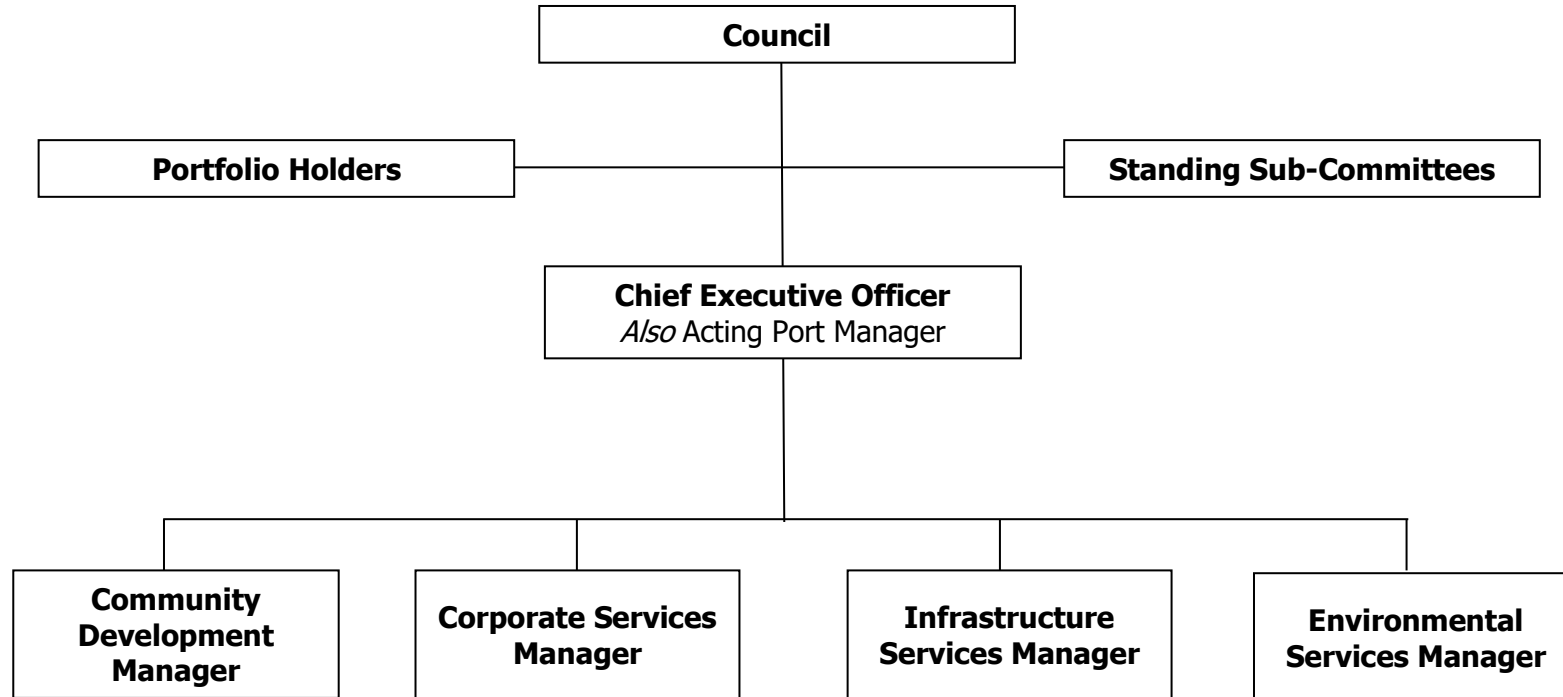


**Note:**

All correspondence should be addressed to the Chief Executive Officer. Such correspondence becomes "public information" for purposes of the Local Government Official Information Act 1987 and must be dealt with accordingly. It is also recorded and dealt with in keeping with the Public Records Act.

# The Management Structure and its Association with Elected Members

This can be explained as follows:



## Association of Management Team with Council Members

In terms of the Local Government Act 2002, the Chief Executive Officer is the contact between Council and its administration. Notwithstanding this, and subject thereto that the association is managed appropriately, the association between Council members and Managers and even other staff is much more "informal" than would otherwise be the case. The Chief Executive Officer promotes frequent contact between Managers and portfolio holders as well as Manager advice during Council meetings. Council as a body also encourages the Management Team to take part in Council activities and workshops whilst Managers are also invited to attend Council functions.

# Equal Employment Opportunities Policy

Council is committed to providing Equal Employment Opportunities as an employer and it takes positive action to remove all barriers to employment in respect of:

<b>Recruitment</b>	By giving preference to the person who is best suited to the position irrespective of other considerations. All job descriptions, specifications and advertisements are non-racist, non-sexist and non-discriminatory against disabled persons.
<b>Training</b>	By encouraging staff to further develop themselves.
<b>Promotion</b>	By where possible providing opportunities for career development and recognising and rewarding ability and performance within budgetary realities.
<b>Staff culture</b>	All relationships based on respect in a diverse working environment.

## Health and Safety

Council is committed to provide safe and healthy workplaces for its staff and visitors to workplaces. In order to attend to this in a proactive, objective manner, Council:

- Developed a Corporate Health and Safety Plan
- Maintains and manages a Health and Safety Committee exclusively made up of staff.

# Key Approved Planning and Policy Documents

## Planning

Attention is drawn to the following planning documents, copies of which are obtainable from Council offices free of charge:

### **The District Plan**

This plan, developed in terms of the Resource Management Act, 1991, provides for development standards to be complied with (as effects) and is the most important protocol to ensure harmonious and sustainable development and protection of rights.

Council's District Plan is effects based and is widely recognised to be one of the more permissive Plans in the country.

This Plan is overdue for review and will, in the next few years be superseded by the Tai Poutini One Plan which is currently being developed.

### **The Long Term Plan 2018-2028 (LTP)**

This plan, more commonly referred to as the Long Term Plan, is a comprehensive future policy statement which strongly focuses on outputs over the term of the Plan but also looks at infrastructural services over the next 30 years (and beyond where applicable). The Plan also provides information on financial implications and how it impacts on ratepayers, financial security, service standards etc. It is without doubt the most important policy document produced by Council.

### **The Annual Plan**

This is a 12 month snapshot of Council activity and aligns closely with the LTP in place. It is an important policy document.

## Policies

The more notable Policies of Council include:

- Significance and Engagement Policy
- Decision-Making Policy
- Policy on Equity and Access for People with Disabilities (including Older Persons)
- Enforcement Policy
- Protocol for Acceptance of Special Assets
- Code of Conduct for Elected Members
- Staff Development and Education Policy
- Financial Policies (Funding, Investment, Borrowing)
- Rating and associated Policies
- Availability, Sale and Supply of Psychoactive Substances Policy
- Class 4 Gaming Venues Policy
- Dog Control Policy
- Dangerous, Affected and Insanitary Buildings Policy
- Refuse and Recycling Kerbside Collection Policy
- Rental Housing Policy
- TAB Board Venue Policy
- Smoke Free Public Places Policy
- West Coast Regional Waste Minimisation and Management Plan
- Outdoor Dining Policy

## Access to Official Information

Under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA) any person may request official information from Council. Any information request is deemed to have been made in terms of LGOIMA.

Council is committed to openness and transparency and respects the right of its residents to access official information as part of being informed and being involved. Council therefore fully supports the principles of the legislation as quoted and will provide such access as far as is practicable. Such access will, at all times, be considered against the need to maintain confidentiality but only in cases where it is fully warranted and meet the exclusion provisions in the Act. The Act provides that information can be withheld if release of the information would:

- endanger the safety of any person
- prejudice the maintenance of the law
- compromise the privacy of any person
- reveal confidential or commercially sensitive information
- cause offence to tikanga Māori or would disclose the location of wahi tapu
- prejudice public health or safety
- compromise legal professional privilege
- disadvantage Council while carrying out negotiations or commercial activities
- Allow information to be used for improper gain or advantage

Council generally provides information free of charge but may charge where costs associated with finding, reproducing and providing information is more than minor or where requests are repetitive.