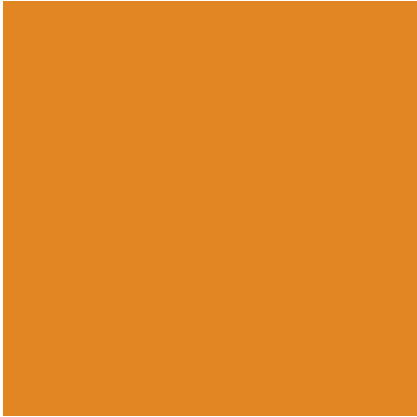


Public perception of local government options on the West Coast

Local Government Commission

Quantitative report

October 2017



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Summary

The Local Government Commission (the Commission) employed UMR Research to conduct this telephone survey on the West Coast to gauge public opinion on some of the proposed changes to the local government.

There were three main objectives of the survey:

- > Measure the level of support or opposition to five different options being considered.
- > Measure the level of public engagement in the proposed changes to local government arrangements on the West Coast
- > Measure how the process has been perceived.

The report focuses on the opinions of Buller, Grey and Westland respondents.

1.1 Attitudes towards change

A quarter of respondents said the current local government arrangements were effective and 28% said they were ineffective. Almost half (47%) gave a neutral response or were unsure.

Half (51%) of respondents said there needs to be a change in the way the local government on the West Coast is organised, 10% were unsure and 40% said there does not need to be change.

Grey District respondents were more likely (58%) to indicate the need for change, while Buller respondents were less likely (43%).

51% said there needs to be a change in the way the local government is organised

Option A: All four councils are combined into one unitary authority.

Just over a quarter (27%) supported combining all four councils, while 59% opposed the idea. This option had the highest support amongst the three options for change. Grey District respondents were more likely to support this option (39%) while Buller respondents were less likely (14%). Greater efficiency, too small population for separate councils and greater unity were the three main reasons given for preferring a unitary authority.

Option B: Buller, Grey and Westland District Councils are combined into one district council, and the West Coast Regional Council remains a separate council

Combining the three district councils had the lowest level of support (22%) of the five options and the highest level of opposition (62%). Grey District respondents (29%) were more likely to give support and Buller respondents were less likely (13%). Greater efficiency was the most frequently cited reason for preferring this option.

Option C: Grey and Westland District Councils are combined into one district council, and the Buller District Council and the West Coast Regional Council remain separate councils.

Around a quarter (26%) said they support (55% oppose) combining Grey and Westland District Councils, the second lowest level of support. Buller respondents were more likely to support this proposition (38%) while Grey and Westland were less likely (20-21%). The main reason people gave for preferring this option was that Grey and Westland are closer together than Buller.

Option D: The four existing councils remain in place but with the responsibility for delivering some services transferred between councils.

Transferring responsibility for some services between councils had the lowest opposition (35%) and one of the highest levels of support (37%). This option was more likely to be supported in the Buller District (45%) and had less support in Grey (29%). The three main reasons for preferring this option were that: the area is too large to have a combined council, it would lead to better collaboration and the districts have different specific needs that require separate councils.

Option E: The four existing councils remain unchanged

The status-quo option had the same level of support (37%) as transferring some services, but somewhat higher opposition (45%). This option was more likely to be supported in the Buller District (49%) and had less support in Grey (27%). The districts having different needs, the West Coast being too large, the current arrangements working fine and concern over lack of fair representation if the councils were combined were the main reasons people gave for preferring the status-quo.

1.2 Engagement

There was a consistent trend throughout the engagement questions that younger respondents were less engaged in the process and local government generally, than their older counterparts.

Three fifths (60%) of respondents said they were aware of the current local government reorganisation process under way on the West Coast.

60% said they were aware of the current local government reorganisation process

Around three fifths (59%) declared they know 'a lot' or 'a fair amount' about local government on the West Coast.

Three quarters of respondents said they would like to get information on any potential changes to local government arrangements through pamphlets (77%) and newspapers (75%). Just over half of respondents said information booths, social media, email and public meetings (52-58%) were ways they would like to get information.

1.3 Performance

About a quarter (23%) of respondents were satisfied with the process the Commission has undertaken, 50% were neutral or unsure and 28% said they were dissatisfied.

Satisfaction was higher in Grey (29%) and lower in Buller (14%).

23% were satisfied with the Commission's process and 28% were dissatisfied

The main reasons given for dissatisfaction were, a feeling that there was a lack of information available (32%) and a lack of knowledge about the process (29%). A quarter (24%) said they felt like the public has not been listened to.

The process:

*36% agreed they trust those organising it
(26% disagreed)*

*34% agreed it has been fair
(24% disagreed)*

*25% agreed the Commission understands
West Coast issues (41% disagreed)*

*24% said they have been closely following it
(51% disagreed)*

Grey District respondents were generally more positive towards the process while Buller respondents were less so.

Over a third of all respondents agreed they trust those organising the process (36%) and that the process has been carried out as fairly as possible (34%).

A quarter said they thought the Commission understands West Coast issues and circumstances and two fifths (41%) said they did not think this was the case.

Around a quarter (24%) said they had been closely following the process and about a half (51%) said they were not.

Background and methodology

2.1 Background

The Local Government Commission is an independent body established by legislation. Its main role is to make decisions on the structure of local authorities and their electoral representation. Before the Commission makes any recommendation for change, it must be satisfied that a new structure would promote **good local government**.

Good local government is defined in law and includes:

- Democratic local decision-making by and on behalf of communities.
- Meeting current and future needs for good-quality local infrastructure, public services and regulatory functions.
- Producing efficiencies and cost savings. It must contribute to productivity improvements for local authorities, households and businesses. It must lead to simplified planning processes.

The West Coast councils cover a vast region from Karamea to Haast (the same distance as from Wellington to Auckland) and currently is administered by four councils (Buller, Grey and Westland district councils and West Coast Regional Council), with over 30 councillors, three mayors and a chair.

In August 2015, the Local Government Commission received a reorganisation application from two West Coast residents proposing a unitary authority for all the West Coast. A unitary authority for the West Coast would mean one council for all the West Coast undertaking both regional and district council functions. This application was supported by a petition signed by 367 people.

During 2016, the Local Government Commission embarked on extensive community engagement exploring local residents' views on the current way their councils are set up and the way services are delivered. The main objective was to get an understanding of the support for change.

The Local Government Commission are wanting to measure the level of support for the possible reorganisation options on the West Coast including both the proposal for a unitary authority and retention of status quo arrangements. The level of support for the possible options will contribute to the Commission's decision-making process.

Research objectives

To measure and explore the level of community support for various options or aspects of local government reorganisation on the West Coast.

Key audiences

The Local Government Commission has indicated that the audience for this research are residents living in each of the three districts on the West Coast districts. These include:

- Buller (10,473)
- Grey (13,371)
- Westland (8,304).

2.2 UMR

UMR was founded in 1987 and is a full-service market research and evaluation company. UMR has ISO20252 accreditation, the international industry standard for organisations and professionals conducting market, opinion, and social research. UMR has their own call centre which is based in Auckland and ensures they can maintain control and quality over all their research.

UMR has extensive experience in quantitative and qualitative research, and has provided high quality research for a diverse range of public and private clients.

All research and data collection activities carried out by UMR is done so to the high standard required by the ISO standard. The ISO process requires that quality systems are in place for the collection of data and information and that UMR is audited regularly.

2.3 Methodology

Fieldwork was conducted from the 12th to the 22nd of October 2017.

The sample of landline phone numbers was randomly generated.

The total sample size was 602 people 18 years and over. The margin of error for a 50% figure at the 95% confidence level for a sample size of 602 is $\pm 4\%$.

Oversampling was done in Westland to increase accuracy in this smaller area.

Quotas for age and gender were set in each district based off subnational population estimates from Statistics NZ. Final weighting was performed so the overall results were representative by population across the four districts.

Population vs. sample

Population is of people over 18 years old from subnational population estimates from Statistics NZ

	Population	Population as percentage	Sample	Margin of error at 50% figure with 95% confidence
Buller district	8450	32.9%	201	$\pm 6.9\%$
Grey district	10460	40.7%	201	$\pm 6.9\%$
Westland district	6800	26.4%	200	$\pm 6.8\%$
Total	25710	100%	602	$\pm 4\%$

Note on rounding:

All numbers are shown rounded to zero decimal places.

This means that the specified totals are not always exactly equal to the sum of the specified sub-totals. The differences are seldom more than 1%.

For example: $2.6 + 2.8 = 5.4$, if rounded to zero decimal places would appear: $3 + 3 = 5$

Attitude towards change

3.1 Current local government arrangement

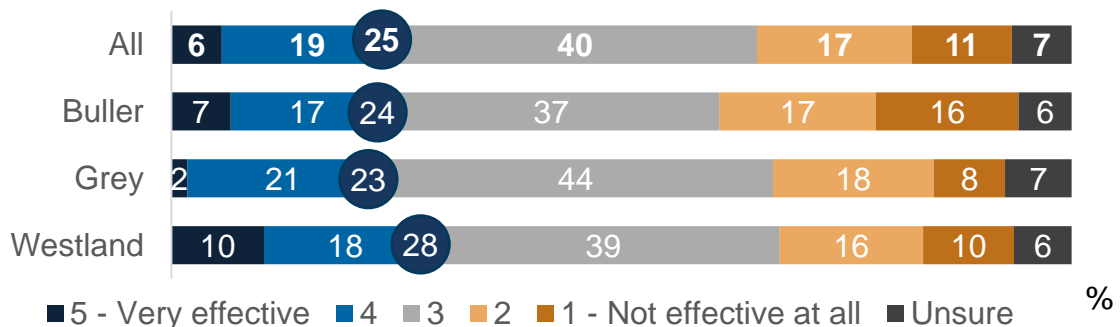
A quarter (25%) of respondents said the current local government arrangements were effective (4+5, on a 1-5 scale) and 28% said they were ineffective (1+2). Almost half (47%) gave neutral (3) response or were unsure.

There were no significant differences between the three districts.

- > Respondents with high declared knowledge ('A lot' or 'a fair amount') were more likely to say the current arrangement is effective (32%) than those who declared less knowledge (14%).
- > Those who wanted change and those who were dissatisfied with the Commission's process were less likely to think the current arrangement is effective (19% and 25% respectively).

Effectiveness of current local government arrangements

On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means not effective at all and 5 means very effective, how effective do you think the current West Coast local government arrangements are?



Base: All respondents (n=602)

3.2 Change in general

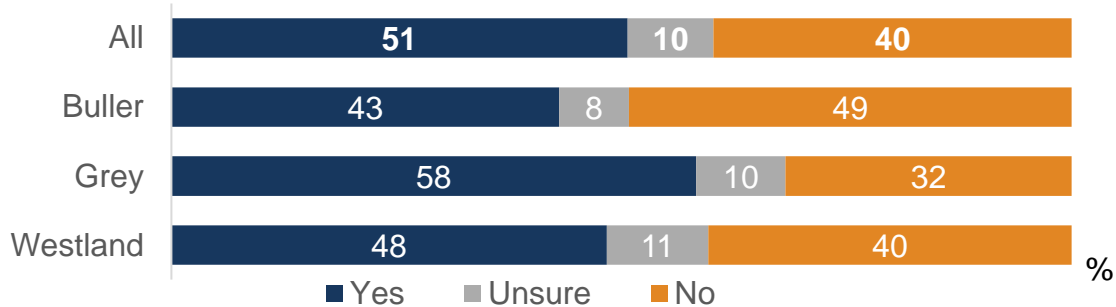
Half (51%) of respondents said they think their needs to be change in the way local government is organised on the West Coast. Grey District residents were more likely to support change (58%) while Buller District residents were less likely (43%).

- > Respondents under the age of 40 were less likely to support change (35%), than their older counterparts (57%).
- > Respondents with high declared knowledge ('a lot' or 'a fair amount') were more likely to say there is a need for change (58%) than those who declared less knowledge (40%).

Change the way local government is organised

As you may be aware Local Government arrangements currently include four councils on the West Coast. They are Buller, Grey and Westland District Councils and the West Coast Regional Council.

Do you think there needs to be a change in the way local government is organised on the West Coast?



Base: All respondents (n=602)

3.3 Support and opposition for amalgamation options

The majority of respondents opposed the three options of combining the different sets of councils, while the two status-quo options had generally higher support. Grey District respondents were generally more likely to support combining different sets of councils while Buller District respondents were less likely.

Option A: All four councils are combined into one unitary authority.

Just over a quarter (27%) supported (4+5, on a 1-5 scale) combining all four councils, while 59% opposed (1+2) the idea.

This option was more likely to be supported in Grey District (39%) and less likely to be supported in Buller (14%), while Westland respondents were in between (24%).

Option B: Buller, Grey and Westland District Councils are combined into one district council, and the West Coast Regional Council remains a separate council

Combining the three district councils had the lowest level of support (22%) of the five options and the highest level of opposition (62%).

Similar to combining all four councils, this option was more likely to be supported in Grey District (29%) and less likely to be supported in Buller (13%) while Westland respondents were in between (22%).

Option C: Grey and Westland District Councils are combined into one district council, and the Buller District Council and the West Coast Regional Council remain separate councils.

Around a quarter (26%) said they support combining Grey and Westland District Councils, while 55% opposed the option.

Buller respondents were more likely to support this proposition (38%) while Grey and Westland were less likely (20% and 21% respectively).

Option D: The four existing councils remain in place but with the responsibility for delivering some services transferred between councils.

Transferring responsibility for some services between councils had the lowest opposition (36%) and one of the highest levels of support (37%).

This option was more likely to be supported in Buller District (45%) and less likely to be supported in Grey (29%), while Westland respondents were in between (40%).

Option E: The four existing councils remain unchanged

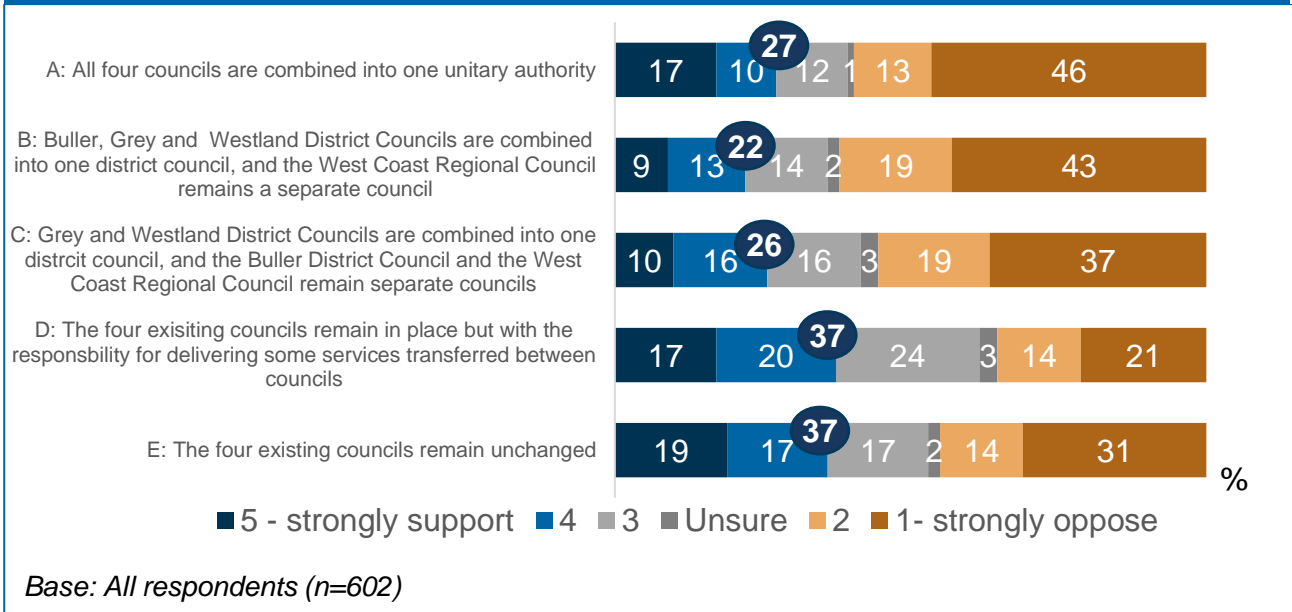
The status-quo had the same level of support (37%) as transferring some of the services, but somewhat higher opposition (45%).

This option was more likely to be supported in Buller District (49%) and less likely to be supported in Grey (27%) while Westland respondents were in between (37%).

Support and opposition for amalgamation options

The Local Government Commission has received an application to combine the four West Coast councils. The commission has identified a number of possible options involving combinations of the current councils. If any of the councils were combined, community or local boards would likely also be created to represent and carry out some functions for local communities within the new district.

Using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means strongly oppose and 5 means strongly support can you tell me how strongly you support or oppose the following options:



Support for options by districts

Using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means strongly oppose and 5 means strongly support can you tell me how strongly you support or oppose the following options: (SUPPORT 4+5)

	All %	Buller %	Grey %	Westland %
Base: n=	602	201	201	200
A: All four councils are combined into one unitary authority.	27	14	39	24
B: Buller, Grey and Westland District Councils are combined into one district council, and the West Coast Regional Council remains a separate council	22	13	29	22
C: Grey and Westland District Councils are combined into one district council, and the Buller District Council and the West Coast Regional Council remain separate councils.	26	38	20	21
D: The four existing councils remain in place but with the responsibility for delivering some services transferred between councils.	37	45	29	40
E: The four existing councils remain unchanged	37	49	27	37

Base: All Respondents

3.4 Preferred option

After having heard all five options respondents were asked to give a single preference. Keeping the councils unchanged had the highest rating with 29% selecting it as their preference, followed by combining all four councils (21%) and transferring service responsibility (19%). Combining two or three councils had the lowest levels at 13% and 9% respectively.

Buller respondents were more likely to say they prefer keeping everything the same (36%) and more likely (19%) to prefer combining Grey and Westland District Councils than Grey and Westland respondents were (10-11%).

Grey District respondents were most likely to prefer the four councils being combined (32%), followed by keeping the councils the same (23%).

Over half of Westland respondents gave their preference to keeping the councils the same (28%) or keeping them the same but transferring some responsibilities for different services (27%).

Preference				
<i>Having heard all these options which would you prefer?</i>				
	All %	Buller %	Grey %	Westland %
<i>Base: n=</i>	602	<i>201</i>	<i>201</i>	<i>200</i>
A: All four councils are combined into one unitary authority.	21	11	32	17
B: Buller, Grey and Westland District Councils are combined into one district council, and the West Coast Regional Council remains a separate council	9	6	12	7
C: Grey and Westland District Councils are combined into one district council, and the Buller District Council and the West Coast Regional Council remain separate councils.	13	19	10	11
D: The four existing councils remain in place but with the responsibility for delivering some services transferred between councils.	19	21	12	27
E: The four existing councils remain unchanged	29	36	23	28
Unsure	9	6	11	10
Base: All Respondents				

3.5 Reasons for preferring option A

The top three reasons for preferring a unitary authority were, that it would be more efficient (40%), that the population is not large enough for four councils (21%) and that it would create greater unity in the region (14%).

Other reasons included better collaboration, lower rates, better communication, simpler and a need for change (5-9%).

Reasons for preferring option A – All four councils are combined into one unitary authority

What are your main reasons for preferring all four councils being combined into one unitary authority?

	All %	Buller %	Grey %	Westland %
<i>Base: n=</i>	127	26	63	38
More efficient	40	33	37	53
> <i>Less duplication</i>	25	25	24	28
> <i>Cost savings</i>	18	15	16	24
Population is too small for 4 councils	21	23	21	17
Greater unity/stronger voice	14	3	21	5
Collaboration	9	5	9	11
Lower rates	8	12	4	17
Better communication	6	9	7	2
Simpler	5	3	7	5
General positive	5	18	3	3
Need for change	5	-	6	5
Better quality services	1	3	1	-
Unsure	1	3	1	-

Base: Respondents who prefer for all councils to be combined as one unitary authority

Note: Multi-response question, the sum of percentages may add to more than 100%

Selection of quotes:

- > *“It is more economical. Everything is duplicated. If we get one bunch to get things done it should be fine. We don’t have the population to do so much and waste so much money.”* (Buller)
- > *“I just think that the West Coast would be better to work as one than not wasting resources.”* (Grey)
- > *“I think they could combine their resources better and allow for the economic development on the West Coast more cohesively.”* (Westland)
- > *“The place is not big enough to carry all the different councils. The idea of having one overall council makes more sense.”* (Buller)
- > *“It is a waste of time having four separate councils for such a small population.”* (Grey)
- > *“We are too small population wise and financial wise”* (Westland)

3.6 Reasons for preferring option B

The most frequently cited reason given for preferring the three district councils being combined was that it would be a more efficient council (52%). This was followed by the mentions of the Regional Council having responsibility for different things so it wouldn't be suitable to combine (20%) and that the total population is too small for four separate councils (13%).

Other reasons included: Greater unity, lower rates and greater collaboration (6-7%)

Reasons for preferring option B – Buller, Grey and Westland District Councils are combined into one district council, and the West Coast Regional Council remains separate

<i>What are main your reasons for preferring to combine three District Councils?</i>				
	All %	Buller %	Grey %	Westland %
<i>Base: n=</i>	49	13	23	13
More efficient	52	61	43	64
> <i>Less duplication</i>	48	56	39	64
> <i>Cost savings</i>	6	5	7	5
Regional Council does different things	20	25	19	17
Population is too small for 4 councils	13	-	22	6
Greater unity/stronger voice	7	14	7	-
Lower rates	6	-	10	-
General positive	6	-	10	-
Collaboration	6	10	4	6
Simpler	1	-	-	5
Unsure	9	5	7	20

Base: Respondents who prefer Buller, Grey and Westland District Councils combined into one district council, and the West Coast Regional Council remains separate

Note: Multi-response question, the sum of percentages may add to more than 100%

Selection of quotes:

- > *“They need to work together to work better. They need to support each other.”* (Buller)
- > *“I think it would be better overall. Too much wasting money at the moment.”* (Grey)
- > *“Just the cost of duplication of services on a low populated area.”* (Westland)
- > *“The Regional Council is a bit different to other councils.”* (Buller)
- > *“The Regional Council is more for the whole area and the others are for the local community.”* (Grey)
- > *“The Regional Council does different things compared to the three district councils.”* (Westland)

3.7 Reasons for preferring option C

The most frequently cited reason for having a preference of combining only Grey and Westland district councils was that they are closer together than Buller is (49%).

Other frequently cited reasons were that Buller is too different (14%), this option is more efficient (13%) and the area is too large for one council (10%).

Reasons for preferring option C – Grey and Westland District Councils are combined into one district council and the Buller District Council and the West Coast Regional Council remain separate councils

What are main your reasons for preferring to combine Grey and Westland District Councils?

	All %	Buller %	Grey %	Westland %
<i>Base: n=</i>	76	34	22	20
Grey and Westland are closer/similar	49	51	46	47
Buller is too different	14	20	12	4
More efficient	13	-	20	29
> <i>Less duplication</i>	10	-	20	18
> <i>Cost savings</i>	4	-	4	10
Too big an area for one	10	15	8	3
General positive	9	16	-	9
Buller is too big	4	4	-	9
Population is too small for 4 councils	3	-	9	3
Collaboration	3	7	-	-
Better communication	3	-	4	9
Greater unity/Stronger voice	3	-	9	-
Lower rates	2	-	-	11
Unsure	2	2	4	-

Base: Respondents who prefer Grey and Westland District Councils combined into one district council and the Buller District Council and the West Coast Regional Council remain separate councils

Note: Multi-response question, the sum of percentages may add to more than 100%

Selection of quotes:

- > *"I just think we have a geographical distance and the functions of the economic activity between Greymouth and Westland combined are different to that of Buller."* (Buller)
- > *"Proximity of the community and similar interests."* (Grey)
- > *"Grey and Westland are closer together and it would be better if they were combined."* (Westland)
- > *"Geography of the area. I don't think Buller should be lumped in with Westland".* (Buller)
- > *"I would like to remain separate from Buller."* (Grey)

3.8 Reasons for preferring option D

The three main reasons for respondents preferring the council to stay the same but transfer some services were, the area is too large to combine the councils (33%), transferring service would lead to better collaboration (24%) and the areas have specific needs that require their own councils (19%).

Other reasons included: a concern that if they were combined there would not be fair representation (9%), a belief that things are working fine currently (6%) and concern over a loss of identity if they were combined (4%).

Reasons for preferring option D – The four existing councils remain in place but with the responsibility for delivering some services transferred between councils

What are main your reasons for preferring the four councils remain in place with responsibility for some services transferred between councils?

	All %	Buller %	Grey %	Westland %
<i>Base: n=</i>	124	41	25	58
Area is too large	33	38	18	38
Better collaboration/Sharing	24	14	42	21
Areas have different specific need	19	13	25	20
Won't be fair representation	9	13	-	11
Working fine currently	6	5	7	4
Loss of identity	4	4	-	6
Cost savings	3	-	4	7
Councils could not work together	3	6	-	1
Cost of merging	1	1	-	2
Didn't work for other councils	1	3	-	-
Would reduce jobs	1	1	-	-
Unsure	5	4	7	3

Base: Respondents who prefers the four existing councils to remain in place but with the responsibility for delivering some services transferred between councils

Note: Multi-response question, the sum of percentages may add to more than 100%

Selection of quotes:

- > *"We are quite far from Greymouth and the road is not reliable. We need to keep our own council."* (Buller)
- > *"I think we are spread out. It is a huge area. It is geographically too big to combine all into one. It is better they are separate but work together."* (Grey)
- > *"We need to have separate councils because it is a long, stretched out mass of land but with modern technology it is possible to share services."* (Westland)
- > *"Resources are not being used. Some resources need to be combined."* (Buller)
- > *"Better communication is a big thing. Working together is better."* (Grey)
- > *"Well sharing things between the councils from my view is the best option we have so far."* (Westland)

3.9 Reasons for preferring option E

The top four reasons respondents gave for preferring to keep the councils the same were, the districts are too different (26%), the whole area is too large (21%), things are working fine currently (17%) and concern there would not be fair representation if the councils were combined (14%).

Other reasons included: noting that combining councils has not worked elsewhere (Auckland in particular was mentioned), concern over a loss of identity, a belief that the councils would be unable to work together and the upfront cost of merging (4-6%).

Reasons for preferring option E – The four existing councils remain unchanged

<i>What are main your reasons for preferring to keep the councils same?</i>				
	All %	Buller %	Grey %	Westland %
<i>Base: n=</i>	169	74	46	49
Areas have different specific needs	26	24	40	12
Area is too large	21	20	16	28
Working fine currently	17	9	24	22
Won't be fair representation	14	16	9	17
Didn't work for other councils	6	7	6	3
Loss of identity	5	3	4	11
Councils could not work together	5	5	7	2
Cost of merging	4	2	6	5
Smaller councils are better	3	6	2	1
Would reduce jobs	1	2	-	2
Higher rates if combined	1	2	-	1
Combining would not be any more efficient	1	2	-	1
Unsure	1	1	2	-

Base: Respondents who prefers the four existing councils remain unchanged

Note: Multi-response question, the sum of percentages may add to more than 100%

Selection of quotes

- > *“The three districts have different needs. Very hard for other people to be aware for the needs of the other people if they are not part of that area.”* (Buller)
- > *“Different areas in the West Coast need different councils.”* (Grey)
- > *“There is a loss of district identity is a problem with combining them.”* (Westland)
- > *“The West Coast is a large region. Trying to combine the councils is not practical.”* (Buller)
- > *“I think it is a big area between Buller and Westland with Grey in the middle of it. I think it is just too big for one council to handle it.”* (Grey)
- > *“It is no good putting the whole West Coast all in one because it is too big for one council to do. The Regional Council should stay by itself.”* (Westland)

Engagement

4.1 Awareness

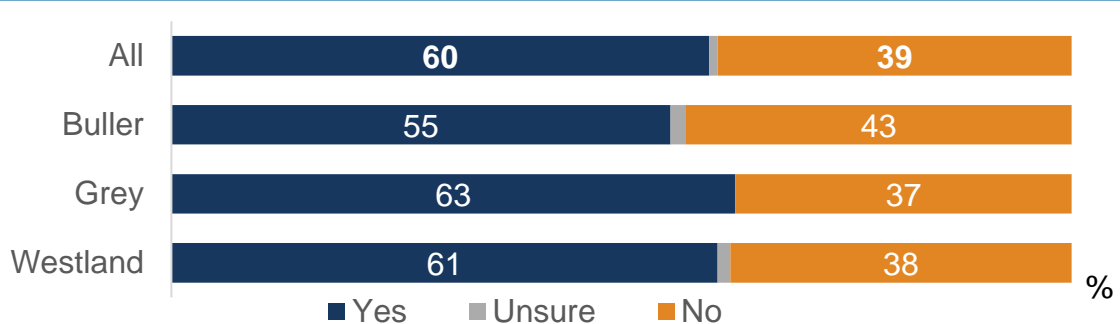
Three fifths (60%) of respondents said they were aware of the current local government reorganisation process under way on the West Coast.

There were no significant differences between the three districts.

- > Younger respondents were less likely to declare awareness: 40% of under 40s, 60% of those aged 40-59 and 76% of those aged 60 or over.
- > Those who voted in the local body elections last year (65%) and those with high knowledge of local government (78%) were more likely to claim awareness.
- > Respondents who thought there needs to be a change in the way local government is organised were more likely to declare awareness (69%) compared to those who do not want change (52%).

Awareness of process

Are you aware there is a local government reorganisation process currently underway on the West Coast



Base: All respondents (n=602)

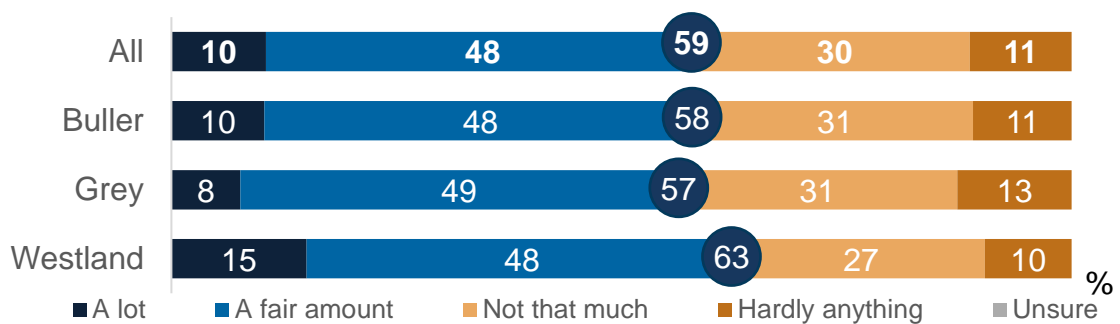
4.2 Knowledge

A majority (59%) said they know 'a lot' or 'a fair amount' amount about local government on the West Coast.

- > Younger respondents were less likely to declare knowledge: 41% of under 40s, 63% of those aged 40-59 and 69% of those aged 60 or over.
- > Respondents who think there needs to be a change were more likely to declare knowledge (67%) compared to those who said they do not want change (52%).
- > Those aware of the reorganisation process were more also more likely to declare knowledge (77%) compared to those not aware of the process (31%).

Declared knowledge of local government

How much do you know about the local government on the West Coast?



Base: All respondents (n=602)

4.3 Channel preference

Three quarters of respondents said they would like to get information on any potential changes to local government arrangements through pamphlets (77%) and newspapers (75%).

Information booths, social media, email and public meetings were cited by the over half (52-58%) of respondents.

Local Government posters (45%) and website (38%) were less likely to be a preferred source.

- > Respondents aged under 40 were more likely to prefer social media (80%) as a source of information, compared to people aged 40-59 (57%) and those aged 60 and over (38%).
- > Pamphlets were rated lower by people aged less than 40 (66%) than their older counterparts (81%).

Preferred Information channel

Now, which of the following ways would you like to get the information on any potential changes to local government arrangements on the West Coast?

	All %	Buller %	Grey %	Westland %
<i>Base: n=</i>	602	201	201	200
A pamphlet delivered to your mailbox	77	78	77	75
A newspaper	75	73	79	72
Information booths in the local community	58	64	57	53
Social media	57	63	56	51
Email	56	52	57	60
A public meeting	52	57	48	54
Local Government Commission posters	45	41	49	45
The Local Government Commission website	38	42	39	33

Base: All Respondents

Note: Multi-response question, the sum of percentages may add to more than 100%

Performance

5.1 Local Government Commission process

Around a quarter (23%) said they were satisfied (4+5 on a 1-5 scale) with the process the Local Government Commission has undertaken and 28% were dissatisfied (1+2). Half of respondents gave a neutral or unsure response.

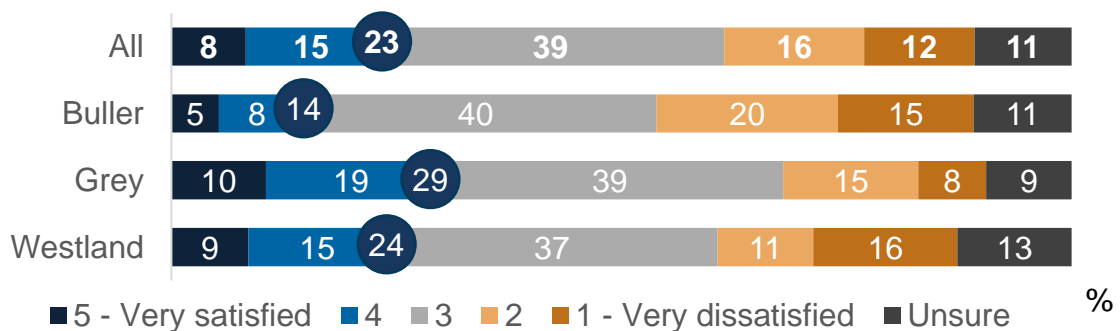
Buller respondents tended to give lower ratings for the process (14% satisfied; 35% dissatisfied) and Grey respondents gave higher ratings (29% satisfied; 23% dissatisfied).

- Respondents who declared high knowledge of the West Coast local government were more likely to be satisfied (27%) than people who said have low knowledge (17%).

Local Government Process

Since receiving the original reorganisation application, the Local Government Commission has worked with the West Coast councils and also sought feedback from the public to help it identify possible options.

On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means very dissatisfied and 5 means very satisfied, how satisfied are you with the process the Local Government Commission has undertaken?



Base: All respondents (n=602)

5.2 Reason for dissatisfaction

The three most frequently cited reasons given for dissatisfaction of the process were there being a lack of information available (32%), lack of knowledge about the process (29%) and a feeling that the public has not been listened to (24%). This was followed by 14% who indicated they were against any change.

Other reasons included thinking the process is a waste of money, disliking outside involvement and the length of time it has taken (3-5%).

Reasons for dissatisfaction

<i>What are your main reasons for being dissatisfied with the process?</i>				
	All %	Buller %	Grey %	Westland %
<i>Base: n=</i>	175	73	48	54
Lack of information available	32	38	30	23
Haven't heard/seen anything about it/don't know anything	29	30	34	23
Public not listened to	24	20	32	19
Disagree with amalgamation/don't want change	14	17	8	18
Waste of money	5	5	4	8
Outside involvement	5	2	6	8
Taken too long	3	3	-	6
Council not doing a good job	1	2	-	-
Unsure	4	4	2	5

Base: 28% of respondents who were dissatisfied with process

Note: Multi-response question, the sum of percentages may add to more than 100%

5.3 Statement testing

Over a third (36%) of all respondents agreed (4+5, on a 1-5 scale) they trust those organising the process and 26% disagreed.

- > Buller respondents were less likely to agree (27%).

Around a third agreed (34%) the process has been carried out as fairly as possible (24% disagreed).

- > Grey District respondents were more likely to agree with this (42%), as were those aware of the process (39%).

A quarter said they thought the Commission understands West Coast issues and circumstances and two fifths (41%) said they did not think this was the case.

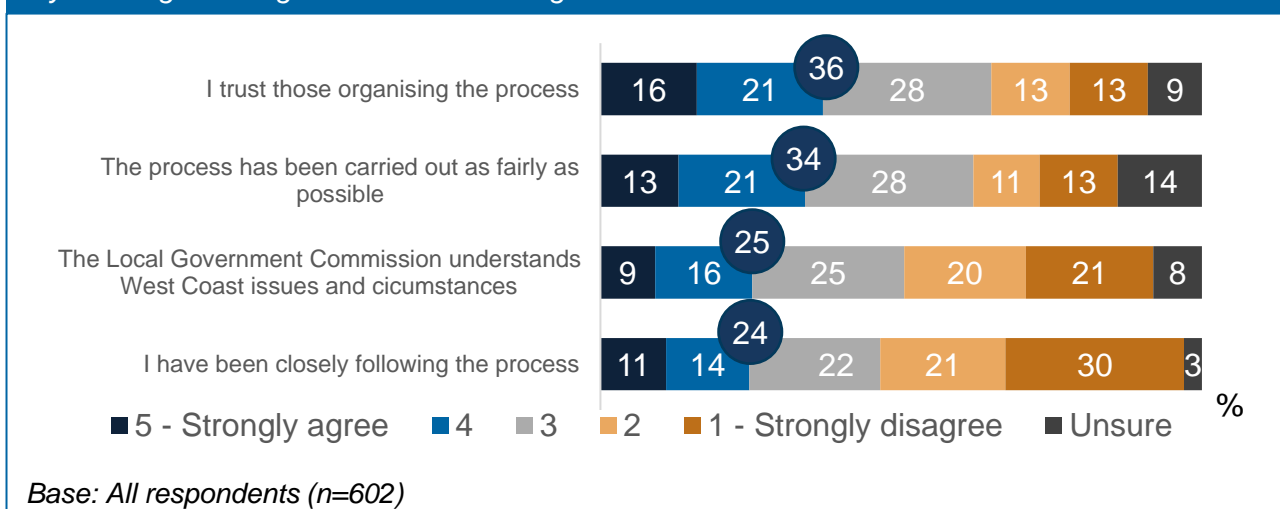
- > Grey District respondents were more likely to agree (31%) than Westland (24%) and Buller respondents (18%).

Around a quarter (24%) said they had been closely following the process and about a half (51%) said they were not.

- > Respondents aged 60 years or older were more likely to have been closely following the process (33%) compared to their younger counterparts (20%).
- > Respondents with knowledge of the local government were also more likely to have been closely following the process (35%) compared to those with lower declared knowledge (9%).

Statement testing

Now on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means strongly disagree and 5 means strongly agree how much do you disagree or agree with the following statements:



Statement testing by district

Now on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means strongly disagree and 5 means strongly agree how much do you disagree or agree with the following statements: **(AGREE 4+5)**

	All %	Buller %	Grey %	Westland %
<i>Base: n=</i>	602	201	201	200
The process has been carried out as fairly as possible	34	29	42	28
I trust those organising the process	36	27	43	37
The Local Government Commission understands West Coast issues and circumstances	25	18	31	24
I have been closely following the process	24	23	24	27
Base: All Respondents				

Demographics

Sample make-up

	Total	Buller	Grey	Westland
<i>Base: n=</i>	602	201	201	200
Gender	%	%	%	%
Female	51	52	51	51
Male	49	48	49	49
Age	%	%	%	%
Under 40	29	28	29	30
40-59	38	38	37	37
60 Plus	34	34	34	33
Occupation	%	%	%	%
Full time work	49	48	47	53
Part-time work	20	17	21	21
Not working	32	36	32	26
Household income	%	%	%	%
Less than \$40K	32	39	32	25
\$40-70K	29	29	31	29
More than \$70K	38	33	37	47
Housing	%	%	%	%
Renting	19	19	21	15
I own my home freehold	45	44	44	47
I own my home with a mortgage	36	36	35	38
Dependent children	%	%	%	%
Yes	32	33	28	36
No/Unsure	68	67	72	64
Voted in last local body elections	%	%	%	%
Yes	82	82	82	83
No/Unsure	18	18	18	17

Area Breakdown

Buller (n=201)	n=
Westport	136
Reefton	28
Karamea	12
Waimangaroa	5
Inangahua Junction	4
Charlseton	4
Other	12
Grey (n=201)	n=
Greymouth	107
Cobden	19
Runanga	18
Blackball	17
Paroa	7
Dobson	6
Other	27
Westland (n=200)	n=
Hokitika	170
Ross	6
Haast	5
Kumara	4
Other	15
