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Submission re West Coast local government arrangements.

- i. It is objectively absurd that there are 4 local government organisations for 30,000 people.
- ii. It is kept in place by geographic distance, parochialism and valid fears that a unitary arrangement would involve centralization, probably in Greymouth, as the geographically central point and largest service centre.
- iii. The question then becomes whether there is a solution to this absurdity, an absurdity which involves fragmentation of payroll, supply, procurement, service, quadrupling of staff at senior management level and so on?
- iv. I believe there is a solution if one turns to a federalist model.
- v. Under this model, there is a CEO, an elected Mayor and a Deputy Mayor and elected community boards with chairs.
- vi. There is a policy unit which sets policy on environment, water, roading, planning, procurement and cultural services, and which interprets national prescriptions for policy; but is open to community board input.
- vii. A rating unit can set rates on a variety of scales according to equity, service provision and so on.
- viii. A building and resource consent unit processes permits and consents with outreach officers.
- ix. An assets and engineering unit looks after and develops assets, once again with outreach officers.
- x. A procurement unit looks after procurement.
- xi. A service unit negotiates with community boards regarding annual plans for spend in each community, this including cultural services.
- xii. The defining of these communities could be an issue, but at the obvious level there is Greymouth, Hokitika and Westport; then the villages (Blackball, Runanga, Ikamatua, Ross, Reefton, Haast etc). The smaller communities may wish to organically enlarge themselves (Grey Valley, Coast Road, South Westland). The runanga could well wish to define themselves as communities. This defining of community board areas would be an essential part of the developing of this plan.

- xiii. The election of community boards and their chairs and their meeting processes become very important, for they determine these annual plans and oversee their implementation. Administrative budget for these boards would be proportional to rate take.
- xiv. In this model, democratic processes are locally based; administration is centralised and rationalized.
- xv. At quarterly intervals there would be assemblies of community boards, Mayor, Deputy Mayor, CEO and heads of units, to discuss policy, issues, problems, successes etc. These would be open to submissions from the public.
- xvi. Elections would take place for Mayor, Deputy Mayor and community boards. Whether the chair of community boards should be elected or be the highest polling candidate or appointed by board members is a moot point.
- xvii. I believe the above model, while radical, would go a long way to solving the local government issues on the Coast.

Dr Paul Maunder