

Wairarapa Chamber of Commerce as a major contributor to economic growth in Wairarapa.

Wairarapa Chamber of Commerce has been the independent voice of business in the region since 2005.

Its focus is on being a major contributor to economic growth in Wairarapa by encouraging and supporting business growth through collaboration, connection and advocacy.

The membership is currently centred around 210 businesses and includes a Business Leaders Network (BLN) of seven core businesses with an interest in ensuring that the region is governed by robust and sound policies that contribute to further economic development.

It represents its members at a regional level on important stakeholder groups, including the Wairarapa Water Stakeholder Advisory Group, Accelerate Wairarapa and Youth in Education, Training and Employment (YETE).

This submission is being made on behalf of both the Chamber members and the BLN.

Submission to the Local Government Commission (LGC) regarding the draft proposal for a Wairarapa District Council.

1. Wairarapa Chamber of Commerce supports the draft proposal

The Wairarapa Chamber of Commerce supports the draft proposal as it offers the best opportunity:

- 1.1 for Wairarapa to have one strong, representative voice
- 1.2 to align rules, systems, procedures and processes across the region
- 1.3 for coherent forward planning and provision of services for Wairarapa
- 1.4 to improve operational economies of scale
- 1.5 to provide Wairarapa-wide strategies across key economic drivers
- 1.6 to improve the potential of leveraging off Greater Wellington Regional Council
- 1.7 to ensure a Wairarapa-wide approach instead of parochial-town approach

2. Wairarapa Chamber members believe there are a number of challenges for business with the draft proposal

The Wairarapa Chamber would like consideration of the following to mitigate the challenges:

- 2.1 the provision of sufficient resourcing to keep disruption to service delivery to a minimum for businesses e.g timely provision of resource consents, permits etc.
- 2.2 the avoidance of spiralling transition costs, particularly around implementation of information technology, so the overall impact on regional productivity is limited
- 2.3 business hubs should remain a focus with an emphasis on the reduction of any potential loss of individual town identity
- 2.4 an appropriate level of representation on rural wards given that rural businesses make a significant contribution to the local economy
- 2.5 an early proposal of the organisational structure and progress plans for the new council so the business community can understand how the combined council will affect the local economy
- 2.6 the decision to amalgamate is made quickly to reduce business and economic uncertainty

3. Wairarapa Chamber members would like to see the following changes made to the draft proposal

The Wairarapa Chamber would like consideration of the following changes:

- 3.1 the inclusion of a representative from the business community on the Transition Board
- 3.2 more power given to the proposed new Wairarapa Committee of the Greater Wellington Regional Council to ensure Wairarapa businesses have the ability to influence the decision-making that affects local economic policy