



BULLER
DISTRICT COUNCIL
Te Kaunihera O Kawatiri

Issue #1  August 2023

Frequently asked Questions

Proposed changes to household waste collection services in zone one.

FAQ

Get started to find out more about what is happening by reading our frequently asked questions (FAQ).

How to have my say?

Community feedback is open between Monday 7 August and 4.30pm on Monday 4 September 2023.

There are several ways you can find out more about the proposed changes to the household collection services for recycling and waste management zone one, including reading the content of these FAQs.

You can download the Statement of Proposal to read what is proposed in zone one and for the wider provision of waste management in Buller.

From the 7 August, the consultation documents and submission forms will be available to be read or collected from Council's offices and libraries in Westport and Reefton, i-Sites, and Resource Centres across the district.

You can make a submission online or download the submission form and drop it off at Council's offices in Westport and Reefton or send them to Buller District Council, PO Box 21, Westport 7866.

You can request copies or ask questions by sending an email to info@bdc.govt.nz with the subject waste management system 2025.

What does zone one cover?

- Zone one covers urban Westport and Reefton, the areas from Westport to the Mōkihinui Bridge, Westport to Punakaiki, Westport to Reefton including Blacks Point, and Reefton to Ikamatua.

Mandatory zone one kerbside collection services would only be for properties located on roads on the kerbside collection vehicle route:

- Westport, Carters Beach and Reefton urban areas.
- SH67 from Westport to Sedonville area.
- SH67A from Buller Bridge to Cape Foulwind.
- SH6 Buller Gorge Road and Coast Road.

- SH69 from Inangahua to Black Points.
- SH7 from Reefton to Ikamatua.

Properties located outside of the set collection routes can still choose to be included in the collection network. They will need to take their bins to the nearest main road where the collection service operates.

You can find out more about refuse and recycling zones on Council's website.

What are the cost implications for zone one households?

Zone one households that are currently receiving the fortnightly kerbside recycling collection service are charged via a targeted rate of \$178 annually.

Currently, rubbish bags, which can be purchased for \$9.10 each, are collected weekly. For a household that uses one bag per week, this adds up to \$473 per year. Once the recycling fee of \$178 is added in, this totals more than \$600 per year. For households that use one bag fortnightly (\$236) for example, once the existing recycling fee (\$178) is included, the cost is more than \$400 per annum.

Under the proposed changes, households serviced by the kerbside rubbish and recycling service would face an estimated combined total cost of between \$375 and \$450* per annum via rates.

**The final cost would be determined via the tender agreement to provide the service.*

What if my costs go up as a result of this change?

Like all council services there will be some people who use one service or facility more than another.

Rates money pays for new roads, stormwater systems, libraries, water pipes, parks and reserves and so on. Councils all over New Zealand charge rates to provide an overall service for the community. This invariably means in some cases one resident who never goes to the library for example will subsidise another in some way, and vice versa.

Frequently Asked Questions

This proposal is for the benefit of the wider community, and the environment.

A low user of rubbish bags in zone one may end up paying a bit more overall, and a high user may end up paying less. For many people the cost will remain about the same, but with the convenience of having a set sum charged via rates. Rather than having to buy bags throughout the year.

For example, a household that uses one bag per week, is paying up to \$473 per year for bags alone. Once the recycling fee of \$178 is added in, this totals more than \$600 per year.

For households that use one bag fortnightly (\$236) for example, once the existing recycling fee (\$178) is included, the cost is more than \$400 per annum.

Under the proposed changes, households serviced by the kerbside rubbish and recycling service would face an estimated combined total cost of between \$375 and \$450 per annum via rates (actual cost to be determined via the tender process).

Why are waste costs so high?

Costs for managing solid waste are likely to continue to rise whether this proposed change goes through or not.

This is due to a range of factors:

- Increase in central government's waste levy for landfills
- Rising costs under the Emissions Trading Scheme
- Higher freight and fuel costs.

More than half (53%) of the \$503 per tonne to drop off waste at the district's transfer stations goes towards covering the disposal fee at the York Valley landfill. This gate fee funds the operation of the landfill, pays for central government's waste levy and the Emissions Trading Scheme costs. In addition, 24% covers the costs to collect, store and handle the waste and the remaining 23% pays for freight costs to Nelson.

The high disposal cost of waste has attracted community backlash, and this proposal is a possible way for Council to minimise the impact of the continuing increase of waste management costs for residents.

By working collaboratively with our West Coast neighbours, we hope to pool resources, create economies of scale, increase efficiency and create more competition between service providers.

Why doesn't Buller have its own landfill?

The simple answer is, at this point in time a new landfill in Buller is not cost-effective.

In 2008/09, Council carried out a Feasibility Study to determine the viability of building and operate an in-District Landfill in Buller (Local landfill). The outcome was that 900 tonnes of waste per

month was required to reach break-down point (the quantity of waste needed to make the landfill operation viable). At that time, Buller produced 250 tonne per month (3,000T a year). Therefore, an in-district landfill was not considered viable.

As we continue to work closer together with Westland and Grey District, we expect that access to local landfills in the region will be one of the points that will be up for discussion.

Council will negotiate the best deal it can for the community but doesn't expect waste costs to lower no matter what system is in place.

How will this help reduce illegal dumping?

Illegal dumping is an issue for the Buller District as it is widespread and has a negative effect on both people and the environment. Illegal dumping also has a financial cost to the community – for removal and disposal of the waste by Council. Moving from a system where households need to pay directly for waste collection to a service that is provided to all households is anticipated to reduce illegal dumping by reducing financial barriers to accessing waste disposal.

A move from bags to wheelie bins also prevents animals getting into bags and spreading waste/ litter.

How can this improve recycling efforts and composting?

By providing a rubbish and recycling service to all residents Council is able to encourage households to recycle materials.

Providing 120 litre refuse wheelie bins to all households is anticipated to improve the capture of recyclable materials. Limiting the space in the bins to 120 litre provides an incentive for people to recycle more efficiently and compost food and garden waste. Providing even smaller bins (80L for example) would further encourage households to divert garden waste, either to composting at home or dropping off at Council transfer stations in Westport or Reefton. This is not currently being considered.

How can this support waste reduction and minimisation?

120l fortnightly – is in effect a cap – with bags residents can put out as many as they like.

Council continues strong kerbside recycling schemes in place to minimise disposal to landfill.

Government will bring in an organic collection at some point (likely by 2030), further driving waste reduction.

Waste minimization programmes continue to be a significant feature of our community engagement.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

To find out more visit Council's website www.bullerdc.govt.nz/have-your-say/new-waste-management-system-2025/. If you have further questions, please email info@bdc.govt.nz with the subject **Waste Management System 2025**.

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Frequently Asked Questions

What if I rent?

For tenants, this means that rubbish collection will be paid for through your landlord's rates bill. You will no longer need to buy rubbish bags or pay for a private wheelie bin collection.

What if I am a landlord?

For landlords, this means that you will start paying for rubbish collection services from your properties through your annual rates bill.

What if I am in zone one, but don't currently use the yellow bin recycling service?

The combined rubbish and recycling service would now be mandatory if you live on a collection route.

Mandatory zone one kerbside collection services would only be for properties located on roads on the kerbside collection vehicle route:

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- SH6 Buller Gorge Road and Coast Road.
- SH69 from Inangahua to Black Points.
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Properties located outside of the set collection routes can still choose to be included in the collection network. They will need to take their bins to the nearest main road where the collection service operates.

What if I want to stick to weekly rubbish collection?

You can express your views by making a written submission during the consultation.

The experts who advised us when putting together this proposal tell us that weekly bin collection would be a more expensive for end users. It would also reduce the environmental benefits of the changes by putting the trucks on the road more frequently.

Here is what was considered, but is not preferred:

Council to provide a weekly collection of rubbish in 80 litre wheelie bins:

- This would continue the weekly service, but with 80 litre wheelie bins (larger containers than the 60L bags currently sold for rubbish collection). This service is likely to be more costly than the current for households, reflecting the cost of the wheelie bins and the weekly collection.
- Provide larger containers for a weekly service is likely to increase the proportion of garden waste and recyclable materials in the rubbish container.

On balance, this option is considered more expensive for households and could result in more green waste and recyclables disposed of as rubbish.

What if I don't use many bags now?

Council notes the feedback we're receiving that some are producing less waste than others. One approach could be to go to 80L every fortnight, some other councils have chosen that as their bin size. RFID tags on bins also allow for data collection and the potential for rebate if less than a fortnightly collection is being used.

Providing more flexibility in terms of bin sizes is something council can and will consider, but it may come with further cost implications for users and potentially make the tendering process more complex.

What if a lot of people want different sized bins?

This can be considered by council following the close of submissions. As above, many different levels of service does add complexity (and hence costs) for a contractor to tender in pick up and handling.

Why can't council fund this out of existing rates?

Currently \$178 inc GST is paid annually for a recycling bin. Additional costs are already being paid by residents via solid refuse bags for refuse services.

General rates are set for service provision; to change the rate direction of this funding to refuse will mean a reduction in other services. Most Councils around NZ have targeted rates for Solid Waste Management activities.

Why not collect once a month?

Council is obligated by the Waste Management Act 2008 to provide regular collection services. Fortnightly is the most common frequency in the country.

Will there be a rebate for senior citizens?

Assistance towards rates for low-income earners has always been part of Council's processes and this will remain in place.

Are the prices of the bins included in the estimated costs?

Yes, the costs will be absorbed over the 10 years of the contract. As with most councils, if bins are lost there will be cost to the user of replacement.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Frequently Asked Questions

How does this affect households in Karamea and Maruia who aren't in zone one?

The operation of the Karamea and the Maruia Landfill recycling centres would be included in the new regional contract under the proposal, however, the level of services in both areas would remain as it is. It would be the day-to-day running of the landfill sites that changes to one common West Coast-wide contractor under the new system.

What are the environmental impacts of the proposed changes?

By switching from weekly kerbside rubbish collection to fortnightly we will be able to reduce the number of truck movements, thereby saving on emissions and fuel.

The Buller environment will benefit from a reduction in fly tipping. Some of this is attributed to people who can't currently afford rubbish bags or dump fees.

We hope that fewer plastic bags end up in landfill. We know a plastic bag can take decades to break down.

A move from bags to wheelie bins also prevents animals getting into bags and spreading waste/litter all over the street.

In addition, the waste collection sector generally is moving away from the use of bags to collect rubbish for health and safety reasons. The key risks include repeated lifting of bags, running in traffic and sharps in bags.

What are the wider changes proposed?

A collaborative approach to waste management services in the West Coast is being proposed.

The new approach will see the Buller District Council working with Grey and Westland District councils to jointly manage all West Coast waste services (kerbside collection, transfer stations, recycling centres and landfills). This includes:

Waste services would be provided via a new joint contract involving the three West Coast district councils (Westland, Grey and Buller).

Ownership of assets - landfills and transfer stations - would remain with each Council.

Westport and Reefton Transfer Stations & Recycling Centres would revert to direct Buller District Council control. They are currently owned by Council, but operated and managed privately under a lease arrangement. Their future management would then become part of the new joint contract.

The service provider of the new Regional Waste Management contract will be determined by a tender process.

Ongoing governance of the tender agreement will be managed by a new Joint Committee made up of representatives of the three West Coast district councils and local iwi.

The new system would be implemented in 2025.

The creation of a single, regional joint waste management services contract in conjunction with Grey and Westland District councils will not be directly consulted on, though Council will receive feedback on any part of the planned changes to the waste management system.

The plan is expected to bring economies of scale, value for money and a reduction in administration costs.

Council will workshop the Joint Committee of Council Terms of Reference (PDF 138.74KB) in order to understand more about what is involved. This will most likely occur in October.

The Joint Committee is a crucial element of the new model as it will govern the new region-wide waste contract.

How can I find out more?

Residents can access the Statement of Proposal and other information on our website or pop in to have a read at Council facilities in Westport and Reefton, as well as the Sue Thomson Casey Memorial Library in Westport, the DOC Visitor Centre in Punakaiki, the Karamea Information Centre, and the Northern Buller Resource Centre.

People can provide feedback or ask questions about details of the plan by sending an email to info@bdc.govt.nz with the subject waste management system 2025

You can also talk to your local Councillor about the planned changes.

Why do this now?

For Council, the timing is right as the current contract for waste services ends in 2024. It will be extended as required to ensure continuity of service while decisions are being made on next steps.

Grey and Westland district councils have recently extended theirs. The intention is to adopt a single contract across the Coast.

For the Buller District, the proposal is to match Grey and Westland District kerbside services for waste. These are based on a fortnightly collection of waste in 120L wheelie bins. Funding is through a targeted rate (a standard charge for each property).

In order to deliver the combined service contract, the three councils will establish a formal Joint Committee. The Joint Committee will oversee waste Minimisation and management activities across the West Coast on behalf of the three councils, including:

Delivery of services (collections, transfer stations) under a joint contract with a single contractor.

Implementation of the Regional Waste Minimisation and Management Plan (WMMP).



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What happens next?

The consultation period closes at 4:30pm Monday 4 September 2023.

Written submissions must be received at Council by that time, late submissions cannot be accepted.

If you indicate on your written submission that you wish to speak to your submission - to present your information to Councillors - you will be given a time slot to do so during the hearing that Councillors will hold, in September/October.

After considering all submissions, Council will vote on the proposed changes at their 25 October meeting.

All three Councils involve need to sign off on the Terms of Reference for the Joint Committee. Once this is completed, it is likely the tender process will take place in the first quarter of 2024, with the aim of implementing the new system in early 2025.



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