

Annual Plan 2026/27 & Co - Officer Analysis of Submissions

This document incorporates the Summary of Submissions, Officer Comments and Officer Recommendations and Actions for the submissions Council received relating to the consultation questions and general comments on the Annual Plan 2026/27, amended Revenue and Finance Policy and Draft Rates Remission Policy.

Consultation Question: One piece of advice to Council as it finalises the 2026/27 Annual Plan

Submissions

Makere Raktairi (001), Samantha Scott (002), Kelsey Barnaby (003), Steph Boerboom (004), Nikita Tweeddale (005), Paul (006), Melissa Karaynidis (007), Dave Herdson (008), Kayla (009), Samantha (011), Jason Port (012), Helen Koster (013), Charity – Taihape Playground Group (014), Jessica Torstonson (016), Alexander Owen-Cooper (017), Adina Foley (018), Jo Rangooni (024), Kathleen Te Momo-Smith (025), Marc Cunningham (028), Libby Rayner (030), Chad McKelvie (032), Lynne Sheridan (033), Gill Duncan – Taihape Grandstand Restoration Committee (034), Gill Duncan – Taihape Community Board (035), Gregory Smith (038), Justin Adams (039), Felicity Wallace (041), David Yates (042) and Daniel Duxfield (046)

Summary of submissions

Officers have summarised the answers to the question about one piece of advice that submitters have for Council as it finalises its 2026/27 Annual Plan.

- Focus on what's needed/necessary such as delivering essential services
- Affordability and the cost of living
- Delay unnecessary spending
- Listen to ratepayers
- Focus on other towns aside from Marton
- Deliver projects like the Marton Water Strategy and Marton Swim Centre
- Reduce rates
- Look for cost savings. For example, with fuel as high as it is, maybe it's time to try and find efficiencies in the vehicle fleet and its use (a submitter noted the Animal Control Vehicles are often seen on their way to Feilding and Palmerston North)
- Cost of the replacement of the Maton Swim Centre roof seems excessive and Council should consider alternatives

- Remove the existing toilets in the Taihape Domain by the grandstand and develop new toilets
- Invest in infrastructure where it will make the largest difference, such as investing in the Bulls Domain which is well used but needs maintenance and upgrades (i.e. releveling the grounds, investing in irrigation, and upgrade the changing rooms)
- Greater transparency and more regular updates on projects
- Support for local businesses
- Do not invest in new Council buildings
- Free use of places and spaces for ratepayers (i.e. parks)
- Good communication especially around changes that local government is experiencing and what they mean for ratepayers
- Encourage people and businesses to move to the district and that the bureaucracy needs to have a 'can do' attitude
- Effective succession plans for younger councillors
- Reassess the rural and Hunterville rates increases as they exceed the average increase substantially and the new Civil Defence rate should be fixed not based on capital value

Officer Comment

Officers acknowledge the comments made by submitters.

Circumstances mean that household costs are high, and this was a key driver for Council as it developed the draft 2026/27 Annual Plan budget. Council reduced the proposed rates increase from 10.75% to 6.4%.

Officers agree that there is a need to find cost savings given the climate that we are operating in. With regards to the Animal Control vehicles having been identified as regularly been seen heading to/from Feilding or Palmerston North, officers would like to clarify that the Animal Control Team is part of a shared services arrangement with Manawātū District Council, and therefore, they also cover the Manawātū District.

The rural, Hunterville and Civil Defence rates will be considered by Council as part of its upcoming Rating Review that will occur as part of the development of the 2027-37 Long Term Plan.

Comments related to the Taihape Domain are addressed elsewhere in submission responses.

Comments around projects are noted, and communications on changes in local government occur as needed.

Officers will work to ensure that regular updates are provided on key projects.

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

No specific action is recommended.

Consultation Question: Proposed Rates Increase

Submissions

Too High:

Makere Raktairi (001), Samantha Scott (002), Kelsey Barnaby (003), Steph Boerboom (004), Nikita Tweeddale (005), Melissa Karaynidis (007), Dave Herdson (008), Kayla (009), Samantha (011), Helen Koster (013), Jessica Torstonson (016), Adina Foley (018), Marc Cunningham (028), Libby Rayner (030), Chad McKelvie (032), Lynne Sheridan (033), Gregory Smith (038), David Yates (042) and Daniel Duxfield (046)

Acceptable:

Paul (006), Jason Port (012), Taine Knight (015), Alexander Owen-Cooper (017), Sarah Hale (019), Anna McCartin (022), Kathleen Te Momo-Smith (025), Peter Kipling Arthur (027), Gill Duncan – Taihape Grandstand Restoration Committee (034), Gill Duncan – Taihape Community Board (035)

Unsure:

Charity – Taihape Playground Group (014), Felicity Wallace – Interested Residents of Marton and Rangitikei (041) and Peter & Daryl Cousins (043)

Summary of submissions

The Consultation Document asked residents and ratepayers whether Council has got the proposed rates increase for 2026/27 right. Of the submissions received 19 submitters indicated that the proposed rates increase is too high. The key themes of comments from submitters that consider the proposed rates increase to be too high include:

- The cost of living, affordability of rates and the fact that they are already struggling to make ends meet;
- That Council should reduce its own costs rather than increase rates;
- That the increase is too high and this is related to Council's over runs and projects;
- That rates are increasing by more than peoples salaries;
- That Council should not be spending on non-essential projects (i.e. the new council buildings or the Marton Streetscape upgrade);
- That Council should be focus on essential projects and doing better at delivering these;
- That some submitters are not using the services that they are paying for; and
- Concerns about the Marton Water Supply and the need for Council to focus on, and make genuine and timely gains to, improving it.

Of the submissions received 11 submitters indicated that the proposed rates increase was acceptable. The key themes of comments from these submitters included:

- Acknowledgement of Council's effort to bring down the anticipated rates increase in the Long Term Plan for 2026/27 of 10.75% to 6.4%;
- A desire to see Council working to keep its costs down and look for ways to increase user pays or other mechanisms;

- That affordability is an issue; and
- Recognition that all costs are increase, and therefore, it's understandable that Council's costs to provide services are also increasing.

Three (3) submitters indicated that they were unsure how they felt about the proposed rates increase. Submitter 041 felt that they had insufficient information to make a call on whether the proposed rates increase is appropriate. Submitter 043 indicated that they are unsure how Council's fees and charges are calculated.

Officer Comment

Officers acknowledge the comments made by submitters.

Circumstances mean that household costs are high, and this was a key driver for Council as it developed the draft 2026/27 Annual Plan budget. Key themes such as the need to focus on core/essential services, deliver key projects, look for ways to reduce costs and/or create efficiencies are key things for Council to keep top of mind as it reviews its Strategic Frameworks and prepares its Long Term Plan 2027-37.

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

No specific action is recommended.

Consultation question – Local Decision Making and Reform

Submissions

Makere Raktairi (001), Samantha Scott (002), Kelsey Barnaby (003), Steph Boerboom (004), Nikita Tweeddale (005), Paul (006), Melissa Karaynidis (007), Dave Herdson (008), Kayla (009), Samantha (011), Jason Port (012), Helen Koster (013), Charity (014), Taine Knight (015), Jessica Torstonson (016), Alexander Owen-Cooper (017), Adina Foley (018), Sarah Hale (019), Anna McCartin (022), Jo Rangooni (024), Kathleen Te Momo-Smith (025), Peter Kipling Arthur (027), Marc Cunningham (028), Libby Rayner (030), Chad Mckelvie (032), Lynne Sheridan (033), Gill Duncan - Taihape Grandstand Restoration Committee (034), Gill Duncan – Taihape Community Board (035), Gregory Smith (038), Justin Adams (039), David Yates (042), Peter & Darryl Cousins (043) and Daniel Duxfield (046)

Summary of submissions

Of the 48 submissions, Council received 30 submitters indicated that local decision making is important to them. In comparison to 16 submitters who either indicated that they were not sure or did not provide a response to this question, and only one (1) submitter indicating that they do not consider local decision making to be important.

Responses to the question “What does 'local decision-making' mean to you?” were as follows and are illustrated in Table 1 below:

- Nine (9) submitters considered it to be the wider district;
- One (1) submitter considered it to be the wider region;
- 22 submitters selected town/community;
- 1 submitter said either town/community or district wide; and
- 14 submitters did not provide a response.

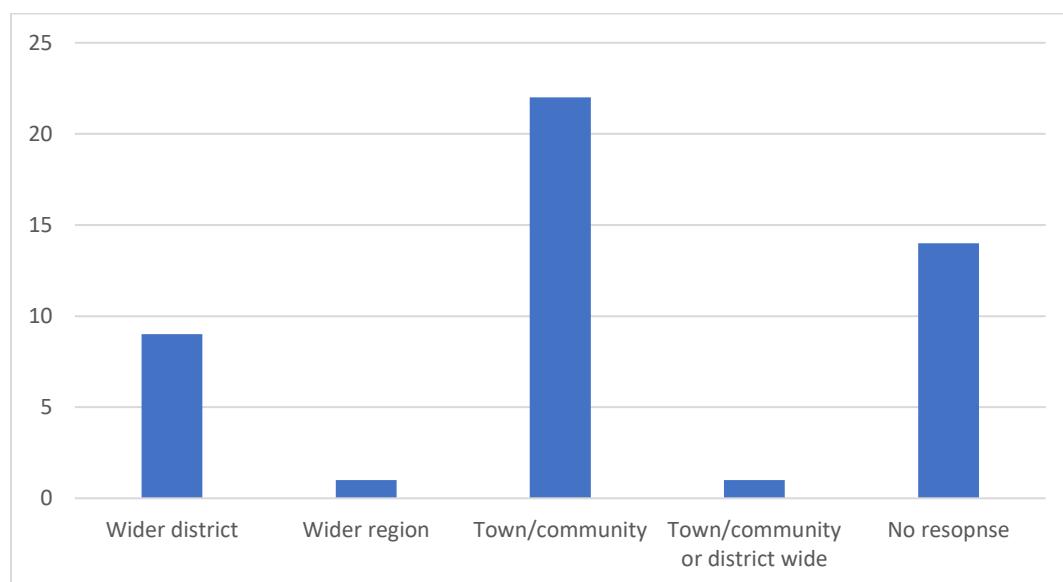


Table 1: Responses to “What does local decision-making mean to you?”

Responses to the question “When councils work more closely at a regional level, what matters most to you?” were as follows (and are illustrated by Table 2):

- 15 submitters selected better infrastructure services;
- Eight (8) submitters indicated faster decision-making;
- Five (5) submitters considered it to be greater resilience to emergencies;
- 16 submitters identified low long term costs;
- 14 submitters said stronger local decision making;
- One (1) submitter provided an alternative; and
- 15 submitters did not provide a response to this question.

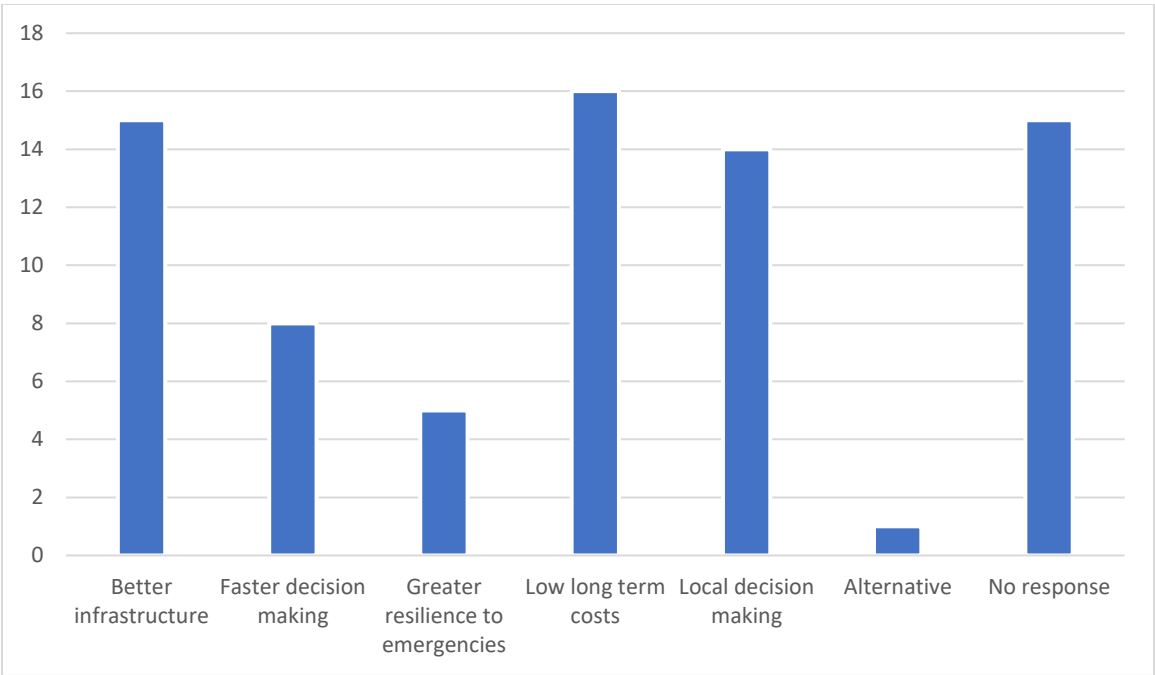


Table 2: Responses to “When councils work more closely at a regional level, what matters most to you?”

Note: The above numbers do not add up to 47 (the total number of submissions received) as many of the submitters who responded to this question selected more than one option.

Below is a summary of the general comments made by submitters about local government reform.

Two (2) submitters commented on the new water entity. Submitter 003 questioned whether the rates will take water maintenance off the bill. Submitter 035 stated that water CCOs must be protected from eventual privatisation.

Submitters 004, 006, 018, 038 and 043 commented on local decision-making including the need to make more efficient decisions, to deliver on projects, and focus on doing the basics (core business) like infrastructure and community assets well. Submitter 018 highlighted the benefits of amalgamation of local authorities such as reducing duplication, lowering administrative costs and strengthening strategic planning.

Submitter 025 requests that council be more accurate in calculating costs rather than putting a figure down and it actually costing millions.

Submitter 013 requests that there should be a ban on private/public partnerships within Councils around the country (currently happening in the Waikato region). I believe that Council should remain a public service with full transparency to its ratepayers.

Submitter 016 requests that the people representing local communities should have their finger on the pulse. They suggest that complaints and observations from customers are met with excuses and vague information.

Submitter 024 suggests that the Government is making demands without consultation – noting “maybe demand from lobbyists”.

Submitter 028 indicates that this question in the consultation document was too vague and that they needed more context.

Submitter 046 asks that Council stop being so risk adverse and that the back office needs to be customer focused.

Officer Comment

The intent behind these questions in the Consultation Document was to get a feel for what members of the community think about local government reform, to help inform Council’s thinking as this reform is rolled out.

Based on the responses received, the majority of submitters feel that local decision making is important. The majority also consider local decision-making to be at the town/community or district wide level.

In relation to councils working more closely at the regional level the top three (3) priorities identified were: low long term costs, better infrastructure services and stronger local decision making.

The responses to the questions and the associated comments from submitters are acknowledged. These can be used to guide Council’s discussions and thinking as it reviews its Strategic Framework and prepares the 2027-37 Long Term Plan.

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

That the responses provided in relation to the questions on local government decision-making and reform are used to guide Council’s discussions and thinking as it reviews its Strategic Framework and prepares the 2027-37 Long Term Plan.

Activity – Economic Development

Topic 1	<i>High Street Corner Buildings</i>
Topic 2	<i>Marton Town Centre Revitalisation</i>
Topic 3	<i>Business After 5 Events and Wayfinding</i>

Topic 1: High Street Corner Buildings

Submissions

Paul (006) and Kayla (009)

Summary of submissions

Submitter 006 requests Council sell or remove the broken buildings and allow a property developer to develop the site.

Submitter 009 suggests that the empty buildings in the town centre are demolished and replaced with apartments constructed by private developers.

Officer Comment

The submitters' comments are acknowledged. Council decided to put the buildings on the corner of High Street and Broadway, Marton on the market for sale via open tender. A party was selected to proceed with their offer to purchase the properties, and their due diligence is expected to be completed towards the end of May 2026.

Due to the commercial nature of the negotiations, Council can not share any details at this stage and an update will be provided to the community at the conclusion of the due diligence period.

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

That officers provide an update to the community about the buildings on the corner of High Street and Broadway at the conclusion of the due diligence period (eta. June 2026).

Topic 2: Marton Town Centre Revitalisation

Submissions

Paul (006), Kayla (009), Lynne Sheridan (033) and Felicity Wallace – Interested Residents of Marton and Rangitikei (041)

Summary of submissions

Submitter 006 states that town centre revitalisation is not affordable.

Submitter 009 considers that making improvements to public space is not important when there are issues with run-down buildings in the area.

Submitter 033 states there is no feedback to the community on the Marton Town Centre Plan.

Submitter 041 asks about progress and spend to date for the Marton Streetscape proposal.

Officer Comment

The decision by Council to look into investing in the revitalisation of the town centre of Marton was made as part of the 2024-34 Long Term Plan after consultation with community. A plan has been developed with stakeholders, users, community members and businesses. The draft plan was shared with the community for feedback at the end of 2025. The plan is being refined as a result of this feedback, and the final plan will be ready for Council's consideration in June 2026.

It is well documented and noted the state of the buildings in the town centre remains a key concern for the community. The development of the Marton Streetscape Plan identified this issue and the draft plan which was consulted on with the community, considered ways Council may be able to encourage maintenance, enhancements and beautification of buildings in Marton's CBD.

The draft Marton Streetscape Plan was shared with the community via our website, social media and circulated to members of the Marton community via the local newspaper. A public workshop was held with Council on 12 March 2026, and which covered the submission feedback, considered alternatives and options for the plan going forward. Further updates will be shared once Council has reviewed and considered the final plan which is expected in June 2026. To date \$73,375.33 has been spent of the budgeted \$100,000.

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

No specific action is recommended.

Topic 3: Business After 5 Events and Wayfinding

Submission

Gill Duncan – Taihape Community Board (035)

Summary of submission

Submitter 035 states that BA5 events are welcome and well attended in Taihape. The new maps and revitalisation plans are important to enable our towns to be positive in harder times.

Officer Comment

Officers note the comments from submitter 035. Support of the Business After 5 events remains an important component of supporting businesses throughout the district. The new maps were funded via external funding.

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

No specific action is recommended.

Activity – Finance

Topic 1	<i>Affordability</i>
Topic 2	<i>Rates Calculations</i>
Topic 3	<i>Civil Defence Targeted Rate</i>
Topic 4	<i>General Financial Comments</i>
Topic 5	<i>Funding - Erewhon Rural Water Scheme</i>

Topic 1: Affordability

Submissions

Samantha Scott (002), Steph Boerboom (004), Kayla (009), Samantha (011), Justin Adams – Hunterville Community Committee (023), Marc Cunningham (028), Tim Matthews (031), Lynne Sheridan (033), Ian Strahan and Laura Morrison - Federated Farmers (036), Gregory Smith (038) and Justin Adams (039)

Summary of submissions

A key theme from eight of the submissions is the rising cost of council rates, while the community is struggling with rising mortgage costs, fuel costs and other inflationary pressures. Council is asked to consider this and keep costs within CPI or less.

Submitter 023 is concerned that Hunterville rates have increased higher than the average of 6.4%. Submitter 039 expresses concern about the disproportionate rates increase as a percentage, as opposed to dollar increase. Submitter 039 also strongly recommends that before the adoption of this Annual Plan the township disproportionality is reviewed and rectified and suggest that it would be transparent for Council to state average rates increases by township to reflect an accurate expectation to ratepayers and adherence to the transparency requirements in the Local Government Act.

There has been concern expressed about the use of the UAGC, and how a lower UAGC can impact unfavourably on properties with higher capital value.

Federated Farmers (036) note that Council has endeavoured to reduce rates from the planned 10.75% increase to 6.4% but notes the global impact on farmers and requests that Council reduces this increase further and do only the bare minimum. They note the rates allocated by way of capital value disadvantage farmers.

Submitter 038 raised a concern that capital values decreased in Seamer Street in Ratana.

Finally, submitter 038 questioned the cashflow, assuming losses from investments.

Officer Comment

Council has maintained consistency in applying increases to the rating categories, reflecting the increase in the cost of the activity. Officers have increased the UAGC in accordance with Council agreement, reflecting an increase based on the average costs of rates per year for the 2024/27 Long Term Plan.

In response to submitter 023's comments - for Hunterville, due to the fact that many of the increases are annual charges, the impact on property's differ due to the starting point, or base rate of each property. The lower the base rate, the higher percentage an annual rate has on total rates. Noting that the average rates for Hunterville is much lower than the other townships in Rangitikei District. Secondly, as Hunterville does not have connected water rates, they have not benefited from a decrease in this rate, which for connected properties helped offset the rising general rate and annual rates. This balances with the fact that in prior years when connected water costs have increased, Hunterville has not felt this specific increase.

As above regarding submitter 039's comments, the key variance between Hunterville and other towns is the reduction in the annual targeted rate of \$280 per fixed water connection.

Concern has been expressed about the use of the UAGC this has been noted and discussed as part of earlier Council workshops and it was generally agreed that Council would not intervene in any of the Groups at this time, but instead it would maintain a consistent agreed approach throughout the current Long Term Plan (LTP).

In relation to submitter 036's observations about the proposed rates impact on farmers, these points are noted. Officers acknowledge that large farms are not connected to water, so similar to Hunterville, did not gain the benefit of decreased costs in connected water. Conversely in prior years, farmers did not receive the increases when targeted costs associated with connected water increased.

Regarding submitter 038's concern about Seamer Street, this is a one-off anomaly due to an event with that property. This property happens to be one of the properties used in Council's sample rates impact table for yearly comparison.

In response to submitter 038's query about cashflow, this is simply cash being used to acquire/build property, plant and equipment, not losses. This submitter also suggested our borrowings significantly increased. This is not correct, our proposed borrowings (current & non-current) total \$105million for 2026-27 compared to \$111million proposed for year three (2026-27) of the LTP. Council is slightly down on expected borrowings for the 2026/27 year. Council does not hold a lot of cash reserves and it uses these reserves where it is able to in place of external borrowings.

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

No specific action is recommended.

Topic 2: Rates Calculations

Submissions

Tim Matthews (031) and Ian Strahan and Laura Morrison - Federated Farmers (036)

Summary of submissions

Both submitters have referred to the use of capital value as a rating allocation disadvantaging properties with high capital values.

A submitter suggests that Quotable Value (QV) have assessed capital values optimistically.

Submitter 036 has requested that Council aim to set the UAGC to the maximum of 30% so as to not disadvantage the farming community.

Submitter 036 also disputes that urban water and wastewater have a general distribution of benefit.

Finally, submitter 036 suggests a differential of less than 1.00 where a property has a high capital value.

Officer Comment

The submitters' comments on the use of capital value as a rating allocation are noted; however, this is in line with the Rating Act and Council's previous and proposed Revenue and Financing Policy.

With regards to the comments on QV's assessment of capital values. QV is a professional body and there is a process in place for property owners to challenge the value assigned to their property if they feel it is inaccurate.

Submitter 036's comments are noted, and these can be considered by Council as part of a rating review for the next Long Term Plan.

Submitter 036 disputes that urban water and wastewater have a general distribution of benefit. Officers note that where properties are connected to either water or wastewater, they are charged a targeted annual rate. Properties not connected to water or wastewater do not receive this targeted rate. All properties however pay an annual "public good" charge for water, wastewater and stormwater as there is a public good component that everyone in our district benefits from.

With regards to differentials these are certainly an option that Council can consider as part of the 2027-37 Long Term Plan process.

Incorporating the requested changes into the Revenue and Financing Policy would be material and require an amendment to the current Long Term Plan which is not feasible to explore at this time. Furthermore, Council needs to consider these suggested changes holistically to fully understand the impact of the proposed changes on other ratepayers.

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

Officers will cover the points raised by submitter 036 as part of the upcoming Rating Review and to inform the development of the 2027-37 Long Term Plan.

Topic 3: Civil Defence Targeted Rate

Submissions

Gill Duncan - Taihape Community Board (035) and Justin Adams (039)

Summary of submissions

Submitter 035 Civil Defence (CD) responsiveness has been a focus for the District, and now with the recent Valentines Weekend weather event reminding us of our shortfalls. The submitter requests that RDC support a stronger Taihape response plan, addressing such things as storage for the CD Trailer to be located in Taihape for such events.

Submitter 039 strongly recommends uniform annual rate for Civil Defence. The same charge for all ratepayers and notes that during the “Valentines Weekend 2026” it was rural ratepayers who partially cleared the roads so they could be traversed at their own cost with no reimbursement. The only Civil Defence spending planned is for an Emergency Operations Centre in Marton. The spending needs to be more proportional to each township rather than focusing on a single town and punishing rural ratepayers for being proactive.

Officer Comment

These responses are noted. Regarding addressing Taihape’s readiness for an event, Council is reviewing all readiness and response levels across the district.

In response to submitter 039’s comment, the Civil Defence Activity was included in the General Rate, and it was rated by the property’s capital value. Council agreed to remove this from General Rate and have as a stand-alone targeted rate, so it became more visible to the community. To change the rating of this activity to a Uniform Annual Charge was considered a significant change, and therefore, is better to be done as part of the Long Term Plan,

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

That Council consider the Civil Defence targeted rate in the next Rating Review as part of the 2027-37 Long Term Plan, noting there may be others that would prefer to see this as an Annual Charge.

Topic 4: General Financial Comments

Submissions

Tim Matthews (031), Gill Duncan - Taihape Community Board (035), Gregory Smith (038) and Felicity Wallace – Interested Residents of Marton and Rangitikei (041)

Summary of submissions

Submitter 031 commented that in earlier times Valuation Department would give a breakdown of values between sectors, be they dairy farms, cropping farms, forests, orchards, industrial, commercial, or residential, when they completed a 3-yearly revaluations.

Submitter 031 suggests that Council detail the Corporate Overhead activities separately in the Annual Plans, as this information could be quite important if ratepayers and residents were to consider amalgamation with other councils. This submitter also suggested that there is not sufficient detail in the breakdown of each activity. For example, how much does Council spend on Civil Defence. It is also noted that it is difficult to get the information needed to make a decision, even if it is meeting the legislative requirements.

Submitter 035 Taihape Community Board, values democracy through local voice, representing our community and advocating to Rangitikei District Council (RDC), about local issues, including environment, land use, water use, roading and infrastructure, business support and grants and facilities such as libraries and parks. Civil Defence must also be a focus. The submitter supports fair rate increases that reflect rising costs on essential services and notes the proposed decrease in the average rates increase from 10.75% to 6.4% for this Annual Plan.

Submitter 038 proposes that limited extra expenditure be recommended by council prior to the handing over of assets to CD Water, suggesting Council is using increased expenditure as a sly method to increase borrowings in the short term, and plans to pass on this increased expenditure as borrowings to the CCO.

Submitter 041 IRO-MAR, requests Council provide transparency to residents and ratepayers and clearly outlines progress and work programmes aligned to budgets, with reference to the Long Term Plan and previous Annual Plans.

Officer Comment

In response to submitter 031's comments about rates breakdown, Council does maintain a RID. It is publicly accessible. In May each year Council advises the public that there is a RID available for the public to inspect.

Regarding submitter 038's comments on display of financial for activities, Council follows legislation in the preparation and display of our activities. That being said, if Council was to adopt a targeted annual charge for its Civil Defence Activity as part of the Long Term Plan, this will be a stand-alone rate, and ratepayers will be able to see the total rates collected for this activity. It will no longer form part of the General Rate/UAGC.

Submitter 035's comments are noted.

In response to submitter 038's comments officers wish to clarify that Council has prepared a Water Delivery Plan as part of the establishment of the Council-Controlled Organisation (CCO). This has been approved by the Department of Internal Affairs. Any deviation from this will require detailed explanations, including the increase in debt.

Submitter 041's comments are noted. The Proposed Annual Plan identifies the difference between the 2024-34 Long Term Plan (year three) and the proposed 2026/27 Annual Plan.

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

No specific action is recommended.

Topic 5: Funding - Erewhon Rural Water Scheme

Submission

Jock Stratton - Erewhon Rural Water Scheme (026)

Summary of submission

This submitter is seeking an amendment to the draft 2026/27 Annual Plan budget, as they require an increase to their capital programme of work from \$406,525 to \$5,000,000 in order to carry out capital work, pipeline replacement initiatives. The three projects of highest priority are as follows;

1. Mangaohane stage two, 1300 meters, PE-Steel, 150mm, 32. bar, est. \$692,500
2. Mangaohane Stage three, 600 meters, steel, 100mm 25-40 bar, est. \$334,328
3. Pipe Bridge to Gilberts cattle yards including 1100 meters on Matawhero Road; Steel, 25-40 bar. Est. \$1,963,866 [sic].

The committee have been working with Mr van Bussel (Water Supply Specialist) of Rangitikei District Council to confirm the requirements of the programme over the last twelve plus months. They have also met with the Chief Executive, and members of the Finance Team to confirm the impact on their budgets and the best way forward.

The committee now has a clear understanding of the programme of work and is planning to go to tender to confirm the cost of this programme of work (anticipated to be around \$5 million), subject to Council approving this submission.

The committee realise the timing may span a number of years, however, in order to go to market, the committee requires their scheme's capital budget to have an approved budget by Council to the total value of \$5,000,000 in order to maximise the best procurement and timing opportunities. Currently the capital programme of work for the 2026/27 year is \$406,525 (excluding GST) and including a CPI adjustment, this level of planned expenditure is reflected for each year of the current long term plan through to 2033/34.

The scheme holders are seeking Council approval to amend the 2026/27 budget to a total value of \$5,000,000 or the 2026/27 to meet their procurement goals. This will remove the need to budget the current \$406,525 per annum in the next long term plan by essentially bringing this expenditure forward relative to the current long term plan.

Assuming Council approve this budget for the 2026/27 year the committee will go to market to seek the best price and most efficient/effective way of carrying out this work. Once the timing of the programme of works is understood, the committee plan to work with the Finance Team of Rangitikei District Council to phase this work across the year or years as per the accepted tenders' recommendations, recognising this may require carry forward of un-spent funds into future years.

The request to increase the 2026/27 capital programme of work will not increase the revenue required In the 2026/27 year, therefore no increase to the rates being sought by Council, however the committee recognises that in the 2027/28 year they will need to increase their water supply charges to cover the cost of debt repayment, interest costs, and increased insurance. Some of these operational costs will be covered, by reduced maintenance costs.

Officer Comment

Officers note that this request has been a “work in progress” over the last 12 months. While the phasing is not fully known at this point in time, or the full costing, by allocating a capital budget in the 2026-27 financial year is a good starting point.

The Finance Team can work with the Committee on the phasing of this spend ahead of each subsequent Annual or Long Term Plan to adjust interest costs, debt repayment and depreciation which impact on the water charges.

Recommendation

That Council does / does not [delete one] approve the 2026/27 Annual Plan capital budget be amended to allow Erewhon Rural Water Scheme’s capital works programme to increase to \$5 million, noting it will be debt funded.

Actions

Subject to Council’s approval the 2026/27 Annual Plan will be adjusted to reflect the increase in the proposed capital spend and the increased debt requirements. The Finance Team will also adjust the 2026/27 annual budget for the Erewhon Committee to reflect the change to their budget.

The Finance Team will work with the Erewhon Committee on the phasing of this spend ahead of each subsequent Annual or Long Term Plan to adjust interest costs, debt repayment and depreciation which impact on the water charges.

Activities – Governance, Community and Communication

Topic 1	<i>Quality of Information in the Consultation Document</i>
Topic 2	<i>General Comments on Projects and Urban Intensification</i>
Topic 3	<i>Public Meetings/Information Sessions</i>
Topic 4	<i>Value of Consultation</i>
Topic 5	<i>Housing in Taihape</i>
Topic 6	<i>Taihape West Slip Zone</i>
Topic 7	<i>Governance Comments and Council Meetings</i>
Topic 8	<i>General Community Funding Requests</i>
Topic 9	<i>Local Government Elections</i>
Topic 10	<i>Customer Services and Relationship with Iwi</i>
Topic 11	<i>Publications</i>
Topic 12	<i>Social Media</i>

Topic 1: Quality of Information in the Consultation Document

Submissions

Justin Adams - Hunterville Community Committee (023), Lynne Sheridan (033), Gregory Smith (038), Justin Adams (039) and Interested Residents of Marton and Rangitikei (041)

Summary of submissions

Submitters 023 and 039 highlight that the Annual Plan consultation document does not include much information that is directly relevant to Hunterville. The submissions indicate that this is a similar issue to last year's Annual Plan consultation document.

Submitter 023 requests that future Annual Plans consultation documents increase focus on Hunterville such as inclusion in the tables showing the average rates increases as opposed to just being covered in the supplementary information only available on the Council's website.

Submitter 039 suggests that there is a trend that Hunterville has had nothing more than standard repairs, maintenance or upgrades to its basic infrastructure. They indicate that every other Township (i.e. Taihape, Marton, Bulls and Ratana) either has had or currently has major Council facility projects and/or government funding. They indicate that given the rates the residents of Hunterville pay that this town appears to be a "low priority".

Submitter 033 also notes that the questions scattered throughout the consultation document made the document disjointed.

Submitter 038 thanks Council for the opportunity to contribute. They request Council stops saying things like "nothing major has changed from the LTP" as they feel this is propaganda and incorrect. They note it does not do justice to the rest of Council trying to do right by the ratepayer.

Submitter 041 IRO-MAR outlines concerns with some of the graphics and the name of the consultation document. They also state that there is no clear information in the consultation document about how the Annual Plan is progressing items in the LTP or previous AP. There are no figures for projects. There are no real and valued updates on projects. There are no budget adjustments or debt comparisons to work programmes. Work programmes are not compared to the LTP, there are no milestones and no projects of significance completed. There is no alignment of the forecast programmes compared to actual delivery; and hence alignment to debt forecasting.

Submitter 041 IRO-MAR questions where the Annual Plan is and that Council needs to do better at meeting its obligations, be transparent and accountable to the community.

Officer Comment

A theme from the submissions was that the consultation document needed more detailed information about different places, projects and Council's financials. Several submitters outlined ways that the document could be improved for future consultations (including use of language and how questions are incorporated into the document). The comments from these submissions are noted.

The purpose of this Annual Plan & Co consultation document was to provide a high-level overview of key projects, rates information and some current challenges and opportunities facing our district for the 2026/27 financial year. Officers acknowledge that this consultation document did not outline particular topics/projects that Council was seeking feedback on, and this is because there were no topics/projects identified by Council that required consultation on as part of this Annual Plan.

More detailed information on Council's work programme, services, capital projects and financials is available in the supporting information (i.e. the Draft Annual Plan 2026/27) which is available on Council's website: [Annual-Plan-2026-27-Supporting-Information-under-separate-cover.pdf](#). Noting that some of the information requested by submitter 041 will be covered in Council's Annual Report.

With regards to Hunterville, officers can include this township in the examples of rates information provided in the consultation document going forward (subject to these tables being included in the consultation document). Officers note the examples included for this consultation document were not intended to be an exhaustive list and the link provided to Council's rates calculator aims to ensure that individuals can see what the proposed rates impact will be on their property.

Submitter 039's comments about a desire to see more being done by Council in Hunterville are noted. Council must carefully consider how and where to invest in infrastructure. Throughout the district, Council is responsible for maintaining agreed levels of services and additional spending on new projects is carefully considered with different towns within the district having been the focus at different times.

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

That officers will include Hunterville in the rates impact example tables used in Annual Plan consultation documents in the future.

Topic 2: General Comments on Projects and Urban Intensification

Submissions

Paul (006), Kayla (009), Lynne Sheridan (033) and Greg Smith (038)

Summary of submissions

Submitter 006 requests that Council “get something done” and highlights the water and pool as opportunities.

Submitter 009 does not support a new council building or urban intensification and would rather Council focus on existing services and basic amenities such as the pool and drinking water before taking on new projects.

Submitter 033 raises concerns about how the information on the Marton Swimming Pool has been presented in the Annual Plan consultation document, the fact the project was not identified in the Annual Plan 2025/26 or the Long Term Plan 2024-34, but was identified in the 2024/25 Annual Report although it was not identified as a variation to the LTP. The submissions notes that the project is barely mentioned in the consultation document and states that there was no expected cost or whether the community will be consulted on what is being proposed or whether it will be open all year round. They suggest a need for a modern facility that is open all year round.

Submitter 038 suggests Council focuses on the basics and does not consider wellness. This submitter considers local government is important but does not support unnecessary spending.

Officer Comment

The submitters comments are noted.

With regards to Council needing to focus on delivering the Marton Swim Centre project and the Marton Water Strategy, Council made significant decisions on both the projects at its meeting on the 9 April 2026. Information was released publicly on the 14 April and 16 April. Detailed information on both these projects is available on Council’s website as follows:

- Marton Swim Centre: [Marton Swim Centre: Rangitikei District Council](#)
- Marton Water Strategy: [Marton Water Supply Strategy: Rangitikei District Council](#)

Officers acknowledge submitter 033's comments that the consultation document did not include much information on the Marton Swim Centre project. This was a consequence of timing. The Annual Plan consultation document was drafted and released for consultation prior to Council making its most recent decision on the Marton Swim Centre. Council's website will be updated as this project progresses so that the community is aware of what is happening. Regarding their comment that this project was not disclosed in the Annual Report 2024/25 as a variance, this was because no money was spent on this project for the 2024/25 financial year.

Officers acknowledge submitter 009's comments about not being supportive of a new Council building or urban intensification and their desire for Council to focus on existing services and basic amenities.

Council is in the early stages of progressing the new building for the Marton Council Offices and Community Hub and more information will be made available to the public as this project progresses.

Urban intensification is being proposed through Proposed Plan Change 3. Submissions closed on this plan change on 13 April. The urban intensification provisions proposed as part of this plan change aim to provide an opportunity for landowners to intensify the development of their property if they wanted to and these provisions have been proposed to ensure that any intensification is contextually appropriate (i.e. provision for single or double storey buildings, duplexes or terraced housing).

Submitter 009's comments around Council needing to focus on existing services and basic amenities are noted. Much of Council's budget and programme of works focuses on core services basic amenities.

Submitter 038's comments on not supporting unnecessary spending and that Council needs to focus on the basics. This Annual Plan sets out the activities that Council plans to undertake for the financial year. Council is currently in the process of reviewing its strategic framework, which is the framework that sets Council's community outcomes and strategic priorities, as it starts to prepare the next Long-Term Plan. This framework is being considered in the context of the revised purpose of local government.

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

No specific action is recommended.

Topic 3: Public Meetings/Information Sessions

Submissions

Belinda Howard – Chapters Bookshop NZ (010) and Justin Adams - Hunterville Community Committee (023)

Summary of submissions

Submitter 010 notes that there is a trend that when information sessions and public meetings are held for consultations (citing the Annual Plan & Co and Proposed Plan Change 3 as examples) that they are almost always held during working hours. They indicated that this actively excludes anyone who has work or business commitments.

This submitter indicates that sessions exclusively during work hours almost guarantees that most of the engagement and feedback you get will be from older, retired people and that Council is not connecting with the 25-65 demographic, and they feel this could explain why the level of submissions is low. The submitter also indicates that they spent several years working in a communications/community engagement role for a district council, and that Council could be doing more to engage the community. Submitter 010 acknowledges that Council's social media game has significantly improved in the past couple of years, however, they believe that there is plenty more that could be done to meet people when and where they are, instead of expecting them to come to you at inconvenient times.

Submitter 023 The Hunterville Community Committee is disappointed in the short notice provided to the community for the "Hunterville Public Meeting" for the Annual Plan. At best residents had between 24-48 hours' notice of the meeting to make arrangements to attend, which resulted in a poor turnout.

Officer Comment

Officers acknowledge that most of the pre-planned public engagement opportunities for this Annual Plan consultation and the consultation on Proposed Plan Change 3 were during usual business hours. However, officers and the Mayor are available to meet with residents and community groups any time by appointment. Officers endeavour to ensure that a range of people are aware that engagement is taking place for example information on these consultations was readily available on our website, posted on social media, and contact details for officers were available to ensuring that the public could access information and ask questions/seek clarification about any of the matters covered in the consultation material. However, there is always room for improvement and submitter 010's comments are noted.

Each consultation is carefully considered by officers, and capacity is something that drives how many engagement events can be offered including when and where. After hours events have been held in the past and officers can work with Elected Members to re-explore offering these as part of future consultations.

Officers acknowledge submitter 023's comments and take on board this feedback and the need to give more notice of engagement events going forward.

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

That when officers prepare a community engagement plan for a project, they will carefully consider how to provide a range of engagement opportunities and events.

Topic 4: Value of Consultation

Submissions

Steph Boerboom (004) and Jessica Torstonson (016)

Summary of submissions

Submitters 004 and 016 both request that Council give genuine consideration to the views expressed by themselves and other submitters through this consultation process.

Officer Comment

The submitters comments are noted.

Council was not required to consult on this Annual Plan but chose to do so because it wanted to provide an opportunity for members of the community to have their say on what it has planned for the 2026/27 financial year.

All feedback is read and analysed by officers and then carefully considered by Elected Members as they make decisions on the Annual Plan & Co.

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

No specific action is recommended.

Topic 5: Housing in Taihape

Submissions

Ian Rae - Taihape Community Development Trust (020) and Gill Duncan - Taihape Community Board (035)

Summary of submission

Submitter 020 requests that Council ensure that staff support housing in Taihape, in line with the first priority stated in Council's 2024 Spatial Plan, and the previous three Annual Plans.

The submitter notes that the township is currently in decline, and while there are a number of issues affecting the town, the main cause of its demise, is lack of housing which is impeding business and natural growth.

The submitter notes that Council's 2024 Spatial Plan specifically indicated that Taihape needed another 200 houses by 2050, or seven houses per year going forward. But despite housing being further prioritised in earlier Long-Term Plans, housing in Taihape is not being supported by Council, hence the stated priority is not being achieved.

Submitter 035 notes that the successful 'plan stop' exemption from Government is a positive that allows for progress of urban growth. Taihape would like to see more housing for businesses looking to expand that are held back by insufficient accommodation.

Officer Comment

The submitters comments are noted. Council is supportive of facilitating urban growth in Taihape. Proposed Plan Change 3 includes a Residential Intensification Area for Taihape, which if successfully implemented would enable properties within this area to be redeveloped in a more intense way (subject to the property owner choosing to pursue development opportunities).

The intent of the proposed Residential Intensification Area is to provide greater opportunities for more dense development in close proximity to the town centre, increasing capacity within the existing urban area. It is acknowledged that no additional land is proposed to be rezoned from the Rural Zone to the Residential Zone for Taihape as part of this plan change as it was considered that there is sufficient greenfield land available to support residential development in the short to medium term.

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

No specific action is recommended.

Topic 6: Taihape West Slip Zone

Submission

Ian Rae (021)

Summary of submission

Submitter 021 requests that Council budget up to \$250,000 to engage Consulting Engineers to design a suitable drainage system to mitigate the likelihood of major slipping of the "Taihape West Slip", and to assign a member of staff, to co-ordinate all communications in respect of the Slip Zone.

This submitter provided their understanding of the recent history of this slip and the current issues it is considered to be causing for properties within slip zone.

The submitter noted meetings that they had with some Elected Members late 2025 and early 2026.

Officer Comment

The landslide identified as the Taihape West Slip Area is a complex, reactivated, translational block slide-earth flow which is located in the south-west part of Taihape.

The area identified in the Rangitikei District Plan is situated south of Kiwi Road down to the Otaihape Stream and encompasses approximately 100 properties. The landslide covers a wider area, however, the area delineated in the District Plan as the Taihape West Slip Area is based on risk of movement and potential damage to property and infrastructure (the wider area was identified as lower risk, and therefore, was not included in the operative District Plan).

This landslide has historically been monitored intermittently and to varying degrees. In February 2009, the EQC engaged GNS Science and Tonkin and Taylor to review the slope-stability hazards posed by the landslide, following a period of major movement starting in April 2004 (likely linked to the February 2004 floods).

Officers have been investigating a review of technical data for the Taihape West Slip Zone. Officers are in the process of engaging a consultant to complete updated monitoring and produce a report with any subsequent recommendations they may have. This updated monitoring and report can be done within existing budgets. Officers will communicate that this project is being undertaken with affected properties prior to any filed investigation work occurring. Any communications released to properties owners or the community will include details for a Council contact person.

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

That officers communicate with affected property owners that updated monitoring will be undertaken in relation to the Taihape West Slip Zone prior to any filed investigation work occurring. Any comms released to property owners or the community will include details for a Council contact person.

Topic 7: Governance Comments and Council Meetings

Submissions

Samantha (011), Jessica Torstonson (016) and Gill Duncan - Taihape Community Board (035)

Summary of submissions

Submitter 011 raises concerns about salary increases for elected members in the context of increasing rates.

Submitter 016 would like to be able to attend Council meetings but like many ratepayers they cannot attend these during business hours and livestreaming meetings is not a viable option.

Submitter 035, the Taihape Community Board, supports the Youth Council, welcoming their attendance at meetings and looking to stimulate governance-curiosity and skills in our Youth.

Submitter 035 also encourages greater use of Community Boards to reach local voice and further Council's understanding of local issues.

Officer Comment

An independent organisation – the Remuneration Authority sets the remuneration pool for elected members. The Local Government Act 2002 provides for the Remuneration Authority to set the remuneration, allowances and expenses of:

- *Mayors*
- *Regional Chairs, and*
- *other local government members on local authorities including local and community boards.*

To determine the remuneration pool for local authorities the Remuneration Authority considers three main factors:

- *the size of the governance role of each council,*
- *the average time required by a local government member on a council of a particular size, and*
- *a general comparison with parliamentary salaries.*

The remuneration number is not able to be reduced by Council. This system is designed to keep pay decisions independent, consistent across the country, and transparent.

Submitter 016's comments about the timing of Council meetings are noted.

The Taihape Community Board's offer for attendance by Youth Council members at its meetings and support in reaching community voice are acknowledged.

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

The officers will pass on the Taihape Community Board's offer for Youth Council members to attend their meetings.

Topic 8: General Community Funding Requests

Submissions

Gill Duncan - Taihape Community Board (035) and Heidi Macaulay - Bulls & District Community Trust (044)

Summary of submissions

Submitter 035, the Taihape Community Board states Grants - Funding for our events, creative endeavours and vital communications, such as 'Talk up Taihape', are essential tools of encouragement. Taihape has no periodical, is limited by isolation and has a wide demographic within a smaller population. We need all the support we can get to connect and boost our people. Re-gifting this small percentage of rates is important.

Submitter 044, the Bulls & District Community Trust requests that their MoU partnership funding increases by inflation and increases by \$2000 per annum to cover the maintenance of the Bulls in Bulls.

Officer Comment

Submitter 035's comments are noted. Officers note the Council funded Event Support Scheme for contestable funding and Community Initiatives Fund. Council also administers the Creative NZ for contestable funding. Talk up Taihape is a deliverable in the MoU Partnership with the Taihape Community Development Trust.

Council has held a MoU partnership with Submitter 044 the Bulls & District Community Trust for a long time. The partnership arrangement was last reviewed in detail by Council as part of the 2021-31 Long Term Plan and would be reviewed for the upcoming Long Term Plan. The grant value of \$27,200 has not increased since 2021. Officers note that increasing budgets by inflation is common, and would align with the approach for the small projects funds provided to community committees/the Taihape Community Board. Council also has a MoU partnership with the Taihape Community Development Trust and would recommend applying the same approach to this MoU agreement as well.

In relation to the bulls in Bulls, in 2014 at a meeting of the Bulls Community Committee, the Bulls Lions Club proposed to install fiberglass bull statues throughout Bulls. The project was to be funded by the Bulls Lions Club with additional support from local businesses.

At Council's meeting on 28 February 2019, further clarification was sought regarding the recommendation from the Bulls Community Committee for Council to contribute towards the refurbishment costs of the bull statues.

At Council's meeting on 28 March 2019, elected members acknowledged that the bulls were a positive tourist attraction for Bulls and should remain in a safe and well-maintained state. The placemaking budget was identified as the funding source for maintenance, and Council resolved:

Resolution 19/RDC/08: That Council confirms that ownership of the bulls remain with the Bulls & District Community Trust and that Council funds ongoing maintenance to a maximum value of \$3,000 per annum against invoices.

Officers note that this funding was to be via the placemaking budget. However, Council has since removed the placemaking budget. At that time, no alternative provision was made for the ongoing maintenance and repair of the statues. Currently, the maintenance of the bulls on Council land is undertaken via request to the Property Team. This process is not proposed to change.

Currently, there are 24 fibreglass bull, cow or calf statues located throughout Bulls across 18 locations. Eight (8) are on public land in the Rangitikei District and 16 are on private land. Bulls & District Community Trust are requesting that an additional \$2000 be added to its annual MoU grant from Council, as a contribution toward the ongoing maintenance of the bull statues on private land. This approach will streamline and futureproof on going maintenance of the bulls in Bulls that are located on private land. It is noted that these bulls contribute to the destination image and marketing of the town.

Recommendation

That Council adjusts / does not adjust [delete one] the annual payment for the MoU partnership with the Bulls & District Community Trust and the Taihape Community Development Trust by inflation each year.

That Council does / does not [delete one] increase the MoU partnership payment to the Bulls & District Community Trust by \$2,000 (GST exclusive) for the 2026/27 financial year, and that this will be included in the budget each year going forward, for the maintenance and repair of the bull, cow and calf statues located on private property in Bulls. If approved, funding is to be provided from additional operational budget that will be funded through the General Rate.

Actions

[if required] That the MoU with the Bulls & District Community Trust is updated to reflect the maintenance of the bull, cow and calf statues.

Topic 9: Local Government Elections

Submission

Greg Smith (038)

Summary of Submission

Submitter 038 suggests that postal voting has not achieved the original aims, i.e., to increase the voting turnout. The submitter suggests a return to in-person voting on a single day for the Rangitikei, with limited number of polling booths maintained in 100% public spaces only.

Officer Comment

The submitter's comments are noted.

The local body elections are held in accordance with the Local Electoral Act 2001, which only provides for postal voting. A sector working group, working alongside the Department of Internal Affairs, is considering the feasibility of booth voting, including required changes to regulations.

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

No specific action is recommended.

Topic 10: Customer Services and Relationship with Iwi

Submissions

Marc Cunningham (028), Gill Duncan - Taihape Community Board (035) and Greg Smith (038) and Peter and Darryl Cousins (043)

Summary of Submissions

Submitter 028 raised concerns about customer service at the Council office.

Submitter 035, the Taihape Community Board, acknowledges the important role the Taihape Library plays in the community. Noting that it particularly shone during the recent weather event that took out our power, cellphone connections and closed our roads. The submitter thanks all Customer Experience staff and supporters.

Submitter 038 raises concerns about Council's commitment to being a trusted partner with iwi. They raise concern about wider community engagement and suggest a closer relationship with community committees.

Submitter 043's comments relate to how Council staff interact with ratepayers. They are concerned that a letter they received is not helpful as it did not provide a link to the relevant standard that the swimming pool fence needed to comply with.

Officer Comment

Submitter 028's comments are noted. Providing quality customer service is a priority for staff and Council is open to feedback on improving services.

Submitter 035's comments on the value of the Taihape Library and the hard work of the customer experience staff are noted.

Regarding submitter 038's comments, Council's strategic framework identifies being a trusted partner with iwi as a core community outcome. Council also has a relationship with community committees and undertakes consultation with the wider community where appropriate.

Regarding submitter 043's comments, New Zealand Standards are copyright protected it would be illegal to provide a link as suggested. The whole of the standard is relevant and should also be read in conjunction with the Building Code Clause F9/AS1. Officers note that there is information available about Swimming and Spa Pools on Council's website: [Swimming and Spa Pools: Rangitikei District Council](#)

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

No specific action is recommended.

Topic 11: Publications

Submissions

Jessica Torstonson (016) and Lynne Sheridan (033)

Summary of submissions

Submitter 016 suggests Council advertises the consultation more publicly.

Submitter 033 raises concerns about the information provided in the newspaper, suggesting there wasn't enough information on the use of rates, projects, budgets and progress.

Officer Comment

Submitter comments are noted.

Officers agree that ensuring people know about consultations is critical. Council promotes consultations across a range of channels (social media, website, community committees, community newsletters and newspapers, and Councillors promote through their own channels. Officers regularly review how reach and engagement can be improved - including where and how often we advertise, and which channels are most effective in our district. Specific ideas for gaining a wider reach are welcomed.

Council has recently made changes to our newspaper page (Rangitikei Connect), moving to a larger monthly format so more content can be included. This includes new sections like "Your rates at work" to better show where funding is going and what it supports. More detailed information about projects was provided in the consultation material Where's Annual Plan & Co @ Rangitikei.

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

No specific action is recommended.

Topic 12: Social Media

Submissions

Jessica Torstonson (016) and Marc Cunningham (028)

Summary of submissions

Submitter 016 and 028 raise concerns about Council's communications approach, particularly on social media.

Officer Comment

Submitter comments are noted.

Officers aim to communicate in a way that is clear, accessible, and engaging for our community. Some channels, particularly social media, use a more informal tone to help make Council work easier to understand and more approachable. It is noted that this style will not resonate with everyone. Officers note that this approach is limited to social media. Our formal communications (including reports, consultation documents, newspaper features, website) follow a more traditional tone.

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

No specific action is recommended.

Activity – Infrastructure

Topic 1	<i>Stormwater</i>
Topic 2	<i>Wastewater</i>
Topic 3	<i>Water</i>
Topic 4	<i>Projects</i>
Topic 5	<i>Solid Waste</i>
Topic 6	<i>Parks and Reserves</i>

Topic 1: Stormwater

Submission

Belinda Howard – Chapters Bookshop (010)

Summary of submission

Submitter 010 notes that Council does not seem to undertake any proactive maintenance of its stormwater pipe network. The submitter states that they enquired how often the pipes were flushed to remove debris and buildup and was told: “There is no regular inspection done on the network; however, we do regular inspections of known problem areas prior to a weather event. We will check other areas as and when they are brought to our attention if they are problematic for residents.” The submitter suggest that this approach is to wait until a pipe becomes completely blocked and water backs up causing flooding, then say “Oops” and do something; noting that this is too late for the property owner who has sustained preventable flood damage.

This submitter is concerned with Council’s approach to maintaining and managing its stormwater network. They outline that flooding is a major hazard in our urban areas and that given the projected increase in both frequency and severity of heavy rain events as a result of climate change, it would seem that a proactive approach to managing stormwater would be sensible. That it would save money in the long term and would also reduce the risk of flood damage for residents and businesses. They clarify that they mean the pipes that carry the water rather than the grates that cover the intakes to the stormwater network.

Officer Comment

The submitter’s comments are noted.

Officers would like to clarify that regular inspection of all the piped stormwater network is not achievable due to the cost associated with camera inspections of any piped network.

To mitigate the risk of blockages in the piped network, we look at long-term performance of the network and identify areas that have regular issues and blockages and then target our spending on

those areas. During rainfall events Council's operations team can check the flow of water in areas of potential concern by opening manholes and visually checking the flow of water.

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

No specific action is recommended.

Topic 2: Wastewater

Submission

Justin Adams - Hunterville Community Committee (023)

Summary of submission

Submitter 023, the Hunterville Community Committee notes that the Annual Plan shows Capital Expenditure for the Hunterville Community for Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrades. The Committee is pleased to see spending on vital infrastructure for Hunterville and asks that it is kept up to date on these works as they progress during the Annual Plan year.

Officer Comment

The submitter's request is noted.

The expenditure identified for the Hunterville Wastewater Treatment Plant is part of a three year works programme and Council is entering the final stages of this programme. For this coming financial year Council is focusing on reinforcing the pond banks for the Hunterville Wastewater Treatment Plant, looking at upgrades for the clarifier, and considering improvements to sludge management.

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

No specific action is recommended.

Topic 3: Water

Submissions

Marc Cunningham (028), Gill Duncan - Taihape Community Board (035) and Felicity Wallace – Interested Residents of Marton and Rangitikei (041)

Summary of submissions

Submitter 028 states that the water is undrinkable. They indicate that it smells bad and has caused skin problems for them.

Submitter 035, the Taihape Community Board note that the Taihape wastewater network improvements for efficiency are important to the town. The Community Board are keen to support the communications around how households, who are directly affected, are enabled to address remediation on private property. They also request that the new and separate charges for water from Central Districts Water (CDW) are broken down and communicated with communities as soon as possible.

The submitter indicates that they are supportive of the new CDW CCO water entity. However, they note that with water Boards and governance moving further away from local delivery they expect Community Boards to be enabled to provide that much needed link to communities and lived experience.

Submitter 041 questions what is Council's plan for re-organisation and restructuring when Water Done Locally comes into effect?

Submitter 041 also notes that asset management/development should be aligned with recent consultant prepared models: 3 Waters Strategy Growth Assessments (1-4) for each of the Rangitikei urban centres and also the associated flood modelling scenarios prepared for Council.

Officer Comment

In response to submitter 028's comment, officers note that the Marton Water Strategy work that is underway will improve the Marton's drinking water quality.

Submitter 35's request to be made aware of, and involved in, the communication with households regarding the wastewater network improvements for efficiency work is noted.

Submitter 035's comments on a desire for Central District's Water to work closely with Community Boards in the future are noted. Officers are not able to comment further on how the new CCO may utilise and work with Community Boards, as this will be a matter for the CCO to decide.

Submitter 41's comments on the future structure of Council are noted.

The future Asset Management Plans for the Three Waters will be aligned with the modelling referred to but these will be subject to how the Central Districts Water CCO wants to process and produce these.

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

No specific action is recommended.

Topic 4: Projects

Submissions

Lynne Sheridan (033), Greg Smith (038), Justin Adams (039) and Felicity Wallace – Interested Residents of Marton and Rangitikei (041)

Summary of submissions

Submitter 033 comments that projects do not seem to get completed by Council. They note that little information has been provided on the new Marton Offices and that Council's approach to the Marton to Bulls Wastewater Project seems to be a design as you go project, not an efficient way to build something and the costs seem not to matter.

Submitter 038 suggests that projects in the Long Term Plan can be deferred and delayed with no negative effects such as the land based wastewater projects at Taihape, Ratana, and Bulls. This submitter notes that the Government's changes to the Wastewater Treatment requirements means that putting in a system that goes far and beyond minimum requirements is not recommended. The submitter also questions the involvement of iwi in these projects to-date.

Submitter 038 also requests that Council stop investing in "vanity projects" like the Council buildings. They state that this is not required under the EQ changes, and now represents a waste that the public can no longer afford. The submitter states that considering the Council may not even exist in 3 years time, means Council needs to be cognisant that the current membership will be held to account for all unnecessary expenditure.

Submitter 039 outlines their desire to see Council focus to get the key projects back on track and/or on budget.

The submitter notes that this is the second Annual Plan where important details, updates and costs for the Marton Swim Centre are released after consultation for the Annual Plan begins, meaning the Swim Centre is avoided in Annual Plan deliberations. The submitter indicates that there is sufficient "public interest" that it should have been included and raises concern (whether true or not) that it looks like Council is hiding something. The submitter requests that the Council advise the public what costs are being funded by the "private funder" and what costs ratepayers are bearing. The submitter suggests that it is of concern that each time this project is updated the budget seems to double (Originally \$1m then \$2.7m now its \$6m).

Submitter 039 seeks an independent review of the Marton Water Strategy Project. After six years and \$3,800,000 spent (one third of the \$11m budget), effectively nothing has been achieved. Council must show the ratepayers that there will be accountability on this issue which is one of the highest priorities for Marton Residents. Council must adhere to the Local Government Act and show transparency to the public on this issue.

Submitter 039 outlines that they are concerned that the below projects are all over the original budget and they have not actually started construction:

- Ratana Wastewater – Budget \$8m – Spent \$1.5m – Expected Final Cost \$9m
- Marton EOC – Originally presented to Council as \$1m last year, now in April 2026 it sits at \$2m
- Marton Swim Centre – Budget \$2.7m – Spent \$642,000 – Expected Final Cost \$6m

The submitter recommends that a thorough review of all projects is undertaken with the view of establishing if Council is capable of delivering the projects well, on-time, on budget and as advertised to the ratepayer.

Submitter 041 requests to know what budgets have been spent & are available for the Marton to Bulls wastewater centralisation and Marton Water Strategy projects?

Further regarding the Marton Water Strategy, the submitter notes that the Annual Report for 2023/24 states that “Construction of the new plant will start in the new financial year” i.e. 2024/2025. An article in the Manawatu Standard dated 17 April 2026 now states this work will not go ahead and that Council has other options. On this basis the submitter asks what funds have been spent on this project that hasn’t gone ahead?

Submitter 041 states that Council commissioned a comprehensive report on the Marton Swim Centre yet selected the least preferred option and ignored the report findings that capex over a number of years would be required to bring the centre up to the required standard. What progress has been made on this project?

Submitter 041 What is the status of the proposed Council Building modernisation project taking into account Central Government intent and directives?

Officer Comment

Officer comments for submission 033:

Officers can clarify that the plans for the new Marton Office/Community Hub building have not been finalised through Council and are still in the design phase. Council will share all information with the community once this work has progressed to an appropriate stage.

In regards to the Marton to Bulls Wastewater Project, Council is working in conjunction with all stakeholders to identify the preferred option. The Best Practicable Option (BPO) phase of the project is a standard phase for all wastewater discharge consents and needs to be completed before the application for the new Discharge Consent can be submitted. The change to the new national Wastewater Discharge Standards has delayed the BPO process.

Officer comments for submission 038:

The submitters comments are noted.

With regards to the Wastewater Treatment Projects for Bulls, Ratana and Taihape these projects are in different stages. All projects are being considered in the context of the changes introduced by the Government to the Wastewater Treatment and Discharge requirements. Information on these projects including progress against scope, schedule and budget, is made publicly available as part of the Assets/Infrastructure Committee meetings.

The submitter's comments on "vanity projects" are noted. Council must consider every project holistically and decide whether they are necessary and affordable for our community.

Officer comments for submission 039:

Submitter 039's comments are noted.

Council often has many projects (many are small and considered "business as usual" type projects) underway at any given time. These projects are generally delivered 'on time' and within operational budgets. Larger projects are more complex in nature and can be delayed for a variety of reasons including due to legislative changes. Officers aim to ensure that Council is transparent and accurate in all project updates and that these are made available to the public as appropriate.

In regards to the submitters comments on the Marton Water Strategy, there has been continuous reporting on progress with this project, and all the reporting is available to the public. Please refer to Council's website here for more information on this project: [Marton Water Supply Strategy: Rangitikei District Council](#)

The money spent to date on this project includes the construction of the new production bore, a new water take consent for that bore and the collection of a large amount of data on the water quality from the available bores and the suitability of different treatment processes for this water source.

Marton pool – the comments are noted.

Officer comments for submission 041:

Marton to Bulls – money spent to date is \$3.1 million and \$79 million available.

Marton Water Strategy – A total of \$3.8m million has been spent to date and as stated above this includes the construction of the new production bore, a new water take consent for that bore and the collection of a large amount of data on the water quality from the available bores and the suitability of different treatment processes for this water source. The change in direction from previous reporting is due to the increase in Capital and Operational costs identified during the trialling phase of the work mentioned above. Please refer to Council's website here for more information on this project: [Marton Water Supply Strategy: Rangitikei District Council](#)

Marton Swim Centre – The construction contract has been awarded and construction will start soon. Please refer to Council's website here for more information on this project: [Marton Swim Centre: Rangitikei District Council](#)

Marton Offices – The new Marton Office/Community Hub building is in the design phase. Once this has been completed, it will be presented to Council for decisions regarding the next steps.

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

No specific action is recommended.

Topic 5: Solid Waste

Submissions

Gill Duncan - Taihape Community Board (035) and Te Aroha Hira Tapui Limited – Hira Community Group (048)

Summary of submissions

Submitter 035 – Taihape Community Board supports the diversion of 1,200 tonnes of waste away from landfill and more sustainable waste management. More efficiency vs expansion is desirable.

Submitter 048 formally proposes a strategic shift in our district's waste management framework. To better align with national environmental targets and ensure equitable public health outcomes, they propose that the Council implement a Rates-Funded Standard Service consisting of one 80-litre rubbish bin per rateable property, with the cost incorporated into a Targeted Rate.

The submitter outlines what they consider to be the problem with the current "User-Pays" bag system. They indicated that while this system intended to incentivise waste reduction, it creates several unintended consequences including what they identify as being: public health risks, inequity and inconsistency.

The submitter then outlines why they consider that their proposal is legally supported in New Zealand legislation - referring to the Waste Minimisation Act 2008 and the Local Government Act 2002.

Submitter 048 proposes the Council adopts a "Hybrid-Incentive" 80L wheelie bin model and that Council uses the Waste Management and Minimisation Bylaw to prohibit the placement of non-council bags on the kerb, ensuring the 80L cap is respected.

The submitter requests that the Council formally investigate the feasibility of this "80L Base Service" and initiate mandatory legal procedures to put it into practice including review of the Waste Management and Minimisation Plan, undertaking a Section 17A Service Review, amending its Long Term Plan, and updating its Solid Waste Bylaws.

Officer Comment

Officers acknowledge the comments from submitter 35.

Officers note the proposal outlined by submitter 048. It is important to note that the "User Pays Bag System" is no longer in use in the district. A variety of service providers now provide wheelie bin services across the district.

Council reviewed and updated its Waste Management and Minimisation Plan (WMMP) last year in 2025 and this plan is next scheduled for review in 2030 to ensure that the review is completed within the 6 year time specified by section 50(1)(b) of the Waste Minimisation Act 2008. As part of the recent WMMP update, Council also completed a Section 17A Service Review.

Officers consider that if Council wishes to review the collection of solid waste within the district this could be done as part of the 2027-37 Long Term Plan process.

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

No specific action is recommended.

Topic 6: Parks and Reserves

Submissions

Gill Duncan - Taihape Community Board (035)

Summary of submissions

Submitter 035 – Taihape Community Board notes that Memorial Park (the Park) has been rated only second in the North Island for Equestrian events. The consistently great condition of the grounds for sporting events is also of great importance. The submitter thanks the Council’s Parks and Reserves Team for their expertise and hard work in maintaining this facility.

Officer Comment

Officers note submitter 035s comments and will pass these on to the Parks Team.

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

No specific action is recommended.

Activity – Property

Topic 1	<i>New Toilet Facility – Taihape Grandstand</i>
Topic 2	<i>Omatane Hall</i>
Topic 3	<i>Kokako Street Hall</i>
Topic 4	<i>Marton School Playground</i>

Topic 1: New Toilet Facility – Taihape Grandstand

Submissions

Taine Knight - Utiku & Old Boys RFC (015), Peter Kipling Arthur - Taihape Heritage Grandstand Sub Committee (027), GP Duncan (029), Gill Duncan - Taihape Grandstand Restoration Committee (034), Gill Duncan - Taihape Community Board (035) and Charlotte Oswald - Taihape Playground Group (045)

Summary of submissions

The submitters are all seeking that Council allocate budget in the 2026/27 Annual Plan for a new toilet facility to be installed in the Taihape Grandstand as part of the restoration project. Some of the reasons provided for this request include:

- The existing toilet block is old and not fit for purpose as it is dangerous for children to use, inadequate for the mobility challenged and the stalls are too small for general use.
- The removal of the existing toilets will better enable the reutilization of this space and help to facility the development of the new Taihape Playground.
- There is a need to implement renovations and improvements as outlined in the Council's Property Review and Maintenance Schedule 2023. Which encourages the creation, facilitation, and contribution to collaborative and community-led partnerships. Additionally, it underscores the importance of celebrating and developing our cultural identity, heritage, and history by promoting and showcasing the district's history and culture.
- Toilets within the grandstand would re-establish the grandstand's multi-use purpose.

Submitter 034 specifically requests \$256,000 be put into the 2026/27 budget to build the required new Public Toilet facility in the Taihape Grandstand footprint. This is a provisional figure, as in the BQH QS updated 5-Oct-25, until quotes for this work can be obtained.

Officer Comment

The submitters' comments are acknowledged. The need for a new toilet facility to replace the current facilities at Memorial Park on the Loader Avenue side of the park has previously been discussed at Memorial Park User Group meetings, and as part of the consultation process with user groups for the Taihape Domain Master Plan.

While there are public toilets at the rear of the Ngā Awa block (at the Weka Street entrance to the park), the Taihape Domain Master Plan [finalised in 2023] Conclusion & Recommendations (Page 23) notes the newly proposed playground would require the removal of the existing public toilet and a new public toilet facility created nearby, possibly integrated into the Taihape Grandstand with exterior access. A site for new toilets has not been confirmed by Council.

Council has an agreed Level of Service performance measure that all new/renovated toilets comply with the appropriate New Zealand Standards and CPTED (Crime Prevent Through Environmental Design). It is acknowledged that the present public toilets in the vicinity of Loader Avenue do not meet current standards and CPTED recommendations, e.g. no direct access and no accessible access.

Submitter 34 has requested a provisional sum of \$256,000 be allocated for new Public Toilets, as per the BQH Quantity Survey requested by TGRC /information provided to Council staff in October 2025. For information, the Te Āhuru Mōwai Playground toilets, adjacent to Marton RSA & Citizens Memorial Hall, which were installed in 2020/21, cost \$166,630 excluding GST for a 2-cubicle stand-alone facility.

Submitter 34 has requested that the sum be provisional as costs are not known, and that the funding be allocated in 2026/27 year. As of 1 May 2026, it was anticipated that the Grandstand construction would commence in August 2027. If Council determined that funding should be provided for new toilets, potentially it could be allocated in the 2027/28 financial year.

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

That Council consider including the location and allocation of funding for the new toilets at Taihape Memorial Park as part of the Long Term Plan 2027-37.

Topic 2: Omatane Hall

Submissions

Anna McCartin - Omatane Domain Board (022)

Summary of submissions

Submitter 022 writes on behalf of the Omatane Domain Board, to request funding towards replacement heating and repairs and maintenance for the Omatane Hall.

The submitter outlines that the Hall is 90 years old this year. It has been, and remains an integral part of the Omatane area, and is used and appreciated by many, as a community wide asset. The Domain Board maintain the Hall to a high standard with the limited resources and funding.

The submitter outlines how a Council review of the facility resulted in the fireplace (which is the only source of heating) being condemned and that any further use is at their risk. As such they are no longer operating the fireplace.

The submitter notes that they are not in a financial position to be able to replace the heating source without some support from Council. The Domain Board have looked into replacement heating sources and consider that a woodburner is the most appropriate option. They have received a preliminary quote from Hogan Plumbing (attached to their submission), to have a woodburner installed - the quote is \$9,594.21 (inc. GST).

The submitter states that they applied to the Duddings Trust for hall maintenance funding and were successful in the 2025/26 year, receiving a grant of \$14,000 – this was prior to the fireplace inspection and so this was not a consideration in a grant application. The grant was towards a new kitchen and ladies/cloakroom vinyl flooring, remaining internal painting and towards the required fix of the ladies bathroom base floor. Unfortunately, on closer inspection of the ladies bathroom base floor by two building companies (Fred Hammer and Baird Built), it appears there has been a plumbing failure and the base floor is rotten and needs replacing. The underlying plumbing / storm water drainage has been identified as the source of the rotting and also needs fixing/replacing.

The submitter received two quotes from the above building companies and these were for an average cost of \$20,000 to do an acceptable (not complete) fix for the ladies bathroom issues.

The Omatane Domain Board's current balance of funds is \$21,561.07 - inclusive of the \$14,000 Duddings Trust funds which must be spent on the flooring project. The remaining \$7,000 will not cover the plumbing/storm water fixes or replacement of the fireplace, nor leave a contingency fund.

The submitter requests that Council consider contributing towards the required works for the Omatane Hall, and work with the Board on a funding solution to ensure our Hall meets public health and safety requirements and can be heated this coming winter.

Officer Comment

The submitter's request is noted. Typically, Council's rural halls receive the majority of their funding from JBS Dudding Trust, who have provide grants for maintenance and renewal programmes specifically for these halls. In this instance, officers note that Omatane Domain Board sought and received funding from JBS Dudding Trust for a project, before they became aware that their source of heating was unable to be used, and that there were plumbing and drainage issues that required fixing before their planned project could be implemented.

Being unable to complete their JBS Dudding Trust funded project first, means they are unable to submit an accountability report for the \$14,000 allocated to them in the 2025/26 year, and therefore, will not be able to apply in the 2026/27 year. As the Domain Board is not a registered Charity or Incorporated Society, it does limit who they can apply to, although potentially they could apply to Lottery Community – Community Matters, and to Four Regions Trust.

If Council determines to contribute toward heating, a second quote for the woodburner should be sought in line with Council's procurement policy for works of a greater value than \$5,000.

Recommendation

That Council does / does not [delete one] allocate funding of up to \$XXX (GST exclusive) to the Omatane Domain Board for heating and/or plumbing and drainage works at the Omatane Hall to be undertaken in the 2025/26 financial year. If approved, funding is to be provided from additional operational budget that will be funded through the General Rate.

Actions

That Council's funding is subject to a second quote being sought for the installation of a heat source at the Omatane Hall.

Topic 3: Kokako Street Hall and Taihape Projects

Submissions

Gill Duncan - Taihape Community Board (035)

Summary of submissions

Submitter 035 - Taihape Community Board notes that the Taihape Town Hall project is long awaited. The submitters comments that this building is the civic heart of Taihape. With this project being pushed out to 2027, the Kokako Street Hall continues to be used more and needs upgrades such as an adequate kitchen for users, reglazing of broken windows and hygienic toilet facilities.

Submitter 035 supports the Community/Council collaborative projects that matter so much to Taihape, noting the Hautapu River Parks Project, the Taihape Grandstand Restoration project, and the Memorial Park sport and Taihape Area School outdoor sporting gallery.

Officer Comment

Officers acknowledge the comments from submitter 035.

Officers can confirm that a works order has been issued for the replacement of the cracked glass panes. Budget provision has also been included in the 2025/26 financial year for new furniture for the Hall.

Asset planning assessments identified that, while the hall was generally tidy and functional, the interior presentation is dated and will require redecoration within the next five (5) years (noting that, at the time the assessment was undertaken, this timeframe aligned with the 2029-31 timeframe).

Work is currently underway on the Asset Management Plan for Community and Leisure Assets as part of preparations for the 2027-37 Long Term Plan. The Kokako Street Hall will be considered through this process, including consideration of the future role and use of the facility following completion of the Taihape Town Hall renovations.

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

That officers consider the role and use of the Kokako Street Hall as part of the Asset Management Plan for Community and Leisure which shall feed into the development of the 2027-37 Long Term Plan.

Topic 4: Marton School Playground

Submission

Sara McCartney – Marton School (047)

Summary of submission

Submitter 047 comments that the Marton School Playground has not been updated for 25 years and it is old, outdated and in need of an upgrade. Marton School is in the process of upgrading the foundations under the playground.

The submitter is seeking financial support from Council towards the upgrading the school's playground. The submitter outlines why they are seeking this funding now and the fact that the playground and school grounds are open to (and well utilised by) the wider community.

The submitter has attached a letter that details the playground the School is looking at installing (funding dependent) and some details about the school.

Officer Comment

Officers acknowledge the submitters' comments. It should be noted that schools are generally responsible for maintaining and upgrading their own playgrounds, typically funded in practice by a combination of Ministry funding, school operational funding, fundraising and donations, and external grants.

In 2020/21, a grant of \$50,000 was provided to Marton School through Council's Parks Upgrade Partnership Fund. The grant contributed towards the development of a pump track at the school. While the facility was not located on Council owned land, Council supported the application on the basis that the pump track would be publicly accessible, and Council did not have a comparable facility within its own parks network.

The Parks Upgrades Partnership fund was discontinued in 2023/24. Council currently owns and maintains several playgrounds within Marton for public use; one such playground is within easy walking distance to Marton School.

Marton School is eligible to apply to the Community Initiatives Fund, which next opens in July 2026. They would also be eligible to apply for funding from several external funders.

Recommendation

That Council does / does not [delete one] provide a grant of \$XXX (excluding GST) towards the upgrade of the Marton School playground. If approved, funding is to be provided from additional operational budget that will be funded through the General Rate.

Actions

That Council's Funding Specialist liaise with Marton School to ensure they are aware of external funding opportunities.

Activity – Roding

Topic 1	<i>Condition of Road and Footpaths</i>
Topic 2	<i>Roding Budget and Transparency</i>
Topic 3	<i>Information on Roding Projects</i>
Topic 4	<i>Roding Projects</i>

Topic 1: Condition of Road and Footpaths

Submissions

Marc Cunningham (028), Lynne Sheridan (033) and Gill Duncan - Taihape Community Board (035)

Summary of submissions

Submitter 028 notes the roads and footpaths are terrible, potholes and large undulations in the road, the drains flood after every heavy rain, on some of the streetsthe lights are on the side of the road without a footpath.

Submitter 033 suggests that given the continued failure of sections of Williamsons Line due to higher heavy vehicle volumes traveling to Bonny Glen Landfill (12 March, Roding Funding report, p 108) the Landfill business could be charged through their rates as an exacerbator of the problems on Williamson Line. Maybe something to consider for the next LTP consultation.

Submitter 033 also notes that Williamsons Line and Taihape - Napier Rd are causing delays for other roading sites in need of repair. Council should consider letting the site failures on Taihape - Napier Rd revert back to a metal surface. The rest of the district's roads, should not be penalised because of the Taihape - Napier Rd. Maybe the logging trucks should be paying for the repairs if they are the exacerbators.

Submitter 035 – Taihape Community Board thank Downers NZ for the delivery of service that has seen local improvements already. The maintenance of the Gentle Annie Road has high importance for Taihape with many of our youth travelling away to schools, stock movements, fuel and everyday goods taking this route. Taihape Community Board thanks RDC for the installation of the Flagtraks that will add to travelers' and local experience of our town and activities.

Officer Comment

In response to submitter 028's comments, officers need more detail to be able to better understand the matters raised by this submitter. However, if residents note issues with potholes or safety concerns with footpaths etc. then Council has a customer request for service system (RFS). Any request made through this system is assigned to an officer and assessed to understand whether it is something that needs urgent attention or consideration as part of Council's wider maintenance and renewals programme.

Officers note submitter 033's comments about heavy traffic on Williamsons Line, however, it is difficult to apply bespoke agreements with certain road users. Heavy transport operators contribute to our road maintenance costs through the National Land Transport Fund (NLTF) which is made up of revenue collected from fuel excise duty, road user charges, vehicle and driver registration and licensing. By law, NLTF money has to be invested in land transport.

With regards to submitter 033's comment on the Taihape - Napier Road, this road provides strategic, inter-regional linkage and had significant investment in 2009 to complete sealing of the road. Council only has so much money available to invest in roads. How this money is prioritised is carefully considered by Council through its Long Term and Annual Plan processes.

Officers note the Taihape Community Board's comments and have passed on the thanks to Downers NZ.

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

No specific action is recommended.

Topic 2: Roding Budget and Transparency

Submissions

Tim Matthews (031) and Ian Strahan and Laura Morrison – Federated Farmers (036)

Summary of submissions

Submitter 031 notes that Council's Roding activity is not divided between sealed, unsealed, bridge repairs, street furniture or unsubsidised roding expenditure. The submitter indicates that they do not know how much is spent on maintenance of halls, parks, cemeteries, or public toilets. The submitter states that published Council minutes or order papers, or the Annual Report give no clues unless there is a specific request or variation. The submitter questions whether this is because managers are afraid to be tied to budgets, or if it's easier for Council when the public do not know what is in each category of expenditure.

Submitter 031 notes that page 21 of the Supporting Documents does not show or record what income will be received from roding rates but a process of deduction suggests that it is \$9.117 million. They question why this was excluded.

Submitter 031 asks how much expenditure is unsubsidised by the FAR rate, being footpaths or street furniture, or lighting? They note that last year we failed to meet our target for metaling unsealed roads and questions why? The submitter highlights the impact on road users of council not meeting this target.

Submitter 036 – Federated Farmers, request that the Council clearly identify funding sources for rural road maintenance in the Annual Plan and Revenue and Financing Policy. They seek greater transparency as farmers are seeing a higher rate increase than many other ratepayers, and it is not clear how this money is being spent. The submitter notes that the maintenance and improvement of the rural roading network is virtually the only Council activity that farmers get a direct benefit from.

Submitter 036 highlights the economic significance of farming in Rangitikei District which makes road maintenance vitally important. The submitter is concerned about the proportion of rates farmers are being asked to pay for roading compared to the general rate.

Submitter 036 notes that ‘roading and footpaths’ are expected to make up 38.56% of the Council’s operating expenditure in 2026/27, yet account for only 24.1% of the Council’s rates. The submitter notes that Council’s Annual Plan supporting documentation is unclear on Council’s rate funding sources for roading. They also indicate that Council’s Revenue and Financing Policy seems to be indicative of a ‘slush fund’ approach to managing roading revenue and expenditure which they do not feel is appropriate.

The submitter identifies that the Council’s road maintenance and upgrading targets for the previous year have not been met, with only 4% of sealed road network having been resealed in 2025/26 (compared to a target of 6%) and only 9,113m³ re-metalling of unsealed roads achieved in 2025/26, against a target of 12,000m³. They note that this was on the back of a rates increase in the 2025/26 Annual Plan of 7.9%. The submitter acknowledges Council’s effort to reduce the proposed rates increase from the Long Term Plan projection of 10.75% to 6.4% but are reluctant to endorse the proposed rates increases for farmers when road maintenance and upgrading targets have not been met for the last lot of rates raises farmers had.

Officer Comment

Response to comments from submitter 031:

In relation to submitter 031’s comments on how Council reports its expenditure, Council follows a reporting layout in accordance with local government legislation. To vary from this, would create unnecessary complexity and cost in relation to both the reporting system and the reporting process.

For clarity, Council reports its capital spend across three categories, which are – to meet additional demand, improve the level of service, or replace existing assets. Council’s Roading Manager also presents a programme of work to Council for approval which could be shared with our communities. The Roading Manager is able to report on expenditure against sealed, unsealed, bridge repairs and unsubsidised roading.

There are a number of checks and balances throughout the year, including reviews by the Finance/Performance Committee and also by the Risk/Assurance Committee. Council also produces an Annual Report, and this is audited by Audit New Zealand. In all situations variances to our budgeted spend have to be reported. This is visible to Council and to our community.

In response to the submitters' observation that the supporting information for the Annual Plan 2026/27 did not include what income will be received from roading rates, officers can confirm that this information was omitted by error. Officers thank the submitter for identifying this issue, and it will be corrected in the final Annual Plan 2026/27. The submitter is correct, the statement is missing targeted rates of \$9.117million, which along with \$1.061 million movement in cash and reserves, makes up the total \$10.178 million non-subsidised expenditure for Roading. This expenditure covers the 34% local share of all NZTA subsidised Roading Activity for both Operational and Capital expenditures along with the other unsubsidised Roading Activity, finance costs and the share of council overhead attributed to roading. Addressing the specific question around non-subsidised street cleaning and lighting, these are budgeted in the 2026/27 Annual Plan at \$360k and \$71k respectively.

Response to comments from submitter 036:

As covered above in greater detail, Council follows a reporting layout in accordance with local government legislation for its expenditure.

There has been no change in the Revenue and Financing Policy to allow for any material changes in the funding of General Rates or Roading as this is typically an LTP process.

Officers would like to clarify that Council does not operate 'slush funds' as the submitter suggests. The Funding Impact Statement is clear on the subsidy from Waka Kotahi NZTA, rate funding and the use of cash reserves, and debt. Because Roading is a targeted reserve, any unspent funding at the end of a year must sit in a targeted reserve to be used for future roading work (i.e. it cannot be used for other activities and will be held in reserve and used for Roading). Officers consider this to be an acceptable and transparent approach and note that this is audited at the end of each financial year.

Officers acknowledge the submitter's comments around their concern about the proportion of rates farmers are being asked to pay for roading compared to the general rate. This can be considered by Council as part of the Rating Review for the 2027-37 Long Term Plan.

The submitter also questions why Council was not able to meet some of the targets set for Roading. Officers can clarify that Council was unable to deliver against our target of spreading 12,000m³ of metal due to cost increases. Instead of the targeted 12,000m³ only 9113m³ was delivered. Officers try to account for cost increases when setting the budget but these sometimes prove to be inadequate for actual increases.

Council was also unable to deliver against its target of sealing 6% of the road network due to a combination of forced deferrals (i.e. the contractor could not complete the programme) and increased costs. Officers note that the 2027-30 National Land Transport Programme is under preparation currently, the cubic metres of gravel and sealing of roads levels of service and the budget required to fund these activities is under review as part of this work.

Officer would like to clarify that Council does not measure roughness on unsealed roads. Instead, the maintenance activities are driven by physical inspections and grading programmes.

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

No specific action is recommended.

Topic 3: Information on Roothing Projects

Submissions

Lynne Sheridan (033) and Felicity Wallace – Interested Residents of Marton and Rangitikei (041)

Summary of submissions

Submitter 033 comments that there is no indication of what Roothing projects are ahead and that this is Council most expensive activity. They indicate that the supporting documents do not provide any details i.e. ratepayers don't know where/when/if any of this work will take place. They ask how the community can be effectively consulted with, without this information.

Submitter 041 asks what roading projects are forecast for the year? They note that the Annual Plan suggests that 16,000 vehicles move through the district on average per day using local roads, i.e. at ratepayers' expense. However, they feel that the State Highways take the bulk of that traffic and at no direct cost to ratepayers.

Officer Comment

The submitters comments are noted.

Officers advise that Council's roading improvement programme of approx. \$12 million for 2024-27 was declined by Waka Kotahi NZTA. Instead, Waka Kotahi NZTA approved approx. \$2.4 million over the 2024-27 period to fund 'resilience type projects' these projects include Waiaruhe Road slip repair and Pourewa Stream rock protection works for the 2026/27 financial year.

Waka Kotahi NZTA also approved \$2.8 million extra funding to offset unplanned works on Taihape-Napier Road for the 2026/27 financial. Council's local share of this work is approx. \$957,000.

As these projects are not major works they were not required to be consulted on. Officers will provide regular updates to the Council over the coming financial year on the progress of these works.

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

No specific action is recommended.

Topic 4: Roading Projects

Submissions

Justin Adams – Hunterville Community Committee (023)

Summary of submissions

Submitter 023 requests that Council explores cutting the roadside curb outside the Hunterville Swimming Pool to provide disabled access to the pool and rugby clubrooms.

Officer Comment

The submitters comments are noted.

Council has been exploring the possibility of the addition of a mobility/disability car park at the Hunterville Pool to provide access for people who are disabled. Staff are currently preparing an engineered design solution which will include plans and supporting costing estimates. This will be provided to support an external funding application for the project.

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for this submission point.

Actions

Staff will continue with the current exploration of adding a mobility/disability park to the Hunterville Pool to provide access to the pool for those who are disabled.

Proposed Changes to the Revenue & Finance Policy

Topic 1	<i>Response to Questions: Revenue & Finance Policy</i>
Topic 2	<i>Additional changes to the Revenue & Finance Policy</i>

Topic 1: Response to Questions: Revenue & Finance Policy

Submissions

Do not agree with the proposed changes:

Makere Raktairi (001), Kelsey Barnaby (003), Nikita Tweeddale (005), Melissa Karaynidis (007), Dave Herdson (008), Lynne Sheridan (033), Gregory Smith (038), Felicity Wallace – Interested Residents of Marton And Rangitikei (041) and David Yates (042)

Partially agree with the proposed changes:

Samantha Scott (002), Samantha Scott (002), Steph Boerboom (004), Kayla (009), Samantha (011), Charity (014), Jessica Torstonson (016), Adina Foley (018), Kathleen Te Momo-Smith (025), Marc Cunningham (028), Libby Rayner (030), Chad Mckelvie (032) and Daniel Duxfield (046)

Agree with the proposed changes:

Paul (006), Jason Port (012), Alexander Owen-Cooper (017) and Jo Rangooni (024)

Summary of submissions

Do not agree with the proposed changes:

Of the submitters that did not agree with the proposed changes to the Revenue & Finance Policy, several are asking that the rates do not increase, a further two (2) submitters do not agree with the Policy and one (1) submitter specifically does not support debt funding activities that span multiple years in order to mitigate swings in the rates across the years.

Submitter 038 does not agree with PART B. This submitter suggests the reduction of Targeted Rate to Community and Council Boards is anti-democratic and also asks if TRAK is included? The submitter objects to the reduction of subsidies and grants in Libraries and also increases in user fees for the domains.

Submitter 038 also objects to Community Housing being funded heavily through General Rate and suggests this opens the council up to accusations of living beyond their means and supporting non-core business. Similarly with Resource Consents and Civil Defence. The submitter prefers that those requiring consent should be paying the vast majority of costs associated with RC applications.

The submitter also believes that the addition of Grants as a source of funding for solid waste is very suspect and will lead to solid waste operators being in a position to "buy" council agreement on major changes they propose.

In summary this submitter requests that Council does not change to single year thinking. Stick to Terms and the LTP. Only emergency changes should be made annually, and debt should not increase beyond the LTP plans.

Partially agree with the proposed changes:

Submitter 011 suggests that the Revenue and Financing Policy should include stricter 'Return on Investment' criteria for community projects. For example, a project like the Bulls footpath paintings cannot demonstrate a clear community or economic benefit, it should not be funded by general rates.

Submitter 016 notes that they are a believer in “user pays”. For example, recycling and rubbish services provided by RDC - they use these and paying for that is fair. But paying for community housing and roading they already pay into these with tax, registrations and other charges.

Submitter 025 seeks that specific events should not be funded through rates. If they are a business like Markets, Harvest Festivals fees for sellers should increase. This submitter believes that businesses should be charged more.

Submitter 028 believes the information is very convoluted and messy without much explanation.

Submitter 046 believes that people who live rurally - outside of town - should not be paying for in town services like sewage and water.

Agree with the proposed changes:

Submitter 012 note that the policy covers everything in a clear and easy to understand way.

Submitter 024 note that it helps to think of the whole community rural/town, rich/poor, healthy/unhealthy and old/young.

Officer Comment

All of the feedback on the Revenue & Finance Policy is noted.

Regarding the comments from submitter 038, that there is a suggestion that Community and Council Boards are being decreased, officers can confirm that is not correct. Rather the mix of costs have changed as has the mix of targeted rates to general rates for Community Boards. Te Rōpū Ahi Kā Komiti is included in these costs.

Officers also note that the overall mix for libraries has also changed as Council does not receive the same level of subsidies to revenue as it has in the past. Community Housing is funded through both rates and rental income. Resource consents are also a mixture of user-pays and rates revenue due to the requirements to carry out components of the activity that cannot be charged back to a direct user. Officers can also clarify that the Solid Waste subsidy is not from waste operators.

Submitter 011 suggests that Council could be stricter on Return on Investment in the Revenue & Finance Policy. Officers note that this is something that Council can explore but it would sit within the Treasury Policy. This can be reviewed as part of the 2027-37 Long Term Plan.

In response to submitter 025's comments, events such as markets and the Harvest Festival are not funded directly through rates, although they do receive indirect support in some format (e.g. our parks team will prep the space where the market or event is held).

The comments suggest that there is a misunderstanding in part about what our income taxes pay for versus property rates. Officers note that there is a mix of Government Subsidy for our district roads plus property rates, as everyone benefits from these roads. The same with sewerage and water; properties connected pay a targeted uniform annual charge, whereas properties that are not connected (typically rural) do not pay for this. All property owners in the district, however, pay a uniform annual charge for the public good component, as Council believes there is a benefit to having good facilities across our district for our communities and the visitors to our district.

Officers note the comment around the Revenue and Financing Policy looking messy. Officers have shown the proposed changes so our readers can see them. There were more explanations for the proposed changes in the consultation document. The document will be tidied up once finalised.

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

That, additional comms is produced to support greater awareness of Council's services and what Council funds versus Central Government.

Topic 2: Additional changes to the Revenue and Financing Policy

Submissions

Tim Matthews (031), Ian Strahan and Laura Morrison - Federated Farmers (036) and Gregory Smith (038)

Summary of submissions

Submitter 031 asks that Council review the allocation of UAGC and General Rate to achieve a fair and equitable outcome. Also suggests that there is not sufficient distinction between public expenditure and private good. There is comment around Council not predetermining an outcome, and Council requires greater rigor around rating modifications to achieve affordability for certain sections of the community. It is also suggested that Council has policies that can deal with large swings in valuations as part of the revaluation process.

Submitter 036 comments that the Council should fund community leadership activities related to Urban Growth (Plan Change 3), and implementation of actions from the Climate Change Strategy and from Rangitikei Tomorrow – Economic Strategy and Action Plan, including community leadership costs for economic, social and cultural wellbeing associated with these activities - from a targeted rate on urban and 'future urban' properties that receive benefits from those services, and not from any general rate. There is no indication of the split between these funding sources for this activity, yet there is an apparent decrease in sourcing this activity from targeted rates. The submitter again reiterates the need to lift the UAGC to the maximum allowable 30% cap.

There are a number of suggestions where particular rates should not form part of the General Rate, such as economic development, climate change implications on urban growth planning and service costs such as office refurbishments.

Submitter 038 raises a concern around the proposal to include debt funding of operational costs that span multiple years. Suggests this should read multiple terms. The concern is that allowing this could open up spending in an annual plan that has not been considered or consulted on in the Long Term Plan.

Submitter 038 suggests that one-off Grants should not be included in the debt to revenue ratio. There is also a suggestion that Council is changing the sources of funding and wider bands. There is also a comment that Community Housing and Rental Income should not be covered by General Rates.

Officer Comment

Submitter 031 and 036's comments are noted and can be considered in the Rating Review as part of Council's 2027-37 long term planning process.

In response to submitter 038's comments on debt funding of operational costs that span multiple years, this change does not suggest debt funding annual costs. Rather it is acknowledged that there are a couple of significant pieces of work that span multiple years, and due to their cyclical nature should be considered in the long term planning process. Sludge removal or district planning costs are able to be planned for in advance and funded through debt, paid off in the timeframe of the work. For example, rather than increasing rates significantly every five or ten years to remove sludge, Council consistently rates for the costs over the period of time the operational cost lasts and debt fund this upfront cost.

Regarding submitter 038's comment that one-off Grants should not be included in the debt to revenue ratio, the proposed change is simply recognising that Council receives funding for capital works from subsidies, grants or donations. This already happens; it had not previously been acknowledged in the Revenue and Financing Policy. For example, Waka Kotahi NZTA provides a subsidy to cover our road maintenance costs (operational) and roading capital expenditure. This was not reflected for funding of capital in Council's current policy. This is an ongoing subsidy that does form part of our debt to revenue calculation.

In response to submitter 038's other comments on the Revenue and Financing Policy, the graphic design of the "piggies" has been replaced with actual bands for easier reading. Where there has been movement it reflects the reality of the budgeted costs, and maintaining transparency as opposed to covering up any mismanagement of costs. Regarding Community Housing, Council has strived to keep the housing affordable while meeting the legislative healthy homes standards.

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

That officers work with Council to review all targeted, uniform annual charges and UAGC rates, as part of the proposed Rating Review for the 2027-37 Long Term Plan.

Proposed Changes to the Rates Remission Policy

Topic 1	<i>Response to Questions: Rates Remission Policy</i>
Topic 2	<i>Situations that should qualify for a remission</i>
Topic 3	<i>General comments on Rates Remissions Policy</i>

Topic 1: Response to Questions: Rates Remission Policy

Submissions

Do not agree - Makere Raktairi (001), Kelsey Barnaby (003), Nikita Tweeddale (005), Dave Herdson (008), Samantha (011) and Kathleen Te Momo-Smith (025)

Partially agree - Samantha Scott (002), Paul (006), Kayle (009), Charity (014), Taine Knight (015), Marc Cunningham (028), Libby Rayner (030), Chad Mckelvie (032), Gregory Smith (038) and David Yates (042)

Agree – Jason Port (012), Alexander Owen-Cooper (017), Adina Foley (018), Sarah Hale (019), Anna McCartin (022), Jo Rangooni (024), Peter Kipling Arthur (027), Lynne Sheridan (033) and Daniel Duxfield

Summary of submissions

Here is a breakdown of the submitters responses to the consultation question on the proposed changes to Council's Rates Remission Policy:

- Six (6) submitters did not agree with the proposed changes;
- Ten (10) submitters partially agreed with the proposed changes; and
- Nine (9) submitters agreed with the proposed changes.

The submitters that did not agree included comments such as that the cost of living is already high and some do not qualify, so feel they should not subsidise the remission policy. One suggested Council could refrain from increasing rates.

The submitters that partially agreed noted things like that the cost of rates are hard for some of our community and that not everyone who should be eligible for a remission is. One submitter noted that some of the remissions seem reasonable whereas others have nothing to do with them. One submitter suggested that secrecy around who receives a remission is disingenuous. Others indicated that they selected this option as they were unsure.

Of the submitters that agreed only two provided comment. One indicated that the proposed changes seemed reasonable and the other asked that Council ensure we advise to our community the cut-off dates for applications (where applicable).

Officer Comment

Officers note the responses and comments on the proposed changes to the Rates Remission Policy. It is a fine line with rates remissions, supporting the exceptions that require help, and

acknowledging the cost of every remission is picked up by the balance of the community. However, the use of rate remissions is consistent with the Local Government (Rating) Act.

The purpose of Council's Rates Remissions Policy is to outline where Council thinks it is appropriate for a ratepayer to apply for a remission and the criteria that Council will consider in assessing and making a decision on the application. Officers do not consider any further amendments are needed to the Proposed Rates Remission Policy.

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

No specific action is recommended.

Topic 2: Situations that should qualify for a remission

Submissions

Samantha Scott (002), Kathleen Te Momo-Smith (025) and Gregory Smith (038)

Summary of submissions

Submitter 002 suggests that there could be a remission for single people living alone/with children paying all their bills, and also victims of domestic violence leaving dangerous situations.

Submitter 025 reflects the concern of pensioners whose homes values, and therefore rates have increased but acknowledges the existence of the Rate Rebate Scheme.

Submitter 038 states that some land that is entitled to apply for remissions has too many exemptions that the rest of the community is being expected to pay more for e.g., Marae with Kaumatua housing gains relief, but community housing is expected to be funded more by ratepayers.

Officer Comment

The comments in these submissions are noted.

Officers note that the New Zealand Rates Rebate Scheme provides low-income homeowners with a partial discount on their annual council rates. Eligibility is determined by income, dependents, and rates amount. A rebate is not given automatically, and ratepayers must apply for one.

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

No specific action is recommended.

Topic 3: General comments on Rates Remissions Policy

Submission

Gregory Smith (038)

Summary of submission

This submitter suggests that the use of remissions is a disingenuous way to allow more remissions that are secret.

This submitter supports the proposed remission of Water Rates, noting that while it is the user's responsibility, some training in what to do MUST be provided, otherwise council must take some responsibility. The submitter doesn't agree with some of the process around the application and suggests Council re-looks at the wording to make it simpler and more achievable outcome for the applicant. They have also asked if this remission will be passed on to the CD Water authority when they take over?

Submitter 038 comments that the incentivising residential development rates remission on new or relocated dwellings - 11.2. Conditions and criteria. The clauses in this section effectively mean no new incentives will be paid out because the window of opportunity is ridiculously small. By the time this AP is ratified, the deadline of 30 June 2026 will have passed. Only applies to Building consents received BEFORE 30 June 2023 and CoC issued prior to 31 Dec 2024. How many properties could possibly meet that tight criteria? Makes a mockery of the Mayor's announcement that the incentive has been reactivated. Please reconsider the dates.

Submitter 038 comments on Rates Remission on Subdivisions for Residential Purposes change from "will" to "may" without specifying reason for rejection if all the criteria are otherwise met, allows for corrupt processes (favouring one application over another). Either return to "will" or specify which reasons may be used if all the criteria are otherwise met.

Officer Comment

Officers note the submitters comments.

Regarding future policies for Central Districts Water; the CCO will need to decide what policies, they choose to create as part of their charging regime.

Officers can clarify that the setting of the dates was established when this policy was initially created. The amendment is simply confirming the end dates, so the submission of documentation is finalised.

Recommendation

There are no specific officer recommendations for these submission points.

Actions

No specific action is recommended.