

# Memorandum

To: Ratana Community Board

From: Carol Gordon

Date: 10 August 2021

Subject: **Long Term Plan 2021-31 Submission - Response**

Ratana Community Board are thanked for providing a submission to the 2021-31 Long Term Plan process. Council deliberated on the submission points raised at their 9 June 2021 meeting. The Ratana Community Board were provided with an overview of the decisions Council made on submissions via email. A detailed response to each query raised by the Community Board is provided below.

## **Affordability of Rates**

A number of submitters commented on the proposed rates increases, in particular around affordability for communities. Rates affordability is carefully considered by Council when proposing an increase. This year, rates increases have been affected by the revaluation throughout the district completed by Quotable Value New Zealand (QV). Across the District, Residential Capital Values increased significantly in comparison to other areas which means Residential ratepayers were going to receive a significant increase. To mitigate against this Council decided to implement two actions to transfer the rating burden away from Residential Properties:

1. Decrease the Uniform Annual General Charge by more than \$100, and
2. Increase rating differentials on Commercial, Industrial and Utility properties.

## **Ratana Playground**

The existing and upgraded playground will be maintained by Council on completion of the project. This has been confirmed to the Chair of the Rātana Communal Board. Council will continue to support the project but do not have any additional budget currently identified for further financial support over and above what has already been committed.

## **Ratana Community Gym**

Currently there is no budget dedicated to extending the Ratana Community Gym. Officers are open to having discussions with the operators of the Ratana Community Gym around a possible extension.

## **Public Toilet**

There are public toilets available at Ratana. Ratana Pa Communal Trustees are the landowners. Council currently pays for these toilets to be maintained as part of the Ratana Town Contract Council has with the Ratana Communal Board. However, these facilities are not opened on a regular basis and users need to collect a key from one of the dairies. An agreement may be able to be reached about regular, opening hours.

### *Action*

Officers will liaise with the Ratana Communal Board about regular opening hours of the public toilets in Ratana.

### **Footpath/Walkways to Junction**

A number of walking and cycling improvements are programmed for Years 1-3 of the 2021-31 Long Term Plan. These would receive a subsidy subject to approval from Waka Kotahi. A footpath to the Ratana junction has not been programmed for construction or improvement. This footpath has not been assessed as a priority for the first three years of the LTP.

### **Curb and Channelling on Seamer Street**

Seamer Street and Rangatahi Road kerb and channel installation would cost \$35,000. This was not previously planned but can be accommodated under the existing Drainage Renewals programme in Years 1-3 of the 2021-2031 Long Term Plan (still subject to approval from Waka Kotahi).

### *Action*

Seamer Street and Rangatahi Road kerb and channel installation will be completed in Years 1-3 of the 2012-2031 Long Term Plan (subject to approval from Waka Kotahi).

### **Key Choices**

#### Key Choice 1: Free Wifi

In response to a lack of community support, Council will not roll out free wifi in its townships.

#### Key Choice 2: Taihape Grandstand

There was strong support for the Taihape Grandstand. Council decided to continue investigating the refurbishment and restoration of the Taihape Grandstand and has included \$1 million in the budget to complete this work (Council will need to make a final decision in the future on whether or not to complete this work).

#### Key Choice 3: Economic Development

Economic Development will receive additional funding of \$172,500 in year one of the Long Term Plan and \$122,500 there after. There was general community support for investment in this activity. Further reporting to the community will be undertaken to show progress.

#### Key Choice 4: Event Sponsorship Fund

There was strong support for the role events play in marketing the Rangitikei District. The Event Sponsorship Fund has been increased from \$25,000 to \$50,000 per year to enable Council to support more events.

#### Key Choice 5: Joining the LGFA as a guaranteeing member

The Council will become a guaranteeing member of the Local Government Funding Agency.

#### Changes to the Rating System

Council will establish rating differentials of 1.2 for the Commercial and Industrial sectors and 1.5 for the Utilities sector and will reduce the Uniform Annual General Charge to \$500. Council will also engage with the forestry sector to discuss a potential differential on forestry land. It was acknowledged that the property revaluations that are set to apply for this rating year have caused rates to go up unequally, however, the proposed changes creates the best smoothing effect.

Carol Gordon

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