

Long-term Plan 2024–34



Respondent No. 105

Response ID 5651629

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Personal information

First name Geoff

Last name Amos

I'm providing a submission (choose one): as an individual

Do you want to speak to Council about your submission at our public hearings on 2 May? No

Are you happy for your name to be published with your feedback: My name can be published with my feedback

Submission

Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about this LTP?

By now maybe you've caught up with my posts to local social media along with other disgruntled ratepayers hereabouts. I'm hopeful other more public media (many of whom I have contacted), might start picking up on the groundswell of ratepayer dissatisfaction across NZ in these times of the wastrel local bodys' culture.

I don't necessarily subscribe to the current 'Neocon' Govt's approach of throwing the baby out with the bathwater as such but they think the previous, spent to excess so are cutting services to reduce the tax rates... will it work.. who am I to say?!

But local bodies need to tie ho as explained below.

I witnessed in my 47 years of public service in Courts the continuing rise of Local Body excesses.

Incredibly high pay rates and opulence we were gobsmacked at along with increasing abandonment of what many if us expect as core services that we now pay for in addition to rates.

Just look at the collective edifices around Aotearoa.

Fundementally incongruous!

It was difficult to watch as we administrators at Courts performed on a shoestring with restraint and very prudent fiscal spending of public funds. Not so for a few other govt depts though.

We had many good frontline staff defect to local bodies on triple their pay rate for much less

responsibility. Many of us, however, remained in the interests of work believing what we did on lower than many salaries, work that made a difference for the people of Aotearoa.

I took the time to open your submission form.

Please don't seek feedback to suit your final agenda as it sure looks that way to many.

What a loaded form!

Option boxes where all the choices aren't acceptable to me or many others, so I didn't choose either or any and made comments below them suggesting ways that council can achieve savings to avoid hammering ratepayers with their choices of rates increase followed by rates increase followed by rates increases. The way the questions are couched and the lack of compliance from the submissions and from the frequent feedback that I've received discourage citizens from even participating. Probably the root cause behind poor electoral turnouts for local body elections.

Savings, like selling off your over stocked and often unused vehicle fleet and no doubt other nice to haves rather than must haves including selling down some flashy assets and relocate into more modest office accomodation and I bet there are plenty of other ways to find funds (like continuous improvement with many less staff) rather than continually expect ratepayers to find money when you don't appear to be doing anything that demonstrably reduced our council spending. Times are tough for many in the community...you spent up large when things were rosey(bad decision) but don't keep doing that when for the last few years many are going to the wall!

And at the final opportunity in the form to vent my disgust I said:-

"It disturbs me that council's first port of call is to collect more in rates. Life is not like that! You need to cut your cloth for the times. Button off this approach and start looking at ways of saving and reducing expenditure to find the funds to maintain council support for our community. To do that you need to seriously trim your bloated and overspent organisation dramatically and stop this nonsense of thinking we ratepayers will accept continual rates increases. On top of that you've reduced core services so that we have to pay for those on top of rates as well. Disgusting culture.

Many people are really worried they will not be able to continue paying rates where the increases are incessant and percentages are ballooning out of all proportion of reality.

Often it's difficult from within to recognise these things and often those within will totally disagree that the entrenched culture is wrong and excessive. The numbers sitting at the Cafe Novella from the council sucking on coffees and buns at all times of the day when I visit..is an indicator..even if they justify it as socialising (having a meeting) .

I used to process Rating Sale and Mortgagee Sale applications and they are the outcome of expenditure exceeding income. I just hope we don't see an escalation of those because of council and cost if living pressures!

The people have had enough!

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