

# Long-term Plan 2024–34



Respondent No. 358

Response ID 5677991

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## Personal information

First name Chris

Last name Tweedie

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

Please let us know what ward you live in Raumati

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?

Madam/Sir

My wife and I moved to the Kāpiti Coast in December 2019. At that time the rates demand on our three bedroom house was \$3547 per annum.

This (current financial) year, the demand four years later is some \$900 pa more.

With Council's proposed 17% increase, that will increase our annual rates to some \$5700 – an increase of nearly \$2,200 - 61 per cent of that on our arrival.

Add to that Wellington Regional Council's proposal to increase its rates by 19.8% and the waste collection service hike by 30% and you're getting into nosebleed territory.

And that's without the other increases that ratepayers have to face – insurance premiums, energy costs and government fees and charges – a cost of living that ASB is suggesting will cost New Zealanders \$70 per week in 2024.

Since 2017, the average earnings of workers in the rest of the country have increased just over 27%.

How does Council expect its ratepayers to afford such imposts?

I note the council platitudes that it's facing a difficult time and unavoidable costs.

But it's also difficult for lots of people, being forced to scrimp and save and make decisions about what to fund, what to cut and what to do without.

And they know that the rates increases will be passed on in the form of rents and higher costs for business and trade services.

But are they that unavoidable?

Take a look at council staffing. In 2019/20 the full time equivalent staffing was 327. In 20/21 it was 353. In 21/22 it was 397 and the Kāpiti Observer of 23 November 2023 reported the CEO proposed to councillors to limit staff to 436 scrapping 16 positions.

Has Council's work and responsibilities increased that much in four years?

This Kāpiti Observer report suggested Council limit rates increases to 12% and with further cuts possible to limit the increase to 8.86% .... and a further 0.76% decrease by changes to insurance premiums.

Standard & Poors assessed that council had weak budgetary metrics and the capital spending programme was at a "record high". The draft capital spend was due to increase by \$70 million.

So rather than cut, my assessment is that council has decided to continue its high capital spend by borrowing as it has done – but justify the huge increase using the excuse of paying down debt.

I would also add that Council granting its CEO an additional \$50,000 a year just prior to announcing its proposed rate hike do not have the best optics. For a local council CEO to receive more remuneration than the Deputy Prime Minister is an interesting juxtaposition.

Chris Tweedie

Raumati Beach

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