

Tuesday, 11 June 2024

Te Hui o Te Kaunihera ā-Rohe o Heretaunga
Hastings District Council
Council Meeting

Kaupapataka

Volume 8

(Submissions 23, 167, 453 – 461)

Te Rā Hui:
Meeting date: **Tuesday, 11 June 2024**

Te Wā:
Time: **9.00am**

Te Wāhi:
Venue: **Council Chamber
Ground Floor
Civic Administration Building
Lyndon Road East
Hastings**

ITEM	SUBJECT	PAGE
5.	COVERING REPORT FOR LTP SUBMISSIONS VOL 8	
	Attachment 1: Attachments Vol 8 (23, 167, 453-461)	3

HDC - 2024 - 2034 Long Term Plan

COMPLETE #23

CREATED



PUBLIC
Apr 23rd 2024, 5:28:15 pm

IP ADDRESS



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Cris Frenette

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*** Please indicate whether or not you wish to speak to your submission at a Council Meeting set down for hearing submissions on Tuesday 11 June.**

No

*** If your submission is a rural matter, it will also be discussed at the Rural Community Board Meeting before this on Tuesday 4 June. Please indicate if you also want to speak to the Rural Community Board.**

No

Pay less, recover slower, accept increased risks to the roading network

Pay more, expand growth areas for development accept more funding risk to ratepayers

Pay less, slowdown further

Pay less, take longer and find more savings

4/26/24, 8:20 AM

Wufoo - Entry Detail

Share your thoughts here . . .

The most recent increase has already put such a strain on my family of four, two dependants. Now you're purposing another rise putting more strain on families.
With interest rates and pay rises not comparable to inflation, we are now having to sell our property and possibly go renting.
This is not right.
Your increases are putting more pressure on households and causing unnecessary strain when we are already all suffering.

Attach a document to your submission

HDC - 2024 - 2034 Long Term Plan

COMPLETE

#167

CREATED



PUBLIC
May 15th 2024, 1:14:40 pm

IP ADDRESS



* Name

Robyn Delany

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* Please indicate whether or not you wish to speak to your submission at a Council Meeting set down for hearing submissions on Tuesday 11 June.

No

* If your submission is a rural matter, it will also be discussed at the Rural Community Board Meeting before this on Tuesday 4 June. Please indicate if you also want to speak to the Rural Community Board.

No

It's about right

It's about right

It's about right

It's about right

5/15/24, 2:32 PM

Wufoo - Entry Detail

Share your thoughts here . . .

(No response)

Attach a document to your submission

Item 5

Submission on the HDC Draft Long Term Plan Consultation Document.

Let me describe myself and my wife, as it is fair to presume we are typical of probably a fair proportion of your ratepayers.

Both in our 80's, living in our own home. Our only regular income is superannuation. We have modest investments, carefully tailored to 'see us out'. Obviously we have factored in to our financial forecasting a steady increase in the cost of living.

A proposed increase *in one year*, of 25% hike in rates is way outside the definition of 'steady increase'.

So it was with total disbelief we read the carefully worded, beautifully articulated and superbly illustrated consultation document that sets out to justify Hastings District Council's proposal to do a rate increase of monumental proportions, based on the moral principle 'because we can'.

No other business, apart from other local councils, has the opportunity to cover their own shortcomings with simple unavoidable cost increases to their customers.

Let me just refer to this wonderful, no doubt incredibly expensive document.

Nowhere is there a mention of looking at HDC's own performance. The civil defence arm of HDC was nationally condemned as 'unfit for purpose'... why did it take a cyclone to expose that? It has been locally known for years that that operation was just a well-paid refuge for various not fit for purpose individuals.

In central government there is a move to cut 7% of staff. Can we apply that to local bodies? I suggest we can and should. 7% of HDC wage bill of \$40million would equate to a worthwhile saving of \$2.8 million. That would be worth having. As an example, the only visible part of HDC, to the general public, is our local library. Any library user is immediately aware of the overabundance of staff, and the presence of bored, but council funded security staff.

Lets move on to the locally elected plethora of councillors. They are visible to the public only at election time. Questions arise... why do we need 8 councillors to represent Hastings? Where were they during the cyclone? Why didn't Father Christmas get out his rig and come and see how the ratepayers of Hastings were faring. Looking at the line-up of councillors in the document, there is some obvious dead wood that needs removing.. easily another 7% saving.

And moving on, the document makes mention of the difference between 'nice to have' and 'need to have' projects. So why has money been spent on Maorifying road signs, and Maorifying and beautifying what should have been a simple water storage facility in town.

And on another council project, why are HDC involved in red stickered buildings buy outs? I sympathize with the people involved, but surely this is a matter between the home owners and their insurers.

And why, tell me why, is it acceptable for Maori to not pay rates. Too hard basket? Easier to lean on the silent majority, the people like ourselves.

And finally, it seems to me HDC is trying to be all things to all people, when I suggest that given a chance, private enterprise could do the same things better and cheaper. Get back to the core business of running Hastings and put in place some plans to be leaner and more effective.

To summarise our dismay and disgust.

This is yet another submission to yet another draft plan. Never have I received even a confirmation. Why bother?

The above comments are obviously my own, but echo the general feeling of others, the feeling of total inability to influence our local council with the reality of the hardship their decisions are having on our community.

And, for the sake of the majority of our districts residents, stop Maoriising us. We don't need it.

Ian and Diane Thompson

1200 Southland Road,

Hastings

From Chris Ryan
59, Kopanga Road
Havelock North

My wife Linda, and I have now been resident in New Zealand since 1968 when we spent 6 weeks crossing the southern oceans with many young immigrants – mainly teachers and nurses. I was neither, but with my training in biology and field experience with plants in England and Europe I felt reasonably confident in keeping a page ahead in the text books at Stratford High School.

My parents were keen gardeners and I was inoculated with the bug from an early age. Searching the local woods and meadows for interesting plants, birds and insects became an obsession and I knew I would 'do' something with biology. Many parts of Sussex and Surrey, my home territory, was renowned for its nurseries and plants. In later years I visited many of these and became a member of the International Dendrology Society and received seeds and plants from some of these sources.

At the time my interview for a place in Strodes Grammar School by the River Thames in England was in hindsight an unknown stroke of good luck which directed my future. At the interview I felt brave enough to ask the headmaster if I could study biology. Surprising for a school founded in about 1763 he told me that biology had never been on the curriculum but he would think about it if there was any demand by other students. As it transpired the headmaster had studied biology himself and then another student asked if he too could study biology as he wished to become a medic. The headmaster decided he would enjoy doing some teaching and we were both tutored by him and passed our exams which opened many doors to future study and research.

Settled in digs in the local butchers' house we looked out onto paddocks of sheep and Mt. Egmont (as it was). We gleaned a plot for growing vegetables as part of our induction to life in New Zealand together with learning to make sausages.

As one of 3 new biology teachers we were delighted to be able to take lessons in the woodland in the large schoolgrounds. The students were docile and very well behaved and the tradition of copying notes from a blackboard was still in vogue. Within a year this practice was stopped and we all went for a refresher course for modern teaching!

Many of the new teachers in the Taranaki district were from England and were soccer players. We soon decided this was a necessary activity and formed a local league which attracted many of the European immigrants. Extra-mural activities were soon being encouraged from New Plymouth to Hawera.

The mid-winter climate of Mt Egmont (Taranaki) was the highlight. With a great coating of snow, one of our party, now a retired teacher from a Havelock North School was determined to ski down the hill only to be seen hurtling down the mountain top in a squatting position and ended in a flurry of snow and flying skis. A tough bloke and enthusiastic teacher.

I believe the large input of teachers from overseas added considerable interest and skills to our school curriculums. Within a year there was a theatre production of Shakespeare and some new talent unearthed. My new thing was to get my heavy-duty licence to be able to drive the school bus.

With our small car we were able to visit many great gardens and plantsmen who were producing so many exotic trees and shrubs that were unfamiliar to us. Many of these are now growing in the arboretum and outdoor education centre at Tutira.

After leaving a years' teaching in Stratford, my wife and I were fortunate to be allowed jobs in Hastings. She continued teaching and I reverted to focusing on a career in horticulture with the Ministry of Agriculture. This opened doors to any sectors in the world of plants and horticulture.

Hawkes Bay was recognised as one of the best fruit bowls in the country with a good deal of information sharing between the large companies such as Watties and Unilever, the Apple and Pear Marketing Board

A.T.O

and research stations. Regular meetings to share information and discuss items for research were of great value to us all.

I was particularly interested in many aspects of research within the tree crops nursery and dendrology organisations. I became a member of the latter organisation and began to share in expeditions with several small groups to Europe, Nepal, India, Australia, Tasmania and China. Eventually I left the M.A.F. as more fruit companies became self-centred, more secretive and we had other plans to focus on nursery work

The growing army of volunteers from the 1980's.

As our nursery at Clive developed part of my role entailed becoming involved with helping the Hastings nursery and advisory staff in selecting suitable trees and shrubs for the streets and parks. Colin Hosford was implementing this. Because of the wide range of soil types across the city this involved checking soil maps and digging potential tree sites. At one time in my training, I was working with Elwyn Griffiths one of the soil scientists who was revising some of the mapping. With variables soil types it is difficult to achieve a uniform look in avenues planted.

During the early 1980's there were several groups and enthusiasts volunteering and helping in the planting and maintenance of local parks and gardens. In Havelock North we had the Keirunga Action Group whose role involved keeping an eye on the gardens, planting new trees and shrubs and general pruning and advice to the council.

Several groups of volunteers were becoming involved in working over many parts of the district to help in the planting and weeding and keeping up the appearance of the areas used by the many visitors. These included the Tree Crops, Farm Forestry, Keirunga Action group and many individuals.

Also, in this area were many members of tree crop organisations growing a wide range of trees and shrubs and able to donate plants for planting in many of the sites along the streams, parks and other sites of interest.

Top Trees nursery which Linda and I were helping to develop, was able to provide many trees to increase the limited range already provided. Within the many other nurseries and enthusiasts, we had access to a wide range of plants to extend the previously limited range. For example, the Tree Crops were able to plant a memorial for Dr. Don McKenzie of nut trees. He was an outstanding founder member and plant scientist here in Havelock North.

Having lived and developed a large garden as a sanctuary for birds it has been extremely satisfying to attract Tuis down to Havelock North to live and breed here. Previously, where there was far less vegetation in the village, the tuis went to Mohi Bush to breed. Havelock attracted many keen gardeners but recent urban spread is resulting in severe loss of top-quality land for cropping and erosion along most stream beds with roads such a Joll Road with many rear sections resulting in stream build-up, erosion and flood damage. There has been noticeable loss of wild plants, birds, insects and creatures such as skinks and with the removal of organic matter in the neat and tidy gardening mentality of sweeping up all the leaves and carting them away.

There is a real need to revise the rating system to help people to encourage the residents who work to build up biodiversity, organic matter in the soils and to maintain some larger gardens and the village image.

Those people who retired and can't afford large rate increase but are supporting the protection of trees and continued planting of trees should be given consideration.

Chris and Linda Ryan.

SUBMISSION ; 2024 – 2034 Draft Long Term Plan Consultation Document

My comments on the Councils Long Term Plan Document is one of disappointment but not one of surprise.

As usual there is a lot of spin, but they not addressing the real issues and dealing with them in a constructive and business-like manner.

The long term issues are because of total fiscal incompetence and mismanagement. Of course everything is because of the 2 C's, Covid and the cyclone. However the malaise is far deeper than that but because of the before mentioned mismanagement this have spiraled totally out of control.

When I closed my business and retired about 15 years ago I got a job with the council in the Parks Service Delivery Unit. As an employee I attended staff meetings where we were all informed as to how things were progressing and proposed plans. A new CEO had just arrived and he stated one of his first priorities was to reduce the overall debt of the council. If my memory serves me correctly at that time it had blown out to around \$40m. Within about a year it had climbed to about \$50m. Obviously it was a difficult task. So we move forward and still the debt climbed. The council then gave the CEO time to go and study in America, he returned and then there was the Havelock North poisoned water disaster which the then Mayor, CEO and several councilors through incompetence or inaction were responsible. This disaster meant further huge costs were added to the already spiraling debt crisis. The Mayor and CEO quickly departed to hopefully greener pastures and the council now under new management proceeded to try and fix the leaking boat but to no avail. It was business as usual, spend on unnecessary feel good projects and what followed was further blow outs of the debt.

The core business of District Councils is;

WATER IN, WASTE OUT, ROADING.

No that is not an oversimplification of the role of a council.

The council is a business and does not have money. The money belongs to the ratepayers.

So you run it as a business.

Rolling out carpets down streets and having a party, spending millions on a display on our water, taking over a failed showgrounds, taking out a BBQ and feeding sausages to people in the suburbs, rebranding, big planned extensions etc. do NOT reduce debt. You do those things when you are solvent.

What is needed then is a total rethink in how all types of expenditure is prioritized beginning in house which of course means staffing expenses. Obviously that means staff numbers and remuneration amounts. Are you able to justify 100 staff, employment of consultants and an annual salary bill of \$40m.

It appears there may be an excess of staff as the current practice of deciding on a project and then employing a consultant from within or without the district to design and or oversee the project when you already have qualified people employed within the business is not a cost effective way of achieving outcomes. I am aware of former high profile former members of the council are being employed this way.

Close management by ensuring efficiency and cost monitoring of contracts would reduce chances of budget overruns is essential in a prudent business and is easier to maintain in-house.

Staff management is also an area where some savings should be made. Is the staff giving their employer their best? In these days of digital distractions and the coffee culture are there some distractions and habits that are reducing the employee's productivity?

These comments are I believe appropriate and by no means a total fix but by just increasing rates which, really appears, at times just seems to be a perceived endless cash stream is unsustainable. The 2 C's came when they did but the damage had already been done so it means some very tough decisions and unfortunately it is going to hurt but there is no easy way out. The future means we need to run this business properly and not through personal agendas and feel good moments.

Large rate rises are NOT affordable or sustainable.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the Draft Plan.

Robin Sage

122 Mount Erin Road

RD2

Pukahu

Hastings

4172

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Submission: Concerning the possible closure of Frimley Pool

I understand the need for the Council to cut costs where possible and appreciate what you are doing to be as pro-active as possible without burdening ratepayers with huge cost. Keep up the good work.

I live in Karaitiana Street and love to see Frimley Road lined with the cars of people using the pool and hear the excitement of school swimming competitions.

I strongly object to the proposal to close the Frimley Pool for the following reasons.

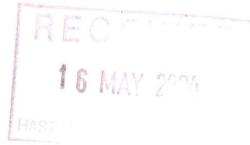
1. This pool is one of only four public pools for family use and entertainment, and school use, operated by the Council.
Frimley Pool is the only Council operated pool in Hastings City.
Other pools are operated by specific organisations for specific use. That includes the Aquatic Centre which is a training pool, not a family recreational pool.
3. If the pool is under used one reason could be that residents are not kept aware of its existence. Advertise it in Council newsletters, especially the "My (Our) Hastings monthly.
4. I believe the pool is not open on public holidays. This makes no sense since that is the very time families are looking for inexpensive family activities.
5. It is very easy to remove a public asset and prohibitively expensive to replace it. We cannot guess how popular, or less popular, the pool may be in the future. So please keep the pool open.
6. If anything the pool should be improved, especially with solar heating, so that it is more attractive to users. I accept this is not a priority now but could be included in the five year plan.

Thank you for considering this submission
Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael C. Smiley".

Michael Smiley

314 Karaitiana St, Frimley, Hastings 4120



Mark von Dadelzen SOCIETIES & CHARITIES LAW

Barrister

Address: 25 Muritai Crescent
Havelock North 4130

Email address: mark@nfplaw.co.nz

9 May 2024

Mayor and Councillors
Hastings District Council
Private Bag 9002
Hastings

Re – 2024-2025 Annual Plan Submission

I was a foundation member of the Hawke’s Bay Regional Development Council between 1978 and 1984. While local authorities then provided their communities with essential services, until the 1980’s local bodies had little if any active involvement in promoting and supporting the economic development of their districts, cities or regions. A number of Regional Development Councils were established around the country, and the Hawke’s Bay Regional Development Council was formed to advance the economic development of the Hawke’s Bay region.

One of the sectors in the Hawke’s Bay economy which was, then, becoming increasingly significant every year was tourism, and the Hawke’s Bay Regional Development Council was largely responsible for the formation of the Hawke’s Bay Tourism Board which I then chaired for several years. The main reason for the formation of that Tourism Board was that the region’s community and Councils did not appreciate how attractive Hawke’s Bay was as a tourism destination, or the fact that the, promotion of visits to Hawke’s Bay by national and international tourists to enjoy our scenic attractions (with the consequent contribution to Hawke’s Bay’s economic development. Such promotion as then existed was minimal, and, if it did exist, it was fragmented and uncoordinated, and the potential benefits to Hawke’s Bay’s economy and to its communities were being lost. The Hawke’s Bay Tourism Board was instrumental in developing and co-ordinating the activities of our local authorities and of our business community to develop Hawke’s Bay as a tourist destination. I cannot, now, recall how those promotional activities were funded, but I do know that Tourism Board members worked on a *pro bono* basis and that much of the funding and works essential the promotion of tourism was provided by most (or all) of Hawke’s Bay’s local government authorities.

According to various reports in local media this year I understand that the economic support of regional tourism promotion and of physical tourist attractions and facilities by some Hawke’s Bay local and regional councils may be reduced or eliminated entirely. If those reports are correct then, with respect, I submit that this would be prejudicial to the economic and social well-being of our local and regional communities, and that your Council should financially support regional tourism promotion and its physical tourist attractions and facilities.

Please note that I will be out of the region between 3 and 27 June, inclusive.

Mark von Dadelzen

NfP Law

Telephone: 0274523530

Email: mark@nfplaw.co.nz



HERITAGE NEW ZEALAND
POUHERE TAONGA

Tairangahia a tua whakarere;
Tatakihia nga reanga o amuri ake nei
Honouring the past; Inspiring the future

24 May 2024

File ref: 33002-069

Hastings District Council
Private Bag 9002
Hastings 4156

Email: council@hdc.govt.nz

Dear Sir or Madam,

**SUBMISSION FROM HERITAGE NEW ZEALAND POUHERE TAONGA ON LONG TERM PLAN 2024-2034
CONSULTATION – HASTINGS DISTRICT COUNCIL**

1. Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga is an autonomous Crown Entity with statutory responsibility under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014 for the identification, protection, preservation and conservation of New Zealand's historical and cultural heritage. Heritage New Zealand is New Zealand's lead heritage agency.
2. Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on the Hastings District Council Long Term Plan for 2024-2034.
3. Heritage New Zealand understands the measures that the Council is undertaking regarding funding priorities and the preferences regarding residential and industrial growth.
4. The Council's Draft Long Term Plan 2024-2034 identifies the activities, major projects, income, and costs for Hastings District over the next ten years. However, the plan does not identify any funding for heritage projects, or the importance of the vibrant heritage characteristics present in Hastings District. Heritage New Zealand recommends that the Council consider, as part of the Draft Long Term Plan 2024-2034, the extraordinary streetscape of Art Deco buildings with its historic characteristics dating back to 1930s as explained in the Hastings City Centre Strategy and Activation.
5. Heritage New Zealand recommends that the Council allocate part of the average increase of 26.5% funding for urban residential and average increase of 27% funding for townships towards funding for

heritage buildings to assist property owners and developers with incentives towards the maintenance and development costs of heritage properties.

6. Heritage New Zealand recommends that the Hastings City Centre Strategy 2023 given due importance in the Draft Long Term Plan 2024-2034. The significance of heritage buildings is evident in the Hastings City Centre Strategy 2023 including the rebuilding of the Opera House and Municipal Building, which has resulted in a *transformational change in the city centre over the past decade*.¹ Heritage New Zealand recommends that there is further investment in heritage projects in Hastings City Centre.
7. Heritage New Zealand supports the Façade Enhancement Scheme which financially supports owners and tenants to upgrade the façades of eligible buildings in the Hastings city centre. Heritage New Zealand notes that the scheme includes a free no obligation colour consultation, and on approval of a design, a grant of up to \$12,000 to undertake the project. Heritage New Zealand appreciates that the funding is based on factors that consider the type of building and the size of the façade.
8. Heritage New Zealand recommends that the Council continue to maintain and strengthen the Façade Enhancement Scheme to provide incentives to owners and tenants of heritage buildings in the Hastings City Centre.
9. The Draft Long Term Plan 2024-2034 does not consider heritage projects as part of the allocated funding. Heritage New Zealand would appreciate if the Council took an active measure towards maintaining and assigning more funding towards heritage projects in the Hastings District.
10. Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga looks forward to further opportunities to be involved in future decision-making stages. We are available to speak to our submission at a council hearing on the 2024-2034 Long Term Plan.
11. We are available to answer any queries that Council may have regarding the submission and continue to be able to offer advice to Council and other owners of heritage buildings regarding heritage conservation, and advice concerning archaeological authority requirements under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014.

Yours sincerely

Dean Raymond



Area Manager / Kaiwhakahaere ā-Takiwā
Central Region / Te Takiwā o Te Pūtahi a Māui
Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga

Address for service
Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga
Central Region Te Takiwā o Te Pūtahi a Māui
PO Box 2629

¹ [City Centre Strategy 2023 | Hastings District Council \(hastingsdc.govt.nz\)](https://www.hastingsdc.govt.nz/city-centre-strategy-2023)

Wellington 6140
Ph: 04 494 8320
Contact person: Dean Raymond, Area Manager
Email: draymond@heritage.org.nz

[p \(64 4\) 494 8320](tel:(64)4948320) [a Central Regional Office Level 1, 79 Boulcott Street](#) [a PO Box 2629, Wellington 6140](#) [w heritage.org.nz](http://heritage.org.nz)

4 The Croft, Brookvale Est,

Havelock North 4130

25.5.2024

Re:- Submission For The Rates Increase in Hastings and Districts.

Dear Madam Mayor Hazelhurst and Councillors,

Please find enclosed a copy of an article written by Roger Hawkins and published in H.B.Today dated 9 August 2023, headed "AN EXISTENTIAL CRISIS FOR THE ELDERLY". Sadly I believe, he is no longer with us.

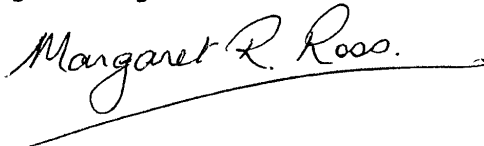
I'm a 75 year old pensioner, living alone for the last 32 years. I have worked extremely hard as a housekeeper for the Peabody family at Craggy Range for nearly 18 years. I bought and paid for my home here in Havelock North and retired at 69 due to a very nasty fall. My net income and only income is \$2076.00 monthly from superannuation. Fixed income! My rates increase has taken me from \$304.36 per month to \$400.00 per month, an increase of \$1147.68 per annum. This additional increase is going to put me into arrears, with the Hastings Council as I cannot afford this huge increase of \$95.64 per month. The State insurance payments per month have increased from \$297.42 to \$344.31, an increase of \$46.89 which is an increase of \$562.68 per annum, together these two increases amount to \$1710.36 per annum. My income of \$2076 per month (\$24,912.00 per annum) and expenses amounting to \$1869.77 per month, (\$22,437.24 per annum) leaving me with an excess income of \$206.23 per month, (\$2474.76 per annum) and that is not including clothing, dental work and emergency expenses. After the cyclone, my garage door fell to bits and the insurance company would not help with any of the replacement costs, which had to be done for safety purposes. I am very concerned that if our rates, power, insurance food, petrol, maintenance, having a phone, increases/ goes up like it has done over the course of a few months, then pensioners will not be able to afford to live in their own freehold homes. When I applied for a rates rebate last year, I cried when they told me they had gone up \$850.00. (That was last year's increase) This years increase is \$1147.68). I asked the cashier if she thought that we would end

up as a state owned country. (she didn't know what that was) and that we would be told how much rent we would have to pay to the council to live in our own houses. Where is all this going to end up? We need someone to lobby the Government to put a stop to all these increased charges. Why should pensioners have to pay for the cleanup of the cyclone, when we, as younger rate payers built the entire infrastructure in Hawkes Bay and throughout New Zealand! Surely the councils, both Regional and City councils have an obligation to maintain and service all the river beds and stop banks. It is an outrage that we now have to foot the bill for their/your mismanagement. Your wasteful spending over the last few years, and to state one of the obvious in changing the names of all signages. That money would have been spent more wisely on rebuilding the river banks so that we didn't have such a disaster!!! When were the river banks reinforced, and the river beds last dredged? I wonder if there will be an increase in assisted suicide, due to the fact that the elderly can no longer live in this country and has now become too expensive for us to exist in. What a disgrace that the elected people in councils have become so detached that they don't have any compassion for the elderly and what they have had to descend to. Can't even go out for a coffee least we then have to go without food or sit with a blanket to keep warm.

I am begging you to reconsider this exorbanent increase that you are considering inflicting on the elderly and lower income population.

I await your response with anticipation that you will consider very seriously giving the pensioners a substantially reduced rates assessment.

Regards Margaret R Ross.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Margaret R. Ross." The signature is written in black ink and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

Wednesday, August 9, 2023

TALKING POINT

Rates – an existential crisis for the elderly

Roger Hawkins

If central government increased taxes at a rate greater than inflation every year for 20 plus years, there would be rioting in the streets. But that is what central government encourages local governments to do – every year. Every single year.

As the country's demographics change and the population ages, new thinking by councillors and, most importantly, central government is urgently required.

As rates increase faster than the ability of the elderly (65+) on fixed incomes to accommodate those increases – so the need for reform increases.

It is now an existential issue for the elderly and the "not so well off".

There are, however, easy solutions to address this rapidly emerging problem.

The problem is elderly have often lived in their privately owned homes for many years. The council-assessed value of homes has increased exponentially for 30+ years, well exceeding the rate of inflation.

Many elderly residents are on a "fixed" income, belatedly adjusted for inflation once a year, and rates increases such as those recently imposed by councils are no longer sustainable.

Councils have always lacked the

internal skills, inclination or ability to address the issues. Rather, they have always just opted to roll out the embedded system.

So what's the solution?

Rates for homes that elderly live in themselves should be set at no more than 10 per cent of projected net after-tax income for that ratepayer, each year.

For example, if Superannuation gives a \$20,000 net income after tax – then rates (being another tax) are then set at no more than \$2000 (or about \$40 a week).

Normal rates apply to any secondary properties owned – wherever they may be located.

It's worth noting this is not dissimilar to how student loan repayments are administered – i.e. as a percentage of the student's income.

This would allow a better and more sustainable quality of life for those who are over 65 and have paid rates in Auckland for most of their working lives or a significant portion of it. Many in this demographic have also helped build Auckland's infrastructure, maintain parks, and care for libraries and art galleries through years of full rates payments.

If a ratepayer has lived in an area for, say, 15+ years and paid rates all

that time, then they have clearly "paid their share" but may well not live too long into the future and can therefore "pass on the baton" to the emerging rates-paying demographic – who, incidentally, get to enjoy the fruits of their forebears' labours (and their previous revenue contributions).

To fix the rates on a "value perception/guess" that council swings at every three years is simply no longer acceptable – as it inevitably results in an inability to afford the rates bill.

Long-term residents who have bought their house many decades before – and have therefore paid rates to cover the infrastructure build and maintenance (many times over, most likely) will see value and logic in not being gouged by the council, as will all thinking observers.

This must also accommodate where those elderly have recently "downsized" to a smaller or lower maintenance primary home, as they will have freed up their former primary residence for a family of full ratepayers to occupy.

The smaller properties now occupied by the long-term ratepayers should also attract lower rates, so this also helps mitigate the

damage to councils budgets – that will help ease the pain to council accountants. The alternative is potentially "rioting in the streets". Many of us well remember Margaret Thatcher's Poll Tax.

The only real issue is that councils need to understand and accept that this proposal deviates from rates based on property value only, to change to rates for over-65s to be based on a percentage of total net income.

To date, income redistribution has been the role of central government – why can't part of this redistribution fall to council rates, given that they are a tax on all homeowners also?

The elderly helped build this city – how about some gratitude and empathy to allow the next generation to enjoy what has been achieved? The only thing stopping this is the elected politicians' inclination to help their ratepayers – as opposed to just maintaining the status quo supported by council accountants. It is time for change – and now is the time to help relieve the long-suffering ratepayers. To our elected representatives: "Over to you."

Roger Hawkins is a former marketing manager with Air NZ, part-owner and operator of a small business, and former lecturer in human resource management and advertising and marketing.



Lex F. Verhoeven

From: customerservice@hdc.govt.nz
Sent: Monday, 27 May 2024 4:08 PM
To: Lex F. Verhoeven
Subject: RE: Rates Increases [Case: nQSlvd, Ticket: WzV9pO]

Hi Lex,

Please see email below with feedback for LTP, obviously they have not done this in the My Voice My Choice form, is it OK to send this to you for review?

Kind Regards,
Nicole
Customer Service Team



Wāea/Phone (06) 871 5000
Īmēra/Email customerservice@hdc.govt.nz | Pae Tukutuku/Web www.hastingsdc.govt.nz
Te Kaunihera ā-Rohe o Heretaunga | Hastings District Council
Private Bag 9002, Hastings 4156, New Zealand

From: Teresa Dever <devfam1286@outlook.com>
Date: Monday 27 May 2024 at 13:03:30
To: Customer Service (External) <customerservice@hdc.govt.nz>
Subject: Rates Increases [Case: nQSlvd, Ticket: WzV9pO]

To whom it may concern,

We are responding to your request for feedback on the next rate increases wanted for your next ten year plan.

I do know in our immediate circle almost all feel the hopelessness of even trying to raise their voices at the never ending onslaught of increases demanded. Just for an example our mothers are widows and all their friends are in the same position with very little financial backing to help buffer these never ending financial increases. Coupled with your brother/sister regional council rate hikes it's huge what you are now proposing.

Most of the public has to work with what their income is. They do not get to apply to their employer for a twenty five percent increase so they can make new plans. In fact most are lucky to get a few percent increase a year, if that, in their income. One has to budget with what they have. We propose that you the Council would do the same. Cut back on everything but infrastructure. That may require moving a few bums off seats, or restructuring inflated wage packets.

But please do what it takes, as the average person has to. It is taking advantage of homeowners to keep demanding percent increases every year that go way beyond inflation and wage increases as a whole, with the leverage of taking the homeowners home should they cease to pay their rates. Everything is expensive and prices are increasing across the board so we acknowledge it is difficult, but everybody has to work in this economy. Our request is please stop using the homeowner as an open bank book to keep dipping into for the next goodie. Work with what you have!

Sincerely,
William and Teresa Dever.

Lex F. Verhoeven

Subject: FW: LTP submission from HBRC Transport

From: Bruce Conaghan <brucec@hdc.govt.nz>
Sent: Tuesday, May 28, 2024 11:16 AM
To: Lex F. Verhoeven <lexfv@hdc.govt.nz>
Subject: LTP submission from HBRC Transport

Lex,

Some comments from HBRC on the LTP as below :

The HBRC encourages HDC to ensure there is sufficient funding in their LTP to enable the implementation of the Public Transport network from mid 2025. For the purposes of HDC this will include public transport infrastructure and end of trip facilities (where applicable). A well functioning public transport service is key to community connection, enhancing access to opportunities and community resilience.

Further, the HBRC encourages HDC to ensure there is sufficient local share funding available in the LTP for RoadSafe Hawke's Bay activities across the next 3 years. Supporting RoadSafe Hawke's Bay helps to reduce deaths and serious injuries on our roads and across the transport system, making it safer for all road users.

Happy to answer any queries re the above.

Regards.
Bruce C.



Bryce Cullen
Transport Strategy & Policy Analyst
06 835 9200 | 027 200 4395
Hawke's Bay Regional Council | Te Kaunihera ā-rohe o Te Matau a Māui
159 Dalton Street, Napier 4110 | hbrc.govt.nz
Enhancing Our Environment Together | Te Whakapakari Tahi | Tō Tātau Taiao



Let us know how we're doing, give your feedback here.
This communication, including any attachments, is confidential. Refer to the disclaimer on our website.

From: Bruce Conaghan <brucec@hdc.govt.nz>
Sent: Monday, May 27, 2024 3:45 PM
To: Bryce Cullen <Bryce.Cullen@hbrc.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: LTP submission

Caution: This email is from outside of Hawke's Bay Regional Council.

Do not click links or open attachments unless you are certain the content is safe. If this email claims to be from a HBRC staff member, do not click on any links or attachments and contact the ServiceDesk immediately.