

Emergency Council Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday, 10 June, 2025
Time: 8:30 a.m.
Location: Civic Centre, Te Iwitahi, 9 Rust Avenue

In Attendance

His Worship the Mayor Vince Cocurullo
Cr Gavin Benney
Cr Nicholas Connop
Cr Jayne Golightly
Cr Phil Halse
Cr Deborah Harding
Cr Patrick Holmes
Cr Scott McKenzie
Cr Marie Olsen
Cr Carol Peters
Cr Simon Reid
Cr Phoenix Ruka
Cr Paul Yovich

Not in Attendance

Cr Ken Couper

Scribe

D.Garner (Democracy Adviser)

Administrative matters

- Meeting livestreamed

1. Karakia/Prayer

His Worship the Mayor opened the meeting with prayer.

2. Declarations of Interest / Take Whaipānga

No declarations of interest were made.

3. Apologies / Kore Tae Mai

Cr's Ken Couper (absent), Jayne Golightly and Phoenix Ruka (late arrival)

Moved By Cr Deborah Harding

Seconded By Cr Nicholas Connop

That the apologies be sustained.

Carried

4. Decision Reports / Whakatauripoata

4.1 2025-26 Annual Plan and Fees and Charges Consultations - Deliberations Part 2

Moved By Cr Gavin Benney

Seconded By His Worship the Mayor

That the Council:

1. Revokes the decisions made at the 5 June 2025 Deliberations Meeting on 2025-26 Annual Plan and Fees and Charges.
2. Notes and considers the 792 formal submissions received on the draft 2025-26 Annual Plan and the draft 2025-26 Fees and Charges consultations.

Rates changes

3. Notes that any delay in setting rates for 2025-26 would prevent Council from being able to issue rates notices by 20 July 2025, adversely impacting customers and thus limiting revenue and requiring drawing down debt.
4. Notes that a significant drop in the planned rates increases could cause a drop in the Council's credit rating and thus increase borrowing costs and trigger an amendment to the 2024-34 Long Term Plan (LTP).
5. Notes that the revenue from the proposed district-wide universal targeted stormwater rate is required to be ringfenced as per direction from Central Government as was signalled in the 2024-34 LTP. The revenue is to cover the stormwater maintenance and upgrade costs that were previously funded from general rates, and then from debt for the 2024-25 financial year.
6. Approves the introduction of a district-wide universal stormwater targeted rate of \$172.00 including Goods and Services Tax (GST) per separately used or inhabited parts of a rating unit (SUIP) as per feedback from public consultation on question one of the Annual Plan Consultation Document.
7. Approves setting the Uniform Annual General Charge at \$901.00 including GST per separately used or inhabited parts (SUIP) of a rating unit as per the Financial Strategy for the 2024-34 LTP and as per feedback from public consultation on question two of the Annual Plan Consultation Document.

8. Declines to proceed with the proposed temporary rates relief for farmed business-zoned land, consulted on in the draft 2025-26 Annual Plan, as per feedback from public consultation on question three of the Annual Plan Consultation Document.
9. Approves an increase in general rates of 9.7% for the 2025-26 Annual Plan in recognition of the tough economic environment and the consequential financial hardships being faced by many ratepayers, noting that the draft 2025-26 Annual Plan included increasing general rates by an average of 10.7% as per the Financial Strategy approved in the 2024-34 LTP.
10. Notes that a 1% reduction in the general rates increase for 2025-26 will require ongoing operational cost reductions of approximately \$1 million so as not to deviate from the benchmarks set in the Financial Strategy for the 2024-34 LTP. Staff propose that these cost reductions can be met by reducing operating budgets funded by general rates on a pro-rata basis.
11. Approves the increase in targeted rates for 2025-26 as per the Financial Strategy for the 2024-34 LTP:
 - a. Water rates of 5.7% (Local Government Cost Index (LGCI) plus 2.5%), which includes allowances for increased Central Government imposed levies, some of which will fund the regulatory functions of the Commerce Commission and the Water Services Authority, and higher than expected costs as set out in the 2025-26 Annual Plan Consultation Document:
 - i. An additional \$15.00 including GST, per SUIP, to the water supply charge, the availability water rate and the unmetered water rate to recover the Government imposed levy.
 - ii. An additional \$8.00 including GST, per SUIP residential wastewater connection and an additional \$5.00 including GST, per pan for non-residential connections to recover the Government imposed levy.
 - iii. Increased backflow preventer rates to recover higher than expected cost increases.
 - b. Wastewater rates of 3.2% (LGCI).
 - c. Flood protection rates for Hikurangi Flood Protection Scheme of 3.2% (LGCI).
12. Notes that growth will be allowed for in expected revenue from rates as per the Financial Strategy for the 2024-34 LTP. This budget assumption is to account for growth in new rateable properties and allows for an additional 1.3% for general rates and stormwater, and 1% for water and wastewater.

Requests for funding

13. Notes the submissions requesting \$3.5 million in Council support in 2025-26 towards the build of an indoor sports facility as part of stage 2 of the Ruakākā Recreation Centre development and the request be considered as part of the 2027-37 LTP.
14. Notes the request from Glenbervie School for an unspecified amount of funding in 2025-26 for a road safety barrier next to the school.
 - a. Requests staff to continue to engage with the school and the Ministry of Education with a joint plan to be agreed and presented to the Whangarei District Council Infrastructure Committee at the August meeting (subject to Ministry of Education approvals).
 - b. Notes that implementation will be considered as part of the High Risk Rural Roads Safety Improvements Budget for this corridor.
15. Approves funding the footpath in King Street Hikurangi, on the western side of the main road from the Four Square to Union Street, through the Elected Member Community Projects budget.
 - a. Notes an engineer's estimate of \$750,000 – \$950,000 has been provided by staff and that this expenditure will be capital expenditure.
 - b. Requests staff to develop a Procurement Plan to be approved at the July 2025 Infrastructure Committee. The Procurement Plan should encourage local contractors and drive cost effective methods for managing the known risks.
 - c. Requests staff to bring the Recommendation for Contract Award to the Infrastructure Committee for endorsement.
 - d. Requests staff to bring the formal allocation of budget to the following full Council meeting for approval.

Fees and Charges

16. Approves the increase the 2025-26 Fees and Charges as detailed within the Statement of Proposal.

Annual Plan preparation

17. Approves the preparation of the final 2025-26 Annual Plan and the 2025-26 Fees and Charges scheduled for presentation for adoption to the 26 June 2025 meeting of Council.
18. Notes that staff will engage with the incoming Council and will recommend a Rates Review as part of the preliminary developments for the 2027-37 Long Term Plan.

Cr Phoenix Ruka joined the meeting at 8:35am during Item 4.1.

Amendment

Moved By Cr Phil Halse

Seconded By Cr Scott McKenzie

That the Council:

1. Revokes the decisions made at the 5 June 2025 Deliberations Meeting on 2025-26 Annual Plan and Fees and Charges.
2. Notes and considers the 792 formal submissions received on the draft 2025-26 Annual Plan and the draft 2025-26 Fees and Charges consultations.

Rates changes

3. Notes that any delay in setting rates for 2025-26 would prevent Council from being able to issue rates notices by 20 July 2025, adversely impacting customers and thus limiting revenue and requiring drawing down debt.
4. Notes that a significant drop in the planned rates increases could cause a drop in the Council's credit rating and thus increase borrowing costs and trigger an amendment to the 2024-34 Long Term Plan (LTP).
5. Notes that the revenue from the proposed district-wide universal targeted stormwater rate is required to be ringfenced as per direction from Central Government as was signalled in the 2024-34 LTP. The revenue is to cover the stormwater maintenance and upgrade costs that were previously funded from general rates, and then from debt for the 2024-25 financial year.
6. Approves the introduction of a district-wide universal stormwater targeted rate of \$172.00 including Goods and Services Tax (GST) per separately used or inhabited parts of a rating unit (SUIP) as per feedback from public consultation on question one of the Annual Plan Consultation Document.
7. Approves setting the Uniform Annual General Charge at \$901.00 including GST per separately used or inhabited parts (SUIP) of a rating unit as per the Financial Strategy for the 2024-34 LTP and as per feedback from public consultation on question two of the Annual Plan Consultation Document.
8. Declines to proceed with the proposed temporary rates relief for farmed business-zoned land, consulted on in the draft 2025-26

Annual Plan, as per feedback from public consultation on question three of the Annual Plan Consultation Document.

9. Approves an increase in general rates of 9.7% for the 2025-26 Annual Plan in recognition of the tough economic environment and the consequential financial hardships being faced by many ratepayers, noting that the draft 2025-26 Annual Plan included increasing general rates by an average of 10.7% as per the Financial Strategy approved in the 2024-34 LTP.
10. Notes that a 1% reduction in the general rates increase for 2025-26 will require ongoing operational cost reductions of approximately \$1 million so as not to deviate from the benchmarks set in the Financial Strategy for the 2024-34 LTP. Staff propose that these cost reductions can be met by reducing operating budgets funded by general rates on a pro-rata basis.
11. Approves the increase in targeted rates for 2025-26 as per the Financial Strategy for the 2024-34 LTP:
 - a. Water rates of 5.7% (Local Government Cost Index (LGCI) plus 2.5%), which includes allowances for increased Central Government imposed levies, some of which will fund the regulatory functions of the Commerce Commission and the Water Services Authority, and higher than expected costs as set out in the 2025-26 Annual Plan Consultation Document:
 - iv. An additional \$15.00 including GST, per SUIP, to the water supply charge, the availability water rate and the unmetered water rate to recover the Government imposed levy.
 - v. An additional \$8.00 including GST, per SUIP residential wastewater connection and an additional \$5.00 including GST, per pan for non-residential connections to recover the Government imposed levy.
 - vi. Increased backflow preventer rates to recover higher than expected cost increases.
 - b. Wastewater rates of 3.2% (LGCI).
 - c. Flood protection rates for Hikurangi Flood Protection Scheme of 3.2% (LGCI).
12. Notes that growth will be allowed for in expected revenue from rates as per the Financial Strategy for the 2024-34 LTP. This budget assumption is to account for growth in new rateable properties and allows for an additional 1.3% for general rates and stormwater, and 1% for water and wastewater.

Requests for funding

13. Notes the submissions requesting \$3.5 million in Council support in 2025-26 towards the build of an indoor sports facility as part of stage 2 of the Ruakākā Recreation Centre development and the request be considered as part of the 2027-37 LTP.
14. Notes the request from Glenbervie School for an unspecified amount of funding in 2025-26 for a road safety barrier next to the school.
 - a. Requests staff to continue to engage with the school and the Ministry of Education with a joint plan to be agreed and presented to the Whangarei District Council Infrastructure Committee at the August meeting (subject to Ministry of Education approvals).
 - b. Notes that implementation will be considered as part of the High Risk Rural Roads Safety Improvements Budget for this corridor.
15. Approves funding the footpath in King Street Hikurangi, on the western side of the main road from the Four Square to Union Street, through the Elected Member Community Projects budget.
 - a. Notes an engineer's estimate of \$750,000 – \$950,000 has been provided by staff and that this expenditure will be capital expenditure.
 - b. Requests staff to develop a Procurement Plan to be approved at the July 2025 Infrastructure Committee. The Procurement Plan should encourage local contractors and drive cost effective methods for managing the known risks.
 - c. Requests staff to bring the Recommendation for Contract Award to the Infrastructure Committee for endorsement.
 - d. Requests staff to bring the formal allocation of budget to the following full Council meeting for approval.

Fees and Charges

16. That Council approves a payment arrangement for the property ID 165276 at 551 Marsden Point Road, deferring the payment of \$150,000 of land rates for each of the 2025-26 and 2026-27 rating years to 20 August 2027, when all deferred amounts will be payable in full.
17. Approves the increase the 2025-26 Fees and Charges as detailed within the Statement of Proposal.

Annual Plan preparation

18. Approves the preparation of the final 2025-26 Annual Plan and the 2025-26 Fees and Charges scheduled for presentation for adoption to the 26 June 2025 meeting of Council.
19. Notes that staff will engage with the incoming Council and will recommend a Rates Review as part of the preliminary developments for the 2027-37 Long Term Plan.

Cr Jayne Golightly joined the meeting at 9:09am during Item 4.1.

On the amendment being put Cr Phil Halse called for a division:

	For	Against	Abstain
His Worship the Mayor	X		
Cr Gavin Benney	X		
Cr Nicholas Connop	X		
Cr Jayne Golightly	X		
Cr Phil Halse	X		
Cr Deborah Harding	X		
Cr Patrick Holmes	X		
Cr Scott McKenzie	X		
Cr Marie Olsen	X		
Cr Carol Peters	X		
Cr Simon Reid	X		
Cr Phoenix Ruka	X		
Cr Paul Yovich	X		
Results	13	0	0

The amendment was Carried (13 to 0)

A break was taken from 10:10am to 10:47am following Item 4.1.

Procedural Motion

Moved By Cr Phil Halse

Seconded By Cr Jayne Golightly

That the meeting adjourn and reconvene at a time and date to be determined by the Chief Executive tomorrow, Wednesday 11 June 2025.

Carried

The meeting adjourned at 10:48am on Tuesday 10 June 2025 and reconvened at 11:00am on Wednesday 18 June 2025 in the Council Chambers, Te Iwitahi.

Emergency Council Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday, 18 June, 2025
Time: 11:00 a.m.
Location: Civic Centre, Te Iwitahi, 9 Rust Avenue

In Attendance	His Worship the Mayor Vince Cocurullo Cr Nicholas Connop Cr Jayne Golightly Cr Phil Halse Cr Deborah Harding Cr Patrick Holmes Cr Scott McKenzie Cr Marie Olsen Cr Carol Peters Cr Simon Reid Cr Phoenix Ruka Cr Paul Yovich
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Not in Attendance	Cr Gavin Benney Cr Ken Couper
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Scribe	D.Garner (Democracy Adviser)
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Administrative matters

- Meeting livestreamed

1. Karakia/Prayer

His Worship the Mayor opened the meeting with prayer.

2. Declarations of Interest / Take Whaipānga

No declarations of interest were made.

3. Apologies / Kore Tae Mai

Cr's Gavin Benney and Ken Couper

Moved By Cr Nicholas Connop

Seconded By Cr Deborah Harding

That the apologies be sustained.

Carried

4. Decision Reports / Whakatauripoata

4.1 2025-26 Annual Plan and Fees and Charges – Deliberations Part 2 (10 June 2025)

4.1.1 2025-26 Annual Plan and Fees and Charges - Deliberations Part 2 - Supplementary Information

Amendment

Moved By Cr Simon Reid

Seconded By Cr Nicholas Connop

That the Council:

1. Revokes the decisions made at the 5 June 2025 Deliberations Meeting on 2025-26 Annual Plan and Fees and Charges and notes the additional information provided to this meeting and the meeting on 10 June 2025.
2. Notes and considers the 792 formal submissions received on the draft 2025-26 Annual Plan and the draft 2025-26 Fees and Charges consultations.

Basis for setting rates

3. Acknowledges that the draft 2025–26 Annual Plan included a 10.7% general rates increase, aligned with the Financial Strategy set in the 2024–34 Long Term Plan, to achieve Everyday Funding by year four.
4. Acknowledges community feedback during consultation that a 10.7% general rates increase is unaffordable for some ratepayers, and that adding a new stormwater targeted rate further worsens affordability concerns.
5. Notes rate increases in the Draft Annual Plan aim to restore Council's Everyday Balanced Budget under the LTP. These increases include funding any operating costs linked to Central Government priority capital projects, which, despite partial government funding, add pressure on Council resources.
6. Notes that other increases in water and wastewater rates are in part driven by Central Government regulatory levies proposed by the Local Waters Done Well reforms, which currently remain uncertain as further legislation has been signalled by Central Government.
7. Notes that a significant drop in the proposed general rates increase of 10.7% for 2025-26 could trigger an amendment to the 2024-34

LTP and/or a re-consultation of the 2025-26 Annual Plan as this may differ significantly from the parameters set within the Financial Strategy including impacts on balanced budget, everyday funding, debt levels and potential changes in service levels.

8. Notes that the revenue from the proposed district-wide universal targeted stormwater rate is required to be ringfenced as per direction from Central Government as was signalled in the 2024-34 LTP.
9. Notes that growth will be allowed for in expected revenue from rates as per the Financial Strategy for the 2024-34 LTP. This budget assumption is to account for growth in new rateable properties and allows for an additional 1.3% for general rates and stormwater, and 1% for water and wastewater connections.

Decisions regarding setting rates for 2025/26

10. Approves an increase in general rates of 9.7% for the 2025-26 Annual Plan (reduced from the 10.7% increase in the 2025-26 Draft Annual Plan), with a corresponding reduction in operating budgets to the same value, recognising the tough economic environment and the consequential financial hardships being faced by many ratepayers.
11. Approves the introduction of a district-wide universal stormwater targeted rate of \$79.00 including Goods and Services Tax (GST) per separately used or inhabited parts of a rating unit (SUIP) for the 2025-26 Annual Plan (reduced from \$172 in the 2025-26 Annual Plan Consultation Document, Option 2).
12. Notes that the stormwater targeted rate will fund the operational expenditure and renewals for the stormwater activity for 2025-26, while growth and level of service capital expenditure will be debt-funded.
13. Notes that a combination of reduced NZTA funding, timing of capital grants paid to external parties, and the reduced stormwater targeted rate will result in Council not achieving the balanced budget benchmark (as determined by Financial Prudence Regulations) for the 2025-26 Annual Plan.
14. Approves setting the Uniform Annual General Charge at \$901.00 including GST per separately used or inhabited parts (SUIP) of a rating unit for the 2025-26 Annual Plan.

15. Declines to proceed with the proposed temporary rates relief for farmed business-zoned land, consulted on in the draft 2025-26 Annual Plan, as per direction from public consultation on question three of the Annual Plan Consultation Document.
16. Approves the following targeted rate increases for 2025-26 which includes provision for increased Central Government imposed levies, some of which will fund the regulatory functions of the Commerce Commission and the Water Services Authority, and higher than expected costs as set out in the 2025-26 Annual Plan Consultation Document:
 - a. Water rates of 5.7% (Local Government Cost Index (LGCI) plus 2.5%), as per 2024-34 LTP:
 - vii. An additional \$15.00 including GST, to the water supply charge per SUIP, to which water is supplied; the availability water rate, per SUIP to which water is available to be supplied; and the unmetered water rate, per SUIP, to which water is supplied; to fund the Central Government imposed levies.
 - viii. Increased backflow preventer rates to recover higher than expected cost increases.
 - b. Wastewater rates of 3.2% (LGCI), and additional \$8.00 including GST, per residential SUIP connected to the wastewater system and an additional \$5.00 including GST, per pan for non-residential rating units connected to the wastewater system; to fund the Central Government imposed levies.
 - c. Flood protection rates for Hikurangi Flood Protection Scheme of 3.2% (LGCI), as per 2024-34 LTP.
17. Notes that staff will engage with the incoming Council and will recommend a Rates Review concurrent with the 2027-37 Long Term Plan.

Requests for funding

18. Notes the submissions requesting \$3.5 million in Council support in 2025-26 towards the build of an indoor sports facility as part of stage 2 of the Ruakākā Recreation Centre development and directs staff to include the request for consideration as part of the 2027-37 LTP.
19. Notes the request from Glenbervie School for an unspecified amount of funding in 2025-26 for a road safety barrier next to the school.
 - a. Directs staff to continue to engage with the school and the Ministry of Education with a joint plan to be agreed and

presented to the WDC Infrastructure Committee at the August meeting (subject to Ministry of Education approvals).

- b. Notes that implementation will be considered as part of the High Risk Rural Roads Safety Improvements Budget for this corridor.
20. Approves funding the footpath in King Street Hikurangi, on the western side of the main road from the Four Square to Union Street, through the Elected Member Community Projects budget.
- a. Notes an engineer's estimate of \$750,000 – \$950,000 has been provided by staff and that this expenditure will be capital expenditure.
 - b. Directs staff to develop a Procurement Plan to be approved at the July 2025 Infrastructure Committee. The Procurement Plan should encourage local contractors and drive cost effective methods for managing the known risks.
 - c. Directs staff to bring the Recommendation for Contract Award to the Infrastructure Committee for endorsement.
 - d. Directs staff to bring the formal allocation of budget to the following full Council meeting for approval.
21. Approves a payment arrangement for the property ID 165276 at 551 Marsden Point Road, deferring the payment of \$150,000 of land rates for each of the 2025-26 and 2026-27 rating years to 20 August 2027, when all deferred amounts will be payable in full.

Fees and Charges

22. Approves the increase to the 2025-26 Fees and Charges as detailed within the Statement of Proposal.

Annual Plan preparation

23. Approves the preparation of the final 2025-26 Fees and Charges and the 2025-26 Annual Plan and scheduled for presentation for adoption on 26 June 2025 and 2 July 2025 meeting of Council respectively.
24. Directs staff to develop an action plan for improving and simplifying the 2026/27 Annual Planning process and to focus on efficiency gains and value for money to reduce the cost burden for the ratepayer, and to report back to Council in September 2025.

The amendment was taken in parts.

On the amendment being put Cr Jayne Golightly called for a division on recommendations 1 to 2:

	For	Against	Abstain
His Worship the Mayor	X		
Cr Nicholas Connop	X		
Cr Jayne Golightly	X		
Cr Phil Halse	X		
Cr Deborah Harding	X		
Cr Patrick Holmes	X		
Cr Scott McKenzie	X		
Cr Marie Olsen	X		
Cr Carol Peters	X		
Cr Simon Reid	X		
Cr Phoenix Ruka	X		
Cr Paul Yovich	X		
Results	12	0	0

**The Amendment was Carried (12 to 0)
Unanimous**

On the amendment being put Cr Jayne Golightly called for a division on recommendations 3 to 9:

	For	Against	Abstain
His Worship the Mayor	X		
Cr Nicholas Connop	X		
Cr Jayne Golightly		X	
Cr Phil Halse	X		
Cr Deborah Harding	X		
Cr Patrick Holmes	X		
Cr Scott McKenzie	X		
Cr Marie Olsen		X	
Cr Carol Peters	X		
Cr Simon Reid	X		
Cr Phoenix Ruka	X		
Cr Paul Yovich		X	
Results	9	3	0

The Amendment was Carried (9 to 3)

On the amendment being put Cr Jayne Golightly called for a division on recommendations 10 to 17:

	For	Against	Abstain
His Worship the Mayor	X		
Cr Nicholas Connop	X		
Cr Jayne Golightly		X	
Cr Phil Halse	X		
Cr Deborah Harding	X		
Cr Patrick Holmes	X		
Cr Scott McKenzie	X		
Cr Marie Olsen		X	
Cr Carol Peters	X		
Cr Simon Reid	X		
Cr Phoenix Ruka		X	
Cr Paul Yovich		X	
Results	8	4	0

The Amendment was Carried (8 to 4)

On the amendment being put Cr Jayne Golightly called for a division on recommendations 18 to 21:

	For	Against	Abstain
His Worship the Mayor	X		
Cr Nicholas Connop	X		
Cr Jayne Golightly	X		
Cr Phil Halse	X		
Cr Deborah Harding	X		
Cr Patrick Holmes	X		
Cr Scott McKenzie	X		
Cr Marie Olsen	X		
Cr Carol Peters	X		
Cr Simon Reid	X		
Cr Phoenix Ruka	X		
Cr Paul Yovich	X		
Results	12	0	0

The Amendment was Carried (12 to 0)
Unanimous

On the amendment being put Cr Jayne Golightly called for a division on recommendation 22:

	For	Against	Abstain
His Worship the Mayor	X		
Cr Nicholas Connop	X		
Cr Jayne Golightly	X		
Cr Phil Halse	X		
Cr Deborah Harding	X		
Cr Patrick Holmes	X		
Cr Scott McKenzie	X		
Cr Marie Olsen	X		
Cr Carol Peters	X		
Cr Simon Reid	X		
Cr Phoenix Ruka	X		
Cr Paul Yovich	X		
Results	12	0	0

**The Amendment was Carried (12 to 0)
Unanimous**

On the amendment being put Cr Jayne Golightly called for a division on recommendations 23 to 24:

	For	Against	Abstain
His Worship the Mayor	X		
Cr Nicholas Connop	X		
Cr Jayne Golightly		X	
Cr Phil Halse	X		
Cr Deborah Harding	X		
Cr Patrick Holmes	X		
Cr Scott McKenzie	X		
Cr Marie Olsen		X	
Cr Carol Peters	X		
Cr Simon Reid	X		
Cr Phoenix Ruka	X		
Cr Paul Yovich		X	
Results	9	3	0

The Amendment was Carried (9 to 3)

Amendment

Moved By Cr Paul Yovich

Seconded By Cr Jayne Golightly

That the Council:

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2. Notes and considers the 792 formal submissions received on the draft 2025-26 Annual Plan and the draft 2025-26 Fees and Charges consultations.

Basis for setting rates

3. Acknowledges that the draft 2025–26 Annual Plan included a 10.7% general rates increase, aligned with the Financial Strategy set in the 2024–34 Long Term Plan, to achieve Everyday Funding by year four.
4. Acknowledges community feedback during consultation that a 10.7% general rates increase is unaffordable for some ratepayers, and that adding a new stormwater targeted rate further worsens affordability concerns.
5. Notes rate increases in the Draft Annual Plan aim to restore Council's Everyday Balanced Budget under the LTP. These increases include funding any operating costs linked to Central Government priority capital projects, which, despite partial government funding, add pressure on Council resources.
6. Notes that other increases in water and wastewater rates are in part driven by Central Government regulatory levies proposed by the Local Waters Done Well reforms, which currently remain uncertain as further legislation has been signalled by Central Government.
7. Notes that a significant drop in the proposed general rates increase of 10.7% for 2025-26 could trigger an amendment to the 2024-34 LTP and/or a re-consultation of the 2025-26 Annual Plan as this may differ significantly from the parameters set within the Financial Strategy including impacts on balanced budget, everyday funding, debt levels and potential changes in service levels.

8. Notes that the revenue from the proposed district-wide universal targeted stormwater rate is required to be ringfenced as per direction from Central Government as was signalled in the 2024-34 LTP.
9. Notes that growth will be allowed for in expected revenue from rates as per the Financial Strategy for the 2024-34 LTP. This budget assumption is to account for growth in new rateable properties and allows for an additional 1.3% for general rates and stormwater, and 1% for water and wastewater connections.

Decisions regarding setting rates for 2025/26

10. Approves an increase in general rates of 9.7% for the 2025-26 Annual Plan (reduced from the 10.7% increase in the 2025-26 Draft Annual Plan), with a corresponding reduction in operating budgets to the same value, recognising the tough economic environment and the consequential financial hardships being faced by many ratepayers.
11. Approves the introduction of a district-wide universal stormwater targeted rate of \$79.00 including Goods and Services Tax (GST) per separately used or inhabited parts of a rating unit (SUIP) for the 2025-26 Annual Plan (reduced from \$172 in the 2025-26 Annual Plan Consultation Document, Option 2).
12. Notes that the stormwater targeted rate will fund the operational expenditure and renewals for the stormwater activity for 2025-26, while growth and level of service capital expenditure will be debt-funded.
13. Notes that a combination of reduced NZTA funding, timing of capital grants paid to external parties, and the reduced stormwater targeted rate will result in Council not achieving the balanced budget benchmark (as determined by Financial Prudence Regulations) for the 2025-26 Annual Plan.
14. Approves setting the Uniform Annual General Charge at \$901.00 including GST per separately used or inhabited parts (SUIP) of a rating unit for the 2025-26 Annual Plan.
15. Declines to proceed with the proposed temporary rates relief for farmed business-zoned land, consulted on in the draft 2025-26 Annual Plan, as per direction from public consultation on question three of the Annual Plan Consultation Document.

16. Approves the following targeted rate increases for 2025-26 which includes provision for increased Central Government imposed levies, some of which will fund the regulatory functions of the Commerce Commission and the Water Services Authority, and higher than expected costs as set out in the 2025-26 Annual Plan Consultation Document:
 - a. Water rates of 5.7% (Local Government Cost Index (LGCI) plus 2.5%), as per 2024-34 LTP:
 - i. An additional \$15.00 including GST, to the water supply charge per SUIP, to which water is supplied; the availability water rate, per SUIP to which water is available to be supplied; and the unmetered water rate, per SUIP, to which water is supplied; to fund the Central Government imposed levies.
 - ii. Increased backflow preventer rates to recover higher than expected cost increases.
 - b. Wastewater rates of 3.2% (LGCI), and additional \$8.00 including GST, per residential SUIP connected to the wastewater system and an additional \$5.00 including GST, per pan for non-residential rating units connected to the wastewater system; to fund the Central Government imposed levies.
 - c. Flood protection rates for Hikurangi Flood Protection Scheme of 3.2% (LGCI), as per 2024-34 LTP.
17. Notes that staff will engage with the incoming Council and will recommend a Rates Review concurrent with the 2027-37 Long Term Plan.

Requests for funding

18. Notes the submissions requesting \$3.5 million in Council support in 2025-26 towards the build of an indoor sports facility as part of stage 2 of the Ruakākā Recreation Centre development and directs staff to include the request for consideration as part of the 2027-37 LTP.
19. Notes the request from Glenbervie School for an unspecified amount of funding in 2025-26 for a road safety barrier next to the school.
 - a. Directs staff to continue to engage with the school and the Ministry of Education with a joint plan to be agreed and presented to the WDC Infrastructure Committee at the August meeting (subject to Ministry of Education approvals).
 - b. Notes that implementation will be considered as part of the High Risk Rural Roads Safety Improvements Budget for this corridor.

20. Approves funding the footpath in King Street Hikurangi, on the western side of the main road from the Four Square to Union Street, through the Elected Member Community Projects budget.
 - a. Notes an engineer's estimate of \$750,000 – \$950,000 has been provided by staff and that this expenditure will be capital expenditure.
 - b. Directs staff to develop a Procurement Plan to be approved at the July 2025 Infrastructure Committee. The Procurement Plan should encourage local contractors and drive cost effective methods for managing the known risks.
 - c. Directs staff to bring the Recommendation for Contract Award to the Infrastructure Committee for endorsement.
 - d. Directs staff to bring the formal allocation of budget to the following full Council meeting for approval.
21. Approves a payment arrangement for the property ID 165276 at 551 Marsden Point Road, deferring the payment of \$150,000 of land rates for each of the 2025-26 and 2026-27 rating years to 20 August 2027, when all deferred amounts will be payable in full.

Fees and Charges

22. Approves the increase to the 2025-26 Fees and Charges as detailed within the Statement of Proposal.

Annual Plan preparation

23. Approves the preparation of the final 2025-26 Fees and Charges and the 2025-26 Annual Plan and scheduled for presentation for adoption on 26 June 2025 and 2 July 2025 meeting of Council respectively.
24. Directs staff to develop an action plan for improving and simplifying the 2026/27 Annual Planning process and to focus on efficiency gains and value for money to reduce the cost burden for the ratepayer, and to report back to Council in September 2025.
25. Directs staff to finalise a review of the procurement policy to focus on efficiencies and encouraging development, and report back to Council by September 2025.

On the amendment being put Cr Jayne Golightly called for a division:

	For	Against	Abstain
His Worship the Mayor	X		
Cr Nicholas Connop	X		
Cr Jayne Golightly	X		
Cr Phil Halse	X		
Cr Deborah Harding	X		
Cr Patrick Holmes	X		
Cr Scott McKenzie	X		
Cr Marie Olsen	X		
Cr Carol Peters	X		
Cr Simon Reid	X		
Cr Phoenix Ruka	X		
Cr Paul Yovich	X		
Results	12	0	0

**The Amendment was Carried (12 to 0)
Unanimous**

On the substantive motion being put Cr Nicholas Connop called for a division:

	For	Against	Abstain
His Worship the Mayor	X		
Cr Nicholas Connop	X		
Cr Jayne Golightly		X	
Cr Phil Halse	X		
Cr Deborah Harding	X		
Cr Patrick Holmes	X		
Cr Scott McKenzie	X		
Cr Marie Olsen	X		
Cr Carol Peters	X		
Cr Simon Reid	X		
Cr Phoenix Ruka		X	
Cr Paul Yovich		X	
Results	9	3	0

The Substantive Motion was Carried (9 to 3)

5. Public Excluded Business / Rāhui Tangata

There was no business conducted in public excluded.

6. Closure of Meeting / Te katinga o te Hui

His Worship the Mayor closed the meeting with prayer at 12:19pm.

Confirmed this 26th day of June 2025

His Worship the Mayor (Chairperson)