

Prioritise Kāpiti

Engagement Summary Report



Prepared For :
Kāpiti Coast District Council

Prepared By :
PublicVoice



Prepared by PublicVoice Limited

This report was produced by PublicVoice Limited in partnership with Kāpiti Coast District Council. It summarises the whole Prioritise Kāpiti engagement: 747 online survey responses; 43 written and paper submissions, including letters, emails and documents sent directly; targeted engagement sessions with focus groups and Council advisory groups; and 138 postcard and post-it entries. The strands are kept separate where their methods and bases differ.

About PublicVoice

PublicVoice Limited is a research and engagement consultancy headquartered in Wellington, New Zealand. We specialise in public policy research and consultation, providing services to local and central government agencies throughout New Zealand. To learn more, please visit www.publicvoice.co.nz.

Document Status:	Final
Version:	1.0
Date:	16 September 2026
Author(s):	PublicVoice Limited Research Team

Contents

1	Executive summary.....	3
2	Introduction	10
3	Methodology	12
4	Respondent profile	16
5	Community priorities.....	22
6	Planning principles.....	33
7	Rates and levels of service.....	36
8	Local government reform.....	44
9	Targeted engagement	48
10	Qualitative themes	57
	Appendix A: The engagement questions	66
	Appendix B: Glossary of qualitative themes.....	67
	Appendix C: Results by demographic group	70
	Appendix D: Engagement session summary reports	73

Figures

Figure 1: Age group.....	16
Figure 2: Suburb.....	18
Figure 3: Lives in or owns a property in Kāpiti.....	19
Figure 4: Kāpiti ratepayer	19
Figure 5: Responding as	20
Figure 6: Community priorities: share of respondents agreeing with each	23
Figure 7: Planning principles: share of respondents agreeing with each	33
Figure 8: Accept reduced levels of service to keep rates within 5% of median household income	36
Figure 9: Who should fund the cost of amalgamation	44

Tables

Table 1: Responses by channel	12
Table 2: Age group	17
Table 3: Suburb	18
Table 4: Lives in or owns a property in Kāpiti	19
Table 5: Kāpiti ratepayer.....	20
Table 6: Responding as	20
Table 7: Community priorities: agreement	23
Table 8: Anything important missing - themes.....	32
Table 9: Planning principles: agreement	33
Table 10: Accept reduced levels of service: responses	36
Table 11: Themes in comments entered in the services-that-matter box.....	43
Table 12: Who should fund the cost of amalgamation: responses	44
Table 13: Who should fund amalgamation - other views: themes	47
Table 14: Targeted engagement sessions.....	48

Table 15: What else should Council consider when developing its Long-term Plan - themes63

Table 16: Qualitative theme categories.....69

1 Executive summary

Prioritise Kāpiti asked the Kāpiti Coast community whether Council is proposing the right priorities and planning principles for its Long-term Plan 2027-37, and how it should balance rates affordability against levels of service. The public feedback form ran from 22 June to 26 July 2026; targeted engagement sessions continued through 5 August.

What came in:

- 790 survey and submission responses: 747 online and 43 written and paper submissions, including letters, emails and documents sent directly.
- 1,185 comments across the four open questions, from the 576 respondents who wrote something.
- Feedback received through targeted engagement sessions and postcard/post-it material sits outside those totals and is reported separately.

1.1 Survey and written submissions

Who took part: those who responded are not a cross-section of the district. Most are ratepayers - 734 of the 768 who answered that question (96%) - and more than half are aged 60 or over (425 of 764, 56%). Written submitters generally did not supply demographic details, so these percentages use fewer than 790 responses. Everything that follows should be read as the views of an older, ratepayer-heavy group of engaged respondents, not as a measure of what the district as a whole thinks.

The priorities: Waters stands well clear of the rest, the only priority agreed with by more than three-quarters. Health, Peace, safety and equality and Land use follow as a middle band. Below them, Shaping our direction together, Connected communities and Housing sit within three points of one another, and Working with others sits alone at the bottom, seven points below the nearest priority and ten below Shaping our direction together. Agreement was widespread rather than selective: 686 of the 790 recorded at least one.

Item	Agreed	% of respondents
Waters	606	77%
Health	498	63%
Peace, safety and equality	482	61%
Land use	461	58%
Shaping our direction together	382	48%
Connected communities	361	46%
Housing	355	45%
Working with others	297	38%

Agreed = respondents ticking the item; % is of all 790 responses. The online form recorded agreement ticks only, so an unticked item is not necessarily disagreement (see Methodology). Charts and demographic breakdowns are in the body of the report.

The principles: the five planning principles drew a much tighter band, ten points from top to bottom, with the two cost principles at the head of it and 714 of the 790 agreeing with at least one. Respondents sorted the priorities into a clear order of importance; they endorsed the principles more or less as a set.

Item	Agreed	% of respondents
Live within our financial limits	614	78%
Growth pays for growth	594	75%
Prioritise the must-dos	578	73%
Community voice	540	68%
User pays where it makes sense	534	68%

The trade-off: the central question asked whether respondents would accept reduced levels of service in some areas to keep total rates at no more than 5% of median household income. Two-thirds of those who answered accepted that trade-off, a split close to flat across age groups and ratepayer status. On local government reform, three-quarters of those who answered would have central government fund the cost of amalgamation; about one in ten would put the cost on councils themselves.

The rates and service levels trade-off

Survey question: “If Council aimed to keep the total KCDC rates (general and water rates) paid at no more than 5% of median household income (based on rates affordability data), would you be prepared to accept reduced levels of service in some areas to achieve this?”

Option	n	% of those who answered
Yes	498	68%
No	230	32%

Who should fund the cost of amalgamation

Survey question: “Who do you think should fund the cost of amalgamation?”

Option	n	% of those who answered
Local councils	75	10%
Central government	560	76%
Other	98	13%

Agreement on ends, division on mechanism: grouping respondents by their rates cap answer moves the priorities only a little - both groups put much the same things at the top of the list, with Waters agreed by 81% of those who accepted the cap and 76% of those who declined it. The same grouping separates the principles more clearly: those who accepted the cap were more likely to agree with the financial principles - user pays where it makes sense shows the widest difference, 79% against 50%, followed by live within our financial limits (87% against 67%), prioritise the must-dos (82% against 63%) and growth pays for growth (82% against 69%) - while community voice, at 71% and 68%, is the one principle the grouping leaves alone. Nor is this simply a split between people who want cuts and people who want more spending: the community-facing priorities, Connected communities and Working with others, each drew agreement nine points higher among those who declined the cap (53% against 44%, and 44% against 35%). These are observed differences in a self-selected engagement, not tested ones. The disagreement is about mechanism, particularly how far cost should be shifted onto the people who use a service, not about the district's ends. Appendix C sets out the breakdowns.

What the comments say: the written comments give that division its texture.

- **Core services first** is the single largest theme: named in 116 of the 469 missed-priorities comments (25%) as an instruction to narrow Council's work, and returning in the services question as a defence of what must not be cut, with the list of what counts as core barely changing between the two.
- **Rates and affordability** runs through all three of the main comment questions and does not run one way: raised by 168 of the 576 who commented (29%), taking in households describing rate rises they cannot absorb alongside respondents who would rather pay more than lose services.
- **Spending discipline** is the largest theme category across the engagement, raised by 210 (36%), and second largest in each of the three main comment questions. The sequencing argument is the same throughout: examine internal costs and discretionary projects before reducing service levels.
- **Governance, engagement and trust** is raised by 204 (35%), and scepticism that Council will act on what it hears runs through it, expressed as consultation settled in advance. Concretely, writers ask Council to report back after decisions are made: what changed as a result of community feedback, what was not adopted, and why.

Theme category	Respondents	% of the 576 who commented
Council spending and financial discipline	210	36%
Governance, engagement and trust	204	35%
Community facilities and public spaces	172	30%

1.2 Targeted engagement sessions and postcards

The targeted engagement sessions: beyond the two channels, elected members, with support from Council staff, ran targeted engagement sessions through late July and early August with business and commercial landowner audiences, community sector leaders, environment leaders, rangatahi (including participants in the Mayors Taskforce for Jobs programme), young people and school students, and Council's Disability Advisory Group, Older Persons' Advisory Group and Youth Council (see Appendix D for the engagement session summary reports). A further 138 postcard and post-it entries were collected at pop-up events, libraries and service centres and coded against the same framework. The sessions and the postcard stream sit outside the 790 responses and every survey-and-submission percentage in this summary; they are reported narratively in Targeted engagement. Three signals from them are worth carrying here:

- **Health led each of the three sessions that ranked the priorities**, argued each time as local access to care.
- **The sessions converged on framing the survey could not test:** seven of the eleven sessions and groups raised gaps in the priorities or the way the material was framed. Equity rather than equality was raised independently by five of them; Te Tiriti and the environment were named as missing by three; and business audiences found growth, jobs and economic development missing - so the framework was read as incomplete from both directions.
- **The youth sessions put on record what the survey's older, ratepayer-heavy base seldom raises:** housing they could ever afford, free places to go, public transport, and mental health support.

1.3 What the feedback points to

Council asked whether it has the right priorities and principles, and the feedback gives directions as well as scores. What follows is drawn from what submitters and participants said across every channel - the survey, the written and paper channel, the sessions and the postcard stream - and from nothing else: these are the changes the feedback itself points to, not a strategic assessment. Where the record runs both ways, both directions are given.

For refining, the clearest feedback-grounded actions are to:

- test **equity** in place of **equality**, and clarify what “peace” is intended to mean;
- state Council’s role in Health and Housing as advocate, planner or enabler rather than assume a delivery role;
- spell out what the least-defined items would mean in practice: name who *Working with others* refers to and what work it covers; publish what counts as a must-do; show how the costs of growth are recovered; and state when user pays applies, with the equity safeguard the Disability Advisory Group asked for, so that charging does not exclude the people a service exists for;
- decide explicitly whether environment/climate, economic development/jobs, accessibility and an aspirational vision should be added or woven through the framework;
- consider how Council should honour its partnership with mana whenua and Te Tiriti obligations, and reflect the importance of te ao Māori in the proposed community priorities - named as missing from the framework in three sessions, and asked for and opposed by small numbers of submitters in roughly equal measure; and
- commit to reporting back after decisions are made: what changed as a result of community feedback, what was not adopted, and why.

The contested additions are identified below rather than presented as settled community positions. Each direction below opens with the part of Council it most concerns.

The priority wording: Waters, Peace and Land use

Most relevant to: the policy & strategy team drafting the priorities; the waters and infrastructure teams; parks and open space.

The feedback endorses the substance of these priorities and contests wording and role.

- **Waters** carries the strongest result of the eight priorities at 77% agreement; separately, the Ōtaki rangatahi worksheets gave safe drinking water and a clean awa full marks. The clearest wording amendment is breadth: environment leaders and rangatahi alike read water as rivers, swimming and mahinga kai as well as pipes.
- **Peace, safety and equality** drew one specific rewording, made independently by five of the eleven session groups (the Older Persons’ and Disability advisory groups, the environment leaders and both community sector leader groups): equity rather than equality. The Disability Advisory Group also questioned what “peace” is meant to carry.
- **Land use** drew the same critique of frame - that it defines land by its usefulness where participants wanted care, whenua and a mountains-to-sea view. The feedback points to reworking that language and making environmental care visible inside it.

Health and Housing: state Council's role

Most relevant to: the policy & strategy team; those advocating with central government and health agencies; housing and growth planning.

Health and Housing carry a role dispute, not a value dispute.

- Health is second on 63% and led each of the three sessions that ranked the priorities, argued each time as local access to care - yet 22 of the 469 missed-priorities comments oppose Council involvement in health outright, as 24 do for housing.
- The demand and the objection are reconcilable, because they are about different things: submitters who want health and housing addressed tend to cast Council as advocate, planner and enabler; objectors resist Council as deliverer.
- The feedback points to keeping both priorities and stating Council's role in them plainly.

Working with others and Te Tiriti: make the partnerships concrete

Most relevant to: the executive and governance teams; those leading mana whenua and community partnerships.

- In the survey-and-submission record, Working with others sits last on 38%. Separately, it took no dots at the session with rangatahi involved in the Mayors Taskforce for Jobs programme - yet Council's Disability Advisory Group named it among its top priorities on the argument that everything else depends on it, and both sector leader groups made partnership with mana whenua its centre.
- The feedback points to making Working with others concrete: state who Council works with and on what, and clarify what Council's role is when working with others.
- Whether it should expressly name Te Tiriti partnership drew two different kinds of evidence, best kept apart. Three of the targeted engagement sessions - both community sector leader groups and the environment leaders - identified Te Tiriti as missing from the framework. In the individual comments the numbers are small on either side: 8 comments in the considerations question asked for Te Tiriti partnership to be made explicit and 11 opposed iwi involvement in Council decision-making, each a small minority of the 790 responses. The wording is Council's to decide; the feedback informs that decision without settling it.

Shaping our direction together and Connected communities

Most relevant to: the communications and engagement team; community services and facilities.

These two hold the middle of the list, and the comment record supplies their content:

- **Shaping our direction together:** close the feedback loop. A recurring strand of scepticism in the engagement is that Council will not act on what it hears; the concrete ask is that, after decisions are made, Council reports back what changed as a result of community feedback, what was not adopted, and why.
- **Connected communities:** free and accessible places to meet - the thing every youth session and the user-pays concern both land on.

What submitters would add to the priorities

Most relevant to: the policy & strategy team weighing additions to the framework; environment and climate; economic development.

The largest framing instruction was to put core services and fundamental responsibilities first, raised by 116 of the 469 respondents who answered the missed-priorities question. Other proposed additions were:

- **Environment and climate:** 34 natural-environment and 28 climate-mitigation comments, the environment leaders' central argument, and the postcard stream's leading topic. A smaller counter-current disputed Council's climate and coastal-hazard modelling (9 considerations comments), so this direction is supported but contested.
- **Economic development, jobs and business growth:** raised across the business and commercial landowner sessions, and in 21 missed-priorities comments.
- **Transport:** the Roads, transport and access category covers 63 respondents in the missed-priorities question, and transport recurs in youth sessions and postcards.
- **Waste minimisation and resource recovery:** carried disproportionately by the written and paper channel.
- **Accessibility:** proposed by the Disability Advisory Group as either a lens through every priority or a standalone priority.

The five planning principles: define rather than delete

Most relevant to: the finance team and the policy & strategy team drafting the planning principles.

The five planning principles were each agreed with by more than two-thirds of respondents, from 78% down to 68%. The feedback's consistent demand is definition rather than deletion.

- **Live within our financial limits** drew the highest agreement of the five, at 78%, and also the sharpest question - whose limits, set where; the environment leaders would extend it to financial and ecological limits, and the sector leaders to the community's financial limits, not only Council's.
- **Growth pays for growth** drew agreement from 75% and doubt about how it works in practice, with 19 considerations comments asking that developer contributions genuinely cover growth's costs and 6 doubting they do; the feedback points to showing the mechanism, not restating the principle.
- **Prioritise the must-dos** needs the must-dos published: submitters asking who decides what counts as a must-do are one of the two main strands behind the 34 comments calling the set vague, and the community sector leaders would name social infrastructure among them.
- **Community voice** is accepted and disbelieved at once, 26 comments calling consultation tokenistic and 23 doubting follow-through; the ask is the same: report back after decisions are made on what changed as a result of community feedback, what was not adopted, and why.
- **User pays where it makes sense** splits almost evenly in the comments, 28 warning it excludes people from public-good services and 25 supporting it where private benefit is identifiable, and the two sessions that discussed it - the Disability Advisory Group and the Paraparaumu community sector leaders - accepted it only on an equity basis: the feedback points to stating the "makes sense" test and writing the equity safeguard in.

As with the priorities, submitters named additions:

- **Equity as a principle in its own right**, proposed as a sixth by the community sector leaders and echoed by 14 considerations comments asking for an equity and accessibility lens;
- **Te Tiriti reflected in the principles**, raised by both sector leader groups and the environment leaders; and
- **An aspirational vision beyond cost control**, sought by 17.

How to read these directions

These directions rest on a self-selected engagement whose respondents skew older and towards ratepayers, and the counts above carry the bases given earlier in this summary. Several directions recur across the two response channels and the two targeted-engagement streams; others are specific to one audience and should be treated that way. Convergence is a finding only where it can be shown item by item - and where a session of eight and a survey of hundreds point the same way, as they do on equity wording, on role clarity for health and housing, and on defining the financial principles, the convergence is itself the finding.

2 Introduction

2.1 Purpose of the engagement

Kāpiti Coast District Council invited feedback on its proposed community priorities and Long-term Plan (LTP) planning principles from 22 June to 26 July 2026, with targeted engagement sessions continuing through 5 August 2026. The information gathered through this 'Prioritise Kāpiti' feedback opportunity will inform the development of Council's 2027-37 LTP, which sets out what Council will deliver over ten years, how it will invest, and the rates track that pays for it.

This round of feedback came before any of those decisions were drafted. Its purpose was to test whether Council had the right starting points: whether the community priorities still describe what matters most, and whether the LTP planning principles Council proposes to use in making trade-offs are the right ones. Formal consultation on the draft 2027-37 Long-term Plan, with detailed proposals and figures attached, follows in early 2027.

Council framed the engagement around affordability. Many households are under pressure from rising costs, and councillors have signalled that rates need to stay as affordable as possible. Council can make some savings, but it also faces hard choices about what it can continue to deliver. The engagement asked the community to weigh in on those choices rather than to comment on a settled plan.

2.2 What was put to the community

The eight community priorities trace back to the 2024 Vision Kāpiti kōrero, when residents set out their aspirations for the district's future. Those aspirations shaped Council's People, Place and Partnership community outcomes and the community needs that sit beneath them, and informed the ten priorities Council adopted for the 2024-27 triennium. From that base, Council worked with elected members to form the eight priorities put forward in this engagement: Housing; Health; Connected communities; Peace, safety and equality; Land use; Waters; Working with others; and Shaping our direction together. This engagement aimed to test these priorities with the community to check that they reflect what matters most and where Council should focus effort as it starts to develop its next Long-term Plan.

Alongside the priorities, Council put forward five planning principles for the Long-term Plan, describing how it proposes to make decisions when money is tight: Community voice; Growth pays for growth; User pays where it makes sense; Live within our financial limits; and Prioritise the must-dos.

Council is also watching the Government's proposed Simplifying Local Government reforms. Because there is still uncertainty about what may change, Council is continuing to plan under current legislation; the engagement included one question on the reform, asking who should fund the cost of amalgamation.

2.3 What the engagement asked

The feedback form, online and on paper, was built around six question areas:

- **Community priorities** - do respondents agree that the eight priorities are the right things for Council to focus on as it develops the next LTP?
- **Anything missing** - is there something important that Council needs to prioritise which the eight priorities do not cover?
- **Planning principles** - do the five proposed principles reflect how Council should make decisions?

- **What else to consider** - what else should Council take into account in developing the Long-term Plan?
- **Rates and levels of service** - if Council aimed to keep total rates paid at no more than 5% of median household income, would respondents accept reduced levels of service in some areas, and if not, which services matter most to them?
- **Local government reform** - who should fund the cost of amalgamation, if the Government's proposed reorganisation of councils goes ahead?

A short set of questions about the respondent followed: age group, suburb, whether they live in or own property in the district, whether they are a ratepayer, and whether they were responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation.

2.4 About this report

This report sets out what people said through the survey, written and paper submissions, targeted engagement sessions and drop-in feedback: the pattern of agreement with the priorities and principles, the split on rates and levels of service, views on who should fund amalgamation, and the themes running through the open-text comments. Its executive summary identifies changes to the draft priorities and principles that the feedback points to. These are evidence-based directions from the engagement, not a wider strategic assessment; decisions on the draft Long-term Plan rest with Council.

Feedback answering the engagement's question set reached Council through two channels, both covered here: 747 online survey responses and 43 written and paper submissions, 790 in all. Council also ran targeted engagement sessions and collected 138 postcard and post-it entries; those sit outside the 790 and are reported separately in Targeted engagement. Because this was an open engagement rather than a controlled sample, the results describe the people who chose to take part, not the district as a whole (see Methodology).

The report runs as follows:

- **Methodology** - how responses were collected, how the agreement questions are reported, how the comments were coded, and the caveats that apply.
- **Respondent profile** - who took part.
- **Community priorities, Planning principles, Rates and levels of service and Local government reform** - the results, question by question.
- **Targeted engagement** - the targeted engagement sessions, Council advisory groups and postcard/post-it stream.
- **Qualitative themes** - the open-text material drawn together.
- **Appendices** - the engagement questions (A), a glossary of the qualitative themes (B), key results by demographic group (C), and the engagement session summary reports (D).

3 Methodology

3.1 How the engagement ran

Prioritise Kāpiti ran as an open public engagement: anyone could take part. Feedback reached Council through four streams:

- **The online survey**, hosted on Council's Have Your Say engagement platform. It opened on 22 June 2026 and closed at midnight on Sunday 26 July 2026; the final export contains 747 responses.
- **Written and paper submissions**, accepted over the same period: the printed feedback form available at libraries and service centres and by post, plus letters, emails and documents sent in directly. 43 were received.
- **Targeted engagement sessions and Council advisory groups**, run by elected members with support from Council staff, through to 5 August: business and commercial landowner audiences, community sector leaders, environment leaders, rangatahi (including participants in the Mayors Taskforce for Jobs programme), young people and school students, and Council's Disability Advisory Group, Older Persons' Advisory Group and Youth Council.
- **Postcard and post-it feedback**, collected at Council's pop-up events, libraries and service centres between 4 and 26 July: 138 entries.

The first two streams answered the same question set, and together they give 790 responses; those 790 are the basis of every survey-and-submission figure in this report. The sessions and the postcard stream did not answer that question set, so they are reported separately in Targeted engagement and do not enter the 790 or any figure elsewhere. How each stream was collected and analysed is set out below.

Channel	Responses
Online survey (Have Your Say platform)	747
Written and paper submissions	43
Total	790

Table 1: Responses by channel

The written and paper submissions

The written and paper channel did not arrive in one format. Of the 43 submissions, 14 came by email, 9 as attached documents, 19 as scanned paper forms and letters, and one as a digital form confirmation. Each was registered on receipt and given a reference (LTPW0001 to LTPW0043). Text was extracted directly from the digital originals; scanned material was transcribed and each transcript reviewed against the source page before acceptance, so what entered the dataset matched what the submitter had actually written.

Each submission was structured against the same question set as the online form, with free text carried across to the same four open questions. Written submissions often ran to thousands of words where the online boxes tended to draw a paragraph; prose of that kind was read against the question set in the same way as a completed form. Anything needing a human decision - an ambiguous mark, unclear handwriting, or a possible duplicate of an online response - was set aside and settled by the research team before the written and paper submissions were bound to the online dataset. Personal names and contact details are not reported and were not used as analytical variables; organisation names are reported only where needed to identify an organisational submission or a standing advisory group.

Six of the 43 written and paper submissions were made on behalf of an organisation or a standing Council advisory group; the other 37 came from individuals. The six are:

- Kāpiti Health Advisory Group (KHAG)
- Waikanae and Peka Peka Beach Residents Society Inc (WPPBRSI)
- Waikanae Watch
- EarthSOS
- Zero Waste Ōtaki Incorporated
- Cycleway, Walkway, and Bridleway Advisory Group

A further nine of the 747 online responses were lodged on behalf of an organisation. Those are not named here: the online form was completed in confidence, and naming a respondent is not necessary to identify a submission in that channel. Fifteen organisational responses were received across the two channels in all (see Respondent profile).

Targeted engagement sessions and Council advisory groups

The sessions were workshops, not surveys. Most ran to a common format: reactions to the draft priorities and principles, what is missing, what should be protected if rates were held lower, and a closing round of top-of-mind messages, with dot-voting or continuum exercises where the format suited the group. The account of each targeted engagement session was drafted from the facilitators' full session notes, including photographs of worksheets and flip charts, supplied by Council's communications and engagement team, and was checked against the 11 summary reports the team produced for these sessions and groups. Those summary reports are reproduced at Appendix D.

Because participants did not complete the feedback form, session material is reported narratively. Where a session ranked priorities by dots or votes, the counts are reported as what happened in that room, among that group, on that exercise; they are not comparable with the survey's agreement shares and are never set beside them. Two pieces of advisory group feedback - letters from the Cycleway, Walkway, and Bridleway Advisory Group (LTPW0043) and the Kāpiti Health Advisory Group (LTPW0006) - arrived as formal organisational submissions and are counted in the written and paper channel.

The postcard and post-it entries

The drop-in entries are mostly one-liners. Each was registered by Council's communications and engagement team; one person may have left several, so they are counted as entries, not people, and personal contact details are not reported. To keep the themes consistent across the engagement, the entries were coded against the same theme framework as the survey and written comments, as a standalone stream reported in Targeted engagement.

3.2 The questions

- **Two agreement questions** - the eight community priorities and the five planning principles, asked as agree lists (tick the items you agree with online; item-by-item on the printed form).
- **Two single-choice questions** - whether the respondent would accept reduced levels of service in some areas if Council aimed to keep total rates at no more than 5% of median household income; and who should fund the cost of amalgamation, with an "other" option accepting free text.

- **Four open-text questions** - anything important the priorities missed; what else Council should consider; the services-that-matter box, presented as a follow-up for respondents answering No to the rates cap; and the “other” box on amalgamation funding.
- **Demographics** - age group in decade bands, suburb, whether the respondent lives in or owns property in the district, ratepayer status, and whether they responded as an individual or on behalf of an organisation.

3.3 How the results are reported

All figures in this report are **unweighted**. They describe the people who took part. This was an open engagement, so respondents are self-selected rather than a controlled sample of the district, and no adjustment has been made to bring the respondent profile closer to the population. This caveat applies to every figure and is not repeated in each chart and table.

Not every respondent answered every question, so base sizes vary and each chart and table reports its own base. Written submissions often carry no demographic information - a letter has no form to fill in - so the demographic bases sit below the 790 total. The two single-choice questions are reported as the share of respondents who answered that question.

The agreement questions are reported as the share of all 790 respondents and submitters who agreed with each item. The two forms put these questions in slightly different layouts, so to count both channels on one common basis the combined figures record agreement only. An item not marked as agreed can mean disagreement, no view, or a question passed over, and these cannot be told apart; the remainder of a figure should therefore not be read as opposition, and this report does not present it that way. If anything the figures read conservatively - they can understate disagreement but not overstate it.

3.4 How the open-text comments were analysed

The engagement produced 1,185 open-text comments from 576 respondents: 469 on anything the priorities missed, 385 on what else Council should consider, 222 on which services matter most, and 109 in the amalgamation “other” box.

The comments were coded to a framework of themes generated from the comments themselves, so the categories come from what respondents wrote rather than a list settled in advance. Both channels were coded against the same framework. Each theme carries a verb prefix recording the respondent’s direction as well as the subject:

- **Prioritise** - rank higher or invest in
- **Protect** - do not cut
- **Consider** - a suggestion or a condition
- **Concern** - a worry rather than a rejection
- **Support** - endorsement
- **Oppose** - a clear no, or stop doing this
- **Null** - responses that carry no substantive content

Where the data runs both ways on a subject, the framework holds opposing themes on it, so agreement and disagreement on the same topic are counted separately rather than merged.

A response can carry more than one theme, and most carry several. Theme counts therefore sum to more than the number of respondents and should be read as relative frequencies rather than shares of a whole. Percentages are of the respondents who commented on that question. The services box contains 222 non-empty texts: 208 from respondents who answered No to Q5, 7 who answered Yes and 7 where Q5 was unanswered. All 222 are retained under the agreed policy, with Q5 stance recorded; percentages for that material are of the 222 commenters, not the 230-person Q5 No group.

Responses along the lines of “n/a” or “no comment” are coded as null and excluded from the theme tables. They are counted in the number of comments reported for each question, and the number carrying no substantive topic is stated alongside it in the body chapters.

Coding was carried out with a large language model working against the fixed framework, one response at a time, and then verified independently: the coded results were reconciled against the raw export, checked for invalid or duplicated assignments, and audited on sampled responses, with corrections applied. The written summaries in this report were checked against the full set of comments in each theme, with counts and proportions recounted by a second pass.

Quoted comments are reproduced with minor corrections to spelling, punctuation and grammar; the wording and meaning are otherwise unchanged. They were chosen to illustrate the leading themes and the spread of views, and are illustrative rather than statistically representative.

Themes from a comment box attached to a closed question are reported alongside that question in the body chapters. The Qualitative themes chapter draws the categories together across the engagement, and Appendix B carries a glossary of the categories and the prefix system.

3.5 Things to keep in mind

- **Self-selection.** An open engagement attracts people who already hold views and are willing to spend time on it. The 790 respondents should not be assumed to mirror the district’s population.
- **The profile of who responded.** Respondents skew heavily towards ratepayers and older residents, and towards two of the district’s larger centres (see Respondent profile). Ratepayers account for 734 of the 768 who answered that question (96%), and 425 of the 764 who gave an age are 60 or over (56%). Younger residents and smaller communities are under-represented. The form did not ask tenure, so renter representation cannot be measured directly.
- **Small subgroup bases.** Some groups in the crosstabs are small - non-ratepayers (34 respondents) and the youngest age bands in particular. Differences involving them are indicative and should not be relied on as measures of the group’s view.
- **Agreement figures record agreement only.** As above: the remainder of an agreement figure is not disagreement and is not reported as such anywhere in this document.

4 Respondent profile

This section describes who took part, so the views that follow can be read in context. The form collected a limited demographic set: age group, suburb, whether the respondent lives in or owns property in Kāpiti, ratepayer status and respondent type. Base sizes vary for two reasons: not every respondent answered every demographic question, and written and paper submitters generally did not supply demographic details. Every base below sits under the 790 responses the engagement received in total.

Those who took part are not a cross-section of the district:

- **Mostly ratepayers:** 734 of the 768 who answered (96%).
- **More than half aged 60 or over:** 425 of 764 (56%).
- **Nearly all live in or own property in Kāpiti:** 758 of the 766 who answered. Nearly all also responded in a personal capacity: 764 of 779.
- **Concentrated in the two largest centres:** Paraparaumu and Waikanae together account for 62% of those who named a suburb.

The results that follow are best read as the views of an older, ratepayer-heavy group of engaged respondents, weighted towards the older end of the district's population and its two largest centres. The charts and tables below give the full breakdowns; the text adds only what they cannot show.

4.1 Age

More than half of those who gave an age group are 60 or over, with the 70s the largest band, and numbers fall away with each younger band. The responses therefore carry the views of older residents more strongly than those of younger ones. Where age makes a material difference to an answer, this report says so; the full breakdowns are in Appendix C.

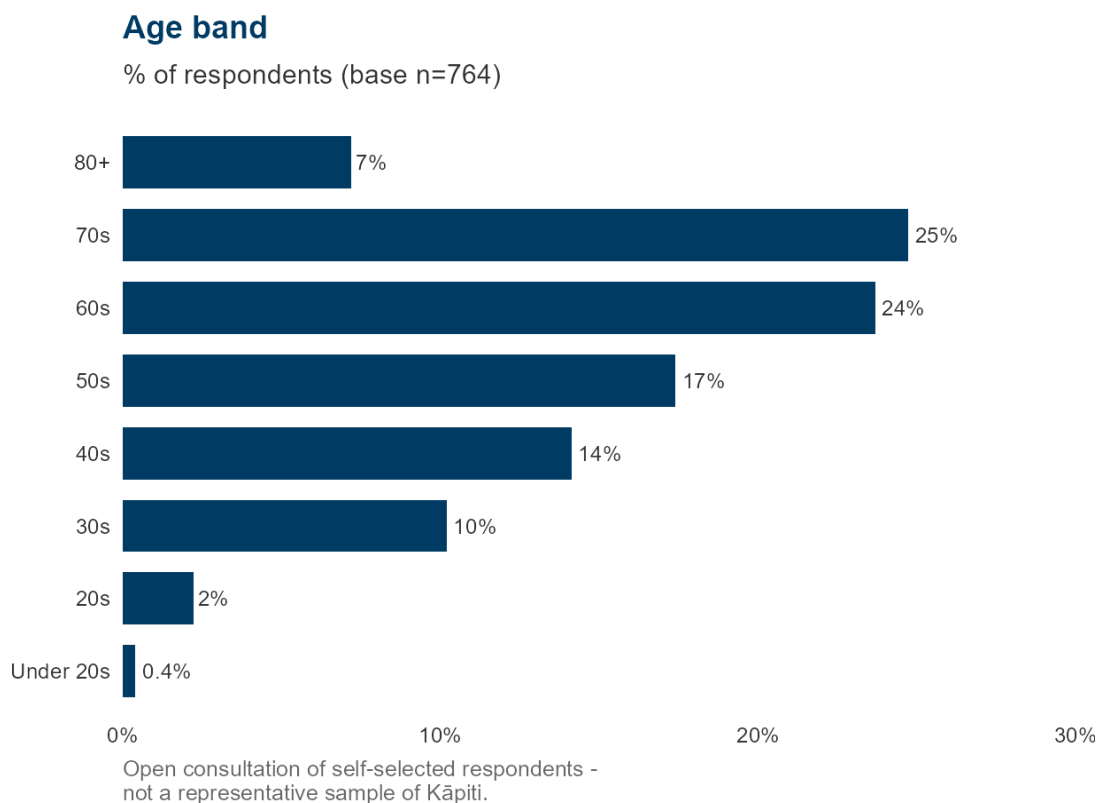


Figure 1: Age group

Category	n	%
Under 20s	3	0.4%
20s	17	2%
30s	78	10%
40s	108	14%
50s	133	17%
60s	181	24%
70s	189	25%
80+	55	7%

Base: respondents who answered (n=764 of 790).

Open consultation of self-selected respondents - not a representative sample of Kāpiti.

Table 2: Age group

4.2 Suburb

Paraparaumu and Waikanae account for three-fifths of those who named a suburb, with the smaller communities represented in single or low double figures. This concentration matters for how the results are read: local issues raised by a small community can be substantial for that community while appearing modest in a district-wide count, and area differences reported in this document rest on very different base sizes.

Response shares broadly track where people live. Against the 2023 Census usually resident population, Ōtaki ward holds 16% of the district's population and supplied 14% of those who named an area; Paraparaumu 42% and 33%; Waikanae 28% and 34%; and Paekākāriki-Raumati 15% and 18%. Paraparaumu's larger response count sits below its share of the population; Waikanae's sits about six points above it. Neither gap is large enough to treat the concentration as an artefact of who chose to respond. Ward figures are Stats NZ 2023 Census usually resident population counts supplied by Kāpiti Coast District Council; for this comparison, Te Horo and Hautere sit in Ōtaki ward, Otaihanga in Paraparaumu ward, and Peka Peka and Reikōrangi in Waikanae ward.

Area

% of respondents (base n=768)

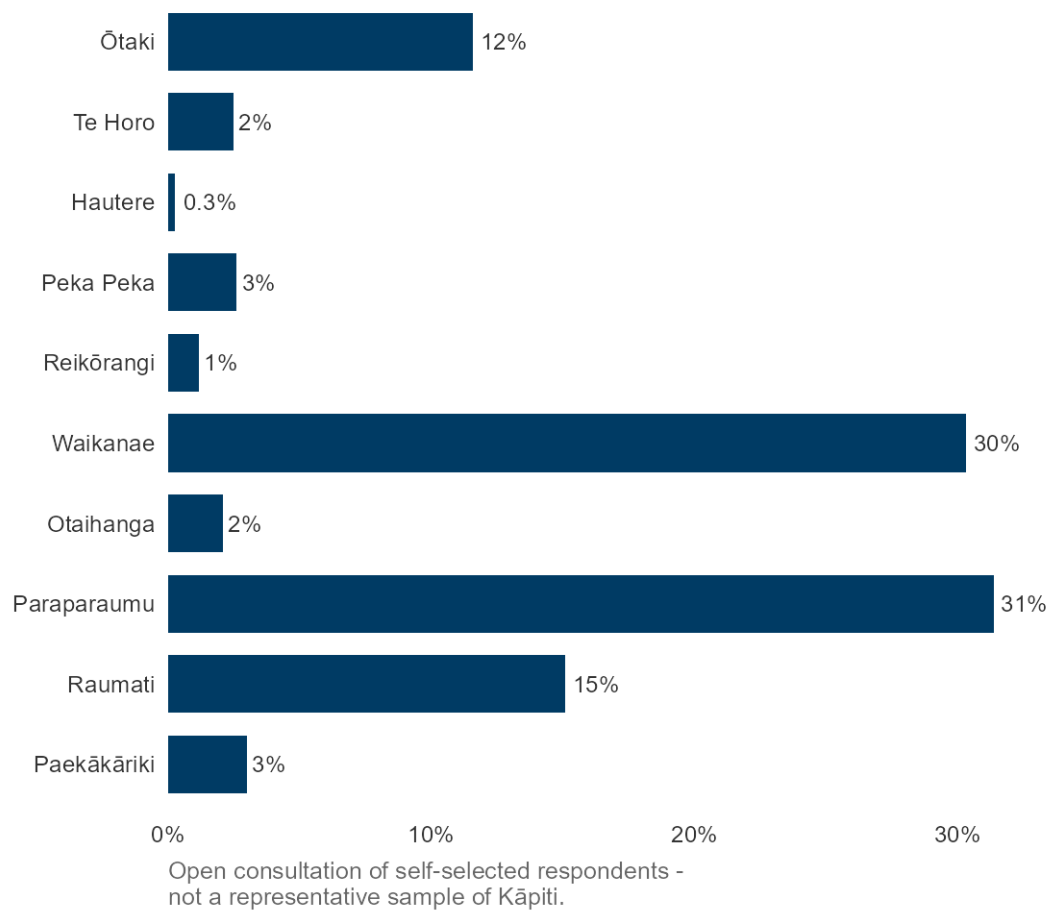


Figure 2: Suburb

Category	n	%
Paekākāriki	23	3%
Raumati	116	15%
Paraparaumu	241	31%
Otaihanga	16	2%
Waikanae	233	30%
Reikōrangī	9	1%
Peka Peka	20	3%
Hautere	2	0.3%
Te Horo	19	2%
Ōtaki	89	12%

Base: respondents who answered (n=768 of 790).

Open consultation of self-selected respondents - not a representative sample of Kāpiti.

Table 3: Suburb

4.3 Lives in or owns property, and ratepayer status

Nearly everyone who answered has a direct connection to the district, and ratepayers make up 96% of those who answered the ratepayer question. Given that the engagement asked about rates levels and what Council should fund, this is the single most important thing to hold in mind when reading the results.

The form did not ask about tenure, so this is not a direct count of renters. At 34 respondents, the non-ratepayer group is too small for any difference from the ratepayer group to be treated as reliable, and this report flags such differences as indicative. On that indicative footing, the non-ratepayers ticked all eight community priorities and all five planning principles more often than respondents overall, most widely on Connected communities, Working with others and Housing; Appendix C sets out the figures. The eight respondents who said they did not live in or own property in Kāpiti are too few, and their location detail too potentially identifying, to report further.

Lives/owns property in Kāpiti

% of respondents (base n=766)

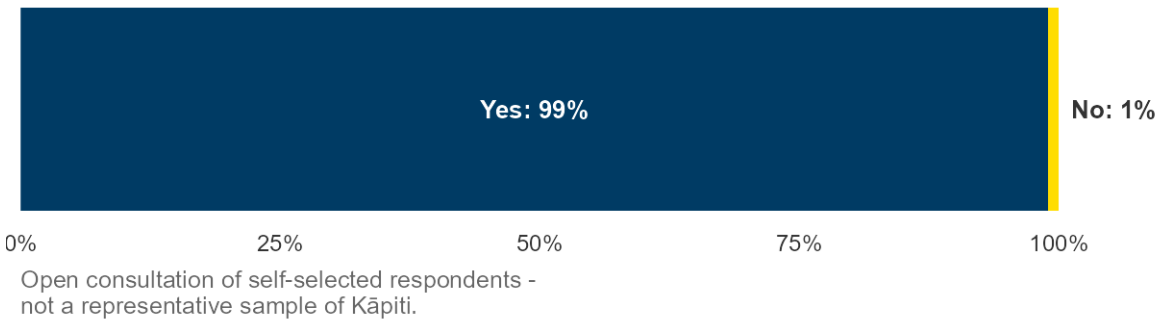


Figure 3: Lives in or owns a property in Kāpiti

Category	n	%
Yes	758	99%
No	8	1%

Base: respondents who answered (n=766 of 790).

Open consultation of self-selected respondents - not a representative sample of Kāpiti.

Table 4: Lives in or owns a property in Kāpiti

Kāpiti ratepayer

% of respondents (base n=768)

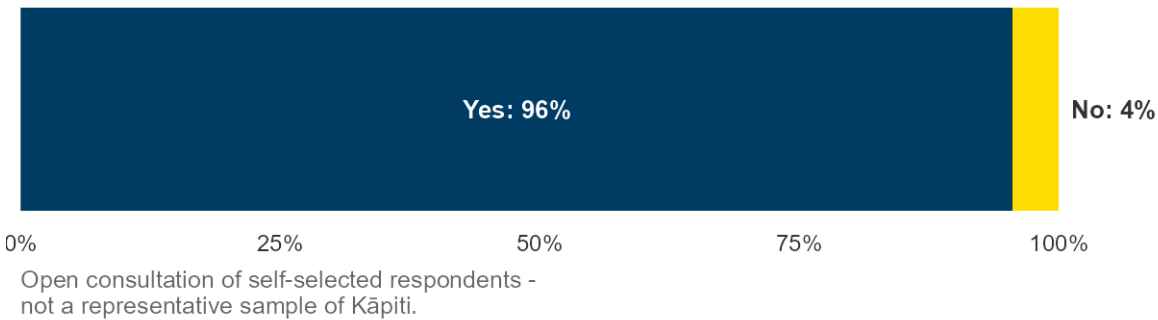


Figure 4: Kāpiti ratepayer

Category	n	%
Yes	734	96%
No	34	4%

Base: respondents who answered (n=768 of 790).

Open consultation of self-selected respondents -
not a representative sample of Kāpiti.

Table 5: Kāpiti ratepayer

4.4 Responding as an individual or organisation

Nearly all responses came from individuals - 764 of the 779 who answered. The 15 organisational responses are too few to report as a group, and they are not spread evenly across the two channels: six of the 43 written and paper submissions came from organisations, against nine of the 747 online responses, so the organisational voice sits mainly in the written material. The six written organisational submissions are named in Methodology.

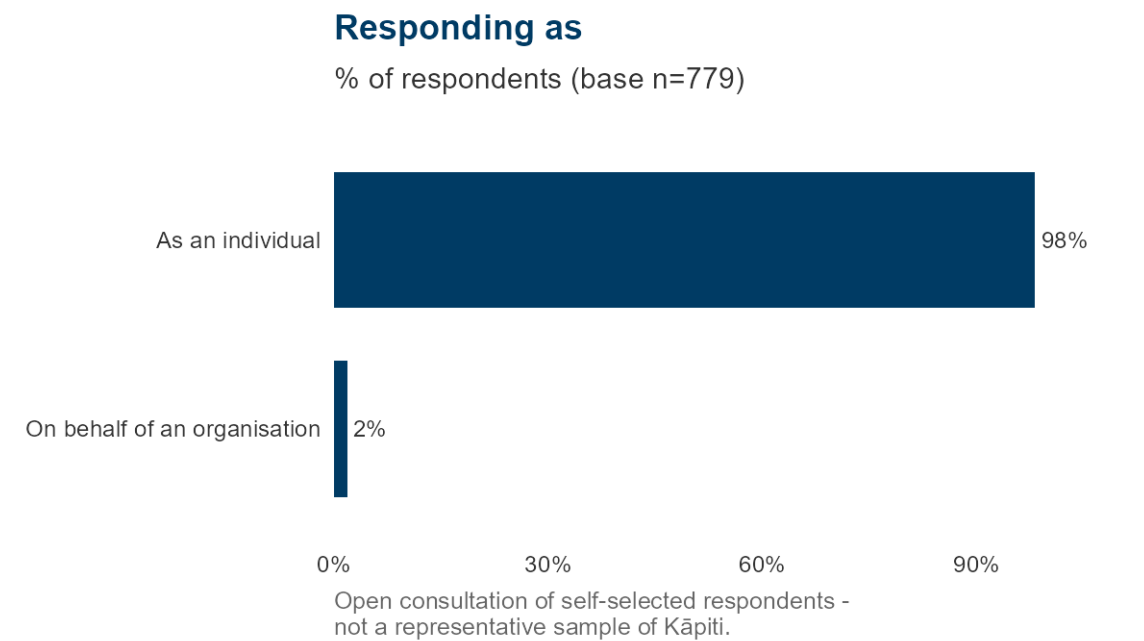


Figure 5: Responding as

Category	n	%
As an individual	764	98%
On behalf of an organisation	15	2%

Base: respondents who answered (n=779 of 790).

Open consultation of self-selected respondents -
not a representative sample of Kāpiti.

Table 6: Responding as

4.5 Who we did and did not hear from

The engagement heard most strongly from ratepayers (734 of the 768 who answered, 96%), from older residents (more than half of those who gave an age were 60 or over) and from the district’s two largest centres (Paraparaumu and Waikanae account for 62% of those who named a suburb). The voices thinnest in the survey and submission record are younger residents, non-ratepayers and the smaller communities.

Non-ratepayers are the only one of those groups big enough to say anything about, and only just. There were 34 of them, just above the 30-respondent minimum this report applies before it reports a difference between groups. They ticked every one of the priorities and principles more often than respondents overall, but with numbers this small the pattern is reported in Appendix C as indicative only. The form did not ask about tenure, so renters cannot be identified directly.

The targeted engagement sessions were designed partly to fill these gaps and to make sure Council heard from a diverse range of voices, including young people and school students, business, commercial developers, representatives from the community and sector and environmental groups, and Council's advisory groups. The postcard and post-it stream collected feedback from people who would not have completed a survey. What those streams contributed is reported narratively in Targeted engagement, with Council's own session summaries at Appendix D. Session findings and survey figures answer different questions and rest on different bases, so they are not compared in this report.

4.6 Reading the results in light of this profile

These figures describe an older, ratepayer-heavy group, almost all with a direct stake in the district, concentrated in Paraparaumu and Waikanae, and engaged enough to complete a survey or write a submission about a ten-year plan. The results describe those respondents and submitters, not the district. The demographic breakdowns in Appendix C, which rest on the same partial bases, show where the views of groups within it diverge.

5 Community priorities

Survey question: “Do you agree that these priorities are the right things for Council to be focussed on as we develop the next LTP?”

The Council put eight community priorities to respondents, drawn from the 2024 Vision Kāpiti kōrero: Housing; Health; Connected communities; Peace, safety and equality; Land use; Waters; Working with others; and Shaping our direction together. The figures below are the share of all 790 respondents and submitters who agreed with each priority, and an item left unticked is not necessarily disagreement (see Methodology).

Waters stands well clear of the rest - the only priority agreed with by more than three-quarters, and roughly fourteen percentage points ahead of the next. Health, Peace, safety and equality and Land use form a middle group. Below them, Shaping our direction together, Connected communities and Housing sit within three points of one another, and Working with others sits alone at the bottom, ten points below Shaping our direction together. The chart and table below give the full results.

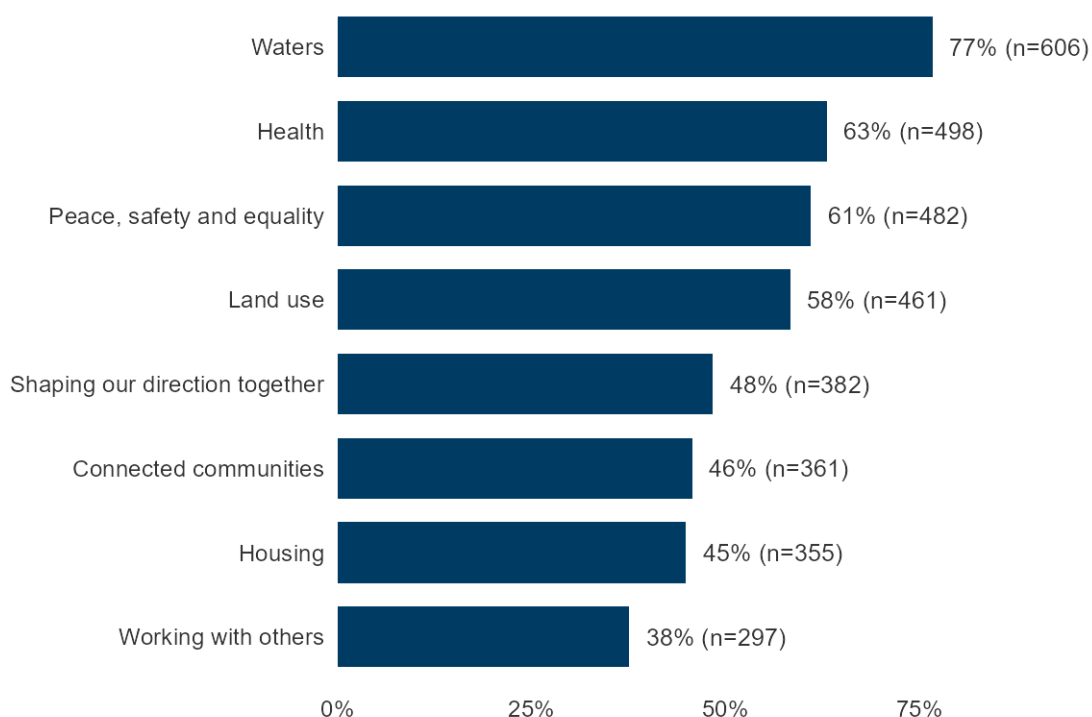
Agreement was widespread rather than concentrated: 686 of the 790 ticked at least one priority, so for most people the question was which of the eight to endorse, not whether to endorse any.

Splitting the answers by the rates cap question (Q5) makes little difference to this ordering: Waters leads in both groups, agreed by 81% of those who accepted the cap and 76% of those who declined it, and most of the eight priorities differ by a few points at most. The two most community-facing priorities are the exception, each drawing agreement nine points higher among those who declined the cap: Connected communities at 53% against 44%, and Working with others at 44% against 35%. These are observed differences in a self-selected engagement, not tested ones (see Appendix C). The division visible at Q5 is about how the district’s work is paid for, not about which priorities matter.

Age separates the answers less sharply: those aged 60 or over and those under 60 ticked most priorities at similar rates, the widest gaps being Housing and Working with others at eight points. Respondents in their 30s were more likely than average to tick Waters and Health, and those aged 80 and over more likely to tick Housing, Connected communities, Shaping our direction together and Working with others. The 34 non-ratepayers ticked all eight priorities more often than respondents overall, though that base is small and indicative only. Appendix C sets out the breakdowns.

Agreement with the eight community priorities

Share of respondents who agreed with each



Base: all respondents (n=790). The online form recorded agreement ticks only; an unticked item is not necessarily disagreement.

Figure 6: Community priorities: share of respondents agreeing with each

Item	Agreed	% of respondents
Waters	606	77%
Health	498	63%
Peace, safety and equality	482	61%
Land use	461	58%
Shaping our direction together	382	48%
Connected communities	361	46%
Housing	355	45%
Working with others	297	38%

Base: all respondents (n=790). The online form recorded agreement ticks only; an unticked item may be disagreement, no view, or a skipped question.

Table 7: Community priorities: agreement

Demographic breakdowns of this question are provided in Appendix C.

5.1 Is anything important missing?

Survey question: “These are not Council’s only priority areas. If there is something important that you think we need to prioritise, please tell us.”

This question drew 469 comments across the two channels; all but two raised a substantive topic. The largest single ask is for Council to get back to core services: core and fundamental responsibilities are named in 116 comments (25%), usually tied to rates and a demand that Council live within ratepayers’ means. The other leading strands:

- **Framing:** the eight priorities are called too vague, too broad or too muddled to rank in 48 comments (10%); a smaller group place health and housing with central government.
- **Money:** rates affordability and the cost of living (57 comments, 12%), spending on nice-to-haves and vanity projects (48, 10%), efficiency and value for money (42, 9%).
- **Pushing the other way:** the natural environment and waterways (34, 7%), climate change mitigation (28, 6%) and coastal hazards and adaptation (26, 6%), each asking that environment or climate stand as a priority in its own right.
- **Also prominent:** consultation quality (32, 7%), infrastructure in place before further growth (28, 6%), local health services (26, 6%) and roading and footpaths (25, 5%).

Percentages below are of the 469 who commented, and comments were coded to as many categories as they raised.

Scope of Council’s role (140 respondents, 30%)

The demand to narrow Council’s work to core services runs through this category and is the largest single theme in the question.

- **Core services first** (116 comments, 25%): usually itemised as roads and footpaths, three waters, waste, regulation, emergency preparedness and community facilities. Several wrote out their own ordered priority list, and the lists converge: governance with community boards, water services, regulatory functions, network infrastructure, waste, disaster management, then community and recreational facilities.
- **Health and housing sit with central government:** 22 comments oppose Council involvement in health and 24 oppose it in housing, with “stay in your lane” the recurring phrasing. A softer version keeps a health priority but recasts it as advocacy, partnership and support rather than delivery.
- **The opposite case:** a smaller group treat community facilities, social connection and local support as essential rather than optional, arguing that investment in connection and capability reduces later demand on costlier services.

I’m a huge supporter of Local Government but you need to stay in your lane. Health and housing (or advocacy) are not your responsibilities; they are National Government responsibilities and the local MP’s job.

Council should stick to its knitting - water, rubbish, and local roads.

Council spending and financial discipline (105 respondents, 22%)

A single test recurs through this category: fund core services first, and defer or drop everything else.

- **Nice-to-haves and vanity projects** (48 comments, 10%): skate parks, the Waikanae library rebuild and architecturally designed bus stops are the recurring examples; one submitter itemised a set of Waikanae works, from a million dollar bridge cycle clip-on onwards, as never essential.
- **Efficiency, cost audits and value for money** (42, 9%): asked for before any further rates are sought; some want zero-based budgeting, and a couple suggest AI and digital tools to strip back-office cost.
- **Staffing and overheads:** staff numbers, salaries, consultants and contractors are targeted by a further group, with travel, allowances and council vehicles drawing separate objections.
- **Debt:** others want debt paid down and borrowing limited, naming the skate park and the library rebuild as borrowing they would not have made. A few push the other way, preferring a higher debt track to underinvestment, and one credits Council with recent progress on sustainable debt levels.

Don't bother with the nice-to-haves. How about getting some of the existing debt repaid?

Governance, engagement and trust (102 respondents, 22%)

Trust is the recurring thread in this category.

- **Consultation quality** (32 comments, 7%): decisions are said to be settled before feedback is sought, or surveys amount to lip service. The closure of the Waikanae Beach Community Hall and the proposed Eruini Street development are named as the cases where residents felt unheard; two ask for face-to-face public meetings rather than drop-in events.
- **Transparency and accountability:** performance measures attached to any funded activity, councillors' votes published, and decisions held by elected members rather than salaried staff or unelected appointees.
- **Māori partnership divides the category:** some oppose co-governance, Māori wards and Council payments to iwi, mostly arguing from equal treatment; others ask for Te Tiriti partnership and mana whenua voice to be made explicit, attaching mechanisms such as a standing Māori advisory panel and kaitiakitanga as a test for greenfield development.
- **Fairness across the district:** a further strand argues decisions taken now must not leave costs to those who come after, and a small group ask for investment spread more fairly across the district, most of them naming Ōtaki.

Every dollar you spend reflects a portion of someone's life.

Community facilities and public spaces (91 respondents, 19%)

Maintenance runs through this category: existing assets should be looked after before anything new is built.

- **Maintenance first:** deferred maintenance is named as the cost that arrives later; two want Council to state publicly which items are trimmed to balance the books.
- **Arts and culture:** the Mahara gallery is named repeatedly as something to keep funded, staffed and free to enter; several observe that the arts are not named in the priority list as drafted.
- **Halls:** the closed Waikanae Beach hall is raised in both channels - shut before any replacement existed, and allowed to run down first.

- **Libraries:** defended mainly against charging, on the grounds that fees would shut out those least able to pay; a pair of submissions would redirect the budgeted Ōtaki library funding into a larger multi-use hub.
- **Parks and playgrounds:** practical asks include a fenced small-dog area and indoor wet-weather space for families; a smaller group treat playground and skate park upgrades as avoidable spending.

Maintenance of the existing excellent facilities that have been created in Kāpiti. Look after what has already been done because it looks great now and is valuable to the community.

You haven't mentioned the arts, though they reach into many aspects of the community. Kāpiti has a strong creative strength and it would be very sad to downplay it.

Framing of the priorities and principles (83 respondents, 18%)

Within this category, wording is the complaint that recurs most.

- **Too vague to rank** (48 comments, 10%): the priorities are called vague, woolly, fluffy or amorphous; some could not tick or rank the list as a result, some say the priorities duplicate one another (health and connected communities most often), and several single out grouping peace, safety and equality with roads, parks and beaches.
- **Must versus choose:** others ask for a visible line between what Council must do by law and what it chooses to do; a handful supply a near-identical replacement list.
- **Reword or reorder:** proposals cluster on health (overstates Council's role, or should widen into advocacy) and on environment, climate or sustainability, which several would lift out as a priority in its own right; two say Connected communities leans too far towards facilities and not enough towards belonging.
- **No costings:** a further group say they cannot give informed feedback without costs, weightings and rates impacts attached to each priority.

These priority areas are awfully designed - a total service salad.

Rates and affordability (77 respondents, 16%)

Rate rises are described repeatedly as beyond what households can absorb.

- **Affordability and the cost of living** (57 comments, 12%): several say they are already struggling, others describe long-term residents priced out, and some ask outright for rates to come down or be frozen.
- **A named ceiling:** most often inflation or the CPI, with 3% and 4% each proposed and a few pinning the limit at 5%, one of them as a share of household income.
- **Budget from affordability:** some would build the budget up from what ratepayers can afford, trimming the priority list to fit; one notes the survey offers no way to de-prioritise anything at all.
- **Fairness of the rating system:** two respondents who described themselves as rural object to paying for services they say they do not receive, several argue rates should track ability to pay, and one proposes deferring payment until a house is sold rather than cutting service levels.

Keeping rates rises at the level of inflation or below should be your top priority and it is not even mentioned.

Environment and climate (72 respondents, 15%)

- **The natural environment** (34 comments, 7%): stronger tree protection and more planting, two setting a 30% canopy target, and a handful saying the environment should stand as a priority in its own right.
- **Climate mitigation** (28, 6%): Council vehicles and procurement, drained peat and a shift away from gas; several want climate action named explicitly, pointing to the emissions reduction plan the district already has.
- **Coastal hazards and adaptation** (26, 6%): argued mostly as a planning question - stop consenting houses on flood-prone, swampy or low-lying land, and treat stormwater maintenance, drainage clearance and stream mouth management as core infrastructure, with the Waimeha Stream mouth and Peka Peka drainage named in the written and paper channel. Sea walls split the few who raise them.
- **The counter-current:** a small group ask that disaster planning and coastal managed retreat policy rest on real data rather than what they describe as extreme modelling.

The environment is noticeably absent from this list.

Roads, transport and access (63 respondents, 13%)

- **Roading and footpath maintenance** (25 comments, 5%): cast as core business - potholes, surfaces running from poor to appalling, cracked footpaths, fading disability park markings, repairs that need redoing within months. Two from Ōtaki say their roads are worse than Waikanae's and Paraparaumu's while the rates are the same.
- **Congestion:** focused on Kāpiti Road and the development near the airport; two ask Council to pursue the north-facing Poplar Avenue on-ramp the original expressway plan allowed for.
- **Public transport:** greater frequency, routes that reach the new subdivisions and feed the railway stations, and smaller electric buses, with Ōtaki named for both rail units and bus connections.
- **Split views on cycleways:** some would cut spending on cycleways, crossings and traffic management; a few ask for more walking and cycling connections. A handful want the Kāpiti Coast Airport retained, largely on emergency and medical grounds.

Improve road infrastructure. Kāpiti Road is always a traffic jam.

Growth, housing and land use (63 respondents, 13%)

School rolls, GP lists and traffic queues carry this category.

- **Infrastructure before growth** (28 comments, 6%): school capacity and GP access are the two things writers want settled before more housing is consented, with Kāpiti Road the recurring pinch point; one asks Council to secure land now for a second Waikanae rail station, an industrial area and future schools.
- **Intensification and character:** objections name Waikanae most often and the Eruini Street development in three cases - the objection is scale and fit, three-storey buildings dropped into single-storey streets.

- **Developer contributions:** several writers make an identical detailed ask - a published review of contribution rates benchmarked against comparable high-growth districts before the draft plan goes out in 2027, and a report on how much growth cost is recovered from contributions rather than general rates.
- **Smaller strands:** housing affordability and quality, regulatory functions and land use control, opposition to further greenfield subdivision, and the cost and complexity of the consent process.

Making sure we don't allow mass-development just because there's land there. If the infrastructure we already have doesn't support it, we shouldn't be putting more strain on existing resources (schools, roads, healthcare).

People, equity and community wellbeing (61 respondents, 13%)

Age pulls at this category from both ends.

- **Young people:** somewhere to go - indoors, free and outside school hours, with the library staying open past 5pm among the suggestions - alongside jobs, training and a reason not to leave the district. A handful argue rangatahi should be brought into decision-making even though they are not ratepayers.
- **Older residents divide the writers:** one proposes that infrastructure for older people be paid for by older people, many of whom can afford it; others describe elderly residents struggling with costs, one not comfortable keeping the heater on.
- **Safety and resilience:** community safety and emergency management each draw a smaller group, with written submitters framing resilience as built within the community - distributed food and waste processing, supply caches, neighbourhood preparedness networks.
- **Both directions on scope:** some want Council out of health, housing, wellbeing and connection altogether; a comparable number argue social infrastructure should be treated as core alongside pipes and roads. A few raise accessibility, mostly over beach and reserve access and footpaths.

More things for our young people! Third spaces, such as the library being open later. Once it hits 5pm, there's not really anywhere indoors for our rangatahi to hang out without spending money.

Health, business and the local economy (60 respondents, 13%)

Getting to a doctor is the sharpest thread.

- **Local health services** (26 comments, 6%): a hospital or a 24-hour or after-hours emergency facility is the most repeated ask, practices closed to new patients the most repeated complaint, and several measure the distance to Kenepuru or Wellington at night; one respondent also asked for a hospice.
- **Jobs on the Coast:** others want Council actively attracting and retaining employers, one counting the commute at ten-plus hours a week and another writing that with businesses closing the region will die.
- **Tourism:** proposals for a specific thing to come and see, from a pier to a sound shell for summer concerts; two connect visitor numbers to the absence of a hotel.
- **The counter-view:** a few rule business promotion and economic development out as Council work.

The medical centres have not allowed new applicants for the past 3 years. I need to go to after-hours to see a GP. Surely that should be a priority.

Water services (44 respondents, 9%)

Naming water in a list of essentials is commoner here than arguing a case for it.

- **The core of the core:** drinking water and wastewater are named as the thing Council exists to deliver, often at the top of a numbered list; a handful object to being asked to rank it at all. Capacity is the practical worry - whether supply and sewerage can absorb new suburbs and retirement villages.
- **Stormwater carries the detail:** several point out that stormwater is named in the Waters factsheet but missing from the actions; drain and channel clearing is the recurring demand, and one asks that flood defence be a priority in its own right. The written and paper channel turns to Waikanae Beach, where deferred clearance of the open stormwater channel is said to be raising flood risk.
- **The new water arrangements:** others ask how the ring-fenced business unit from July 2027 fits the Long-term Plan - one wants it kept as an annex so ratepayers can see the whole bill in one document, and two want ownership kept in local hands.

The idea of asking people to prioritise these basics shows the council's inability to look after the residents.

Local government reform and central government (26 respondents, 6%)

- **The boundary:** several of those who raise it name health and housing as central government responsibilities funded through taxes; one asks Council to resist unfunded work from central government, and others complain legislation keeps arriving without funding attached.
- **For amalgamation:** support rests mostly on cost - stripping duplicated roles and management overhead to hold rates down - with Wellington named in two responses and Horowhenua in two others.
- **Against it:** a smaller group defend local control, two warning about inheriting Wellington's water problems.

Kāpiti Coast council needs to stay focused on local issues. Don't amalgamate with Wellington City Council. They have different needs from what we have.

Waste and recycling (23 respondents, 5%)

- **Kerbside collection:** several object to multiple private operators sending trucks down the same street on different days, one counting up to six; a group want collection folded back into rates or back under Council.
- **Fees:** tip and green waste charges are said to be high enough to push people into fly-tipping, one costing a mattress at \$49.
- **Waste minimisation:** a strand carried out of proportion to its size by the written and paper channel argues waste minimisation and resource recovery should be named as a core service, citing Vision Kāpiti; one describes an Ōtaki wood-recovery operation keeping over 200 tonnes out of landfill in five years, another a food-scrap system already trialled in the district. It is raised by 4 of the 43 written and paper submissions against 7 of the 747 online responses.

*Waste management needs simplifying. There are too many private companies operating.
This creates confusion and overuse of polluting vehicles.*

A small residual group record general support for the priorities and Council's direction, or general rejection of them, without naming a topic.

Can't think of anything else - above seems pretty comprehensive to me.

Topic	n	%
SCOPE OF COUNCIL'S ROLE	140	30%
Prioritise: core services and fundamental responsibilities	116	25%
Oppose: Council involvement in housing and social housing	24	5%
Oppose: Council involvement in health services	22	5%
Oppose: 'woke' and ideological agendas in Council work	11	2%
Prioritise: a stronger Council role in housing and homelessness	4	1%
COUNCIL SPENDING AND FINANCIAL DISCIPLINE	105	22%
Oppose: spending on 'nice-to-haves' and vanity projects	48	10%
Prioritise: efficiency, cost audits and value for money	42	9%
Oppose: spending on staff numbers, salaries, consultants and contractors	17	4%
Prioritise: paying down debt and limiting borrowing	12	3%
Consider: alternative revenue, asset use and external funding	10	2%
GOVERNANCE, ENGAGEMENT AND TRUST	102	22%
Prioritise: consultation quality and acting on what the community says	32	7%
Prioritise: efficient governance, community boards and elected decision-making	20	4%
Prioritise: transparency and accountability for spending and decisions	19	4%
Oppose: co-governance, Māori wards and spending on iwi engagement	13	3%
Prioritise: long-term and intergenerational thinking	12	3%
Consider: community as partner and co-producer, not just consulted	9	2%
Prioritise: Te Tiriti, mana whenua partnership and Māori representation	6	1%
Prioritise: fair distribution of investment across towns and rural areas	5	1%
COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND PUBLIC SPACES	91	19%
Prioritise: maintenance and upkeep of existing assets and public spaces	21	4%
Prioritise: arts, culture, galleries and heritage	20	4%
Prioritise: parks, reserves, playgrounds and open space	16	3%
Prioritise: community halls, centres and meeting spaces	15	3%
Prioritise: pools, sports fields and recreation facilities	13	3%
Oppose: spending on playground, park and skate park upgrades	12	3%
Prioritise: libraries	6	1%
Oppose: spending on arts, galleries and events	4	1%

Topic	n	%
FRAMING OF THE PRIORITIES AND PRINCIPLES	83	18%
Oppose: the priorities as too vague, broad or muddled to be meaningful	48	10%
Consider: rewording and reordering the priorities	16	3%
Consider: separating core statutory functions from discretionary and aspirational activity	16	3%
Consider: costings, weightings and trade-offs needed to give informed feedback	9	2%
Prioritise: an aspirational vision for the district	7	1%
RATES AND AFFORDABILITY	77	16%
Prioritise: rates affordability and cost of living	57	12%
Prioritise: capping rates increases and setting an affordability limit	17	4%
Consider: fairness of the rating system and how costs are shared	6	1%
ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE	72	15%
Prioritise: natural environment, biodiversity, waterways and trees	34	7%
Prioritise: climate change mitigation and emissions reduction	28	6%
Prioritise: coastal hazards, erosion and climate adaptation	26	6%
Concern: hazard modelling and worst-case assumptions driving policy	6	1%
GROWTH, HOUSING AND LAND USE	63	13%
Prioritise: infrastructure and services in place before further growth	28	6%
Oppose: high-density intensification and loss of neighbourhood character	19	4%
Prioritise: developer contributions and growth paying for growth	7	1%
Prioritise: housing affordability, supply and quality	7	1%
Oppose: further growth and greenfield subdivision	6	1%
Consider: streamlining consents and reducing red tape	5	1%
Prioritise: regulatory functions, land use control and consenting	5	1%
ROADS, TRANSPORT AND ACCESS	63	13%
Prioritise: roading and footpath maintenance	25	5%
Prioritise: public transport	16	3%
Prioritise: traffic congestion and traffic management	12	3%
Oppose: spending on cycleways, crossings and traffic management works	8	2%
Prioritise: cycleways, walkways and shared paths	6	1%
Prioritise: retaining Kāpiti Coast Airport	6	1%
PEOPLE, EQUITY AND COMMUNITY WELLBEING	61	13%
Prioritise: children, youth and rangatahi	12	3%
Prioritise: emergency management, civil defence and community resilience	11	2%
Prioritise: older residents and the ageing population	11	2%
Oppose: spending on community development and connectedness	9	2%

Topic	n	%
Prioritise: community safety, crime and antisocial behaviour	9	2%
Prioritise: social infrastructure, community development, grants and volunteers	9	2%
Prioritise: accessibility and disability inclusion	6	1%
Consider: user pays, charging and equitable access to services	3	1%
HEALTH, BUSINESS AND THE LOCAL ECONOMY	60	13%
Prioritise: local health services, GP access and hospital facilities	26	6%
Prioritise: local business, jobs and economic development	21	4%
Prioritise: tourism, visitors and destination development	12	3%
Prioritise: schools, education and training capacity	11	2%
Oppose: Council spending on business promotion and economic development	4	1%
WATER SERVICES	44	9%
Prioritise: stormwater, drainage and flood protection	18	4%
Prioritise: drinking water and wastewater services	16	3%
Consider: water services delivery model, metering and charges	13	3%
LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM AND CENTRAL GOVERNMENT	26	6%
Prioritise: pushing back on central government functions and unfunded mandates	12	3%
Support: amalgamation, reorganisation and shared services	10	2%
Oppose: amalgamation and loss of local control	5	1%
WASTE AND RECYCLING	23	5%
Prioritise: kerbside rubbish collection, recycling and tip fees	14	3%
Prioritise: waste minimisation, resource recovery and composting	11	2%
GENERAL	5	1%
Support: general support for the priorities and Council's direction	3	1%
Oppose: general rejection of the priorities as presented	2	0%

n = count of distinct respondents raising each theme. Base: the 469 respondents who commented on this question. % = share of that base. Topics raised by fewer than 2 respondents are omitted. Open-text question; respondents may raise more than one theme, so themes sum to more than 100%.

Table 8: Anything important missing - themes

6 Planning principles

Survey question: “Do these principles reflect how Council should make decisions?”

The Council proposed five planning principles to guide the development of the next Long-term Plan: Community voice; Growth pays for growth; User pays where it makes sense; Live within our financial limits; and Prioritise the must-dos. Where the eight priorities describe what Council would work on, the principles describe how it would choose between them and who would carry the cost. The figures below are the share of all 790 respondents and submitters recording agreement with each principle, and the absence of agreement is not itself disagreement (see Methodology).

Agreement was evenly spread across the five. The band from top to bottom is ten points, much narrower than the priorities’ band, with the two cost principles at the head of it; 714 of the 790 agreed with at least one principle. Respondents sorted the priorities into a clear order of importance; they endorsed the principles more or less as a set. The chart and table below give the full results. Only six responses separate user pays from community voice, and both round to 68%, so the order between those two carries no weight; what sets user pays apart is the comment it attracted, covered below.

Agreement with the five planning principles

Share of respondents who agreed with each

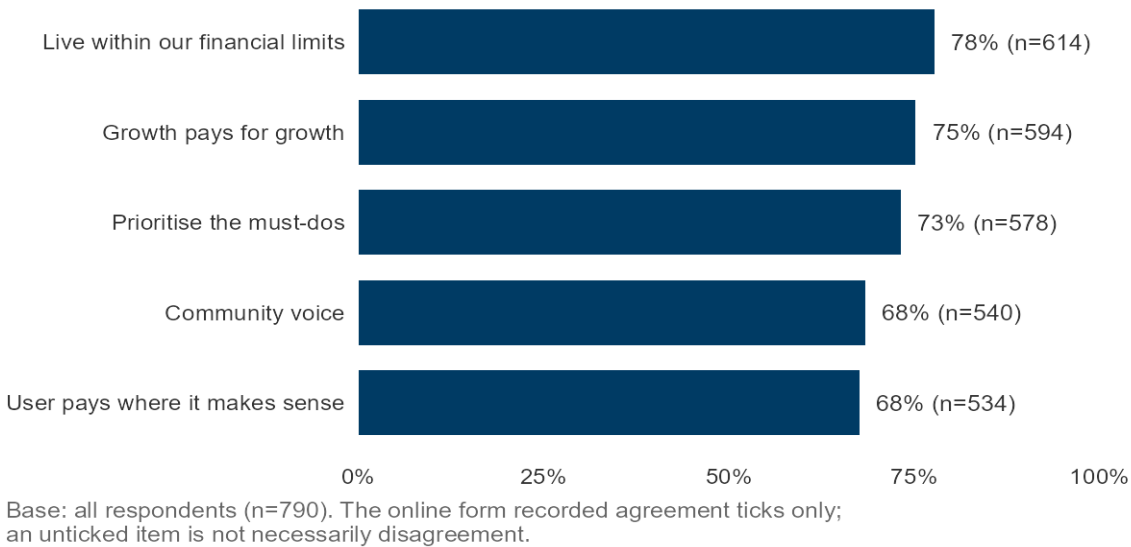


Figure 7: Planning principles: share of respondents agreeing with each

Item	Agreed	% of respondents
Live within our financial limits	614	78%
Growth pays for growth	594	75%
Prioritise the must-dos	578	73%
Community voice	540	68%
User pays where it makes sense	534	68%

Base: all respondents (n=790). The online form recorded agreement ticks only; an unticked item may be disagreement, no view, or a skipped question.

Table 9: Planning principles: agreement

Demographic breakdowns of this question are provided in Appendix C.

6.1 Agreement on the ends, division on the mechanism

The most consistent pattern in this question appears when respondents are grouped by their answer to the rates cap question. That single answer separates the two groups on four of the five principles: those who accepted the cap were more likely to agree with live within our financial limits (87% against 67% among those who declined), prioritise the must-dos (82% against 63%), growth pays for growth (82% against 69%) and, most of all, user pays where it makes sense (79% against 50%). Community voice is the exception, with the two groups three points apart at 71% and 68%.

The contrast with the priorities question is direct. There, the same grouping moved most items only a few points, and the two most community-facing priorities, Connected communities and Working with others, ran the other way, each nine points higher among those who declined the cap (53% against 44%, and 44% against 35%). These are observed differences in a self-selected engagement, and no significance testing has been applied. Those who part company over holding rates down are not disagreeing about what matters in the district. They are disagreeing about the rules for paying for it, and particularly about how far cost should be shifted onto the people who use a service. Appendix C sets out the breakdowns.

6.2 What respondents said about the principles

The open question about what else Council should consider drew 385 comments across the two channels. Much of that material ranges well beyond the principles and is reported in **Qualitative themes**; four strands bear directly on how the five principles are worded and what they would mean in practice.

“Too vague to be tested” (34 comments, 9%)

The commonest strand. “Live within our financial limits” drew the most attention - what is the limit, and who sets it? The objection is that a limit Council sets for itself can be moved by Council. The same test was turned on the must-dos: who decides what counts as one, and the label could stretch to cover anything unless the legislative obligations behind it are listed.

‘Live within our financial limits’ is too ambiguous, and the limit should be stated. This statement could suggest high rates increases.

Must-dos can be a cover for a multitude of wasteful spending and so this priority should be defined more carefully to focus on vital infrastructure.

A replacement set (24 comments, 6%)

This strand supplied its own wording or ordering rather than rejecting the five. Much of it converges on one substitute set: financial limits recast so affordable rates are the named constraint, the must-dos relabelled as core responsibilities, and user pays tied to Auditor-General guidelines. A handful pull the other way, saying the five miss an equity and inclusion lens and a principle valuing social infrastructure; one written submission rewrites all five around civic values, offering “No one left behind” in place of community voice.

Of course we must do the basics well so why isn't that #1? Every proposal should ask "must do, should do, can't do, won't do" before a final decision is made.

This is material the written and paper channel carries out of proportion to its size: 6 of the 43 written and paper submissions took up the rewording, against 18 of the 747 online responses.

"Nothing to aim at" (17 comments, 4%)

This strand argued that a set of principles built around cost control leaves the district with nothing to aim at. Doing the basics well is not disputed; what is missing is something to aim for beyond a budget to stay inside. Some would use Council's borrowing capacity to invest where the long-term payoff justifies the risk; others said the framework omits Te Tiriti and never mentions mana whenua.

What's hard to find, however, is the overarching vision, which is not just a sum of the parts, but an inspiring story of how Kāpiti will evolve. What will make it precious?

User pays: divided almost evenly

User pays drew the most comment of any single principle, and the comments divide much as the agreement data does.

- **Against** (28 comments, 7%): charging risks pricing people out of services treated as public goods - libraries named most often, with pools, galleries and community halls close behind. Several want an explicit equity safeguard written in; a small number reject the model outright, one arguing it would widen the economic divide.
- **For** (25 comments, 6%): backed where the benefit is identifiably private, many asking that it be applied under Auditor-General guidelines. Others treat it as basic economics Council has not applied, pointing to services funded by ratepayers who do not use them, including a submitter who described themselves as rural and rated for rubbish collection and streetlights they say they do not receive.

I can't agree with the user-pays option when it is so vague. For example, libraries should never be user pays.

"User Pays" should be the rule today, but it isn't, as we as rural users are required to pay for services we do not receive.

Not all of the comment is critical. Several writers endorse the set as drafted, and the endorsement and the request for definition sit together in the record:

I like these... particularly a more user-pays approach... as this should also drive rates as well.

Agree with the above principles but struggle to understand what Growth pays for growth actually means in practice?

7 Rates and levels of service

Survey question: “If Council aimed to keep the total KCDC rates (general and water rates) paid at no more than 5% of median household income (based on rates affordability data), would you be prepared to accept reduced levels of service in some areas to achieve this?”

The engagement’s central trade-off question joined two things: a ceiling on what a household pays in total KCDC rates, general and water together, set as a share of median household income; and, as the price of holding that ceiling, service levels reduced in some areas rather than across the board. “Levels of service” was defined for respondents as what the Council does to deliver a service, including its quality, quantity, reliability, responsiveness and cost.

About two-thirds of those who answered accepted the trade-off - 68% of the 728 who answered said yes, as the chart and table below show. A further 62 did not answer the question.

The split is close to flat across age groups and by ratepayer status, and moves more by area: Waikanae respondents were the most likely to decline the trade-off and Raumati respondents the least, with the smaller communities each below 30 respondents on this question and indicative only. Appendix C sets out the breakdowns.

Accept reduced service levels to keep rates within 5% of median household income?

Q5: If Council aimed to keep total KCDC rates at no more than 5% of median household income, would you accept reduced levels of service in some areas?

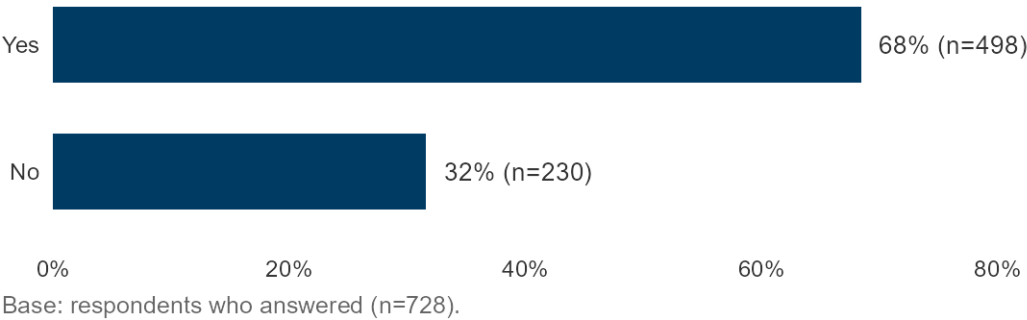


Figure 8: Accept reduced levels of service to keep rates within 5% of median household income

Option	n	%
Yes	498	68%
No	230	32%

Base: respondents who answered (n=728).

Table 10: Accept reduced levels of service: responses

The answer to this question is used through the report as a way of grouping respondents. It separates respondents sharply on the planning principles and only slightly on the community priorities, where the widest gaps are nine points (see Planning principles and Appendix C).

7.1 Comments entered in the services-that-matter box

Survey question: “If no, what are the services that matter most to you?”

The form presented this as a follow-up for respondents who answered No to Q5. In the combined data, 222 respondents left text in the box: 208 answered No, 7 answered Yes, and 7 did not answer Q5. In line with the agreed retention policy, all 222 texts are analysed here, with Q5 stance retained as an analytic flag. Every percentage in this section is a share of the 222 commenters, and categories overlap.

Many respondents answered by listing services, and the lists are similar to one another: water first or near first, then roads, then libraries, parks and pools. Two kinds of answer recur:

- **Lists of services:** community facilities and public spaces is the largest category (78 respondents, 35%), though no single service is named more often than drinking water and wastewater. Water services follow as a category at 56 (25%) and roads, transport and access at 45 (20%).
- **Arguments with the question:** 68 (31%) wrote about the rates cap and the trade-off itself, and 69 (31%) about Council’s own spending - most arguing that internal costs and discretionary projects should be examined before any service level is reduced.

Community facilities and public spaces (78 respondents, 35%)

Libraries anchor this category - the most-named single service after drinking water and wastewater, appearing in 40 responses (18%), usually in a short list beside water, roads, parks and pools.

- **The other facilities:** parks, reserves and playgrounds 38 (17%), pools and recreation facilities 19 (9%), arts, culture, galleries and events 17 (8%).
- **Why:** where a reason is offered it is cost of access - these are the places people on limited incomes can use without adding to the household budget.
- **Maintenance:** 13 (6%) wrote about upkeep of what already exists, several saying the decline has already happened in street sweeping, gardens and public toilets; 8 (4%) named community halls.
- **The other side:** 6 (3%) put arts, events and community grants at the trimmable end of the budget, one written submission asking that grants stop where the recipient does not deliver value; another asks why Ōtaki needs so many parks and playgrounds when it has a beach and a river.

Libraries and parks so that those on lower incomes have places to go for recreation that doesn’t impact on the household budget.

I am proud of the parks, pools and libraries we have in Kāpiti, and our water infrastructure. I would like to see these continue to be well cared for and invested in.

Council spending and financial discipline (69 respondents, 31%)

The argument here is about sequence: deal with Council’s own costs first, and the question of service cuts may not arise.

- **Efficiency and value for money:** 32 (14%) raised efficiency, cost audits and red tape; 30 (14%) wrote about funding essential services before anything discretionary.
- **Debt rules:** 22 (10%) raised debt, borrowing and depreciation, most applying two rules - borrowing is for agreed infrastructure, never day-to-day operations, and depreciation rather than rate increases should repay debt.

- **Staffing:** 19 (9%) named staffing, salaries, consultants and contractors, with chief executive and senior leadership pay the most frequent target.
- **Ceilings and projects:** 18 (8%) wanted operational spending held within CPI, and 10 (5%) named projects they regard as avoidable - a new library, a Matuhi Street playground upgrade, repeated skate park redesigns. 6 (3%) looked outside the rates base to central government funding, bed taxes and visitor levies.

A near-identical package of financial rules appears in several separate responses in almost the same words, in both channels.

So before reducing services: look at councillors and staff, look at departments and redundant / unnecessary processes, look at generating efficiencies without reducing services.

The rates cap and the service-cut trade-off (68 respondents, 31%)

A substantial minority used this box to argue with the question rather than name services - and they pull in both directions.

- **Against the 5% benchmark** (21 respondents, 9%): some argue Council should work out what needs doing and then fund it, rather than let a ratio set the ceiling; others reject 5% as far too generous and want CPI, 3%, or no increase at all for two years. A separate objection lands on the yardstick - a median dragged down by asset-rich, income-poor residents - one noting the Shand Inquiry treated 5% as a line in the sand rather than a hard boundary.
- **Against the trade-off** (19, 9%): the choice is described as false, leading or manipulative, on the grounds that efficiency reviews, consultant costs, discretionary programmes and senior salaries had not been exhausted first.
- **For the cap** (15, 7%): most specify the calculation should take in water and regional council rates, paired with the same conditions - essentials first, operating costs within CPI, borrowing only for infrastructure, depreciation repaying debt.
- **Live within your means** (9, 4%): as a household or any organisation must, several adding this need not mean cutting services.
- **Already cut:** 8 (4%) say service levels are already reduced or inadequate, pointing to maintenance, street sweeping and rubbish collection; 7 (3%) could not answer without a list of the services at issue, their costs, and the options for reducing each.

I don't agree that KCDC should aim to keep rates at no more than 5% of household income and cut its cloth to suit. Rather, I think it should determine what needs doing, then figure out how to pay for it.

Please aim for no more than 5%. Be transparent about distinct, big-ticket items that may push the increase above 5%. Be transparent.

Water services (56 respondents, 25%)

Drinking water and wastewater is the most-named service in the question, raised by 50 respondents (23%) - usually the first word of a list rather than an argued case. Where writers said more it was about water quality, safe supply, and the state of the pipes. Ten (5%) named stormwater, drainage and flood

protection, mostly inside numbered lists of what counts as core, and five (2%) raised the water services delivery model, metering and charges.

Water quality, and maintenance of water services / pipes (let's not get like Wellington).

People, equity and community wellbeing (47 respondents, 21%)

Access is the thread here.

- **Social infrastructure:** 16 (7%) framed community development, grants and volunteers as preventative investment that reduces later demand on costlier services.
- **Safety and resilience:** 10 (5%) named emergency management and community resilience, 9 (4%) community safety.
- **Free access:** 8 (4%) named free or affordable access to community services, most naming libraries alongside the gallery, pools and halls; 7 (3%) argued a district providing only basic services would not be a place people want to live; 6 (3%) named children, youth and rangatahi.
- **The other side:** 4 (2%) supported user charges where there is a private benefit, one suggesting a dollar more on a pool visit and the return of library overdue fees.

If we lose them, they will be gone forever. Nobody is going to open a private user-pays library.

Roads, transport and access (45 respondents, 20%)

- **Roading and footpath maintenance** (27 respondents, 12%): fourth among individual services behind water, libraries and parks, most often paired with water at the head of a list; a handful argue it on safety grounds - footpaths and street lighting after dark.
- **Public transport** (13, 6%): usually bundled with health services, libraries and pools. One written submission registers alarm that public transport is not mentioned anywhere in the feedback document; another asks that buses and trains work for mobility scooters.
- **Smaller strands:** 5 (2%) raised traffic management, road safety and parking, and 5 (2%) cycleways and shared paths, one treating the Peka Peka Road sections as money wasted.

Rates and affordability (36 respondents, 16%)

- **Pay more, keep services:** 14 (6%) said plainly they would rather pay higher rates than lose services, two saying the increase should be allowed to exceed 5%, and one framing the electoral focus on avoiding rate rises as a debt loaded onto the future.
- **Affordability:** 12 (5%) wrote about rates rising faster than wages or inflation, and 10 (5%) about the pressure on retirees and fixed incomes - one converting a 5% rise into 8 to 9% of a retired couple's income, another putting a single superannuitant's rates at a quarter of theirs.
- **Fairness:** 7 (3%) raised the rating system itself - respondents who described themselves as rural paying for services they say they do not receive, rating by ability to pay, and deferring payment until a property is sold rather than reducing service levels.

Rate rises are inevitable especially when we are faced with climate events and ageing infrastructure. Raise the rates please and keep the services.

I'd rather pay higher rates and get better services. Right now we are paying higher rates with bad/subpar services.

Scope of Council's role (28 respondents, 13%)

Twenty-three respondents (10%) answered by defining a core - typically water, roading, waste, regulation and emergency management - and keeping it off the table; libraries, pools and parks sit just inside that line for some and just outside it for others. One argued the opposite case, that grants, youth development, arts and volunteer support are preventative investments and belong alongside the pipes. Seven (3%) named Council activity they consider outside its role - economic development funding and payments to iwi among the items - arguing these should go before any service is reduced.

Governance, engagement and trust (19 respondents, 9%)

- 5 (2%) raised consultation quality and whether Council listens, two declining to answer because the services at issue were not specified.
- 5 (2%) asked for transparency on what services and proposed improvements would cost and where the money goes.
- 4 (2%) supported Te Tiriti, mana whenua partnership and Māori representation, one crediting the gallery's bicultural programming; 4 (2%) opposed spending on iwi funding, Māori wards and karakia.
- 3 (1%) raised the distribution of investment across towns, with Ōtaki named most often.

Growth, housing and land use (17 respondents, 8%)

- 6 (3%) wrote about the pace of growth and whether infrastructure can support it, naming school capacity in Paraparaumu and Waikanae and development approved ahead of roads and water.
- 4 (2%) raised developer contributions, one testing "growth pays for growth" against ten years of housing, rates and income figures for Waikanae.
- 5 (2%) named consents, regulation and compliance as work to be maintained, and 3 (1%) named housing - one arguing that homes being safe, warm, watertight and cool in summer is the single most important thing.

Health, business and the local economy (16 respondents, 7%)

Twelve respondents (5%) named local health services, GP access and hospital facilities, almost always in a short list of essentials and most often beside public transport; one, writing as part of a young family, asked for a development plan for a larger emergency medical centre. Four (2%) named local business, jobs and economic development as things they would not want cut.

Waste and recycling (16 respondents, 7%)

All 16 (7%) named kerbside rubbish collection, recycling and waste services, usually inside a list of basics. Six turned it into a grievance - collection sits outside the rates and with private operators - one comparing Kāpiti unfavourably with councils where bins are included, and one asking Council to take collection back and add a food waste service.

General (14 respondents, 6%)

Thirteen respondents (6%) declined to choose, saying everything Council currently provides matters and none of it should go. Two would rather pay the rates needed to keep the lot, one noting that rises are

inevitable with climate events and ageing infrastructure, another adding that once community services are lost they are gone for good.

Environment and climate (14 respondents, 6%)

Eight respondents (4%) named the natural environment, biodiversity, waterways and trees - the substance clean drinking water, safe wastewater and swimmable rivers - and seven (3%) named coastal hazards, erosion and climate adaptation. Both appear inside short lists of what should not be cut rather than argued at length. One written submission rejects the keep-or-cut question outright and asks Council to fight for the funding instead.

Topic	n	%
COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND PUBLIC SPACES	78	35%
Protect: libraries	40	18%
Protect: parks, reserves, playgrounds and open space	38	17%
Protect: pools, sports fields and recreation facilities	19	9%
Protect: arts, culture, galleries and events	17	8%
Protect: maintenance and upkeep of existing assets and public spaces	13	6%
Protect: community halls, centres and meeting spaces	8	4%
Oppose: arts, events and community grants funding	6	3%
COUNCIL SPENDING AND FINANCIAL DISCIPLINE	69	31%
Consider: efficiency, cost audits, red tape and value for money	32	14%
Consider: essential spending before 'nice-to-haves'	30	14%
Consider: Council debt, borrowing and depreciation	22	10%
Oppose: Council staffing, salaries, consultants and contractor costs	19	9%
Consider: operational spending within CPI and new spending funded from savings	18	8%
Oppose: 'nice-to-have' and vanity projects	10	5%
Consider: alternative revenue, central government funding and funding reform	6	3%
THE RATES CAP AND THE SERVICE-CUT TRADE-OFF	68	31%
Oppose: capping rates at 5% of median household income	21	9%
Oppose: the trade-off between rates restraint and service cuts	19	9%
Support: capping total rates at 5% of median household income	15	7%
Support: Council living within its means like any household	9	4%
Concern: service levels have already been reduced or are already inadequate	8	4%
Consider: cannot answer without a list of services, costs and options	7	3%
WATER SERVICES	56	25%
Protect: drinking water and wastewater services	50	23%
Protect: stormwater, drainage and flood protection	10	5%
Consider: water services delivery model, metering and charges	5	2%

Topic	n	%
PEOPLE, EQUITY AND COMMUNITY WELLBEING	47	21%
Protect: social infrastructure, community development, grants and volunteers	16	7%
Protect: emergency management, civil defence and community resilience	10	5%
Protect: community safety, crime and antisocial behaviour	9	4%
Protect: free and affordable access to community services	8	4%
Protect: liveability, community connection and sense of belonging	7	3%
Protect: children, youth and rangatahi	6	3%
Consider: user pays and charging where there is private benefit	4	2%
ROADS, TRANSPORT AND ACCESS	45	20%
Protect: roading and footpath maintenance	27	12%
Protect: public transport	13	6%
Protect: cycleways, walkways and shared paths	5	2%
Protect: traffic management, road safety and parking	5	2%
RATES AND AFFORDABILITY	36	16%
Support: paying higher rates rather than reducing services	14	6%
Concern: rates affordability and cost of living	12	5%
Concern: rates pressure on retirees and people on fixed incomes	10	5%
Consider: fairness of the rating system and how costs are shared	7	3%
SCOPE OF COUNCIL'S ROLE	28	13%
Protect: focus on core services and fundamental responsibilities	23	10%
Oppose: Council activity beyond its core role	7	3%
GOVERNANCE, ENGAGEMENT AND TRUST	19	9%
Concern: consultation quality and whether Council listens	5	2%
Consider: transparency and accountability for spending and decisions	5	2%
Oppose: spending on iwi funding, Māori wards and karakia	4	2%
Support: Te Tiriti, mana whenua partnership and Māori representation	4	2%
Concern: fair distribution of investment across towns and rural areas	3	1%
GROWTH, HOUSING AND LAND USE	17	8%
Concern: pace of growth and infrastructure capacity to support it	6	3%
Protect: building and resource consents, regulation and compliance	5	2%
Consider: developer contributions and growth paying for growth	4	2%
Protect: housing, warm dry homes and housing support	3	1%
HEALTH, BUSINESS AND THE LOCAL ECONOMY	16	7%
Protect: local health services, GP access and hospital facilities	12	5%
Protect: local business, jobs and economic development	4	2%

Topic	n	%
WASTE AND RECYCLING	16	7%
Protect: kerbside rubbish collection, recycling and waste services	16	7%
ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE	14	6%
Protect: natural environment, biodiversity, waterways and trees	8	4%
Protect: coastal hazards, erosion and climate adaptation	7	3%
GENERAL	14	6%
Protect: all current services with none named	13	6%

n = count of distinct respondents raising each theme. Base: the 222 respondents who left text in the services-that-matter box: 208 answered Q5 'No', 7 answered 'Yes', and 7 did not answer Q5. Percentages are of these 222 commenters. % = share of that base. Topics raised by fewer than 2 respondents are omitted. Open-text question; respondents may raise more than one theme, so themes sum to more than 100%.

Table 11: Themes in comments entered in the services-that-matter box

8 Local government reform

Survey question: “Who do you think should fund the cost of amalgamation?”

The Government’s proposed Simplifying Local Government reforms could reorganise councils, and moving to new arrangements would carry costs that Long-term Plans would need to absorb. Council is continuing to plan under the current legislation. The engagement asked one question on the reform: who should fund the cost of amalgamation - local councils, central government, or another arrangement.

8.1 Who should pay

Three-quarters of those who answered would have central government fund the cost, and about one respondent in ten was willing to put it on councils themselves; the rest wrote their own answer. The chart and table below give the full results. Only 11 written and paper submitters answered this question, too few to compare the two channels.

Who should fund the cost of amalgamation?

Q6: Under the Government's proposed Simplifying Local Government reforms

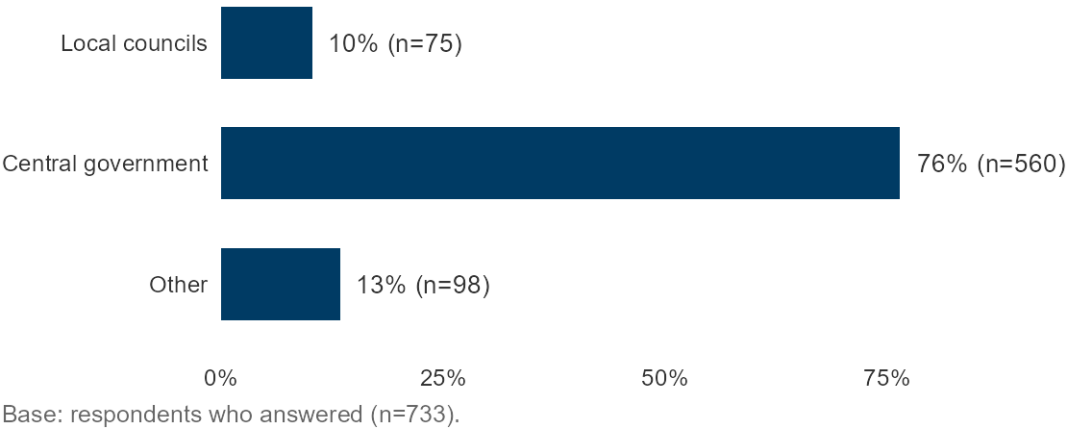


Figure 9: Who should fund the cost of amalgamation

Option	n	%
Local councils	75	10%
Central government	560	76%
Other	98	13%

Base: respondents who answered (n=733).

Table 12: Who should fund the cost of amalgamation: responses

8.2 How the answer moves by group

The rates cap answer moves this result in the way the rest of the engagement would predict: those who accepted the cap were more likely to choose central government, and those who declined it were more likely to choose Other. Central government leads in both groups and local councils sits at about one in ten in both, so this is a difference of degree rather than of direction: the group least willing to trade services for lower rates is also the group least satisfied with the three options on offer. Age and ratepayer status move the answer far less. Demographic breakdowns of this question are provided in Appendix C.

8.3 Other views on funding

Survey option: "Other (please state)"

Ninety-eight respondents and submitters chose Other as their answer. The free-text box attached to the question drew 109 comments, and every figure below is a share of those 109.

Twenty-eight of the 109 (26%) carry no substantive answer to the funding question and are excluded from the theme counts.

Across the 109, 56 (51%) speak to who should pay and 28 (26%) argue the case for or against amalgamation itself rather than its funding. The answers settle into a small number of positions.

Share the cost between local and central government (31 of the 109, 28%)

The largest single position. Nearly all of them put it in a line or two: both, a combination, a split, half in half, shared cost. Where a reason is attached it is about incentives, that a local share keeps councils with a stake in controlling the cost while central government carries its part.

Both: the cost should be split so the council has a stake in keeping costs down, while government needs to help.

A merger should pay for itself (14, 13%)

These start from the premise that there is nothing to fund: a merger should pay for itself out of the savings it is meant to deliver, through economies of scale, consolidated roles and fewer salaries. One put it as the costs being paid from the savings amalgamation achieves, calling that arrangement common in commercial enterprises. Related positions:

- A group of five (5%) would find the money in council staffing, salaries and overheads specifically, one naming senior leadership costs.
- One would absorb the planning work inside existing staff budgets; two would make funding follow benefit, with whoever captures the saving paying a proportionate share.
- A further five (5%) want existing council costs examined for value before any amalgamation cost is added to them.
- Five (5%) doubt the savings case altogether, one treating the existence of a transition cost at all as proof that a merger will never pay for itself.

Central government imposed the change, so central government pays (8, 7%)

These give the most common answer with a reason attached: central government is imposing the change, so central government should carry the cost of it. One would accept that funding only if it does not bring central control of the outcome with it, and one written submission widens the argument to departments whose land sits in the district, naming DOC and LINZ as contributors.

Opposition to amalgamation itself (10, 9%)

These use the box to oppose amalgamation rather than to answer the funding question. Independence is argued on three grounds: Kāpiti is the right size and already runs its services effectively; local matters need local representation and accountability; and the cost will land on ratepayers whatever the arrangement. Two describe the reform as an assault on local democracy and one asks why the district would join councils that have not sorted their own water. Alongside them:

- Five (5%) record opposition with no reason attached.
- Three (3%) fear inheriting someone else's backlog - water infrastructure other councils have not upgraded, or Wellington City's past decisions; one proposes a period of exemption for councils that have already done the work.
- Three (3%) write about the loss of local representation and elected local decision-making.

There should be no amalgamation. Local matters need local representation and accountability.

Conditional: prove the case first (6, 6%)

The first conditional position sets a financial test: proceed only if the benefits outweigh the costs, in which case the merger will largely fund itself, and do not proceed if they do not. One asks for a formal business case with medium-term debt financing if needed, another would watch how Auckland fared first, and a third would have whoever captures the saving pay a proportionate share.

One response set the test out plainly: amalgamation should only occur if the financial benefits outweigh the costs, with those costs paid off over the long-term budget of the new entity.

Conditional: too undefined to answer (6, 6%)

The second conditional position is simpler: the partner, the costs and the likely gains are all undecided, so there is no basis for choosing who pays. Three of these six question whether amalgamation belongs in a ten-year plan consultation while it remains this undefined.

I don't think this question belongs here given you have a separate survey.

Same pockets either way (6, 6%)

These answer that the source hardly matters, because rates and taxes come out of the same pockets, four of them in a single line. One written submission pushes past the question, arguing that which bill the cost lands on is a second-order matter next to what is actually to be done. Two (2%) ask that essential service levels be maintained through any transition.

It doesn't matter; it's coming from me in one way or another.

Topic	n	%
FUNDING THE COST OF AMALGAMATION	56	51%
Support: cost shared between local councils and central government	31	28%
Consider: amalgamation should fund itself out of the savings it generates	14	13%
Support: central government should fund the reform it is imposing	8	7%
Concern: ratepayers and taxpayers will pay whichever option is chosen	6	6%
Consider: fund it by cutting council staffing, salaries and overheads	5	5%
THE CASE FOR AND AGAINST AMALGAMATION	28	26%
Oppose: amalgamation is wrong for Kāpiti and the district should stay independent	10	9%
Consider: costs, scope and options must be defined before this can be answered	6	6%
Consider: proceed only if a business case shows the benefits outweigh the costs	6	6%

Topic	n	%
Concern: amalgamation will add cost rather than deliver savings	5	5%
Concern: Kāpiti would subsidise other councils' debt and unfinished infrastructure	3	3%
Protect: essential service levels must be maintained through any transition	2	2%
COUNCIL SPENDING AND FINANCIAL DISCIPLINE	5	5%
Consider: scrutinise existing council costs and value for money first	5	5%
GENERAL	5	5%
Oppose: general opposition to amalgamation with no reason given	5	5%
GOVERNANCE, ENGAGEMENT AND TRUST	4	4%
Concern: loss of local representation and elected local decision-making	3	3%

n = count of distinct respondents raising each theme. Base: the 109 respondents who commented on this question. % = share of that base. Topics raised by fewer than 2 respondents are omitted. Open-text question; respondents may raise more than one theme, so themes sum to more than 100%.

Table 13: Who should fund amalgamation - other views: themes

9 Targeted engagement

Alongside the survey and the written and paper submissions, elected members, with support from Council staff, ran targeted engagement sessions through late July and early August 2026, sought feedback from Council's standing advisory groups, and collected written feedback at pop-up events, libraries and service centres. These sessions reached audiences the survey barely did: business owners and commercial landlords, community sector leaders, environment leaders, rangatahi (including participants in the Mayors Taskforce for Jobs programme), young people and school students, and Council's Disability Advisory Group, Older Persons' Advisory Group and Youth Council.

None of it is counted anywhere else in this report. Session participants did not complete the feedback form, so nothing here enters the 790 responses, the agreement shares, or the coded comment counts. Where a session ranked priorities by a show of dots or votes, the counts are what happened in that room, among that group, on that exercise; they are not comparable with the survey's agreement shares. Where a session echoes a finding reported elsewhere, the text says so, and an echo is all it is.

The sessions were workshops, not surveys. Most ran to a common format: reactions to the draft priorities and principles, what is missing, what should be protected if rates were held lower, and a closing round of top-of-mind messages, with dot-voting or continuum exercises where the format suited. What follows was drafted from the facilitators' full session notes supplied by Council's communications and engagement team, and checked against the 11 summary reports the team subsequently produced, which are reproduced at Appendix D; participant counts are approximate where the notes record an estimate. Two further pieces of advisory group feedback - letters from the Cycleway, Walkway, and Bridleway Advisory Group received 4 August and the Kāpiti Health Advisory Group dated 24 July - arrived as formal organisational submissions and are counted among the 43 written and paper submissions rather than reported here.

Session	Date	Participants
Business focus group, Paraparaumu	22 July 2026	About 23
Community sector leaders, Paraparaumu	22 July 2026	23
Older Persons' Advisory Group	22 July 2026	Not recorded
Disability Advisory Group	22 July 2026	Not recorded
Commercial landowners (Paraparaumu, Ōtaki, Raumati, Waikanae)	20–28 July 2026	About 44 across four sessions
Environment leaders focus group	24 July 2026	16
Youth Council	27 July 2026	Not recorded
Rangatahi session, Ōtaki	3 August 2026	15
Paraparaumu Beach School (years 7 and 8)	3 August 2026	14
Mayors Taskforce for Jobs participants	5 August 2026	10
Ōtaki community sector leaders	5 August 2026	8

Table 14: Targeted engagement sessions

9.1 Business and the development community

Council met its business audiences twice over: a business focus group of about 23 participants in Paraparaumu on 22 July, and four sessions with commercial landowners and the development community - Paraparaumu on 20 July (about 15), Ōtaki on 21 July (about 8), Raumati on 23 July (about 6) and Waikanae on 28 July (about 15). The landowner sessions discussed the proposed commercial targeted rate alongside the LTP material.

On the priorities and principles, the business voice is an endorsement with a gap named:

- The principles were called pragmatic and fit for purpose, and general agreement was recorded with the focus areas - but the recurring caveat across the sessions was that business growth, job creation and economic development are not directly recognised in them, with rates affordability wanted as the underpinning of all of it.
- Income and work were repeatedly named as top priorities, tied to retaining young people in the district; the Ōtaki landowners asked directly how economic development activity is supporting young people there into employment.
- Health ran strongly through the business material too, as access to local services, doctors and hospital care rather than travel to Wellington or Palmerston North.
- The focus group linked growth to climate resilience, water and ocean health, green space and recreation. It wanted waste and bureaucracy reduced, but not services cut by default, and was open to investment where community benefit and delivery outcomes were clear.

On transport and land use, the asks were specific:

- The Paraparaumu landowners put transport and connectivity at the centre, naming link roads between Otaihangā and Paraparaumu, and argued housing and transport must grow concurrently. Better public transport recurred across sessions.
- Water supply resilience and wastewater capacity were argued as prerequisites for growth, with enabling infrastructure delivered ahead of development rather than after it.
- Land use questions were about enabling: which sectors the district is targeting, what land SMEs need, whether rezoning has been done proactively - and, in Raumati, whether development contributions are sufficient in the commercial context.
- Raumati also pressed on housing for people doing it tough: could Council build houses, ease the regulatory path for social housing, and rebate development contributions for not-for-profit providers?
- Waikanae added a town-centre thread: empty buildings in Mahara Place, a want of places to gather, and cautious interest in some urban intensification balanced against concern for character.

On the commercial targeted rate, the response differed by town:

- Paraparaumu was broadly comfortable that the commercial share of economic development operating costs is about right.
- Ōtaki was more open to an evening-out of the rate but concerned about timing and costs landing on businesses already doing it tough.
- Waikanae was the most resistant: attendees calculated that shifting the targeted rate contribution from 25% to 50% would add roughly \$1,400 a year to an average \$15,000 commercial rates bill,

argued that activity aimed at retail, hospitality and tourism does little for professional-services tenants, and warned the increase would be borne by tenants through net leases.

- Raumati raised the same concern from the ownership side: loading more onto the commercial ratepayer risks failed tenancies.
- Across the landowner sessions, participants reported limited understanding of what Council's economic development activity actually is, with a preference for communication about direct results over research and studies. The consistent thread is not opposition to economic development but a demand that any increased burden be matched by a commensurate, visible increase in benefit.

9.2 Council advisory groups

The Older Persons' Advisory Group (22 July) endorsed housing and health as priorities and reshaped both: housing as intergenerational, with smaller suitable accommodation and room for a mobility scooter; health as access to care.

- Its additions: affordability, transport accessibility, and the social infrastructure that supports growth.
- Its sharpest framing points: equity, not equality, should be the word; and an age-friendly approach should be a principle Council operates under, not a matter for individual projects.
- Members described the squeeze from both ends: residents becoming unable to afford their own homes, yet facing retirement-village prices if they sell.
- Asked what matters most, the group named housing, health and connected communities - the last because of isolation. If rates were held lower it would protect social infrastructure, and it would rather see Council grow income from sources other than rates, lobby for rating reform, and give rates relief to organisations doing community good.

The Disability Advisory Group (also 22 July) put working with others among its top priorities, on the argument that it is the priority the others depend on, and made accessibility the through-line: either a lens flowing through every priority or a standalone priority in its own right.

- Its material is dense with specifics: footpath and roading accessibility on Te Moana Road, library redevelopment for wheelchair users, a way of flagging down a bus for someone who cannot see it coming, public transport that actually connects people to specialist services.
- It questioned the word "peace" in the priority wording, asked for equity rather than equality, and accepted user pays only on an equity basis, noting that charging can exclude the very people a service exists for.
- If rates were held lower it would protect accessibility, infrastructure maintenance, transport, advocacy and the natural environment - with a distinctive argument on the first two: a path that is not there can be worked around, but a path that exists and is unusable creates a worse barrier than none.
- It turned the lens on the engagement itself, recording that the LTP session venues were difficult for disabled attendees. Members said success would include non-disabled people promoting acceptance, and one summed up the accountability test: "Easy to say it. Proof is in the actions. We have to see it for it to be true to us."

The Cycleway, Walkway, and Bridleway Advisory Group provided its feedback as a formal letter, received 4 August, setting out network-wide principles: connect the network, look after existing assets, target accessibility where it does the most good, protect beach and natural-environment access, design for tamariki and future generations, recognise the network's economic value, and engage advisory groups early enough to influence decisions. As an organisational written submission it is counted in the written and paper channel (LTPW0043), among the 43, and it did not take part as a targeted engagement session; its content is reported with that material.

The Kāpiti Health Advisory Group likewise gave its feedback as a formal letter, dated 24 July, reading the priorities through a health lens: Council as planner and advocate for accessible health services across an older, lower-income district; safe, suitable and affordable housing and connected communities treated as determinants of physical and mental health; land use that provides suitable housing while protecting horticultural land for food security; water services as a statutory public health role; and partnership with the community through Council's formalised advisory groups. As an organisational written submission it is counted in the written and paper channel (LTPW0006), among the 43, and it did not take part as a targeted engagement session; its content is reported with that material.

9.3 Community sector leaders

Two sessions drew community sector leaders: 23 in Paraparaumu on 22 July and eight in Ōtaki on 5 August. They pressed hardest on the framework itself rather than the ordering of its items.

The Paraparaumu group's central contention was that values are missing:

- The priorities and principles read as operational and financial documents without the values that should underpin them; Te Tiriti o Waitangi should be the framework within which the rest sits - named in the priorities, reflected in the principles, visible in partnership with mana whenua.
- Equity was proposed as a sixth principle.
- Community voice as drafted was read by some as treating the community as a source of information rather than a partner; the group asked for engagement that is collaborative and continuous, with the feedback loop closed.
- Social infrastructure was argued to be as important as physical infrastructure, with prevention framed as the spending that saves money later. User pays was accepted only with an equity balance, since the most vulnerable users are the least able to pay.
- The group returned repeatedly to community-led delivery: Council as enabler and champion of a sector already doing the work, libraries as community hubs, and success measured by whether communities, not Council, are thriving.

The Ōtaki group covered similar framework ground - Te Tiriti and Taiao missing from the principles, values wanted alongside them, equity rather than equality - and added a strongly local reading:

- Health drew the most dots in its ranking exercise (six). Its picture of success is specific: Ōtaki-based and Ōtaki-informed services, a multi-purpose hub in the town centre, and the ability to be born, live and die in Ōtaki with health support at each stage. Participants said Ōtaki had only two general practices, that service boundaries split care between regions, and that funding decisions sat in Palmerston North.

- Housing followed with four dots. Participants spoke of people sleeping rough, older residents in poverty and rangatahi who could not buy in; one participant said roughly 900 homes in the district were unoccupied. The group supported papakāinga development.
- The environment and Te Tiriti partnership sat behind those, on three dots each.
- The group asked that the environment be treated as intrinsic rather than as land to be used, that development come with the right supporting infrastructure, social as well as physical, and that decision-making be localised, with equity between the district's towns read from population-based data.
- Its closing line belongs to the whole session: He aha te mea nui o te ao? He tangata, he tangata, he tangata.

9.4 Environment leaders

The environment leaders focus group (24 July, 16 participants) made one argument from several directions: the environment is missing from the framework as a thing in itself.

- Climate change, biodiversity and conservation were named as absent from the priorities. The group's most repeated proposal was that a healthy environment underpins most of the listed priorities and should stand alone as one, or run through all of them as the lens every decision passes.
- "Land use" was rejected as defining land by its usefulness, with whenua carrying a different meaning. "Live within our financial limits" drew the session's neatest amendment: live within our financial and ecological limits.
- Te Tiriti responsibilities were asked for in the must-dos, and te reo through the documents.
- The practical material was development-facing: ecological corridors planned into subdivisions from the start, wetlands and peat protected rather than drained, encroachments wound back, and shade corridors planted against rising temperatures.
- The group saw Kāpiti's volunteer base as a force Council underuses, asking for leadership, space and modest resourcing for planting, dune restoration and community environmental projects - connecting that work to mental health, community connection and intergenerational knowledge as much as to biodiversity.
- If rates were held lower it would protect water quality, waterways, the three waters and support for community groups, and it would reduce support for private enterprise and end support for the airport. Its takeaway line: we cannot lose sight of our collective role as kaitiaki, because it is all connected.

9.5 Young people

Four sessions put the LTP in front of young people, from year 7 and 8 students to rangatahi aged 18 to 24 - a group the survey reached barely at all - and their material is among the most concrete in the engagement.

The Youth Council (27 July) worked through the eight priorities and translated them into a young person's terms:

- Safety as the condition for using public spaces at all; connected communities as five-minute neighbourhoods and places to belong; housing as eco-apartments and affordability so the next

generation can stay in Kāpiti; health as mental health services and care that does not require a trip to Wellington.

- Recurring themes: youth spaces, public transport and connectivity, green growth, and inclusivity, with growth accepted on the condition that infrastructure and services keep pace.
- Its strongest message: young people want a real say in the decisions that affect them, and do not want decisions made for them without them. Keeping and strengthening the Youth Council was pressed repeatedly.
- Its don't-wants were specific: no funding cuts to youth services or spaces, no rushed projects, no losing the Youth Council, and, from several members, no Council investment in AI data centres and no AI use in schools or local government.

The rangatahi session in Ōtaki (3 August, 15 participants) put health first by a wide margin in its voting exercise - named on 13 of the sheets, with water on 9 and housing on 5; working with others, connected communities, safety and land use each drew three or fewer.

- What the group loves about Ōtaki is a list of places and belonging: the awa and the beach, the marae, Te Wānanga o Raukawa, Māoriland, the library, whānau, everything within walking distance.
- What it wants changed is mostly buildable: a deeper pool, a better skatepark, the Haruātai half-court completed, footpaths and streetlights, the beach pavilion opened, the roads fixed.
- Jobs run through the sheets - "we have no jobs here!!" among the comments - alongside more trade options at the wānanga; mental health support appears repeatedly, as do bullying and how easy it is for rangatahi to buy vapes and alcohol.
- On the priority worksheets, safe drinking water and keeping the awa clean drew full marks, while the working with others sub-items - Council not being in charge of everything, services delivered or funded in new ways - drew some of the lowest scores of the exercise.

The Mayors Taskforce for Jobs session (5 August, 10 rangatahi aged 18 to 24) is the one session that ran the priority statements as agree-disagree continuums.

- The group agreed that Council should do more to advocate for health services, that community feedback should influence what Council does, and that young people's views should be considered alongside other generations'.
- It disagreed that there are enough places to spend time without spending money, that there are lots of things for young people to do, and, mostly, that young people are treated fairly in Kāpiti; the health of rivers, streams and beaches also drew mostly disagreement. It was split between neutral and disagreement on whether there are enough different types of homes for different stages of life. Against that, the group mostly agreed it feels safe in public places, and views on the proposed indoor sports centre ran mostly from agreement to neutral.
- Its dot-vote ranking ran health 7, shaping our direction together 6, housing and land use 5 each, waters 3, Connected communities and Peace, safety and equality 2 each, and working with others none.
- The discussion behind those marks covered the difficulty of getting support for trauma and mental health, gaps in homelessness support, experiences of racism and of harassment for dressing differently, and rentals out of reach without employment.

- Its ten-year picture of Kāpiti: affordable youth housing so that leaving home does not mean leaving the district, free places to go, better public transport, stronger flood protection, and services that work for people on benefits.

Paraparaumu Beach School brought the youngest voices: 14 year 7 and 8 students in the Council Chambers on 3 August. Their list is practical and local:

- More lighting at the railway station, bus stops, small streets and Paraparaumu Domain, with solar suggested.
- Better footpaths, named as a tripping hazard for old, young and disabled people alike.
- Indoor places to go when it rains, and sports facilities from public courts to a running track to reopened bowling lanes.
- Better communication about events, and 24/7 urgent medical care in the district.

The overlap with the older groups' material - lighting, footpaths, free indoor space, local healthcare - is close.

9.6 Postcards and post-it notes from events and service centres

Between 4 and 26 July, people who came to Council's pop-up events and public counters could leave feedback on a postcard or a post-it note. Council's communications and engagement team registered 138 of these:

- 79 postcards
- 56 post-it notes
- 3 whose format went unrecorded or fell outside those two

Where the collection point was recorded:

- 56 came through a service centre
- 23 from the Ōtaki event
- 17 from the Paraparaumu Library event
- 1 from Coastlands
- 41 carry no recorded location

The feedback is mostly one-liners. Personal contact details are not reported, and one person may have left several entries, so this section counts entries, not people. Three were excluded as off-topic or no opinion, leaving 135 entries with in-scope themes. The entries were coded against the same framework as the survey and written comments, as a stream of their own: nothing here enters the 790 responses, the 1,185 coded comments, or any figure elsewhere in this report.

What the entries are about. The stream carries the everyday texture of the district, and reads differently from the survey's comment record. The largest categories, by entries and from the top down:

1. People, equity and community wellbeing — 25 entries
2. Growth, housing and land use — 23
3. Roads, transport and access — 22
4. Community facilities and public spaces — 19
5. Environment and climate — 16
6. Health, business and the local economy — 15

Inside those sit the stream's leading topics:

1. The natural environment, waterways and trees — 11 entries
2. Consenting, regulation and red tape — 9, mostly asking for faster and simpler subdivision consents, building files and LIMs
3. Local business, jobs and economic development — 9
4. Housing supply and suitability — 8, repeatedly asking for smaller, single-level, affordable homes that suit older people
5. Community safety — 8, half wanting more visible policing and camera coverage
6. Growth outpacing infrastructure — 7, pressed hardest around the fast-tracked development north of Waikanae

Transport spreads across public transport, cycleways, roading and traffic on 5 entries each, with a bus service to Te Horo Beach among the most specific asks.

Spending and rates sit lighter here. The spending, rates and governance material that dominates the survey's open text is present but much lighter: rates affordability draws 6 entries, essential-spending-first 5, and consultation and transparency a handful, one of them putting it plainly:

Please focus on the essential facilities (water/sewerage, etc.) and much less spent on the nice-to-dos or frills. We can't afford frills!

What replaces that material is place: named streets, parks, beaches and towns - Paekākāriki's flooding and its lost letterbox, Te Horo Beach's want of a bus and its unserviced rates base, Haruātai Park, the Waikanae river. Amalgamation appears five times and runs against Wellington each time it names a direction. The stream echoes the sessions more than the survey: consenting and infrastructure-ahead-of-growth echo the commercial landowner sessions, environment-as-priority echoes the environment leaders, and the asks for youth facilities echo every youth session. Council's communications and engagement team recorded its own priority tag against 96 entries; the counts above use the common-framework coding rather than Council's original tags.

9.7 What the targeted engagement sessions add to the record

Read together, the sessions extend the engagement's record in three ways, none of them statistical.

- **Health led each of the three sessions that ranked the priorities:** 13 of 15 sheets in the rangatahi session, 7 votes at the Mayors Taskforce for Jobs session, and 6 dots among the Ōtaki sector leaders - each time argued as local access to general practice, mental health support and urgent care rather than as an abstraction. Health is also prominent in the survey material, but the echo is in the subject only: the sessions ranked importance, while the survey measured agreement with a priority statement. At the other end, working with others drew no dots at the Mayors Taskforce for Jobs session and three mentions among the rangatahi; the Disability Advisory Group, which named it among its top priorities on the argument that everything else depends on it, is the counterexample.
- **The sessions converge on wording critiques the survey could not capture.** Seven of the eleven sessions and groups raised gaps in the priorities or the way the material was framed. Equity rather than equality was raised independently by five of them: the Older Persons' Advisory Group, the Disability Advisory Group, the environment leaders and both community sector leader groups. Te

Tiriti and the environment were named as missing from the framework by the environment leaders and both sector leader sessions, with “land use” challenged as the wrong frame in two of them. The business and landowner sessions made the mirror-image critique - growth, jobs and economic development are missing - so audiences at both ends of the engagement found the framework incomplete, in different directions.

- **The sessions reached people the survey’s older, ratepayer-heavy profile lacks:** four groups of young people, from year 7 and 8 students to rangatahi aged 18 to 24, alongside jobseekers, disabled residents and community-sector workers. What that cohort added - youth spaces and free places to go, mental health access, housing they could ever afford, safety and lighting, jobs that would let them stay - is largely absent from the survey’s comment record. None of this material carries a base that supports generalisation, and this chapter has not generalised from it; what it carries is the direct record of the groups Council set out to hear.

10 Qualitative themes

Four questions in the engagement invited free text: whether anything important was missing from the eight priorities; what else Council should consider in developing the Long-term Plan; comments entered in the services-that-matter box; and “other” views on who should fund the cost of amalgamation. Together they drew 1,185 comments from 576 of the 790 respondents and submitters - 1,090 written into the online form and 95 into the written and paper submissions.

Every comment was coded against a framework built from the responses themselves. Each theme carries a prefix marking how the writer approached the subject (Prioritise, Protect, Consider, Support, Concern, Oppose), and themes are grouped into categories. Because a comment can raise several themes, counts do not sum to the number of comments and are best read as indicative relative frequencies. The coding method is set out in Methodology; Appendix B carries a glossary. Both channels were coded against the same framework, and every count here combines the two; where a theme sits mainly in one channel the text says so.

Themes from the comment boxes attached to a closed question are reported alongside that question in Community priorities, Rates and levels of service, and Local government reform. This chapter reports the one open question with no closed question of its own, then draws together the threads that recur across all four.

10.1 What else should Council consider?

Survey question: “What else should Council consider when developing its Long-term Plan?”

This question drew 385 comments across the two channels, the second largest of the four boxes. Five carried no substantive topic; a further five combined a non-substantive response with substantive material and are included in the themes below. Percentages below are of all 385 who commented.

Spending restraint runs through the question without settling into one combined position:

- **Pull back to core services:** 51 comments (13%).
- **Essentials before anything discretionary:** 38 (10%).
- **Drop vanity projects, grants and wasteful spending:** 26 (7%).
- **A named ceiling for rates rises** - inflation, CPI, or a share of median household income: 33 (9%).

Where user pays is taken up directly, about as many writers attach a reservation as endorse it (set out under People, equity and community wellbeing below). Several object that the financial limits principle is undefined and movable, one asking “whose limits?”. A near-identical rewrite of the five principles recurs through the question: affordable rates first as the named constraint, the must-dos relabelled core responsibilities, and user pays tied to Auditor-General guidelines.

Mana whenua draws comment from both directions, the objectors the slightly larger group. Te Tiriti partnership and an explicit mana whenua voice are asked for by 8 (2%), several attaching mechanisms such as a standing Māori advisory panel and kaitiakitanga as a test for greenfield development. Against that, 11 (3%) object to iwi involvement in Council decision-making, most arguing that only elected councillors should decide Council business.

*Tangata whenua have a unique connection to the area built over hundreds of years.
Generations of family are in the ground here, and this is the only place they call home.
Their voice should hold significant weight.*

Stop giving unelected iwi a voice, vote or say in council matters; it's not a partnership.

Governance, engagement and trust (134 respondents, 35%)

The largest category in this question. Many writers answer it by narrowing it: they reply with a shorter list of what they take Council's own work to be, then turn to whether Council can be relied on to stick to it.

- **Consultation called tokenistic** (26 comments, 7%): decisions settled before feedback is sought, hearings attended for form's sake, submissions that go nowhere. Several distrust community voice for the opposite reason - that the loudest voices crowd out everyone else.
- **Transparency and accountability** (25, 6%): publish the rates impact of each proposal, account plainly for where the money goes, and name any project trimmed to balance the books, since the trimming resurfaces as deferred maintenance.
- **Better engagement and reporting back** (24, 6%): the concrete ask is that Council reports back after decisions are made on what changed as a result of community feedback, what was not adopted, and why; formats for people not online a secondary one.
- **Follow-through and capability** (23, 6%): several call the principles sound and question their application; others doubt Council has the staff and expertise to execute the plan at all.
- **Smaller strands:** long-term and intergenerational thinking (16, 4%); working with the community as genuine partners (16, 4%), with a caution that partnership must not become cost-shifting onto volunteers; community boards, local democracy and elected decision-making (12, 3%); fair distribution of investment across towns (5, 1%), with Ōtaki most often named. Community boards lean written: 4 of the 43 written and paper submissions against 8 of the 747 online responses.

When a budget is trimmed to balance the books, the public must be informed what was trimmed and what this means further down the track - invariably it equates to deferred maintenance to be dealt with in the future!

Council spending and financial discipline (95 respondents, 25%)

The recurring test is sequencing: fund the essentials, then look at the rest.

- **Essentials before nice-to-haves** (38 comments, 10%): several accept the draft principles in outline, then want "live within our financial limits" pinned to a figure.
- **Vanity projects** (26, 7%): carried by named examples - a skate park, a library rebuild, pop-up shops, footpaths widened where the old ones were sound.
- **Staffing and consultants** (21, 5%): executive pay named as the first thing to review before services are touched; competitive tendering raised by a smaller group.
- **Efficiency and value for money** (20, 5%): published benchmarks, per-capita comparison against similar councils, automation of back-office work.
- **Debt** (19, 5%): many rule out borrowing for anything discretionary and treat the interest bill as money lost to ratepayers. Alternative revenue (7, 2%) points outside the rating base to central government advocacy, joint ventures and a visitor levy.

Stop providing business grants. The Council is not qualified to pick winners with my rates.

Living within our means, and razor sharp focus on sustainable debt levels. KCDC has done a good job in this space in recent years, well done. Ultimately it will result in lower rates (lower interest).

Three of these arguments lean written: essentials-before-discretionary is raised by 7 of the 43 written and paper submissions against 31 of the 747 online responses, and across the four questions staffing and consultant costs draw 5 written against 31 online, and debt 5 against 20.

People, equity and community wellbeing (91 respondents, 24%)

User pays divides this category almost down the middle.

- **Against user pays** (28 comments, 7%): charging reads as a barrier for people on low incomes, older residents and children; libraries are named most often as the service that must stay free. Several want an equity safeguard written in.
- **For user pays** (25, 6%): where there is identifiable private benefit, many inside the same re-prioritised list tied to Auditor-General guidelines; one asks whether a \$145 dog licence already has dog owners subsidising everyone else.
- **An equity, inclusion and accessibility lens** (14, 4%): some want it written in as a principle in its own right, others translate it into physical access to buildings and footpaths.
- **Social infrastructure** (13, 3%): relationships, volunteers and local organisations are infrastructure too, and investing in them reduces later demand on costlier services.
- **Age pulls from both directions**: older residents and fixed incomes (11, 3%, five describing superannuitants unable to absorb further increases); children, youth and rangatahi and the want of somewhere free and indoors to go (9, 2%); and 6 (2%) arguing the retirement-destination framing is out of date and the district should plan for families as well. Emergency management and resilience accounts for 6 (2%).

Services for the public good, such as libraries, galleries and parks, need to remain free, particularly in times of hardship.

User pays should be applied with a reduction in rates, not in addition to them.

Council should consider that children and young people need to be considered in all decision-making - they are not "ratepayers" but are just as important, even if they are not as vocal.

Rates and affordability (88 respondents, 23%)

- **Affordability and the cost of living** (44 comments, 11%): the single most frequent topic in this category, measured most often as rates rising faster than wages and inflation; four writers say the increases may push them out of the district altogether.
- **A cap or affordability limit** (33, 9%): usually inflation or CPI, sometimes 5% of median household income counting regional and water charges in, occasionally tighter at 4% or 3%.

- **Fairness of the rating system** (12, 3%): respondents who described themselves as rural billed for services they say they do not receive, targeted rates on the properties a seawall protects, Ōtaki's rating treatment, rating by ability to pay, and one proposal to defer payment until a house is sold.
- **The other way:** 6 (2%) oppose holding rates down by cutting services, reading user pays and must-dos as cover for reducing community facilities.

*We are financially hurting and cannot sustain the constant year-on-year rates increases.
This seems to be falling on deaf ears within council.*

Framing of the priorities and principles (73 respondents, 19%)

The recurring complaint is definitional rather than hostile.

- **Too vague, broad or undefined** (34 comments, 9%): around a dozen ask what "live within our financial limits" means when Council sets the limit; nearly as many ask who decides what counts as a must-do.
- **Reworded and reordered sets** (24, 6%): many converge on the one substitute set; a handful say the five miss an equity lens and social infrastructure. This material leans written - 6 of the 43 submissions against 18 of the 747 online responses - and what it proposes is set out in Planning principles.
- **An aspirational vision** (17, 4%): something to aim at beyond cost control; two argue for borrowing to invest where the long-term payoff justifies the risk.
- **Costings needed** (8, 2%): respondents who say they cannot rank anything without a budget and a rates impact against each item.

The above are in the main far too vague. Paradigm shift time.

Growth, housing and land use (58 respondents, 15%)

Two topics lead at equal size.

- **Developer contributions** (19 comments, 5%): contributions should stretch beyond the developer's own site to the roads, water, schools and wider upgrades that follow; three want contribution rates benchmarked against comparable high-growth districts and the recovery rate published.
- **Growth outpacing infrastructure** (19, 5%): congestion, water and sewerage capacity, medical services already full, flood risk.
- **Smaller strands:** consents and regulation (11, 3%), most pulling towards tighter consenting on flood-prone land; opposition to high-density intensification (9, 2%); doubts that "growth pays for growth" works in practice (6, 2%); housing affordability, supply and quality (6, 2%).

I am sorry but if you think growth pays for growth then why are there massive rate increases? Surely that growth would have paid for future infrastructure upgrades if it did.

Scope of Council's role (55 respondents, 14%)

One topic dominates: prioritising core services and fundamental responsibilities, raised by 51 (13%), usually itemised as three waters, roads and footpaths, waste, regulatory functions, emergency management and community facilities, and often written out as an ordered list. Opposition to Council involvement in housing, health and social wellbeing is recorded by 6 (2%), one written submission asking

Council to publish its own definition of a core service. Opposition to what writers call woke or ideological agendas accounts for 4 (1%).

Council should stick to its core activities, i.e. network infrastructure and public transport, environmental and public safety, waste management, emergency response, and community facilities. This should be achieved at the most efficient cost to ratepayers.

The remaining categories

- **Environment and climate** (44, 11%): natural environment, biodiversity and waterways 18 (5%), climate action and adaptation 11 (3%), coastal hazards 10 (3%); against that, 9 (2%) dispute Council's climate and coastal hazard modelling, calling it extreme or built on flawed advice. Climate mitigation is one of the arguments the written and paper channel carries most heavily across the engagement, at 5 of the 43 submissions against 23 of the 747 online responses.
- **Community facilities and public spaces** (39, 10%): maintenance of existing assets 15 (4%); arts and culture and pools and recreation 9 (2%) each; libraries, parks and community halls 7 (2%) each.
- **Roads, transport and access** (28, 7%): congestion and public transport 8 (2%) each, cycleways and shared paths 6 (2%), retaining the airport 5 (1%).
- **Health, business and the local economy** (27, 7%): local business, jobs and tourism 15 (4%); GP access and hospital facilities 13 (3%).
- **Local government reform and central government** (23, 6%): the boundary with central government 12 (3%) and amalgamation and shared services 12 (3%); the funding question is reported in Local government reform.
- **General support** for the priorities and Council's direction 14 (4%), usually with a test attached; general rejection 2 (1%).
- **Water services** (11, 3%) and **waste and recycling** (10, 3%), both raised more heavily in the other three questions; kerbside collection is the whole of the waste material here and leans written, at 4 submissions against 6 online responses.

Topic	n	%
GOVERNANCE, ENGAGEMENT AND TRUST	134	35%
Concern: consultation is tokenistic and Council does not listen	26	7%
Consider: transparency and accountability for spending and decisions	25	6%
Consider: improving how Council engages, reaches people and reports back	24	6%
Concern: whether Council will follow through and can deliver	23	6%
Consider: working with the community as genuine partners	16	4%
Prioritise: long-term and intergenerational thinking	16	4%
Consider: community boards, local democracy and elected decision-making	12	3%
Oppose: Māori wards, co-governance and spending on iwi engagement	11	3%
Prioritise: Te Tiriti, mana whenua partnership and Māori representation	8	2%
Concern: fair distribution of investment across towns and rural areas	5	1%
COUNCIL SPENDING AND FINANCIAL DISCIPLINE	95	25%
Prioritise: essential spending before discretionary 'nice-to-haves'	38	10%

Topic	n	%
Oppose: vanity projects, grants and wasteful spending	26	7%
Oppose: Council staffing, salaries, consultants and contractor costs	21	5%
Consider: efficiency, cost audits and value for money	20	5%
Prioritise: paying down debt and limiting borrowing	19	5%
Consider: alternative revenue and external funding sources	7	2%
PEOPLE, EQUITY AND COMMUNITY WELLBEING	91	24%
Concern: user pays excluding people from public-good services	28	7%
Support: user pays where there is identifiable private benefit	25	6%
Consider: an equity, inclusion and accessibility lens on decisions	14	4%
Prioritise: social infrastructure, community development, grants and volunteers	13	3%
Prioritise: older residents and people on fixed incomes	11	3%
Prioritise: children, youth and rangatahi	9	2%
Consider: planning for younger people and families, not only retirees	6	2%
Prioritise: emergency management, civil defence and community resilience	6	2%
RATES AND AFFORDABILITY	88	23%
Concern: rates affordability and cost of living	44	11%
Consider: capping rates increases and setting an affordability limit	33	9%
Consider: fairness of the rating system and how costs are shared	12	3%
Oppose: holding rates down by cutting services	6	2%
FRAMING OF THE PRIORITIES AND PRINCIPLES	73	19%
Concern: priorities and principles too vague, broad or undefined	34	9%
Consider: reworded and reordered priorities and principles	24	6%
Consider: an aspirational vision rather than only cost control	17	4%
Consider: costings, weightings and trade-offs needed to give informed feedback	8	2%
GROWTH, HOUSING AND LAND USE	58	15%
Concern: growth outpacing infrastructure capacity	19	5%
Prioritise: developer contributions so growth pays for growth	19	5%
Consider: building and resource consents, regulation and red tape	11	3%
Oppose: high-density housing and intensification in established areas	9	2%
Concern: whether 'growth pays for growth' works in practice	6	2%
Consider: housing affordability, supply and quality	6	2%
SCOPE OF COUNCIL'S ROLE	55	14%
Prioritise: core services and fundamental responsibilities	51	13%
Oppose: Council involvement in housing, health and social wellbeing	6	2%
Oppose: 'woke' and ideological agendas in Council work	4	1%

Topic	n	%
ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE	44	11%
Prioritise: natural environment, biodiversity, waterways and trees	18	5%
Prioritise: climate change action and adaptation	11	3%
Prioritise: coastal hazards, erosion and climate adaptation	10	3%
Oppose: Council's climate and coastal hazard modelling and spending	9	2%
COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND PUBLIC SPACES	39	10%
Prioritise: maintenance and upkeep of existing assets and public spaces	15	4%
Prioritise: arts, culture, galleries and events	9	2%
Prioritise: pools, sports fields and recreation facilities	9	2%
Prioritise: community halls, centres and meeting spaces	7	2%
Prioritise: libraries	7	2%
Prioritise: parks, reserves, playgrounds and open space	7	2%
ROADS, TRANSPORT AND ACCESS	28	7%
Consider: public transport services and coverage	8	2%
Consider: traffic congestion and traffic management	8	2%
Prioritise: cycleways, walkways and shared paths	6	2%
Prioritise: retaining Kāpiti Coast Airport	5	1%
Prioritise: roading and footpath maintenance	2	1%
HEALTH, BUSINESS AND THE LOCAL ECONOMY	27	7%
Consider: local business, jobs, tourism and economic development	15	4%
Prioritise: local health services, GP access and hospital facilities	13	3%
Prioritise: schools, education and training capacity	3	1%
LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM AND CENTRAL GOVERNMENT	23	6%
Consider: amalgamation, reorganisation and shared services	12	3%
Consider: central government responsibilities, funding and unfunded mandates	12	3%
GENERAL	16	4%
Support: general support for the priorities and Council's direction	14	4%
Oppose: general rejection of the priorities and principles as presented	2	1%
WATER SERVICES	11	3%
Prioritise: stormwater, drainage and flood protection	6	2%
Prioritise: drinking water and wastewater services	5	1%
WASTE AND RECYCLING	10	3%
Consider: kerbside rubbish collection, recycling and tip fees	10	3%

n = count of distinct respondents raising each theme. Base: the 385 respondents who commented on this question. % = share of that base. Topics raised by fewer than 2 respondents are omitted. Open-text question; respondents may raise more than one theme, so themes sum to more than 100%.

Table 15: What else should Council consider when developing its Long-term Plan - themes

10.2 Threads running across the four questions

Four threads recur across all four open questions. Where a figure covers the engagement as a whole it is a share of the 576 respondents and submitters who wrote at least one comment; where a single question is named, it is a share of that question's own base.

1. Core services - the largest single subject in the qualitative dataset, raised by 145 (25%) of the 576 across the themes that name it. The Scope of Council's role category that holds those themes is raised by 170 (30%).

- In the missed-priorities question it arrives as an instruction to narrow Council's work: 116 name it (25% of the 469), and Scope of Council's role is that question's largest category at 140 (30%).
- In the considerations question it appears in the same form but smaller, at 51 (13%).
- In the services box the same idea turns protective: 23 (10% of the 222) name core services as what must not be reduced, and the leading topics are drinking water and wastewater at 50 (23%), libraries at 40 (18%) and parks and reserves at 38 (17%).
- The list of what counts as core barely changes; what changes is whether it is being used to cut or to defend. It leads in both channels: 13 of the 43 written and paper submissions and 120 of the 747 online responses raise it as a priority.

Water, sewerage, roading, general infrastructure, community recreational facilities.

2. Rates and affordability - raised by 168 (29%) of the 576, running through all three of the main comment questions without belonging to any of them.

- It accounts for 57 (12%) in the missed-priorities question, 44 (11%) in the considerations question, and 12 (5%) in the services question, where a further 10 (5%) write specifically about retirees and fixed incomes.
- It does not run one way: in the services question 14 (6%) would rather pay higher rates than lose services, and 21 (9%) reject the 5% benchmark itself - some as too high, some holding that need should set the budget before affordability sets the ceiling. That division is the qualitative counterpart of the rates cap split reported in Rates and levels of service.

3. Spending discipline - raised by 210 (36%) of the 576: the largest category across the engagement, and second largest in each of the three main comment questions.

- It sits second in the missed-priorities question (105, 22%), the considerations question (95, 25%) and the services question (69, 31%), and surfaces again in the amalgamation comments, where 14 (13% of the 109) argue a merger should pay for itself and 5 (5%) would fund it by cutting staffing and overheads.
- The sequencing argument is the same throughout: examine internal costs and discretionary projects before reducing service levels. Executive pay, consultant spend and named local projects recur in all three larger slices.
- Its three sharpest strands - essential spending first, staffing and consultant costs, and debt - are each raised by around 5 to 7 of the 43 written and paper submissions, well above that channel's share of the engagement.

4. Distrust of the consultation itself - Governance, engagement and trust is raised by 204 (35%) of the 576, the second largest category across the four questions and the largest in the considerations question.

- In the missed-priorities question 32 (7%) raise consultation quality; in the considerations question 26 (7%) call consultation tokenistic and 23 (6%) doubt Council will follow through; in the services question 7 (3%) decline to answer because no list of services and costs was supplied, and 5 (2%) question whether Council listens.
- The concrete ask is reporting back after decisions are made: what changed as a result of community feedback, what was not adopted, and why. Consultation quality also leans written, at 5 of the 43 against 27 of the 747 online.

Two further patterns are worth recording:

- **User pays is divided rather than contested at the edges:** in the considerations question 28 (7%) warn it would exclude people from public-good services and 25 (6%) support it where private benefit is identifiable - close to an even split.
- **A near-identical package runs through several questions:** the five principles reordered to put affordable rates first, core responsibilities second and user pays last under Auditor-General guidelines, paired with a 5% cap, operating spending held to CPI, borrowing confined to infrastructure and debt repaid from depreciation. The reordering is offered by 24 (6%) in the considerations question, and 18 (8%) in the services question set out the same financial rules - worth noting when reading the counts for those themes. It appears in both channels.

The written and paper submissions are 43 of the 790 responses but 95 of the 1,185 comments, and they are longer and more prescriptive than the online material. Reordered principles, essential spending before discretionary, climate mitigation, consultation quality, debt, staffing costs, community boards and waste minimisation are each raised by written submitters at well above the written channel's share of the engagement, so each of those themes draws more heavily on the written material than its overall count suggests.

Appendix A: The engagement questions

The engagement questions are summarised below. The same questions were asked online (on the Council's Have Your Say platform) and on the paper feedback form, with one presentational difference: the two agreement questions were tick-lists online ("tick the ones you agree with") but yes/no-per-item grids on paper (see Methodology).

Agreement questions

- **Community priorities** - Do you agree that these priorities are the right things for Council to be focussed on as we develop the next LTP? (8 priorities): Housing; Health; Connected communities; Peace, safety and equality; Land use; Waters; Working with others; Shaping our direction together.
- **Planning principles** - Do these principles reflect how Council should make decisions? (5 principles): Community voice; Growth pays for growth; User pays where it makes sense; Live within our financial limits; Prioritise the must-dos.

Choice questions

- **Rates and levels of service** - If Council aimed to keep the total KCDC rates (general and water rates) paid at no more than 5% of median household income (based on rates affordability data), would you be prepared to accept reduced levels of service in some areas to achieve this? (Yes / No.)
- **Local government reform** - Who do you think should fund the cost of amalgamation? (Local councils / Central government / Other, please state.)

Open-text questions

- These are not Council's only priority areas. If there is something important that you think we need to prioritise, please tell us (in less than 500 words).
- What else should Council consider when developing its Long-term Plan? (in less than 150 words).
- If no [to accepting reduced levels of service], what are the services that matter most to you?
- Who should fund the cost of amalgamation - Other (please state).

Demographics

Age group (decade bands), whether the respondent lives in or owns a property in Kāpiti, suburb (or where the respondent is from), Kāpiti ratepayer status, and whether the response was made as an individual or on behalf of an organisation (with organisation name).

Appendix B: Glossary of qualitative themes

Every open-text answer in this engagement was read and coded against a single framework of themes. This appendix explains how those themes are named and grouped, so the theme tables in the body chapters can be read without going back to the coding files.

How a theme is named

Each theme carries a prefix that records what the respondent was doing with the subject, followed by the subject itself. The prefix, not the subject, tells you the direction of the comment.

- **Prioritise** - the respondent wants Council to rank this higher or invest more in it.
- **Protect** - the respondent wants this kept as it is and not cut back.
- **Consider** - an idea, a suggestion, or a condition attached to something else, rather than a position for or against.
- **Concern** - a worry about something, stopping short of rejecting it.
- **Support** - endorsement of a proposal, a principle or a direction Council has put forward.
- **Oppose** - clear rejection, or a call to stop doing something.
- **Null** - housekeeping for answers that carry no in-scope theme, including blanks, no opinion or material outside the question's scope. Null themes are excluded from theme counts.

Respondents ran both ways on several subjects, and the framework keeps those movements apart rather than merging them into a single neutral topic. Reading only the subject would collapse the disagreement:

- **Housing is the clearest case.** In the answers about anything missing from the priorities, 24 respondents were coded to "Oppose: Council involvement in housing and social housing", most placing housing with central government, while four were coded to "Prioritise: a stronger Council role in housing and homelessness".
- **The rates cap runs the same way.** In the services box, 15 respondents were coded to "Support: capping total rates at 5% of median household income" and 21 to "Oppose: capping rates at 5% of median household income". This is not a No-only corpus: 14 of the 222 commenters either answered Yes to Q5 or left Q5 unanswered.

How themes are grouped and counted

Themes sit inside categories, written in upper case, which gather the themes that deal with the same broad area of Council's work. Categories are a navigational device: they group the detail, and the theme underneath is where the substance is.

A single response can carry several themes, and most substantial responses do. A comment that asks for the roads to be fixed, objects to the skate park and questions consultant costs is coded to a theme in each of those areas. Percentages therefore sum to well above 100 across a table, and each figure should be read as the share of respondents to that question who raised that theme, not as a share of a fixed total that adds to a whole.

Counts are of distinct respondents, so a respondent who makes the same point three times in one answer counts once against that theme. Category counts are also distinct respondents, so a respondent coded to three themes inside a category counts once toward that category and not three times.

Themes raised by very few respondents are left out of the tables in this report to keep them readable. Those themes remain in the coded dataset supplied to Council, so a theme that carried one or two respondents can still be retrieved and reported on if Council wants the detail.

The theme categories

Each question's table shows only the categories found in responses to that question. Categories with no coded responses are omitted to keep the table readable. The supplied coded dataset contains the complete list of themes and counts for every question.

Category	Description
COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND PUBLIC SPACES	Libraries, pools, parks, halls, playgrounds, galleries and the arts, and the upkeep of the assets Council already owns.
COUNCIL SPENDING AND FINANCIAL DISCIPLINE	How Council spends, including discretionary and 'nice-to-have' projects, staff and consultant costs, debt and borrowing, efficiency and value for money.
ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE	The natural environment, biodiversity, trees and waterways, climate mitigation and adaptation, and coastal hazard and flooding.
FRAMING OF THE PRIORITIES AND PRINCIPLES	Comments about the priorities and principles as documents: their wording, breadth, overlap, ordering, and the costings needed to respond to them.
FUNDING THE COST OF AMALGAMATION	Who should carry the cost of amalgamation, raised in the open-text answers to the reform question.
GENERAL	Broad endorsement or rejection with no specific service, project or subject named.
GOVERNANCE, ENGAGEMENT AND TRUST	How Council makes and explains decisions: consultation, transparency, accountability, elected member and community board roles, and Te Tiriti and mana whenua partnership.
GROWTH, HOUSING AND LAND USE	The pace and form of growth, intensification and neighbourhood character, developer contributions, housing supply and affordability, consenting and land use control.
HEALTH, BUSINESS AND THE LOCAL ECONOMY	GP access, hospital and emergency facilities, local business and jobs, tourism and visitors, and schools and training capacity.
LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM AND CENTRAL GOVERNMENT	Amalgamation, reorganisation and shared services, and the boundary between Council's role and central government's.
PEOPLE, EQUITY AND COMMUNITY WELLBEING	Who is affected and how: older residents, children and rangatahi, accessibility, community safety, social infrastructure, and equitable access to services.
RATES AND AFFORDABILITY	The level of rates, cost of living, pressure on fixed incomes, and fairness in how rates are shared across property types and communities.
ROADS, TRANSPORT AND ACCESS	Roading and footpath maintenance, traffic congestion and management, public transport, cycleways and shared paths, and the district's airport.
SCOPE OF COUNCIL'S ROLE	What Council should and should not be doing at all, including calls to confine it to core services and to leave health and housing to others.
THE CASE FOR AND AGAINST AMALGAMATION	Arguments for and against amalgamating, and for standing alone, raised in the open-text answers.
THE RATES CAP AND THE SERVICE-CUT TRADE-OFF	Direct responses to the rates cap question and to the choice it puts between rates restraint and reduced levels of service.
WASTE AND RECYCLING	Kerbside collection, recycling, tip and green waste charges, and waste minimisation and resource recovery.

Category	Description
WATER SERVICES	Drinking water and wastewater, stormwater, drainage and flood protection, and the new water services delivery arrangements.

Table 16: Qualitative theme categories

Appendix C: Results by demographic group

This appendix breaks the engagement's closed questions down by demographic group. It covers both channels: the online survey responses and the written and paper submissions are counted together, on the basis set out in Methodology. Bases are respondent and submitter counts, and they differ from question to question. The full cross-tabulations are supplied to Council as a separate workbook, KCDC_LTP_Crosstabs.xlsx, and this appendix describes what is in it and draws out the differences worth a reader's attention.

What is in the cross-tabulation workbook

The workbook covers the four closed questions: the eight community priorities, the five planning principles, the rates cap question, and who should fund the cost of amalgamation. Each is crossed by the same set of columns.

- **Age band**, in decades, with a further 60 and over against under 60 split so the district's older skew can be read at a glance.
- **Area**, the suburb or locality the respondent gave.
- **Ratepayer status**, Kāpiti ratepayer or not.
- **The rates cap answer**, Yes or No, used as an analytic dimension across the other three questions as well as being a question in its own right.

Reading the workbook

Every demographic column rests on the people who supplied that detail, and those bases all sit below the 790 responses and submissions the engagement received. Written and paper submitters frequently gave no demographic information at all, so the shortfall is larger than it was on the online survey alone. Age breakdowns rest on 764, suburb breakdowns on 768 and ratepayer breakdowns on 768. The two single-select questions have their own answered bases, 728 on the rates cap and 733 on amalgamation funding, and any demographic split of those rests on the smaller of the two figures again. Each table in the workbook carries its own base in the header, and no table in this appendix should be read against the full 790.

Bases differ between the two kinds of question in a second way. For the two tick questions, the priorities and the principles, percentages are of everyone in the subgroup, whether or not they ticked anything, which is the same full-base convention used for the charts in the body of the report. For the two single-select questions, the rates cap and the amalgamation funding question, percentages are of those in the subgroup who answered.

Throughout the priorities and principles sheets, figures record agreement only. An item not marked as agreed may mean disagreement, no view, or a question passed over, and the remainder of a percentage should never be read as disagreement (see Methodology).

No population-inferential significance markers are shown in the workbook or in this appendix: subgroup percentages are descriptive results for this self-selected consultation. Cell highlighting in the workbook identifies each row's highest and lowest subgroup values, and is applied only where the subgroup has at least 30 respondents. Subgroups below 30, among them the under-20s, the smaller rural localities and those responding on behalf of an organisation, are shown in full for completeness, and the differences they appear to show should not be relied on.

Differences worth noting

The rates cap answer is the sharpest contrast in the workbook. It barely moves the priorities but splits the principles hard and consistently. Those who answered this question divided over how to pay, not over what matters.

- **Priorities, barely moved:** Waters was ticked by 81% of those who accepted the cap and 76% of those who did not. The widest gap of the eight sits on Connected communities, ticked by 53% of the No group against 44% of the Yes group; Working with others runs the same way, 44% against 35%.
- **Principles, split wide:** user pays where it makes sense 79% (Yes group) against 50% (No group); live within our financial limits 87% against 67%; prioritise the must-dos 82% against 63%; growth pays for growth 82% against 69%. Community voice, at 71% and 68%, is the one principle the cap answer leaves alone.
- **Amalgamation funding:** respondents who declined the cap were less likely to name central government (69% against 80%) and twice as likely to choose Other (21% against 10%); local councils sits flat at 10% in both groups. The Local government reform section describes the Other answers.

Age moves a small number of items rather than the whole picture.

- Those in their 30s were more likely than average to tick Waters (90%), Health (79%) and, among the principles, Community voice (79%). Respondents aged 80 and over were more likely to tick Shaping our direction together (60%), Housing (56%), Connected communities (56%) and Working with others (51%), and those in their 70s to tick Working with others (48%). All of these rest on bases between 55 and 189 and are descriptions of the column, not tested differences.
- The 425 aged 60 or over and the 339 under 60 differ hardly at all: Waters was ticked by 79% of each, and the widest gaps are Housing (50% against 42%) and Working with others (42% against 34%).
- On amalgamation funding, those in their 70s sit furthest below the total on central government (69%) and those in their 40s furthest above (84%, against the total of 76%); both are descriptions of the column rather than tested differences.
- The rates cap itself is close to flat by age: accepted by 68% of those aged 60 and over and 70% of the under-60s.

Area produces fewer differences than the workbook's column count might suggest.

- On the rates cap the column runs from 64% Yes in Waikanae (base 218) and 66% in Paraparaumu (231), through 70% in Ōtaki (83), to 75% in Raumati (107). The 11-point range is a description of the column, not a tested difference. Paekākāriki, Peka Peka, Te Horo, Otaihangā, Reikōrangī and Hautere all fall below 30 on this question and are indicative only.
- The widest spread of the eight priorities across the four localities with a base of 30 or more falls on Working with others: 32% in Paraparaumu, 34% in Raumati, 44% in Waikanae and 48% in Ōtaki. The widest on the five principles is narrower again. That 16-point range is likewise a description of the column, not a tested difference.

Ratepayer status needs care. The 34 respondents and submitters who said they were not Kāpiti ratepayers ticked every one of the eight priorities and five principles more often than respondents overall, most widely on six of the eight priorities: Peace, safety and equality 88% (total 61%), Land use 85% (58%), Connected communities 82% (46%), Housing 79% (45%), and Shaping our direction together and Working

with others both 71% (48% and 38%). Among the principles that group ticked Community voice at 85% against 68%, the widest of the five. Ratepayer status does little on the two single-select questions: non-ratepayers accepted the rates cap at 61% on a base of 31, and 76% of both groups named central government on amalgamation funding. A base of 34 moves several percentage points on a handful of responses: the pattern is worth noting and is not a finding, so treat it as indicative only.

Appendix D: Engagement session summary reports

The eleven reports in this appendix are Council's communications and engagement team's own summary reports of the targeted engagement sessions and Council advisory group discussions listed in Table 14. They are reproduced here as supplied, with light formatting standardisation so that the eleven read consistently: a common set of subheadings, spelling and punctuation regularised, and the two ranking exercises originally set as tables presented as lists. Participant counts have been updated where Council subsequently supplied them. Their substance is the engagement team's, not PublicVoice's.

The Targeted engagement chapter of this report was drafted from the facilitators' full session notes and reconciled against these summaries on 10 August 2026. Where the two describe the same session they agree. Nothing in this appendix enters the 790 responses and submissions, the agreement shares, the 1,185 coded comments, or any figure elsewhere in this report, and no count here should be converted to a percentage or set beside a survey share.

Business focus group, Paraparaumu

Session held 22 July 2026. About 23 participants.

Overview and summary. Around 23 business community representatives took part in a focus group. The session helped Council better understand business perspectives on district priorities, LTP decision-making principles, rates affordability, and what success could look like for Kāpiti.

The business focus group broadly supported Council's core priorities, while calling for a stronger focus on growth, innovation, economic opportunity and practical delivery. Participants saw work, income and employment as central to Kāpiti's future, with business growth, land use, infrastructure, health services and climate resilience closely connected. A clear message was that Council should be more enabling, more commercially minded, and clearer about how investment decisions support long-term outcomes for the district.

The group also wanted greater transparency about trade-offs, costs and progress. While rates affordability was important, lower rates were not seen as the only measure of success. Many comments suggested participants would support investment where it is clearly linked to community benefit, accountability and measurable outcomes.

Key themes.

- **Economic growth, work and income.** The strongest theme was the need to grow local employment and income opportunities. Participants called for clearer pathways for small businesses to grow, more support for local enterprise, stronger business connections, and initiatives that help retain talent in the district. They were particularly concerned about limited opportunities for younger people and the need to create diverse employment options close to home.
- **Land use and planning for growth.** Land use was identified as a practical area where Council can influence growth. Participants wanted planning that supports business activity, protects highly productive land, provides space for health, education, shops and recreation, and considers how land can support small and medium-sized enterprises. They were also concerned that too much land is being used for housing without enough attention to recreation, business activity and future service needs.
- **Health and wellbeing.** Access to local health services was raised repeatedly as a major concern. Participants highlighted the need for more doctors, better facilities, improved emergency services, and local healthcare options so residents do not need to travel to Palmerston North or Wellington. Mental health support for teenagers was also identified as an important part of community wellbeing.
- **Infrastructure, transport and town centres.** Participants said infrastructure investment needs to keep pace with growth and support business activity. Feedback included calls for improved town centre planning, better connectivity, reduced congestion, clearer wayfinding, more coordinated road works, and more practical transport options. Infrastructure was often viewed as an investment in long-term productivity, not simply a cost.
- **Environment, climate and recreation.** Environmental sustainability, climate adaptation, water and ocean health, and protection of natural assets were also important priorities. Participants wanted green spaces retained as housing density increases, recreation facilities improved, and public parks

managed strategically so the district offers high-quality destinations and places for people to connect.

What success would look like. Participants described success as a district with more local jobs, stronger business networks, new business activity, commercial space, co-working spaces, business precincts and hubs. A vibrant local business ecosystem was seen as important for keeping spending local, attracting visitors and supporting district-wide prosperity.

Success would also mean easier and more reliable transport, reduced congestion, better healthcare access, well-planned zone changes, improved recreation facilities, and progress on infrastructure challenges. Participants also pointed to practical measures such as increased local patronage, measurable retail growth, better wayfinding through townships, and stronger relationships between landlords, businesses and Council.

Decision-making principles. The group generally supported Council's planning principles but wanted them to more clearly reflect leadership, growth, innovation and ambition. Participants said Council should lead and enable rather than hinder development, use data to show what is needed, work with developers and partners, and apply fiscal discipline similar to a private business.

Several comments suggested the principles should include stronger growth aspirations, clearer thinking about risk and reward, and recognition that growth should help pay for growth. Participants also wanted more transparency about budgets, project delivery, contractor performance and supplier issues, particularly where delays or repeated works affect businesses and the wider community.

Rates, affordability and trade-offs. Feedback on rates reflected a balance between affordability, accountability and investment. Participants wanted essential services and valued community assets protected, including water, infrastructure, sports and recreation facilities, recycling, libraries, pools, reserves, community engagement, natural assets and business collaboration.

There was support for reducing waste, bureaucracy and poorly scoped projects, but not necessarily for cutting services. Some participants said Council should focus on efficiency, targeted rates, better use of existing organisations, alternative revenue sources and clearer cost-benefit analysis. Overall, the group wanted stronger accountability for spending and clearer communication about how costs connect to priorities and outcomes.

Takeaways.

- Council should be more enabling, ambitious and growth-focused, with economic development, local jobs and business growth treated as core priorities.
- Investment decisions should clearly connect land use, infrastructure, health, climate resilience and town centre planning to long-term district prosperity.
- Participants want greater transparency about costs, trade-offs, delivery progress and return on investment.
- Rates affordability matters, but participants placed greater emphasis on wise investment, efficiency, accountability and clearer communication.

Community sector leaders, Paraparaumu

Session held 22 July 2026. 23 participants.

Overview and summary. This report summarises feedback from 23 community sector leaders who took part in the Paraparaumu focus group as part of early engagement to inform Council's Long-term Plan. The discussion explored proposed priorities, planning principles, affordability, and what long-term success could look like for Kāpiti.

Participants strongly supported a future-focused, community-centred approach to Council's long-term planning. A clear message was that social infrastructure, including community hubs, libraries, leadership, community sector capability, and places where people connect, should be treated as essential alongside physical infrastructure such as water, roads, parks and facilities.

The group emphasised that Te Tiriti o Waitangi, partnership with mana whenua, equity, accessibility, kaitiakitanga, manaakitanga, whanaungatanga and kotahitanga should be visible foundations for Council's priorities and planning principles. Participants felt these values should shape decisions from the outset, rather than sitting separately or being added late in the process.

There was also strong support for Council to shift from Council-centric framing to a partnership and community-enabling role. Participants wanted Council to champion, support and resource community-led action, while being clear about its role, statutory responsibilities and financial constraints, and where it can advocate rather than directly deliver.

Key themes.

- **Put people, community connection and wellbeing at the centre.** A consistent message was that Council's planning should start with people and the conditions communities need to thrive. Participants highlighted belonging, social cohesion, resilience, accessible services, community leadership, and support for vulnerable people, young people, older people and new arrivals. Connected communities were seen as the foundation for safety, wellbeing, emergency preparedness and long-term resilience.
- **Treat social infrastructure as essential infrastructure.** Participants were clear that community infrastructure is more than buildings. It includes community hubs, libraries, parks, playgrounds, social services, leadership, volunteering, community development support, and the capability of local organisations. Libraries were repeatedly described as important community hubs that could better connect people with services, including organisations such as Citizens Advice Bureau.
- **Embed Te Tiriti, partnership and values throughout.** Many participants felt the draft priorities and planning principles needed a stronger values base. Te Tiriti o Waitangi was raised repeatedly as a foundation for Council's work, decision-making and relationships with mana whenua. Participants wanted partnership to be visible in language, governance, planning, implementation and measures of success. Related values such as kaitiakitanga, manaakitanga, whanaungatanga, rangatiratanga and kotahitanga were suggested as ways to make the framework more locally grounded and meaningful for Kāpiti.
- **Be clear about Council's role and decision-making principles.** Participants wanted greater clarity about Council's role across different priority areas. In areas such as health, housing and transport, Council may have a role in advocacy, planning, facilitation or partnership rather than direct service delivery. There was also concern that concepts such as "must do", "user pays", "growth pays for

growth” and “financial limits” need to be clearly explained so the community understands what is discretionary, what is required, and what trade-offs are genuinely available.

- **Strengthen equity, accessibility and diverse community voice.** Equity and accessibility were strong recurring themes. Participants noted that user-pays models can disproportionately affect people with limited ability to pay and should be considered through an equity lens. They also called for more accessible engagement and more intentional inclusion of young people, disabled people, ethnic communities, families, older people and those who may not usually participate in Council processes. Community voice was seen as needing to move beyond consultation to ongoing conversation, collaboration and clear feedback loops.
- **Plan for growth in a way that protects community, environment and affordability.** Participants raised concerns about housing affordability, the use of productive land, pressure on infrastructure and services, and the need for good urban design. Growth was seen as needing to be matched by facilities, schools, health services, transport, parks, water infrastructure and community spaces. There was a strong desire for growth to support liveable neighbourhoods rather than disconnected developments, and for planning to protect te taiao, whenua, water and future generations.

Feedback on the proposed priorities. The proposed priorities generally resonated, particularly those relating to connected communities, working with others, housing, water, safety and environmental wellbeing. However, participants suggested several areas that could be strengthened or reframed.

- Connected communities should be elevated as a central priority because it underpins social cohesion, resilience, wellbeing and community-led action.
- Working with others should more clearly recognise mana whenua as Te Tiriti partners and should include practical resourcing for community organisations expected to help deliver outcomes.
- Safety, peace and equity should shift to reference equity, not equality, and use strengths-based language.
- Housing and land use should be framed more holistically, with attention to liveability, infrastructure, productive land, affordability, urban design and social outcomes.
- Environmental care and kaitiakitanga should be more visible, including the responsibility to protect te taiao for mokopuna and future generations.
- Additional gaps identified included transport, youth development, economic development, social infrastructure, community resilience, accessibility and spaces where people can connect.

Decision-making principles. Participants supported community voice as a planning principle but wanted it reframed to reflect partnership, shared understanding and collaboration rather than one-way feedback. They suggested the principle should recognise community organisations as pathways for diverse voices and include clear feedback loops that show how input has influenced decisions.

Several participants felt the existing planning principles were too financially focused and needed a stronger social and values lens. Suggested additions included equity, Te Tiriti, kaitiakitanga, wellbeing, strengths-based practice, evidence-based decision-making and community-led approaches. Participants also asked Council to provide clearer information, facts and figures so the community can give informed feedback on realistic choices.

Rates, affordability and trade-offs. When discussing lower rates, participants acknowledged the need for financial discipline but cautioned against a narrow, short-term focus that could undermine long-term community wellbeing. They wanted affordability decisions to consider community financial limits, not only

Council's financial limits. Participants repeatedly noted that prevention, connection and early support can save money over time by strengthening communities and reducing future demand on services.

Areas participants felt should be protected included libraries, youth services, social services, community development support, mana whenua relationships, green spaces, parks and playgrounds, roading and footpaths, accessible transport, environmental protection, and long-term infrastructure planning. Participants also wanted Council to better communicate what rates fund and why, so the community can take part in informed conversations about trade-offs.

What success would look like. Participants described success as a Kāpiti where people of all ages feel they belong, can access what they need, and are connected to one another and to place. Success would include thriving local communities, strong community leadership, inclusive neighbourhoods, accessible services, protected natural environments, affordable living, and children and mokopuna choosing to build their futures in Kāpiti.

Success would also mean Council operating as an enabler, navigator and partner, not the only deliverer of outcomes. Participants wanted Council to support community capability, celebrate community strengths, share power where appropriate, and measure outcomes from a community perspective rather than only through Council delivery measures.

Takeaways. The strongest message from the focus group was that Kāpiti's future planning should be values-led, Tiriti-based, equity-focused and centred on people, place and partnership. Participants want Council to balance investment in physical infrastructure with deliberate investment in the social fabric that enables communities to thrive. They also want greater clarity, stronger collaboration and a planning framework that reflects what makes Kāpiti distinctive: its people, whenua, mana whenua relationships, community strengths and shared responsibility for future generations.

Older Persons' Advisory Group

Session held 22 July 2026. Participant count not recorded.

Overview and summary. This report summarises feedback from the Older Persons' Advisory Group discussion. It draws out the main themes, priorities, and planning implications raised by participants, with a particular focus on what should be considered through Council's long-term planning and engagement work.

The discussion highlighted strong support for prioritising housing, health and connected communities for older people. Participants emphasised that housing affordability, suitable smaller homes, access to healthcare, transport, and social connection are deeply interconnected. Concerns were raised that Kāpiti is becoming increasingly difficult for older people to afford, particularly those on fixed incomes who want to remain in their own homes and communities.

The group also stressed that Council's planning should take an age-friendly approach across the full Long-term Plan rather than treating older people's needs as a standalone issue. Equity, rather than equality, was raised as an important principle, recognising that different communities and different stages of ageing require different levels and types of support.

Key themes.

- **Housing affordability and suitability are central concerns.** Housing was identified as one of the strongest priorities. Participants linked housing directly with affordability, wellbeing, independence and people's ability to remain connected to their communities as they age. A particular concern was that Kāpiti is becoming increasingly unaffordable for older people, especially those living on fixed incomes and wanting to stay in their own homes. Feedback also pointed to the need for a wider range of housing options, including smaller, accessible and more affordable homes. Participants noted the financial challenge for people who may sell a home at market value but then face high costs to buy into retirement village or other specialist housing models. This reinforces the importance of considering housing choice, accessibility and affordability together.
- **Health access is a critical part of ageing well.** Access to healthcare was identified as another top priority. For older people, access is influenced by a range of practical factors, including the availability of local services, transport links, mobility, affordability and the ability to get to appointments safely and reliably. The discussion reinforced that health should not be viewed separately from transport, housing and community planning.
- **Connected communities help reduce isolation.** Participants placed strong emphasis on connected communities, particularly as a way to prevent or reduce social isolation. Community connection was discussed as more than participation in activities; it depends on having accessible places, transport options, social infrastructure and local opportunities that make it easier for people to stay involved, visible and supported. There was also support for intergenerational approaches, including opportunities that bring older people together with young people and wider community groups. Examples discussed included shared spaces or initiatives that create practical points of connection across ages and stages of life.
- **Affordability pressures extend beyond housing.** Affordability was a strong cross-cutting issue. Participants raised concerns about the impact of rates, the ability of older people to remain in their homes, and the need for Council to explore income sources beyond rates. There was interest in

better understanding how many people are behind on rates, as well as how payment arrangements could align with fortnightly income cycles for people on fixed payments. Participants also suggested Council should continue to advocate for reform of the rating system and consider rates relief for organisations delivering clear community benefit. The discussion reflected a broader concern that affordability needs to be considered both at household level and through the lens of community wellbeing.

- **Transport and accessibility underpin participation.** Transport was raised as a key enabler of independence and connection. Accessible routes to shops, services, public transport links, healthcare and community facilities were seen as essential. The feedback suggests that transport planning should consider not only movement between places, but also whether older people can practically and confidently access the services and spaces they need.
- **Social infrastructure should support growth.** Participants emphasised the importance of protecting and investing in social infrastructure that supports growth. This includes community spaces, services and networks that help people remain connected and supported as the district changes. The group's feedback suggests that infrastructure planning should include social and community infrastructure alongside physical assets.

Decision-making principles. The group was generally comfortable with the planning principles discussed, including the principle that operating costs should not be funded through borrowing. However, participants felt the principles should more clearly reflect an age-friendly approach, with older people's needs considered across the whole Long-term Plan rather than as a separate or isolated topic.

A strong point of feedback was that Council should apply an equity lens. Participants noted that equality does not always lead to fair outcomes, because people and communities have different needs, barriers and levels of access. Including the age-friendly approach as a principle would require Council to consider the diversity of older people, including different ages and stages of ageing, tangata whenua, ethnic minorities and the wider diversity of Kāpiti communities.

Participants also raised the importance of evidence-based decision-making, including the need for relevant data sets to inform choices. This included questions about affordability indicators, such as rates arrears, and how Council weighs public good and private benefit when making investment decisions.

Implications for the Long-term Plan. The feedback points to several implications for Council's Long-term Plan and wider engagement work. First, housing, health, transport, affordability and community connection should be treated as linked issues, not separate workstreams. Decisions in one area can have direct impacts on older people's ability to live well, remain independent and participate in community life.

Second, the Long-term Plan should clearly demonstrate how Council is considering older people across its work programme. This should include applying the age-friendly approach as a lens to infrastructure, transport, housing advocacy, community facilities, services and financial planning.

Third, affordability needs further analysis and clear communication. Participants' feedback suggests value in better understanding the scale of rates pressure on older households, whether payment options are working well for people on fixed incomes, and what other tools Council may have to reduce or offset pressure while maintaining essential services and social infrastructure.

Takeaways.

- **Embed an age-friendly and equity-based approach in the Long-term Plan.** Council should ensure the planning principles and decision-making framework explicitly consider the needs of older people across all relevant areas, including housing, transport, community facilities, infrastructure, services and financial planning.
- **Treat housing, health access, transport, affordability and connection as linked priorities.** Future planning and engagement should reflect how these issues interact. For older people, the ability to age well depends not only on individual services, but on whether homes, transport, healthcare, community spaces and everyday costs work together in practical and accessible ways.
- **Strengthen the evidence base for affordability decisions.** Council should review available data on rates affordability, rates arrears, payment arrangements and the impact of fixed incomes, and use this to inform options for rates relief, payment flexibility and advocacy for rating system reform.
- **Recognise social infrastructure as essential to supporting growth and wellbeing.** Community spaces, services and networks should be considered alongside physical infrastructure when planning for growth, particularly where they help reduce isolation, support intergenerational connection and enable older people to remain active in community life.
- **Continue targeted engagement with older people and diverse communities.** Further engagement should test these themes with older residents across different ages, stages of ageing, cultures, locations and circumstances, including tangata whenua and ethnic minority communities, to ensure planning reflects the full diversity of Kāpiti's ageing population.

Disability Advisory Group

Session held 22 July 2026. Participant count not recorded.

Overview and summary. This report summarises feedback from the Disability Advisory Group on Council's proposed priorities and Long-term Plan decision-making principles. The discussion explored whether the priorities felt right, what may be missing or need changing, what matters most to disabled people and their whānau, and what should be protected if Council needs to keep rates lower.

The strongest message from the group was that accessibility is not a standalone issue affecting only disabled people. It shapes whether people can participate, connect, work, travel, access services, and feel safe and accepted in the community. Participants emphasised that accessibility should be embedded across Council's priorities, decisions, engagement, infrastructure, services, and partnerships. They also highlighted the importance of equity, community voice, practical action, and accountability.

Key themes.

- **Accessibility needs to be built in from the start.** Participants were clear that accessibility should flow through all Council priorities and decisions, rather than being treated as an add-on. Examples included accessible transport, footpaths, public buildings, housing, events, libraries, and community facilities.
- **Equity matters more than treating everyone the same.** The group discussed the difference between equality and equity, noting that "user pays" approaches or standard service models can have unintended impacts on disabled people if additional barriers, costs, or needs are not considered.
- **Working with others is essential.** Participants saw partnership as a foundation for achieving other priorities. This included working with disability communities, Māori, Pacific communities, deaf communities, health providers, central government, community organisations, businesses, and other agencies.
- **Connection depends on transport, health, housing and accessible places.** The group linked social connection with practical access to transport, housing, health services, respite care, outpatient services, safe streets, and local facilities.
- **Community voice, transparency and accountability are critical.** Participants supported Council decision-making principles that value community voice, but wanted clarity on how feedback is heard, how decisions are made, and what action follows.

Feedback on the proposed priorities. The group broadly supported the direction of the priorities but wanted stronger and clearer recognition of accessibility, equity, diversity, and working with others. Working with others was seen as a top priority because participants felt it was necessary to make progress across all other areas. There was also strong feedback that accessibility should either be clearly woven through every priority or recognised as a priority in its own right.

Participants raised examples where access barriers affect everyday life, including pool payment systems, buses, graffiti and streetscape design, wheelchair access in libraries, inaccessible pavements, public transport connections, housing design, and access to specialist health services. They also noted that future planning and land use decisions should better anticipate accessibility needs, including business activity, specialist services, housing, and community facilities.

Some wording was questioned. In particular, the term “peace” prompted uncertainty, with participants suggesting concepts such as acceptance, social cohesion, diversity, relationships, and inclusion may better reflect the intended meaning. They also wanted clearer language about being heard, what happens after engagement, and how Council will demonstrate action.

What matters most. The priorities that mattered most to the group were accessibility, working with others, connected communities, fit-for-purpose housing, health, safety, and transport. Participants described these issues as interconnected: if people cannot move around safely, access services, find suitable housing, or connect with others, they can become isolated and excluded from community life.

Health was described as underpinning everything, because poor access to health, respite, outpatient services, and specialist support can directly affect people’s ability to participate. Transport and safety were also important, including practical examples such as being able to identify and flag down buses, avoid hazards, and move safely through streets and public spaces.

The group also highlighted the economic and community value of accessibility. Investment in accessible places, services, and employment pathways was seen not only as support for disabled people, but as something that can strengthen local participation, bring people into town centres, support businesses, and benefit the wider community.

What success would look like. For participants, success would be visible, practical and felt in everyday life. It would mean disabled people having more confidence to be out, using and enjoying the district; community groups being visible and supported; and acceptance, empathy and diversity being normalised. The group stressed that words are not enough: Council and the wider community need to demonstrate commitment through action.

Decision-making principles. The group generally supported principles that emphasise looking after what Council already has, improving assets as opportunities arise, hearing from the community, and being accountable. However, participants wanted stronger consideration of equity, especially where decisions may have a different impact on disabled people.

There was particular caution about “user pays”. Participants said this may be appropriate in some situations but should be applied “where it makes sense” and on an equity basis. They noted that additional costs can disproportionately affect disabled people or exclude them from services and facilities.

Participants also raised the importance of holding contracts and services to account, considering the wider impacts of decisions, and taking a long-term view that values institutional knowledge. Examples included accessible transport funding, rubbish and recycling services, road impacts from multiple trucks, and the risk of engagement activities being inaccessible to some communities.

Rates, affordability and trade-offs. If Council needs to keep rates lower, participants said the things most important to protect are accessibility, infrastructure, transport, advocacy, and the natural environment and lifestyle that support people’s wellbeing. Maintaining infrastructure was seen as particularly important because poorly maintained or unusable paths and facilities can create more barriers to participation in community life than having no infrastructure at all.

Participants suggested Council could look for efficiencies by reducing duplication, using appropriate resources for the right jobs, considering whether some services could be brought in-house, and taking a

more joined-up view of service delivery. They also suggested carefully considering the timing and quality of upgrades, and assessing whether some lower-priority projects could be delayed.

Implications for Council.

- Make accessibility explicit across priorities, decision-making principles, engagement approaches and service planning.
- Use equity-based language and test decisions for different impacts on disabled people and other communities.
- Clarify what Council means by terms such as acceptance, social cohesion, diversity and inclusion, and avoid wording that may be unclear or open to misinterpretation.
- Show how community feedback influences decisions, including what Council heard, what changed, and why.
- Ensure Council engagement methods, events, venues and materials are accessible to disabled people, including wheelchair users and deaf communities.
- Work with disability communities early when planning infrastructure, transport, housing, open spaces, community facilities and services.

Takeaways. The central takeaway is that accessibility matters for everybody. When places, services, transport, housing, engagement and information are accessible, more people can participate in community life. The group also emphasised that accessibility is an investment in local wellbeing, inclusion and economic participation, not simply a compliance requirement or additional cost.

Participant quotes.

Accessibility matters for everybody.

Easy to say it. Proof is in the actions. We have to see it for it to be true to us.

(Success would look like) Non-disabled people explaining in ways that promote acceptance.

Commercial landowners (Paraparaumu, Ōtaki, Raumati, Waikanae)

Sessions held 20 to 28 July 2026. About 44 participants across four sessions.

Overview and summary. Around 44 commercial landowners participated in engagement sessions held in Paraparaumu, Ōtaki, Waikanae and Raumati. The sessions tested support for Kāpiti's proposed Council priorities and Long-term Plan decision-making principles, and explored whether commercial ratepayers should contribute more to economic development funding.

Commercial landowners broadly supported Council's proposed priorities and Long-term Plan decision-making principles. Support was strongest where the priorities were seen to protect affordability, keep Council operating within its means, and ensure growth contributes to the infrastructure it requires.

Across the four locations, participants wanted Council to plan growth in a more proactive and coordinated way. They saw transport, water and wastewater infrastructure, housing, land use, employment and commercial activity as closely connected. A recurring message was that infrastructure should be planned and delivered ahead of, or alongside, development rather than after problems have already developed.

Participants also wanted economic growth, local employment and business prosperity to be more visible in Council's priorities. While there was recognition that commercial ratepayers have a role in funding economic development, support for any increase was cautious. It depended on Council showing clear, measurable and fair benefits for businesses, particularly in a difficult operating environment.

A significant finding was the limited awareness of Council's economic development work. Participants wanted clearer information about what Council delivers, how businesses benefit, and what outcomes are achieved. Rates affordability mattered strongly, but the broader message was that Council should make disciplined investments, explain the trade-offs and show what ratepayers receive in return.

Key themes.

- **Infrastructure, transport and connectivity.** The strongest cross-district theme was the need for infrastructure to keep pace with growth. Participants called for better transport connections, including link roads in the Paraparaumu and Otaihanga area, and wanted housing and transport planning to occur concurrently. Water supply resilience and wastewater capacity were repeatedly identified as prerequisites for development. Participants were concerned that enabling infrastructure has too often been delivered reactively and wanted Council to plan ahead.
- **Growth paying for growth.** There was broad support for development contributing to the additional infrastructure demand it creates. Participants questioned whether current development contributions are sufficient, particularly for water and other growth-related infrastructure, and whether developers should bear a greater share of upgrade costs rather than transferring those costs to existing ratepayers.
- **Economic growth, work and employment.** Participants generally agreed with the proposed priority areas but were concerned that business growth, economic prosperity and job creation were not directly recognised. Local employment was particularly important in Ōtaki and Waikanae, including pathways for young people to enter work. Commercial prosperity was viewed as benefiting the wider community, not only business and property owners.
- **Housing and proactive land use.** Participants supported housing growth where it is well planned, appropriately located and supported by infrastructure. Feedback included the need for more

proactive rezoning, the right growth in the right place, and easier regulatory pathways for social and affordable housing. Raumati participants highlighted a need for more commercial land, while Waikanae participants saw carefully managed town-centre intensification as a possible way to support vitality and accessibility.

- **Health and wellbeing.** Health services remained an important priority. Participants discussed the need for greater local health provision, including whether Kāpiti could secure a hospital or expanded hospital-level services. There was recognition that Council's role is primarily through advocacy, land-use planning and enabling the preparatory work required for future health investment.
- **Town centres, events and gathering places.** Waikanae participants were particularly concerned about vacant premises and limited reasons for people to spend time in Mahara Place. They wanted quality and distinctive shops, events that attract people into the centre, stronger landlord collaboration and places where the community can gather. Some participants considered modest intensification around the centre could support foot traffic, while others cautioned that growth should protect Waikanae's character and respond to the needs of an older population.
- **Local government reform and future uncertainty.** Participants also noted that potential local government reform creates uncertainty about where future responsibilities and decisions may sit. They wanted Council to remain mindful of this context while progressing long-term commitments.

What success would look like. Participants described success as a district where infrastructure, growth and economic activity are planned together. This would include reliable water and wastewater services, improved road and public transport connections, well-located housing, sufficient commercial land and development that does not outpace essential services.

Successful town centres would have fewer vacant buildings, a stronger mix of quality businesses, regular activity and events, and welcoming places for people to meet. Participants also wanted stronger local employment opportunities, particularly for younger residents, and economic development activity that produces visible benefits for businesses across the district.

From a Council performance perspective, success would mean clearer communication about priorities, costs and outcomes. Commercial landowners wanted practical evidence of delivery, greater transparency about how economic development funding is used, and measurable results that are fair in relation to the extra rates being requested.

Decision-making principles. The groups generally supported Council's proposed planning principles and focus areas. Affordability and the principle of working within Council's means attracted the strongest support. Participants wanted rates affordability to underpin decision-making, particularly given the combined effect of rates, insurance and other operating costs on commercial property owners and tenants.

Participants also wanted Council decisions to be proactive and integrated. Infrastructure, land use, housing, transport and economic development should be considered as parts of the same growth system rather than as separate work programmes. The feedback favoured decisions that anticipate demand, make appropriate use of development contributions and avoid costly retrospective responses.

Good decision-making was also associated with transparency and evidence. Participants wanted Council to explain what is being funded, the outcomes expected, when benefits will be delivered and how success will

be measured. In economic development, the preference was for communication focused on direct results for businesses rather than research, reports or process alone.

Rates, affordability and trade-offs. Views on the commercial contribution to economic development funding varied by location, but the common position was that any increase must be justified by clear value. Paraparaumu participants generally considered the existing commercial contribution toward economic development operating costs to be about right. Ōtaki participants were more open to an even funding split but were concerned about the timing of any increase and wanted a corresponding increase in visible economic development activity.

Waikanae participants highlighted the significant impact a funding change could have on a relatively small number of commercial ratepayers. An example discussed was that a property paying approximately \$15,000 in annual rates could face an increase of about \$1,400 if the targeted-rate contribution moved from 25 percent to 50 percent. Participants noted that these costs are commonly passed to tenants through net leases and could reduce business viability or Kāpiti's attractiveness as a place to operate.

Participants also questioned whether economic development benefits are distributed evenly. Waikanae landowners with professional-services tenants considered some current activity more relevant to retail, hospitality and tourism. In Ōtaki, major events such as the Kite Festival and Māoriland Film Festival were recognised positively, but some participants did not see the resulting economic benefits reaching retailers on the main road.

Across all sessions, participants reported limited understanding of Council's economic development services and how the budget translates into results. They wanted greater visibility of on-the-ground support, clearer reporting on outcomes, and a stronger connection between increased funding and increased benefit. Some questioned whether a growing economic development budget was appropriate during difficult economic conditions.

Overall, commercial landowners were not uniformly opposed to funding economic development or to reconsidering the funding split. Their support was conditional on Council demonstrating that the additional burden is affordable, equitably applied and matched by practical, measurable benefits. Participants also raised the possibility of rates or development-contribution relief for not-for-profit social housing initiatives that deliver a clear community benefit.

Takeaways.

- Commercial landowners broadly supported Council's proposed priorities and Long-term Plan decision-making principles, especially affordability and operating within Council's means.
- Infrastructure, transport connectivity, water resilience and coordinated planning for growth were the strongest priorities across the sessions.
- Participants wanted economic growth, local employment and business prosperity to be more clearly recognised in Council's priority framework.
- There was strong support for growth paying for growth, including closer scrutiny of whether development contributions adequately cover additional infrastructure demand.
- Council's economic development activity was not well understood. Participants wanted clearer communication focused on direct support, measurable outcomes and results rather than process.

- Any increase in the commercial share of economic development funding should be proportionate to the benefits delivered and sensitive to the pressures facing tenants, who are likely to bear these costs.
- Participants wanted Council to take a more proactive, transparent and coordinated approach to growth, including earlier provision of zoning and infrastructure and stronger links between land use, housing, transport and economic development.

Overall, the feedback points to support for Council's direction, provided decisions remain affordable, transparent and clearly linked to practical benefits for businesses and the wider community.

Environment leaders focus group

Session held 24 July 2026. 16 participants.

Overview and summary. This report summarises feedback from the Environment Leaders Focus Group. Participants reflected on the proposed priorities and planning principles, what matters most, what success would look like, and what should be protected, changed, or reduced given affordability pressures. The central message was clear: the natural environment is fundamental to Kāpiti's identity, wellbeing, resilience, and future prosperity, and should be more visible across Council priorities, principles, and decision-making.

- Participants saw the environment as central to why people live in Kāpiti and to community wellbeing, identity, and resilience.
- Climate change, biodiversity, conservation, waterways, wetlands, ecological corridors, and environmental limits were seen as missing or not visible enough in the proposed priorities.
- Several participants felt "land use" was too narrow and transactional, preferring broader concepts such as land, whenua, ecosystem health, or ki uta ki tai, mountains to sea.
- Environmental thinking should underpin housing, transport, infrastructure, community connectedness, economic development, and climate adaptation.
- Participants supported a stronger Council role in enabling community-led environmental action, including planting, restoration, education, awareness, and volunteer support.
- There was support for community voice, growth paying for growth, user pays where appropriate, and living within limits, provided those limits include ecological as well as financial limits.
- Rates affordability was acknowledged, but participants cautioned against short-term cost cutting that undermines long-term environmental resilience or community wellbeing.

Key themes.

- **The environment underpins everything.** Participants described the natural environment as the foundation for Kāpiti's lifestyle, wellbeing, economy, visitor appeal, identity, and resilience. Many felt it should be visible as a core priority, not implied within other priorities.
- **Climate change needs clearer integration.** Participants linked climate change to housing, transport, infrastructure, safety, health, flooding, sea-level rise, water quality, and resilience. Some preferred broader language such as "environmental change", but the need for mitigation and adaptation was clear.
- **Language matters.** There was concern that "land use" frames land as something to be used rather than cared for. Participants suggested language that better reflects relationships with land, water, biodiversity, and place, including stronger use of te reo Māori, Te Ao Māori perspectives, and Te Tiriti responsibilities.
- **Planning should take a mountains-to-sea view.** Council thinking should reflect connected systems, from the Tararua ranges to waterways, wetlands, dunes, beaches, ecological corridors, and urban areas. Reserves and restoration areas need to be connected to function well.
- **Community action is a major strength.** Participants saw strong potential for Council to enable local people, volunteer groups, rangatahi, and community organisations to contribute to restoration, planting, education, dune protection, carbon forests, wetland protection, and local environmental projects.

- **Wellbeing and environment are inseparable.** Participants connected environmental health with physical and mental health, community connection, youth opportunity, belonging, and resilience.

Implications for Council priorities.

- **Housing and growth.** New development should protect natural systems, restore or retain wetlands, provide ecological corridors, include green and shaded spaces, and avoid sensitive areas such as wetlands and peat.
- **Transport and connected communities.** Participants supported low-emissions transport, better public transport, walking and cycling connections, transport hubs, and accessways that connect people to services and strengthen community connection.
- **Waters.** Water was viewed as more than infrastructure, encompassing waterways, stormwater, swimming, fishing, ecological health, mahinga kai, recreational water quality, and the need to heal and revitalise waterways.
- **Resilience and climate adaptation.** Participants wanted climate change built into everyday decision-making, including nature-based solutions such as dunes, wetlands, riparian planting, connected conservation areas, and flood-resilient planning.
- **Community wellbeing.** Environmental restoration was seen as a way to build connection, support volunteering, improve mental health, strengthen resilience, and help people contribute locally.

The group understood the need to focus on essentials and affordability, but felt the proposed priorities risk underplaying the environment and climate resilience. They saw environment as a lens that should shape decisions across all Council activity.

What success would look like. Success was described as a future where people, communities, and ecosystems are healthy and connected. Participants talked about having the right relationship with the place we live, recognising people as part of the environment, and ensuring rangatahi have local pathways to contribute, work, and belong. A successful future would include restored wetlands, protected peat areas, connected reserves, healthy waterways, shaded and green movement corridors, and development that treats ecosystem protection as an opportunity.

- People understand they are part of the environment and have the awareness and tools to make positive changes.
- Council decisions reflect ecological as well as financial limits.
- Developers plan for ecological corridors, wetlands, green space, shade, and resilience from the start.
- Community groups are supported to restore, protect, educate, and advocate.
- Waterways, wetlands, dunes, forests, beaches, and biodiversity are protected and enhanced.
- Infrastructure, transport, housing, and community planning all contribute to a low-emissions, resilient future.

Decision-making principles. Participants supported the intent behind principles such as community voice, growth paying for growth, user pays where appropriate, and focusing on must-dos. However, they wanted the principles to be broader and more balanced, with stronger recognition of environmental stewardship, climate change, Te Tiriti responsibilities, and long-term ecological resilience.

- **Broaden “living within our means”** so it includes ecological and environmental limits as well as financial limits.

- **Strengthen community voice** by reflecting participation, local expertise, and the contribution of community and volunteer groups.
- **Reflect Te Tiriti and Te Ao Māori** more clearly, including language that better expresses relationships between people, whenua, water, and place.
- **Avoid principles that are too shaped by the current political context.** Participants wanted Council to stay focused on long-term local goals rather than short-term national policy settings.
- **Clarify user pays.** Participants supported user pays where it makes sense, but cautioned that it should not undermine access, equity, connection, or essential community facilities.

Rates, affordability and trade-offs. Participants recognised that Council cannot do everything and that affordability is a real concern. However, they strongly favoured protecting what makes Kāpiti a good place to live, especially the natural environment, waterways, parks and reserves, community voice, core water services, public transport, and support for community groups.

- **Protect:** environment, waterways, water quality, parks, reserves, open spaces, biodiversity, community voice, three waters, priority roads, public transport improvements, and support for community organisations and volunteer groups.
- **Change or reduce:** better use of community facilities, greater collaboration to improve efficiency, less support for private enterprise, no further support for the airport, and stronger expectations that growth and development meet their full costs, including ongoing environmental impacts.
- **Equity:** Participants raised the need to consider how costs are shared, including whether targeted approaches are appropriate for issues such as flood protection and whether user pays models could reduce access for those with less ability to pay.

Takeaways. The strongest message from the focus group was that the environment should be clearly visible as a central priority and decision-making lens. Participants accepted that Council faces difficult choices but wanted Council to keep sight of the bigger picture: Kāpiti's communities, wellbeing, economy, and resilience depend on a healthy natural environment.

Youth Council

Session held 27 July 2026. Participant count not recorded.

Overview and summary. This report sums up what Youth Council members said about the future they want for Kāpiti. Their feedback covers safety, connection, housing, transport, water, health, decision-making and how Council works with young people. It highlights the big ideas, concerns and opportunities young people want Council to consider.

Youth Council members want Kāpiti to be safe, inclusive, connected and environmentally responsible, a place where young people can see a future for themselves. They want good public spaces, reliable transport, better health services, affordable homes, local opportunities and a stronger say in decisions that affect them.

A strong message was that growth is welcome, but it needs to be done well. Young people do not want development that leaves behind the environment, youth services, community connection or local identity. They want services, facilities and infrastructure to keep up as Kāpiti grows.

Overall, the feedback comes down to three things: young people want to belong, they want the practical support to live well locally, and they want their voices to help shape what happens next.

Key themes.

- **A safer, more inclusive community.** Safety, peace and equality were central to the future young people described. Feeling safe was about more than avoiding harm, it was about confidence, freedom, comfort in public places and knowing support is there when needed. Young people also want Kāpiti to be a place where diversity is accepted and people feel they belong. Safer, more welcoming spaces would help young people take part in community life and feel proud of where they live.
- **Stronger connected communities.** Young people value strong connections with whānau, friends, schools, local businesses, Council and the wider community. They want places where people know each other, look out for each other and have spaces to come together. The idea of enabling “five-minute communities” was raised as a way for everyday things, such as parks, shops, schools, transport, youth spaces and services, to be easy to reach. They also want more events, culture, activities and nightlife that bring energy to Kāpiti.
- **Growth, housing and infrastructure that keep pace.** Affordable housing was a big concern. Young people want future generations to be able to live in Kāpiti, rather than feeling pushed out by cost or lack of choice. They supported more housing options, including apartments and eco-friendly homes close to schools, buses, shops and services. They were also clear that growth needs good planning. Feedback raised concerns about rushed projects, weak regulation and infrastructure that does not last. Young people want roads, transport, local services, health facilities, green energy and community spaces that match Kāpiti’s growth.
- **Transport, access and local opportunity.** Transport came up often. Young people want it to be easier to move around Kāpiti and connect with Wellington, Hutt Valley and Ōtaki. Ideas included more routes, better connections, greener transport, electric trains to Ōtaki and e-buses. They also want more reasons to stay local: more jobs, local businesses, school and community links, and places where young people can gather, contribute and be part of what is happening.

- **Environmental care and resilience.** Caring for the environment was a strong part of young people's vision. They want greener communities, clean energy, sustainable transport, healthy waterways and decisions that consider the environmental impact of new infrastructure. Water was seen as both an essential service and something to protect. Young people talked about safe drinking water, healthy waterways, recreation, emergency storage and climate resilience as part of a liveable future.
- **Better health and wellbeing support.** Health services, in particular mental health support, were a practical and urgent concern. Young people want better access to healthcare, mental health support and diagnosis closer to home, without needing to travel to Wellington. They linked health to wellbeing, happiness, work, education and being able to take part in community life. As Kāpiti grows, they expect health and wellbeing support to grow too.
- **Youth voice in decision-making.** Young people want more chances to help shape Kāpiti's future. They said youth engagement leads to better youth spaces, stronger participation and more interest in local decisions, including voting. There was strong support for keeping and strengthening Youth Council and other youth voice opportunities. Young people do not want decisions made for them without them.

What young people want for Kāpiti. Young people described a future Kāpiti that is greener, safer, happier, more inclusive and more connected. They are open to change, but want it to be careful, community-led and backed by the right services and infrastructure.

- More youth spaces, youth-friendly events and places where young people can express themselves.
- Better public transport, local access and connections across Kāpiti and to neighbouring areas.
- Affordable housing and infrastructure that supports both growth and environmental care.
- Improved health and mental health services closer to home.
- More local businesses, jobs and opportunities for young people.
- Greater inclusivity, acceptance of diversity, and protection and celebration of culture.
- More chances for youth to have a say in decisions that affect their future.

What young people do not want. Young people were clear about what they want to avoid: rushed or poorly planned projects, short-term infrastructure, unchecked expansion, and funding cuts to youth services or youth spaces. They were especially concerned about losing Youth Council or other ways for young people to be heard.

Some feedback also raised concerns about AI data centres and the use of AI in schools or local government. These comments point to a wider message: young people want careful decisions that look at long-term impacts, protect community values and show clear benefits.

Implications for future planning and engagement. The feedback gives Council a clear steer for future planning and engagement. Young people are thinking about how housing, transport, infrastructure, environmental sustainability, access to health and mental wellbeing services, connection and participation all fit together. Key considerations for Council are to:

- Keep youth voice visible and active in long-term planning and community decision-making.
- Consider how housing, transport, infrastructure, social infrastructure, and access to health and mental wellbeing services can support young people to stay, work, study and participate in Kāpiti.
- Protect and strengthen youth spaces, youth services and opportunities for youth-led activity.

- Ensure growth is planned in a way that supports environmental resilience, community connection and cultural identity.
- Use plain, accessible engagement approaches that make it easy for young people to understand issues and contribute meaningfully.

Takeaways. Youth Council feedback sets out a hopeful, practical vision for Kāpiti: a district that grows well, protects what makes it special, and gives young people real reasons to see their future here.

The strongest message is simple: young people want to be part of shaping that future. Continuing to listen, involve them early, and show how their feedback influences decisions will help build confidence and a future Kāpiti that works for all generations.

Rangatahi session, Ōtaki

Session held 3 August 2026. 15 participants.

Overview and summary. This report summarises feedback from a dedicated focus group with 15 rangatahi from Ōtaki, held as part of early engagement to inform the development of Council's Long-term Plan. The discussion provides valuable insight into what young people value about Ōtaki, the challenges they experience in daily life, and the practical improvements they believe would help create a safer, healthier, better-connected, and more vibrant community for rangatahi now and into the future.

The Ōtaki youth focus group highlighted strong pride in local identity, culture, whānau, the natural environment, and the places that give rangatahi a sense of belonging. Participants value Ōtaki's accessibility, community facilities, beaches, awa, marae, sports spaces, and cultural strengths. They also identified clear opportunities to improve everyday wellbeing, youth recreation, transport, employment, health support, and public spaces.

Across the discussion, rangatahi placed the greatest importance on health, water, housing, and services and infrastructure that support safe, active, connected communities. Their feedback shows a desire for practical improvements that make Ōtaki easier, safer, and more enjoyable to live in, while protecting the things they already love about their town.

Key themes.

- **Strong pride in Ōtaki's culture, identity and natural environment.** Rangatahi spoke positively about Ōtaki's culture, whānau connections, marae, Te Wānanga o Raukawa, Māoriland, Ngā Purapura, Te Haemata, and local artists. They also strongly valued the taiao, including the beach, awa, river mouth, swimming holes, Rāhui, and whitebaiting. These places and connections are central to how young people experience belonging and local identity.
- **Better youth recreation spaces are a clear priority.** Participants repeatedly called for better-quality places to be active, socialise, and have fun. Requests included an upgraded skatepark, improved pump and BMX tracks, basketball courts with lighting, a deeper or larger pool with more youth-focused features, better access to the beach pavilion and rooftop area, a running track, more sports teams, and more dedicated youth spaces.
- **Transport, roads and basic infrastructure matter in daily life.** Rangatahi valued being able to walk around Ōtaki and use bus transport, but many comments focused on the need for more streetlights, smoother footpaths, fewer potholes, fewer cones and stop/go disruptions, better roads, improved public transport, and stronger train connections. Infrastructure issues were described in practical, everyday terms, showing how directly they affect young people's ability to move around safely and easily.
- **Health, mental health and wellbeing were top priorities.** Health was identified as the most important priority overall. Rangatahi raised the need for more mental health services and youth support, while also recognising the importance of safe drinking water, warm homes, local health services, and places that support active lifestyles. Participants also noted concerns about bullying and young people's ease of access to vapes and alcohol.
- **More local opportunities for rangatahi.** Participants wanted more jobs, training pathways, trade options, shops, and activities in Ōtaki. Feedback suggests rangatahi want to see more investment in

opportunities that help them stay connected, build skills, participate locally, and see a future for themselves in their community.

- **Protecting water, awa and the environment is important.** Water was the second-highest priority. Rangatahi highlighted safe drinking water, stormwater and wastewater, keeping the awa clean, and preventing waste from entering the river. These comments show that environmental care is linked strongly to wellbeing, recreation, identity, and pride in place.
- **Safety, belonging and connectedness are linked.** Rangatahi wanted public spaces that feel safe, welcoming, and well cared for. Comments about lighting, safe spaces, bullying, ram raids, “hoodrats”, theft, and emergency preparedness sit alongside a strong desire for places to gather, play sport, and feel included. This suggests that safety is not only about enforcement, but also about good design, positive activities, and visible care for shared spaces.

Priority areas identified by participants.

- **Health:** the strongest priority, including mental health, safe water, warm homes, and local services.
- **Water:** safe drinking water, clean waterways, and environmental protection.
- **Housing:** homes that are affordable, accessible, in the right place, and suited to people’s needs.
- **Working with others:** recognition that Council cannot address every issue alone, but partnerships need to deliver visible benefits.
- **Connected communities:** youth spaces, recreation areas, and opportunities to meet and belong.
- **Safety, peace and equality:** safer public spaces, early prevention, and emergency preparedness.
- **Land use and movement:** access to parks, services, community facilities, transport, and places for businesses to grow.

Implications for Council.

- Rangatahi want practical, visible improvements that make a difference to everyday life, particularly recreation facilities, roads, footpaths, lighting, transport, and water quality.
- Youth-focused spaces and activities are a strong opportunity to support wellbeing, safety, belonging, and local pride.
- Health and mental health needs remain important, even where Council’s role is mainly advocacy or partnership.
- There is strong value in protecting and investing in the places that rangatahi already identify with, including the beach, awa, marae, cultural spaces, sports facilities and community hubs.
- Future engagement should continue to clearly explain Council’s role, including what Council can directly deliver, where it can advocate, and where partnership is needed.

Takeaways. Ōtaki rangatahi are proud of their town and deeply connected to its culture, people and natural environment. They want Council and partners to protect what makes Ōtaki special, while investing in the facilities, services, transport, jobs and supports that will help young people thrive locally.

Paraparaumu Beach School (years 7 and 8)

Session held 3 August 2026. 14 participants.

Overview and summary. Fourteen year 7 and 8 students shared their ideas for making Kāpiti better for young people. Their feedback focused on practical improvements to facilities, more safe and accessible places to be active and connect, better promotion of local activities and events, and changes that support wellbeing and inclusion.

Students want local spaces and activities that are safe, accessible, well maintained and easy to find out about. Their feedback points to the importance of involving young people in decisions about community facilities and services, so improvements reflect how they use and experience public spaces.

Key themes.

- **More youth-friendly recreation and activity options.** Students wanted more places and activities for young people, including indoor options for wet weather, a trampoline park, bowling, public basketball and tennis courts, running tracks, sports grounds, mountain biking tracks, touch rugby fields, and an indoor sports centre.
- **Safe places for young people to connect.** A strong theme was the need for dedicated, welcoming places where young people can meet others their age, especially when the weather is poor. Students also raised the value of public spaces that support performance and creativity, such as open mic nights, community centre events and public stages in parks.
- **Improved maintenance and accessibility.** Students identified practical improvements such as better toilets at Mazengarb Road, safer footpaths, filling potholes in car parks, keeping popular facilities such as flying foxes and sports fields open more often, and providing a map of local indoor and outdoor sport and activity facilities.
- **Safety, lighting and security.** Students highlighted the need for better lighting at railway stations, bus stops, small streets and Paraparaumu Domain, with a suggestion to explore solar lighting. They also mentioned cameras at schools and broader improvements to help people feel safer in public places.
- **Health, wellbeing and emergency awareness.** Feedback included support for 24/7 urgent medical care, free hygiene supplies in public bathrooms, emergency services events where children and adults can learn more about what emergency services do, and concern about the condition and equipment at the Te Roto Drive Fire Station.
- **Waste and environmental services.** Students suggested more landfill, recycling and compostable bins in public areas.
- **Better communication about events and activities.** Students wanted more visible and youth-friendly promotion of events, including posters, signs and cinema advertising, so young people and families know what is happening locally.

Takeaways. The strongest message from students was that young people want more safe, active and affordable things to do close to home. They value sport, recreation, entertainment and creative opportunities, but also want the basics to work well: safe paths, clean toilets, good lighting, maintained facilities and clear information about what is available.

Mayors Taskforce for Jobs participants

Session held 5 August 2026. 10 participants.

Overview and summary. This report summarises feedback received from ten rangatahi aged between 18 and 24 who are engaged in the Mayors Taskforce for Jobs programme. It provides a rangatahi perspective on what is working well in Kāpiti, what needs attention, and what young people want Council to prioritise over the next 10 years.

Participants value Kāpiti's natural environment, public spaces, libraries, sports grounds, shopping centres and Council's visible community role. However, their feedback shows many rangatahi do not yet see Kāpiti as fully meeting their needs or offering a clear future. Their strongest priorities were health, youth voice, housing and land use. They called for better health and mental health support, more affordable housing, youth-friendly spaces and activities, improved transport and walkability, and continued environmental protection. Overall, participants want Kāpiti to be more inclusive, affordable, connected and youth-friendly, with rangatahi voices genuinely reflected in Council decisions.

Key themes.

- **Young people want more places to go and things to do.** A strong and repeated message was that Kāpiti needs more youth-friendly spaces, activities and programmes. Participants valued places like Zeal and wanted more free or low-cost spaces where young people can spend time with friends without needing to spend money. They also wanted a greater variety of activities, including options for younger children, nightlife, and more things to do around Coastlands and beach areas.
- **Affordability and housing are major concerns.** Housing affordability came through strongly, including concern that even higher-density housing is too expensive. Participants wanted more accessible youth housing and affordable apartments, noting that affordable, safe, warm and flood-resilient housing would help young people stay in Kāpiti longer. There was also concern about the difficulty of finding rentals when employment is uncertain.
- **Health, mental health and social support need greater focus.** Health was the highest-ranked priority, receiving seven votes. Participants agreed Council should do more to advocate for health services in Kāpiti. They highlighted gaps in trauma and mental health support, social work, support for people on benefits, homelessness services, and programmes for young people who are struggling, including employment-related support such as the Mayors Taskforce for Jobs.
- **Safety and fairness are uneven experiences.** While some participants said they generally feel safe in public places, others raised concerns about crime around the railway station, harassment, racism, and being unfairly treated or stereotyped because of appearance or skin colour. Participants also felt young people are not always treated fairly in Kāpiti and identified barriers to reporting crime or serious harm. This suggests perceptions of safety differ and are shaped by personal experiences, identity and location.
- **Transport, access and walkability matter.** Participants identified public transport as inconsistent and wanted better transport options. They also wanted activities and services to be closer together and easier to walk between. Access to parks, shops and services was seen as important as Kāpiti grows, with participants broadly agreeing that new development should make it easier for people to reach the places they need and enjoy.
- **Protecting the environment remains important.** Participants valued Kāpiti's natural environment, including waterways, beaches, bush walks, views, walking tracks, parks and open spaces. They

agreed that important green spaces and the environment should be protected as Kāpiti grows. At the same time, they expressed concern about the health of rivers, streams and beaches, and saw flood resilience and preparation for extreme weather as areas needing attention.

- **Rangatahi want to have a stronger voice in Council decisions.** Participants strongly agreed that young people's views should be considered alongside other generations, that they would like more opportunities to share ideas with Council, and that community feedback should influence what Council does. "Shaping our direction together" was the second-highest priority, receiving six votes, showing strong interest in meaningful participation and influence.

Priority ranking. When participants ranked priorities using sticky dots, the strongest areas of interest were health (7 votes), opportunities to help shape Council's direction (6 votes), housing (5 votes), and land use (5 votes). Lower-ranked areas such as connected communities (2 votes) and safety, peace and equality (2 votes) still generated important discussion, suggesting these issues matter even where they received fewer votes.

Priority continuum questions. Participants were asked to respond to a series of statements linked to the proposed priorities. Their responses show strong concern about youth spaces, fairness, housing choice, and environmental health, while also highlighting areas where views were more mixed or uncertain. The statement tested is given first, then the group's overall response.

- *Health.* "Council should do more to advocate for health services in Kāpiti." Agreed.
- *Housing.* "There are enough different types of homes here for different people and different stages of life." Split from neutral to disagreed.
- *Housing.* "As Kāpiti grows, we should protect the places and things people care about." Agreed.
- *Connected communities.* "I feel connected to my community." Mostly neutral, with some disagreement.
- *Connected communities.* "There are enough places in Kāpiti where you can spend time without spending money." Disagreed.
- *Connected communities.* "There are lots of things for young people to do in Kāpiti." Disagreed.
- *Safety, peace and equality.* "I feel safe in public places in Kāpiti." Mostly agreed, with some neutral responses and one disagreement.
- *Safety, peace and equality.* "Kāpiti is prepared for emergencies and natural disasters." Split from neutral to agreed.
- *Safety, peace and equality.* "Young people are treated fairly in Kāpiti." Mostly disagreed, with some neutral responses.
- *Land use.* "We need to protect important green spaces and the environment as Kāpiti grows." Mostly agreed, with some neutral responses.
- *Land use.* "New development should make it easier to access parks, shops and services." Mostly agreed, with some neutral responses.
- *Land use.* "Decisions about land use today will affect future generations." Split from agreed to neutral.
- *Waters.* "The rivers, streams and beaches in Kāpiti are healthy." Mostly disagreed, with some neutral responses.

- *Waters.* “We need to do more to prepare for floods and extreme weather.” Split from agreed to neutral.

What participants want to see in 10 years. Participants described a future Kāpiti with more affordable and suitable housing, better public transport, stronger flood protection, more youth activities and free places to spend time, improved mental health and social support, and more walkable connections between activities and services. They also wanted Kāpiti to remain a place where the environment is protected and young people can see a future for themselves.

Ōtaki community sector leaders

Session held 5 August 2026. 8 participants.

Overview and summary. This report summarises feedback from eight Ōtaki community sector leaders who discussed local priorities, what success would look like, and how Council planning could better reflect Ōtaki's needs.

The strongest message was that Council planning should be grounded in people, place, Te Tiriti o Waitangi, equity and environmental wellbeing. Participants wanted Ōtaki's distinct circumstances recognised, rather than a one-size-fits-all district approach. Health access, housing affordability, environmental stewardship and genuine iwi and hapū partnership were the strongest priorities, alongside a call for planning principles that reflect community wellbeing and intergenerational responsibility.

Key themes.

- **Local health access and wellbeing were the strongest priorities.** Health was the highest priority. Participants described local access as difficult and insufficient, with limited GP services, boundary issues and unclear information about available support. There was strong interest in an Ōtaki-based health and wellbeing hub covering primary care, prevention, mental health, vulnerable people and support across all life stages.
- **Housing affordability, accessibility and suitability are urgent concerns.** Housing was a significant concern, including rough sleeping, older people under housing stress, young people priced out of rentals, and the need for warm, dry, affordable and accessible homes. Participants also questioned whether current housing design meets local needs and highlighted opportunities for papakāinga, partnerships with housing providers, and stronger links between housing and health.
- **The environment should be treated as foundational, not secondary.** The environment was seen as an overarching priority, with strong support for protecting the coastline, awa and moana, reducing waste, restoring dunes and considering environmental impacts early in planning decisions. Participants linked this to kaitiakitanga, intergenerational responsibility and the role of iwi and hapū as kaitiaki.
- **Te Tiriti o Waitangi and iwi and hapū partnership must be visible and enduring.** Te Tiriti was seen as a foundation for Council planning, not a separate consideration. Participants wanted strong, visible and enduring iwi and hapū partnerships, including through Te Whakaminenga o Kāpiti. They also wanted clearer reporting back, more bilingual information, and assurance that future structural or legislative change would not weaken existing relationships.
- **Equity, local voice and delivery matter.** Participants wanted Council to better recognise different levels of need, access and vulnerability across Kāpiti. Equity was preferred over equality because different communities require different levels of support. They also wanted stronger feedback loops so communities can see how their input influences decisions and delivery.

Priority areas identified through dot voting. The level of support recorded against each priority area is given first, then the key points raised.

- **Health, 6 dots.** Localised services, health advocacy through an Ōtaki lens, support for vulnerable people and mental health, stronger public health controls, and better food security.
- **Housing, 4 dots.** Affordable and accessible homes for all ages, housing stress in Ōtaki, papakāinga, safe warm homes, and stronger connections between housing and health.

- **Environment, 3 dots.** Environment as an overarching priority, waste reduction, recycling, protection of beaches, and stronger environmental consideration in decisions.
- **Te Tiriti and partnership, 3 dots.** Te Tiriti as a foundation for partnership, stronger reporting on Treaty partnerships, and enduring iwi and hapū relationships regardless of legislative change.
- **Working with others, 2 dots.** Shared delivery models, planning for growth impacts, and collaboration with central government agencies and community providers.
- **Land use, 2 dots.** Taiao and environmental impacts considered before land use and infrastructure decisions.
- **Connected communities, 2 dots.** More responsive public transport, regular rail connections, and a multi-purpose Ōtaki community hub.
- **Waters, 1 dot.** Continued investment in water infrastructure, drinking water quality, water for people first, and protection of awa and moana.
- **Safety, peace and equity, 1 dot.** Equity over equality, safer local connections, and addressing infrastructure gaps such as footpaths and street lighting.

What success would look like. Success was described as Ōtaki having the services, infrastructure and partnerships needed to thrive: a local health and wellbeing hub, no rough sleeping, affordable and accessible housing, and better public transport connections.

Participants also pointed to strong iwi and hapū partnerships, visible commitment to Te Tiriti, environmental protection and decision-making based on local evidence and priorities. As one guiding idea put it:

He aha te mea nui o te ao? He tangata, he tangata, he tangata.

Planning implications. Council's planning framework should give more explicit weight to values as well as principles. Affordability and financial sustainability matter, but participants wanted a broader base that includes people, equity, Te Tiriti, the environment and place-based evidence.

- Make Te Tiriti and iwi and hapū partnership more visible in decision-making.
- Use equity when considering access, need and investment.
- Reflect Ōtaki's needs through local data and community insight.
- Consider environmental impacts early in growth and infrastructure decisions.
- Show communities how their input influences decisions.

Takeaways.

- **Ōtaki needs place-based planning.** Participants want Council decisions to reflect the specific needs, strengths and challenges of Ōtaki, rather than relying on district-wide assumptions.
- **People and wellbeing should sit at the centre.** Health, housing, safety, access and connectedness were discussed as interrelated issues that affect everyday quality of life.
- **Te Tiriti and iwi and hapū partnership should be foundational.** Participants want Treaty partnership to be visible, enduring and clearly reflected in planning, delivery and reporting.
- **The environment is a core priority.** Protection of awa, moana, beaches and land was seen as essential to community wellbeing and future decision-making.
- **Equity matters.** Participants preferred equity over equality, noting that different communities require different levels of support, investment and access.

- **Engagement needs to lead to visible action.** Participants want clearer feedback loops so communities can see how their input influences Council decisions and delivery.