

**Waimāero**  
**Fendalton-Waimairi-Harewood Community Board**  
**Submissions Committee**  
**OPEN MINUTES**

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**Date:** Monday 8 April 2024  
**Time:** 5.40pm  
**Venue:** Boardroom, Fendalton Service Centre,  
Corner Jeffreys and Clyde Roads, Fendalton

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**Present**

Chairperson	Jason Middlemiss
Deputy Chairperson	Linda Chen (via audio/visual link)
Members	Nicola McCormick Shirish Paranjape Bridget Williams

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**Principal Advisor**

Maryanne Lomax  
Manager Community Governance,  
Fendalton-Waimairi-Harewood  
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Community Board Advisor  
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- Part A**     **Matters Requiring a Council Decision**  
**Part B**     **Reports for Information**  
**Part C**     **Decisions Under Delegation**
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**1. Apologies Ngā Whakapāha**

**Committee Resolved FBSC/2024/00001**

That the apology received from David Cartwright be accepted.

Bridget Williams/Shirish Paranjape

**Carried**

**2. Declarations of Interest Ngā Whakapuaki Aronga**

Bridget Williams declared an interest in the submission point regarding event funding and took no part in discussing the Board's response to that question.

Shirish Paranjape left the meeting at 6 pm during consideration of item 3.

### 3. Community Board Submission on Council's Long Term Plan 2024-34 Committee Resolved FBSC/2024/00002

That the Waimāero Fendalton-Waimairi-Harewood Community Board Submissions Committee:

1. Adopts the following submission on the Council’s Long Term Plan 2024-34, and authorises Jason Middlemiss to approve any changes prior to the submission being lodged.

Question	Feedback
<p>Our overarching proposal is to focus on a deliverable capital programme that helps drive our city forward, with particular investment in roads and transport infrastructure and in protecting and upgrading our water networks. We’re borrowing for new projects that have long-term value and ensuring that the debt repayments are spread fairly across the generations of ratepayers who will benefit from them. We’re maintaining enough financial flexibility to be able to handle unplanned events, and we’re finding permanent efficiencies in our day-to-day spending.</p> <p><b>Overall, have we got the balance right?</b></p>	<p>The Board thanks the Council for the opportunity to submit on the Draft Long Term Plan 2024-34.</p> <p>While acknowledging the effort invested in the draft LTP, the Board regrets that this process hasn't delved deeper into assessing levels of service to identify potential cost-saving measures. In the current climate of escalating living costs, where financial strain is palpable for many, it's imperative that we leave no stone unturned. Unfortunately, the thorough review necessary to discern where savings could be realized seems to have been overlooked. This oversight is concerning as it leaves us without a clear understanding of where efficiencies could be made. Consequently, it's premature to affirm that the balance has been struck correctly. Given the absence of essential information, it's difficult to justify the current rate. Moving forward, it's essential that we conduct the required analysis to ensure our financial decisions are informed and equitable for all stakeholders.</p>
<p>Given that both the Council and residents are facing significant financial challenges, should we be maintaining our existing levels of service and level of investment in our core infrastructure and facilities, which will mean <b>a proposed average rates increase of 13.24% across all ratepayers and an average residential rate increase of 12.4%?</b></p>	<p><b>No</b></p> <p>Comments:</p> <p>In light of the significant financial challenges confronting both the Council and residents, it's evident that difficult decisions must be made. The proposed average rates increase of 13.24% across all ratepayers and 12.4% for residential rates is substantial and cannot be taken lightly, particularly in the midst of a living costs crisis. The absence of a comprehensive review of levels of service is a missed opportunity, as such an assessment could have potentially unearthed avenues for cost savings and efficiencies. The current draft LTP places an undue burden on ratepayers already struggling with financial pressures. It's imperative that we reassess our approach to</p>

	<p>strike a balance between maintaining essential services and infrastructure while alleviating the financial strain on residents. Exploring alternative solutions and avenues for cost reduction should be prioritized to ensure a more equitable and sustainable outcome for all stakeholders involved.</p> <p>The LTP consultation material discusses the Council’s desire to win back the trust of its residents. When it does not appear that the Council has made a serious attempt to review its costs, at a time when our residents are having to do the same, it does not inspire trust in the Council. This fosters a level of community disengagement.</p>
<p>We’re proposing some changes to how we rate, including changes to the city vacant differential, rating visitor accommodation in a residential unit as a business, and changes to our rates postponement and remissions for charities policies.</p> <p><b>Do you have any comments on our proposed changes to how we rate?</b></p>	<p>The Board is concerned about the Council’s plan to fund its capital programme through debt. Our concern is that in the long term this will lead to a perpetual accumulation of debt which will be unsustainable for future generations.</p> <p>The Board generally supports the Council’s approach to the city vacant differential and rating short term visitor accommodation in residential units as a business.</p>
<p>For information about Fees &amp; Charges see <b>page 43 of the Consultation Document</b>.</p> <p><b>Do you have any comments on our proposed changes to fees and charges (e.g. our proposal to introduce parking charges at key parks)?</b></p>	<p>The Board acknowledges that the car parking spaces in Hagley Park are not utilised to their full potential, because many people park here to visit destinations in the wider central city and not for visiting the Gardens. The Board also understands that this proposal is intended to increase revenue to offset the significant rates increase. However, charging people to park at Hagley Park is a very difficult proposition for our residents. The Board finds it distasteful that we are put in the position of deciding whether or not to support this proposal, when the Council was not willing to put other cost-saving options on the table.</p>
<p>Operational spending funds the day to day services that the Council provides. Our operational spending is funded mainly through rates and</p>	<p><b>No</b></p> <p><b>Comments:</b></p>

<p>therefore has a direct impact on the level of rates we charge. Everything we build, own and provide requires people to get the work done. For example, ongoing costs to operate a library, or to service our parks and waterways includes staff salaries, and maintenance and running costs such as electricity and insurance.</p> <p>For more information about Operational Spending see the <b><u>Consultation Document from page 23.</u></b></p> <p><b>Are we prioritising the right things?</b></p>	<p>While recognising the essential nature of operational spending in sustaining the day-to-day services provided by the Council, it's imperative to assess whether we are prioritising these expenditures effectively. The absence of a comprehensive levels of service review poses a significant challenge in determining the appropriateness of our operational spending. Without a thorough examination of the demands and standards of service required, we run the risk of allocating resources inefficiently and potentially overlooking opportunities for cost savings. This lack of clarity raises concerns that we may be allocating funds to areas that do not align with community needs or expectations, inadvertently squandering resources that could be redirected to more impactful initiatives. Therefore, it's crucial that we prioritise conducting a thorough levels of service review to ensure that our operational spending is optimised, enabling us to make informed decisions and allocate resources where they can deliver the greatest value for our community.</p> <p>As an example of where Council spending is not aligned with community expectations, the Board wishes to reiterate concerns we have expressed in past submissions, that there are assets owned by Council with no associated maintenance budget. These are often features of subdivisions, and a specific example are the sculptures throughout the Northwood area. The result is that residents are left with broken or deteriorating assets next to their homes, and the past 11 years have taught us all what this can do to peoples' wellbeing. The lack of a routine maintenance budget is an example of why our residents regularly report concerns about the Council not addressing the basics. Without a full account of the Council's assets and the necessary resources to maintain them, it is difficult to make the necessary budget allowances.</p> <p>The Board invites the Council to re-consider reviewing the opening hours of some Council facilities, for example libraries. The Board acknowledges that the previous proposal to reduce some opening hours was declined due to concerns about equitable access to our facilities. The Board agrees that this is a genuine concern, but submits that we need to find the right balance by targeting extended operating hours at facilities where there is clear demand for the service. Anecdotally we have heard that there is very low demand for extended operating hours at some of our libraries.</p>
<p>In this LTP we have focused on developing a deliverable capital programme.</p>	<p><b>Don't Know</b></p> <p><b>Comments:</b></p>

<p>We're proposing to spend \$6.5 billion over the next 10 years across a range of activities, including some key areas that you've told us are important through our residents' surveys, and our early engagement on the LTP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$2.7 billion on three waters (drinking water, wastewater and stormwater) (31.5%)</li> <li>• \$1.6 billion on transport (24.9%)</li> <li>• \$870 million on parks, heritage &amp; the coastal environment (13.4%)</li> <li>• \$286 million on Te Kaha (4.41%)</li> <li>• \$140 million on libraries (2.16%)</li> <li>• \$137 million on solid waste and resource recovery (2.11%).</li> </ul> <p>For more information about the Capital Programme see the <b><u>Consultation Document from page 23.</u></b></p> <p><b>Are we prioritising the right things?</b></p>	<p>While the Board supports the focus on developing a deliverable capital programme, to ensure the success and sustainability of these exciting projects, it's crucial to adopt a staged phase approach. By breaking down the implementation into manageable stages, we can mitigate the risk of cost blowouts and ensure that the Council stays on track with budgetary goals. This phased approach allows for better monitoring, risk management, and adjustment as needed, thereby enhancing the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the capital programme.</p> <p>The Board wishes to raise concerns about the Council's use of large programme-level budgets with minimal transparency of the projects contained within them. The Board understands that there are financial advantages to this approach, including the ability to use cost-savings from some projects as contingency against other cost overruns. However there should still be more transparency about the specific projects that these programmes plan to address.</p>
<p><b>Is there anything that you would like to tell us about specific aspects of our proposed capital spend or capital programme?</b></p>	<p><b>Transport:</b></p> <p>The Board wishes to express its concern that the Sawyers Arms/Greers/Northcote intersection improvement project has been removed from the LTP. This intersection is dysfunctional in its current state and improvements have been promised to the community for a number of years. It is the Board's view that this is an essential project and removing it from the LTP now will only result in it being reintroduced at an inflated cost sometime in the future. The Board also makes the point that this project is one component of a wider programme of work to improve the transport network in this area of the city, and was intended to support Sawyers Arms Road to accommodate more traffic when Harewood Road drops down</p>

	<p>to one lane. Removing this project risks undermining the expected benefits of the other investments Council is making on the network.</p> <p>The Board highlights that 14 transport projects within our Wards have been removed from the LTP, of those this is the one we are most concerned about retaining.</p> <p><b>Parks, heritage or the coastal environment:</b></p> <p><b>Libraries:</b></p> <p><b>Solid waste and resource recovery:</b></p> <p><b>Other aspects of our capital spend or capital programme?</b>  The Board submits that it is difficult to make a meaningful submission on the level of investment we make in facilities such as pools and libraries without further information. For example, a comparison of how much Christchurch spends per capita compared to other New Zealand cities.</p>
<p>Which of the following should be our focus for the 2024-34 Long Term Plan?</p>	<p><b>Select your preferred:</b></p> <p><b>Explore other ways to bring down our proposed rates increases</b></p> <p>The Board’s preference is for the Council to explore other ways to bring down our proposed rates increases. The Board reiterates its concern at reports that a number of opportunities for operational cost savings were not explored by the Council. While it is possible that many of these options would not have been acceptable to the community, we cannot know for sure without asking them. The Board is concerned that this has undermined our community’s ability to provide feedback on ways they would like the Council to save money. This reinforces our previous comment about lack of trust in the Council.</p>
<p><b>Are there any areas where you feel we should be reviewing the services we provide to reduce our costs throughout the Draft LTP 2024-2034?</b></p> <p>Christchurch competes with other cities in New Zealand and around the world to attract major international sports,</p>	<p><b>Leave the bid funding for major events at current levels in the draft LTP</b></p> <p><b>Comments:</b></p> <p>The Board understands that the background to this proposal was a concern that the events bid funding would be inadequate to support events in Te Kaha during its first year of operation. The Board is sympathetic to this concern, as having the facility underutilised would be a poor return on the</p>

<p>business and music events through event bid funding. While the city has an established portfolio of events and attracts a range of other events, there are opportunities to grow the existing events and attract new events to the city. This would require additional funding.</p> <p>For more information about the major event bid funding see <b><u>page 49 of the Consultation Document</u></b>.</p> <p><b>Should we leave bid funding for major and business events at current levels in the draft LTP, as proposed? Or should we increase the bid funding?</b></p>	<p>Council’s investment. Equally, the Board acknowledges that this is a difficult economic environment in which to consider spending additional money on events.</p> <p>Before making any decision about increasing the bid funding, the Board encourages the Council to seek advice on any cost-neutral options for making the city more attractive to event organisers, and seek cost efficiencies from existing events to free up more event bid budget for Te Kaha. The Board also submits that any decision to invest in event bid funding must be made in the context of robust evidence of the return on investment the city should expect to receive from the event.</p>
<p>Our district faces diverse climate hazards, from rising sea levels to more frequent extreme weather events. At a high level, we’re spending \$318 million over 10 years on projects that have a direct impact on climate change mitigation, and \$1 billion over 10 years on projects that directly help us adapt and build our resilience. We could bring forward to 2024/25 the additional \$1.8 million annually that is currently proposed to start in 2027/28. This would accelerate the Coastal Adaptation Planning Programme and boost overall community preparedness and resilience.</p> <p>For more information about adapting to climate change</p>	<p><b>Don’t Know</b></p>



<p>see <a href="#">pages 51 and 52 of the Consultation Document</a>.</p> <p><b>Do you think we should bring forward to 2024/25 the additional \$1.8 million spend currently proposed to commence in 2027/28, to accelerate our grasp of the climate risks?</b> The early investment would bring forward a rates increase of 0.29% to 2024/25 from 2027/28.</p>	
<p><b>Should we create a climate adaptation fund to set aside funds now to manage future necessary changes to Council assets, including roads, water systems, and buildings, in alignment with our adaptation plans?</b> Implementing this fund would result in a rates increase of 0.25% per annum over the LTP period. How this fund would be established, managed and governed, and the criteria of how the fund will be used, all require further work. As part of that process there will be further opportunity for residents to have their say.</p>	<p><b>Don't know</b></p>
<p><b>Do you have any comments on our additional proposals to invest more in adapting to climate change?</b></p>	<p>The Board submits that it is confusing to be asked whether to include this funding, when climate change investment is named as the Council's top priority and the Council has declared a climate change emergency. Our expectation is that the top priority issues would have been baked into the plan, with lower priority projects not included.</p> <p>Establishing a dedicated fund to manage future necessary changes to Council assets aligns with our adaptation plans and provides a sensible approach to allocate resources for unforeseen climate-related challenges. Having a fund set aside for this purpose offers flexibility and ensures that we are</p>

	<p>prepared to address emerging issues promptly. However, it is essential to proceed cautiously, considering the uncertainties surrounding the climate crisis and the potential solutions or challenges we may face in the future. The lack of clarity on how the fund would be established, managed, governed, and the criteria for its utilisation raises concerns about transparency and accountability. Residents deserve transparency and certainty regarding how their rates are being utilised and how the fund will safeguard Council assets. The Board’s view is that these issues need to be addressed before a decision can be made on the establishment of the fund. This is likely to require a separate consultation and deliberation process.</p> <p>In relation to bringing forward funding for the Coastal Adaptation Planning Programme, the Board does not dispute that this is vital work. However, we need to balance this against the immediate needs of our residents. To bring this funding forward in the current economic environment, the Board’s view is the Council would need to be confident that the outcome would be a greater return on investment than if we waited until 2027/28.</p>
<p>Our LTP is guided by the Council's Strategic Framework 2024-34 - it's the cornerstone for our long term vision, steering how we dedicate our energy and resources. Our community outcomes and priorities have shaped all our proposals in this Draft LTP ensuring that every initiative, project, and effort resonates with our commitment to build a thriving, inclusive, and sustainable city for all.</p> <p>For more information about our community outcomes and priorities see <a href="#"><u>page 15 of the Consultation Document</u></a>.</p> <p><b>Do you have any thoughts on our vision, community outcomes and strategic priorities?</b></p> <p><b>What do you think of our proposal to start formal</b></p>	<p>The Board submits that we believe there will be more opportunities for property sales to free up Capital and reduce operating costs.</p>

<b>processes to dispose of five Council-owned properties?</b>	
<b>What do you think of our proposal to dispose of other Council-owned properties which includes former Residential Red Zone Port Hills properties?</b>	
<b>What do you think of our proposal to gift Yaldhurst Memorial Hall to the Yaldhurst Rural Residents' Association?</b>	The Board cautiously supports the proposal. However, the site is likely to be a liability and not an asset, and it would set a dangerous precedent if the Council were to contribute further costs towards the restoration and operations of the Hall. The Board's view is this risk needs to be mitigated in the agreement with the Yaldhurst Rural Residents' Association.
<b>Is there anything else that you would like to tell us about the Draft Long Term Plan 2024-2034?</b>	

Jason Middlemiss/Nicola McCormick

**Carried**

**Meeting concluded at 7pm.**

**CONFIRMED THIS 10<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF APRIL 2024**

**JASON MIDDLEMISS**  
**CHAIRPERSON**