

Council Workshop AGENDA

Notice of Workshop Te Pānui o te Hui:

A Council Workshop will be held on:

Date: Tuesday 20 January 2026
Time: 10.00 am
Venue: Camellia Chambers, Level 2, Civic Offices,
53 Hereford Street, Christchurch

Membership Ngā Mema

Chairperson	Mayor Phil Mauger
Deputy Chairperson	Deputy Mayor Victoria Henstock
Members	Councillor Kelly Barber
	Councillor David Cartwright
	Councillor Melanie Coker
	Councillor Pauline Cotter
	Councillor Celeste Donovan
	Councillor Tyrone Fields
	Councillor Tyla Harrison-Hunt
	Councillor Nathaniel Herz Jardine
	Councillor Yani Johanson
	Councillor Aaron Keown
	Councillor Sam MacDonald
	Councillor Jake McLellan
	Councillor Andrei Moore
	Councillor Mark Peters
	Councillor Tim Scandrett

16 January 2026

Principal Advisor

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Note: This forum has no decision-making powers and is purely for information sharing.

To find upcoming meetings, watch a recording after the meeting date, or view copies of meeting Agendas and Notes, go to:

<https://www.ccc.govt.nz/the-council/meetings-agendas-and-minutes/>



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1. Apologies Ngā Whakapāha

Apologies will be recorded at the workshop.

2. Draft Submission on the Rates Cap Consultation

Reference Te Tohutoro: 25/2636932


Presenter(s) Te Kaipāhō: Tom Lee, Principal Policy Advisor, Strategic Policy

1. Detail Te Whakamahuki

Purpose and Origin of the Workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff are seeking feedback on the draft submission to the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) regarding the 'Consultation on a rates target model for New Zealand'.
Timing	This workshop is expected to last for 30 minutes.
Outcome Sought	Following an overview of the content of the draft submission, the Mayor and Councillors will be given an opportunity to provide feedback on the submission. This is to enable staff to make any updates to the submission and return to the Council on 4 February for final approval.
ELT Consideration	N/A
Next Steps	<p>Submissions to the DIA are due on 4 February 2026.</p> <p>Following the workshop, the submission will be updated and brought back to the Council on 4 February for approval and submitted on the same day.</p> <p>The Government has signalled that the rates cap legislation will be introduced into the House before the general election period and enacted in December 2026 to take effect from 1 January 2027.</p>
Key points / Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On 3 December 2025, Christchurch City Council was approached by the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) to provide feedback on 'Consultation on rates target model for New Zealand'. At this stage, consultation on the rates cap model is targeted and not offered publicly. It is consultation on the policy proposal (the proposed model for implementing a rates cap) and is not consultation on the draft legislation. The consultation requests feedback on five questions regarding the rates cap modelling and its impacts. Staff intend to extend the submission to include additional points Council requests be added. Staff also note the material provided by the DIA for the consultation is limited. The Government has proposed a target range for rates increases of 2-4% per year and that councils must adhere to this from 1 July 2029, with a two year transition period commencing 1 July 2027. The Government's objectives are to keep rates affordable for households while ensuring councils can maintain essential services and invest in infrastructure. The submission does not offer a view supporting or otherwise a rates cap policy. However, the submission highlights risks and concerns regarding the government's proposal. Specifically, the submission questions the modelling used to determine the 2-4% target range, outlines potential impacts of a rates cap on councils' assets, its infrastructure and its ability to deliver its serviced and activities, and conveys

	Elected Members' concerns of the cumulative impact of central government policies and reforms. The submission also proposes that the government is more strategic in its approach and how it can provide more assistance to councils.
Useful Links	N/A

Attachments Ngā Tāpirihanga

No.	Title	Reference	Page
A 	Draft Rates Cap Submission	25/2647098	7

Signatories Ngā Kaiwaitohu

Author	Thomas Lee - Principal Policy Advisor
Approved By	David Griffiths - Head of Strategic Policy & Resilience Bede Carran - General Manager Finance, Risk & Performance / Chief Financial Officer Mary Richardson - Chief Executive

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Wednesday, 4 February 2026

Department of Internal Affairs
Via email: ratescapping@dia.govt.nz

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Christchurch City Council submission on the rates target model for New Zealand

Introduction

1. Christchurch City Council (the Council) thanks the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) for the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed rates target model for New Zealand.
2. The Council recognises the financial pressure on households. We make decisions to increase rates only when essential to sustain services, renew infrastructure, and meet growth and legislative obligations. We reject any assertion that Christchurch City Council lacks fiscal discipline.
3. A statutory rates cap is a significant and enduring intervention. International experience shows such caps are difficult to unwind and can have unintended, long-term consequences for asset condition, debt, and intergenerational equity.
4. The Council is concerned at the limited analysis accompanying this proposal, particularly given the simultaneous and substantial reforms affecting local government. The combined impacts of a rates cap, resource management changes, 'Simplifying Local Government' reforms, and the Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill must be transparently evaluated and communicated.
5. In this submission we respond to the five consultation questions and recommend essential design changes. Our bottom line is clear: a rates cap must not slow Christchurch's momentum or degrade our community services.

Executive Summary

6. The proposed rates cap, while well-intentioned, is unrealistic and unworkable in its current form and requires significant refinement to ensure it is economically sound, financially sustainable and responsive to local needs. The Council cannot support the target range and methodology as currently drafted.
7. Rates cap policies tend to be enduring so it is important that they are well-considered, use the best evidence and indicators available, and reduce risks to local government. The Council is not confident that the policy meets these standards.
8. To make the policy workable, sustainable and reflective of local government conditions, the Council makes the following recommendations:

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- a. That central government refrains from implementing policies that have a material impact on council finances and resources without providing financial support for those policies. Robust Regulatory Impact Statements should quantify the financial impact of central government policies on local government.
- b. That central government offers additional financial support to councils to manage the transitional and cumulative costs of the suite of local government reforms underway and to manage the risk of future underinvestment in infrastructure. For example, Australia has a federal Financial Assistance Grant for local government.
- c. A rates cap policy should be accompanied by other central government support measures, such as paying rates on government properties, and removing or refunding (in full or in part) GST on rates.
- d. The government should sequence the timing of the rates cap policy to better align with the Long-Term Plan process and the associated Audit NZ requirements to avoid uncertainty.
- e. A rates cap based on an inflation measure must accurately reflect local government cost pressures. The Consumer Price Index is not a robust method for measuring council inflation. The Producer Price Index or Capital Goods Price Index should be included within the methodology.
- f. Gross Domestic Product should not be used to measure demand for council services. Using local indicators would provide a more accurate and evidence-based way to assess growth demand for council services.
- g. A rates cap must be based on the rates increase for existing ratepayers, not the nominal increase, to avoid disincentivising growth and undermining operational and capital requirements.
- h. All 'three waters' rates and charges should be excluded from the rates cap to align with Local Water Done Well ringfencing and to avoid fragmentation of water funding settings.
- i. Allow councils to continue to fully fund renewals/depreciation through rates. This could be achieved through a carve-out from the rates cap policy. This would also recognise that a rates cap will reduce a council's debt headroom.
- j. A rates cap policy must be flexible enough to reflect local conditions (such as levels of growth, hazard exposure, age of assets, and debt levels), with transparent criteria for special variations.
- k. A rates cap policy must be able to work alongside other financial tools available to councils and be flexible enough to reflect the different ways councils pay for growth (for example, cost recovery for building growth infrastructure).

Submission

9. The Council acknowledges the policy intent of a rates cap system, which is to ease rates increases for households. A rates cap would have this effect and would increase assurance to ratepayers by providing a transparent and accountable limit for annual rates increases. However, the proposed methodology introduces material risks to service levels, asset condition, and prudent financial management that must be addressed before any legislation proceeds.

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Christchurch City Council is financially responsible

10. The Council has recently had to increase rates, largely in response to market pressures, such as inflation (particularly in the construction sector) and interest rates. Decisions to increase Christchurch's rates are driven by unavoidable cost pressures and statutory obligations, not discretionary or "frivolous" spending. For the year 2025/26, the Council plans to spend approximately 93% of its rates revenue on what the Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill considers is a "core service", and this year, like the year before, we have been reviewing our Annual Plan budget line-by-line over many weeks to identify savings opportunities.
11. We also note that when compared to the other large metropolitans (using DIA's grouping), our Council has only the fifth highest per capita rates (\$1,815) out of the ten councils and the third lowest per capita percentage increase since 2018. This has been achieved while Christchurch's population has grown by 9.2% and the Council has been undertaking a major post-earthquake repair and rebuild programme. This demonstrates that we are a fiscally responsible council that is prudently and successfully managing the challenges of growth across our district.
12. Before responding to the five consultation questions, the Council has identified several broader points regarding the rates cap policy and the impact of central government.

Impact of central government policy on local government

13. The Council is concerned about the impact of central government policies on local government, especially those that impact rates. Councils are increasingly being expected to deliver infrastructure and shoulder the responsibility for implementing the policy decisions of central government without effective funding or transitional support, directly shifting the cost to ratepayers – a point noted by the Productivity Commission in its local government funding and financing report¹. Some recent examples include:
 - a. the government required our Council to chlorinate our water supply which has come at a cost despite the Council's opposition to this policy, and there are significant costs for our Council associated with permanent chlorination.
 - b. the Taumata Arowai levy and the levy to recover Commerce Commission costs of regulating water. These two levies were centrally determined and transfer costs directly onto local ratepayers without councils having an ability to influence or reduce this cost. This undermines local accountability and fiscal management and sets a concerning precedent. These levies are estimated to impact rates by approximately 0.27%.
 - c. changes to the requirements KiwiRail demands of Road Controlling Authorities at crossing points has led to significant cost increases to upgrade several level crossings for which the Council has had to bear the cost.
 - d. speed limit changes that required councils to undertake costly and time-consuming processes to comply with government policy.
 - e. implementing national policy statements on urban development and medium residential standards which required significant Council resource, as it will for many other councils.

¹ <https://www.treasury.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2024-05/pc-inq-lgff-final-report-local-government-funding-and-financing.pdf>

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14. The Council is also required to meet the cost of the many regulatory functions we undertake, which are functions that councils do not have discretion over, and we are required to respond to significant government policy changes, such as Plan Change 14 and other local government reforms.
15. The Council is required to meet these costs, which has an impact on finances and resources. Unfunded mandates combined with a rates cap are untenable. Moreover, when the government imposes unfunded mandates, it effectively absolves itself from exercising the fiscal restraint it is seeking to impose on councils. We ask that the government considers the impact of any future policies that are unfunded and the impact that this will have on the Council. Implementing a rates cap policy while requiring the Council to spend money on policies it has not planned for undermines our ability to be fiscally responsible. Regulatory Impact Statements should quantify the impact of policies on local government and rates, and central government should not introduce new unfunded costs to council while simultaneously constraining council revenue.
16. The Council is also concerned about the impact of a rates cap policy being implemented at the same time the Government is requiring us to reconsider the form of local government through the 'Simplifying Local Government' reforms, adapt to the reforms outlined in the Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill, and manage the significant changes to the resource management system. The transitional, compliance and cumulative costs of these reforms are substantial and must be funded or offset for a rates cap to be viable.
17. Updating our plans and processes to meet the new resource management legislation will be a cost on the Council over several years. Restructuring local government in Christchurch and Canterbury will additionally incur significant costs, as the Auckland experience of local government reform demonstrated. The government has signalled councils should absorb these costs, which is inconsistent with the objective of easing ratepayer burden.
18. The Council asks that the Government is more strategic in its approach and works with local government to find appropriate solutions. If central government does not contribute to the transition costs being imposed on local government, communities and residents will pay the price.
19. The Government should consider how it can use its position to assist our Council transition during these reforms and ease the load on ratepayers, which is the objective of the rates cap policy and the 'System Improvements' Bill. For example, the government could: provide funding to councils to assist with paying for the reforms; pay rates on government properties; remove GST from rates; or return the full or partial GST paid on rates back to councils. Without supporting measures, meeting the target is unlikely without service reduction or higher debt.
20. We note that in Australia, where rates caps are in place in several states and which this government has looked to as an example for rates caps, there is a scheme where the federal government annually provides local government with a Financial Assistance Grant. For 2025/26, these grants are total \$3.4 billion and include a large 'general purpose' component that can be used to fund the local priorities determined by councils (and also specifically include council amalgamations). The objective of this fund is to improve the capacity, efficiency and effectiveness of local government. A rates cap system in New Zealand should be accompanied by similar funding support.

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Risk of continued underinvestment and increased future burden for ratepayers

21. The overseas experience has demonstrated that there is a risk that a rates cap policy can cause asset decay and underinvestment in infrastructure because councils do not have enough funding to maintain assets and meet the pressures related to growth. Councils may risk having insufficient funding available to provide and maintain core services to levels expected by the community. Councils must have a range of effective funding and financing tools. A rates cap that does not reflect actual cost inflation will lead to deferred renewals, growing backlogs, and lower maintenance. These are costs that compound and fall on future ratepayers.
22. A common criticism of both central and local government is that there has been underinvestment in critical assets and core services over recent decades. The Treasury and the Office of the Auditor General both report that years of underinvestment in infrastructure have created a situation where councils are being required to now increase rates so they can invest in capital programmes to try to close the investment deficit. The Treasury says that promises to keep rates low and keep rates increases to a minimum are responsible for much of this underinvestment. It is difficult to understand how a rates cap policy will close the investment deficit and a poorly designed rates cap system risks repeating the very dynamics that created the deficit.
23. There appears to be an implicit assumption in the proposed policy that only current infrastructure expenditure is required to be funded. Clearly this is incorrect and the infrastructure deficit requires substantial expenditure, as highlighted by both the Treasury and the Office of the Auditor General. The rates cap policy does not address how councils will fund the infrastructure expenditure required to reduce the infrastructure deficit, which is a significant driver of the current rates increases.
24. Additionally, the starting point for a rates cap is that it applies to the existing base. For councils that have previously exercised fiscal restraint, a disproportionate and unintended consequence is that these councils are stuck in a lower rates cycle, as past decisions to keep rates low means rates cap increases are calculated from a lower starting point. This effectively limits the ability to fund infrastructure investment compared to councils that had higher existing rates.
25. Councils are also required to identify climate risks, undertake adaptation planning and finance the adaptation measures required to ensure that communities can continue to function. The impacts of climate change are expected to worsen over time, making the adaptation of assets increasingly expensive in the future. More council funding over the coming years and decades will be required to manage Christchurch's climate risks, such as upgrading assets and building new infrastructure. With a rate cap in place, it will become increasingly difficult for the council to manage this risk. Restricting revenue growth now will make future transitions more costly and abrupt.
26. In New South Wales and the United Kingdom where similar rates cap policies are present, there are increasing concerns about their impact on council finances and levels of service delivery. The Australian experience is that rates caps very rarely keep up with the cost of infrastructure or demand on councils, so over time projects get deferred or delayed, renewal backlog grows, and levels of maintenance decrease. DIA's research shows that 127 of 128 councils in New South Wales have applied for a special variation to increase rates above the cap since 2010. A 2023 New South Wales Parliamentary inquiry into their rates peg system found that the rates peg failed to match the cost increases borne by local government and failed to recognise diverse cost pressures. A redesign of the New South Wales system was recommended. New Zealand should learn from this experience and design flexibility in the system from the outset.

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27. Deferrals and underinvestment can lead to intergenerational issues, with the compounding and increasing cost of repairs and maintenance being transferred to future ratepayers, rather than being funded today – a risk that The Treasury has also raised with the government this year.
28. If councils need to increase spending on infrastructure and service delivery, they will likely have to turn to increasing their debt. In their 2024 *'Insights into Local Government'* report, the Office of the Auditor General notes that across New Zealand councils have been borrowing at record levels. Councils' debt rose to \$29.9 billion in 2023/24 which is a 15% increase from the previous year (\$25.9 billion). A rates cap is likely to increase the reliance on debt which raises long-term costs for ratepayers by having to repay higher levels of debt over a long period of time. Relying on increased debt to fund infrastructure investment in a rates-constrained environment is an unsustainable measure and will only add more pressure on credit ratings, further driving up debt servicing costs.

Scope and timing of the proposed rates cap policy

29. If a rates cap is introduced, it should apply to the rate increase for existing ratepayers, rather than a nominal rates increase. This approach properly accounts for population growth and the associated operational and capital requirements. A rates cap on the nominal rates increase risks disincentivising growth because increases in population could mean the council is required to increase operational and capital expenditure to match the growth, but would not have a means of funding it (without further decreasing services for existing ratepayers).
30. The Council understands that although the proposed policy excludes water charges and water-related targeted rates, that stormwater and flood activities will still be captured within the rates cap policy. The Council proposes that water-related rates and charges for all 'three waters' are excluded. The Council, like all others, has fundamental Local Water Done Well reforms underway. Consistent and clear rules regarding the funding and financing of all water-related activities is valuable and practical, as all three water activities will be ringfenced in the new system.
31. The Government intends to align the implementation of the rates cap policy with the next Long-Term Plan (LTP) process. The advice we have received is that the rates cap legislation is planned to be enacted by December 2026, with the transition phase effective from 1 January 2027, and fully in effect by July 2029. This timing intersects with LTP development and audit in a way that creates uncertainty. The Council will be well-advanced in LTP discussions by the time the new legislation is enacted in December 2026. The proposed timing creates uncertainty about what the final legislation will consist of during the time the Council is discussing the LTP. It is also not clear how Audit NZ will audit our process, as we will be required to meet the audit requirements of the legislation that is in force at the time, but the new legislation may change the focus. We seek further consideration and clarification of the timing of the rates cap policy with the LTP process. Audit NZ protocols must be clear and stable throughout LTP preparation and legislation should not change requirements mid-process.

Response to consultation questions

Question 1 – Do you agree with the proposed economic indicators to be included in a formula for setting a rates target?

Question 2 – If not, what economic indicators do you suggest be included and why? Does setting the minimum of the target in line with inflation ensure that councils can maintain service standards? If not, why not?

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32. The Council is not confident in the formula provided for setting a rates target and has several concerns with the methodology, outlined below. The Council also would have preferred to see more of the analysis and the options considered by the government presented in the consultation material to enable better understanding and analysis.

Using inflation to inform the minimum rate

33. The minimum rate increase of 2% is based on the midpoint of the Reserve Bank's inflation target. According to the government, this target should ensure that councils can maintain service standards. The 2% minimum will not maintain service standards in Christchurch. This target is not supported by evidence and is based on flawed analysis.
34. The inflation measure used is based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI), which is used to measure the average household consumer prices. This is not a robust method for measuring the impact of inflation on councils. Council spending is not the same as an average New Zealand household and most of the indicators that sit within the CPI measure are not relevant to councils and are not causing increases to rates. Councils do not purchase a "basket of goods", as the CPI expects. Vegetables, fruit, meat, drinks, cigarettes, alcohol etc are not the focus of council spending. Councils undertake activities like construction, laying pipes, repairing roads, building community facilities, maintaining assets, professional services, and servicing debt – categories poorly captured by CPI. The difference between CPI and council spending is acknowledged in analysis and research by economic advisors, such as BERL and Infometrics.
35. If the government wants to use inflation as a measure for rates, there are other ways that the government can do this that are more appropriate and a better reflection of the realities of council spending. The Council recommends adopting a local government inflation index. For example, the local government inflation index developed by BERL incorporates the Producer Price Index (PPI) in its calculations, with transparent publication and methodology. PPI measures inflation based on the price businesses pay for inputs and the price businesses receive for their outputs. Similarly, the Capital Goods Price Index (CGPI) measures price changes for capital assets purchased by producers. The CGPI measures the price changes for things such as land, buildings, roads, bridges, pipes, plant and machinery. This is far more relevant than CPI to network infrastructure and building programmes. Both the PPI and the CGPI are indexes produced regularly by the government and should be included within the government's methodology if inflation is to be used as a measure to cap rates.
36. Research undertaken by Infometrics² shows the difference between using the CGPI compared to CPI, which is that the cost of civil construction was much higher than CPI. Across three years (2021-2023), CPI increased by 19%, but the cost of building bridges increased by 38%, the cost of building sewers increased by 30%, and the cost of roads and water supply increased by 27%. A rates cap tied to CPI will therefore lag actual costs and drive deferrals.
37. Inflation is also variable and susceptible to external economic influences. There can be extended periods of high inflation and it is unlikely that inflation will remain around 2%. The proposed policy says the rates target will be reviewed every three years, but this could be too long during periods of higher inflation. For example, in recent years, general inflation has been as high as 4-7%. Based on this, 2% seems low and inflexible.

² "Analysing increases in local government costs for Local Government New Zealand", published February 2024.

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Using GDP as a proxy for council growth

38. The maximum end of the rates target range (4%) is determined by a formula that uses GDP as a way to measure growth demand for council services. The maximum is intended to allow councils to manage growth over the long term. The Council does not consider GDP to be a valid way to measure demand for council services.
39. An assumption that demand for council services grows at the same rate as national GDP is poorly founded. We have been unable to identify any evidence to suggest this is accurate. Every council across New Zealand is different – some are rural councils, some are urban; some are growing fast (like Christchurch) and others are not growing at all; some are recovering from disasters and others are not. Using an average of the national nominal GDP growth is unlikely to reflect any of these differences between councils. This is a very blunt measure that captures none of the localism of local government. It will not reflect the growth circumstances of many councils and therefore will not reflect the demand for council services. Local indicators better reflect the demand for council services, such as population growth, dwelling consents, development contribution volumes, network load metrics, hazard exposure and insurance costs.
40. While the government considers nominal GDP growth to be 5.4% on average, GDP growth in recent years is much lower than this. In Christchurch, demand for our services has increased significantly over recent years with high levels of growth, so it is hard to be confident in the relationship between GDP and council growth given our real-life experience. If the government wants to set a rates cap to account for growth, it must be much more flexible, evidence-based, and reflect local characteristics.

Question 3 – Does the maximum of the target account for council spending on core services?

41. The Council cannot guarantee that the 4% maximum will be sufficient to enable spending on core services. The Council will be required to make significant savings to meet this target. Preliminary modelling indicates it is unlikely to be sufficient without significant changes to services. Decisions on what savings will be made have not yet been taken by the Council, so we cannot comment on whether core services will be impacted.
42. Our initial analysis shows that if a 4% rates cap was implemented on the Council's rates revenue (excluding all 'three waters' rates) in 2029/30, the Council would need to reduce rates revenue by \$28.8 million (which is equivalent to 4.5% of non-water rates charges). Due to the cumulative effect of the rates cap, the Council would need to reduce rates revenue by \$62.2 million by 2033/34 (which is equivalent to 8% of non-water rates charges). These reductions would materially affect our ability to maintain current service levels and renew assets on prudent cycles.
43. Implementing a 4% rates cap would impact the Council's strategic position on using rates to fund infrastructure renewals. Recently, the Council has been increasing over time the proportion of renewals that are funded by rates, rather than debt. The aim is to have renewals fully funded by rates by 2032 to ensure that the Council is in a stronger financial position and can reduce debt repayments and interest costs that fall on ratepayers. This strategy generates long-term savings for ratepayers in exchange for higher short-term rates. To implement this policy, our rating for renewals is approximately 10%. There is a risk that a 4% rates cap could undermine this strategy and cost ratepayers more money over the long term. Alternatively, the Council would likely need to scale back infrastructure renewals.

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44. We consider using rates to fund infrastructure renewals to be a fiscally responsible approach, which would no longer be possible under a rates cap. We think councils should be able to continue to fully fund renewals/depreciation through rates, which, for example, could be achieved through a carve-out from the rates cap policy. A carve out to enable infrastructure expenditure that address councils' infrastructure deficit would also be useful for councils.
45. We also note that the proposed policy does not address how growth infrastructure is paid for by councils. While development contributions (or the proposed development levies) are intended for 'growth to pay for growth', they are essentially a cost recovery mechanism for councils. To build infrastructure, councils must first bear the cost, which is managed through either collecting rates or increasing debt. The cost is then recovered by councils through development contributions. Under the new resource management reforms, councils will be unable to block development because of a lack of infrastructure and is required to deliver infrastructure in a timely manner. This will increase the pressure on councils to meet the upfront costs of building infrastructure, which will impact council rates and/or council debt. A rates cap policy must acknowledge this and be able to work alongside other government reforms, so that councils have greater flexibility in the financial tools available to pay for growth.

Question 4 – What council spending will not be able to take place under this target range? Why?

46. It is too early to say what council spending will not take place under this target range, as decisions by the Council about what savings will be made to meet this target have not been taken. However, restricting rates revenue will constrain renewals and service levels unless offset by support measures.
47. A rates cap in this target range could have a negative impact on our Council's ability to access and repay debt, which could risk our Council's ability to fund some activities. Revenue impacts a councils' ability to access and service debt. Rates are generally considered a stable and key source of revenue for councils, with an ability to be adjusted if required. A rates cap will limit both the revenue available to councils and the ability for councils to adjust rates, which reduces the Council's available debt headroom and could impact our credit rating.
48. The rates cap reduces the Council's debt headroom because a council's ability to access debt is linked to a council's total revenue. A rates cap reduces council revenue and therefore reduces the available debt headroom. We estimate that a 4% rates cap commencing in 2029/30 would reduce the Council's debt headroom by \$174.1 million by 2033/34. This materially constrains our capacity to fund growth and resilience projects and negatively impacts the Council's key funding source for managing any major events in the city, which could be problematic.
49. The Council's credit rating could also be impacted, which would result in a negative impact on rates. The risk of a credit downgrade has been raised by S&P Global Ratings and in advice by The Treasury. If the Council receives a credit downgrade, this will have an impact when debt is renewed or new debt is acquired. We estimate, under current conditions, that a credit rating downgrade would lead to an increase in interest rates on new borrowing by approximately 0.05%, which is approximately an increase of \$1.3 million per year. This amount would have to be accounted for within a rates cap.
50. In 2025/26, approximately \$59.6 million of the rates we collect relate to activities that could be considered non-core services under the 'System Improvements' Bill. Under most rates capping scenarios, this does not provide sufficient savings to address a rates cap target. Also, \$27.3 million of the rates spent on these

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non-core services relates to interest and debt repayments on non-core services, which cannot be easily eliminated. Eliminating all non-core spend would not make the cap achievable.

51. The Council will also have to consider what the rates cap will mean for the fees collected for the services we provide, such as pools, recreation facilities, and libraries. Increasing fees is a possible way for Council to raise revenue under a rates cap, however the Council is mindful of the risk that fee increases may reduce usage and patronage, and may create an accessibility barrier to some in our community.

Question 5 – Are changes to the target needed to account for variations between regions and councils? What changes do you propose and why?

52. The Council thinks that a rates cap target should account for variations between regions and councils, for example through a more flexible target range or variation criteria. A one-size-fits-all rates cap policy will not reflect local realities. Councils across the country have different characteristics that are unique and impact the rates that they collect. Key differences between councils include:
- a. Rates of growth – Some councils, like Christchurch and our neighbouring districts Selwyn and Waimakariri, are experiencing high levels of growth. This requires councils to spend more on updating and building infrastructure and increasing service levels. Other councils are not growing, or growing very slowly. These councils will be less driven to spend on new infrastructure in comparison to high growth councils.
 - b. Asset lifecycles – Councils have different infrastructure and asset needs. Some councils require significant investment to renew older core assets and infrastructure as their lifecycle is coming to end. For other councils, this issue is less pressing and only minor maintenance will be needed.
 - c. Risk profiles – New Zealand is highly susceptible to natural hazards, climate risks and natural disasters, for example coastal and river erosion, flooding, large storm events and earthquakes. In Christchurch, the earthquakes have had a long impact on the city and its circumstances like this that can be considered. In regard to climate risks, the level of exposure differs across environments, with some areas such as Christchurch being highly exposed, particularly to flood risks. Mitigating these risks and/or managing the aftermath of events is primarily the responsibility of local government, with central government support not assured. Our hazards modelling indicates that the scale and frequency of impacts on our infrastructure cannot be absorbed into business-as-usual funding streams, and the Council will need to find funding to manage these risks to enable communities to adapt. Central government could assist with these costs but if not, a rates cap policy could make infrastructure upgrades cost prohibitive. Councils also have different financial risk profiles. For example, some councils have very high levels of debt, some have low or no ratepayer growth, and some councils have high and increasing insurance costs.
53. A broad, one-size-fits-all rates cap policy is a blunt instrument and does not take into account these local differences. It is likely that the broad approach being proposed will not reflect the realities that many councils face and will not be suitable.

DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION

Conclusion

54. The Council is currently experiencing growth levels higher than many other councils in New Zealand and we have made significant progress revitalising our city following the Canterbury earthquakes. We have been managing this growth and the rebuild in a financially responsible way and recent rates increases have largely reflected the market pressures on council, such as high inflation, interest rates and insurance premiums.
55. The proposed rates cap policy will keep rates increases within a 2-4% target limit and provide some certainty for ratepayers. However, the methodology behind the target range does not accurately reflect the cost drivers for recent rates increases and the realities that councils face. The target limit is likely to force further deferrals, increase debt and degrade services over time.
56. The Council cannot support the target range and methodology as currently drafted. Rates caps policies tend to be enduring and difficult for governments to remove once implemented, so it is important that a rates cap policy is well-considered, using the best evidence and indicators possible, so that risks can be minimised. The Council suggests the government revisits the methodology used to create a target range for rates caps.
57. The Council also asks the government to consider the impacts of its policies on local government. Councils are increasingly being expected to deliver infrastructure and shoulder the responsibility for implementing the policy decisions of central government without effective assistance from the government. On top of this, there are major local government reforms underway, the full impact of which is unclear, including with respect to council finances and resourcing.
58. The Council asks that the government is more strategic in its approach and works with local government to find appropriate solutions. This could include providing funding assistance to councils or for the government to reconsider its own impact on rates, such as paying rates on government properties or removing or sharing the GST collected on rates.
59. A rates cap policy does carry risk and our Council is not confident from the analysis available to date that the real and full impact of the proposed rates cap on councils is well understood. Christchurch City Council is focused on delivering high quality services for its residents and to ensure that we can maintain doing this, we would happily work with the government to find a system that works and reduces the risks of the current proposal. We will continue to prioritise the key services and investment that our community expects while doing what we can to reduce the burden on ratepayers.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this submission.

For any clarification on points within this submission please contact Tom Lee, Principal Policy Advisor at Thomas.Lee@ccc.govt.nz

Ngā mihi,

Phil Mauger
Mayor of Christchurch

3. Draft Submission on Emergency Management Bill

Reference Te Tohutoro: 26/8924


Presenter(s) Te Kaipāhō: Brenden Winder, Manager Civil Defence & Emergency Management

1. Detail Te Whakamahuki

Purpose and Origin of the Workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Staff are seeking feedback on the draft submission to Parliament on the Emergency Management Bill (No 2).
Timing	This workshop is expected to last for 30 minutes.
Outcome Sought	Following an overview of the Bill and the content of the draft submission, Elected Members will be given an opportunity to provide feedback on the submission. This is to enable staff to make any updates to the submission and return to the Finance and Policy Committee on 28 January for final approval.
ELT Consideration	n/a
Next Steps	<p>Submissions to Parliament's Governance and Administration Committee are due on 3 February 2026.</p> <p>Following the workshop, the submission will be updated and brought back to the Finance and Performance Committee on 28 January for approval, ahead of submitting on 3 February.</p>
Key points / Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none">On 9 December 2025, the Emergency Management Bill (No 2) was introduced to Parliament and had its first reading.The Bill was referred to the Governance and Administration Committee for submissions. The closing date for public submissions is 3 February 2026.The Bill replaces the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002 and gives effect to the Government's response to the Government Inquiry into the Response to the North Island Severe Weather Events.The submission supports the review of the current legislation, particularly to modernise and make the language clearer, and we acknowledge the further work done since the earlier iteration of the Emergency Management Bill by the previous Government.However, it also notes that there are areas where additional clarification or information is needed.
Useful Links	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Government Response to the Government Inquiry into the Response to the North Island Severe Weather Events: Strengthening Disaster Resilience and Emergency Management Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Emergency Management Bill (No 2): Emergency Management Bill (No 2) 236-1 (2025), Government Bill – New Zealand Legislation
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Attachments Ngā Tāpirihanga

No.	Title	Reference	Page
A 	Emergency Management Bill Submission Slides Workshop 20 January 2026	26/86861	21

Signatories Ngā Kaiwaitohu

Authors	Matthew Gowans - Policy Analyst Brenden Winder - Manager Civil Defence & Emergency Management
Approved By	John Filsell - Head of Community Support and Partnerships

Draft Council submission on Emergency Management Bill (No 2)

Council Workshop 20 January 2026

Purpose:

To inform Council on the Emergency Management Bill (No 2) and discuss our draft submission

We are using this session to:

- Seek feedback from elected members
- Inform updates for final submission

What is the intent of the Bill?

- The Bill's objectives are to modernise emergency management legislation, while strengthening settings that affect local delivery and interoperability.
- It would replace the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002
- Gives effect to the Government's response to the Government Inquiry into the Response to the North Island Severe Weather Events.

Our Submission

- Council supports modernised emergency management legislation.
- Priority improvements include:
 - explicit reduction and readiness focus;
 - clearer planning products and accountabilities;
 - transparent assurance/monitoring; and
 - implementable national guidance.

Key Submission points

- Implementation should avoid unfunded mandates created through secondary instruments.
- Disadvantaged and disproportionately affected communities must be explicitly supported and resourced.
- Central government should help fund transition and ongoing requirements to match the Bill's increased expectations.
- Use simple, clear role names and responsibilities to minimise confusion during response.

Next Steps

- Brenden available to discuss and advise
- Comments required by 22 January
- Updated submission will be considered at F&P on 28 January
- Submission lodged by 3 February

Thank you

Questions/Comments

4. Building Consenting Unit Update: July 2025 - October 2025


Reference Te Tohutoro: 25/1238580

Presenter(s) Te Kaipāhō: Steffan Thomas, Head of Building Consenting Unit

1. Detail Te Whakamahuki

Purpose of this Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The purpose of this report is to update the Council on the Building Consenting Unit activity during the period July 2025 – October 2025
Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The presentation is expected to last 30 minutes
Key Points / Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Levels of Service SummarySignificant Building ConsentsEarthquake Prone BuildingsGovernment Reform and Changes

Attachments Ngā Tāpirihanga

No.	Title	Reference	Page
A 	Building Consenting Unit Council Presentation - July 2025 to October 2025	25/2377725	30

Signatories Ngā Kaiwaitohu

Author	Steffan Thomas - Head of Building Consenting
Approved By	John Higgins - General Manager Strategy, Planning & Regulatory Services

Building Consenting Unit Update

July 2025 – October 2025

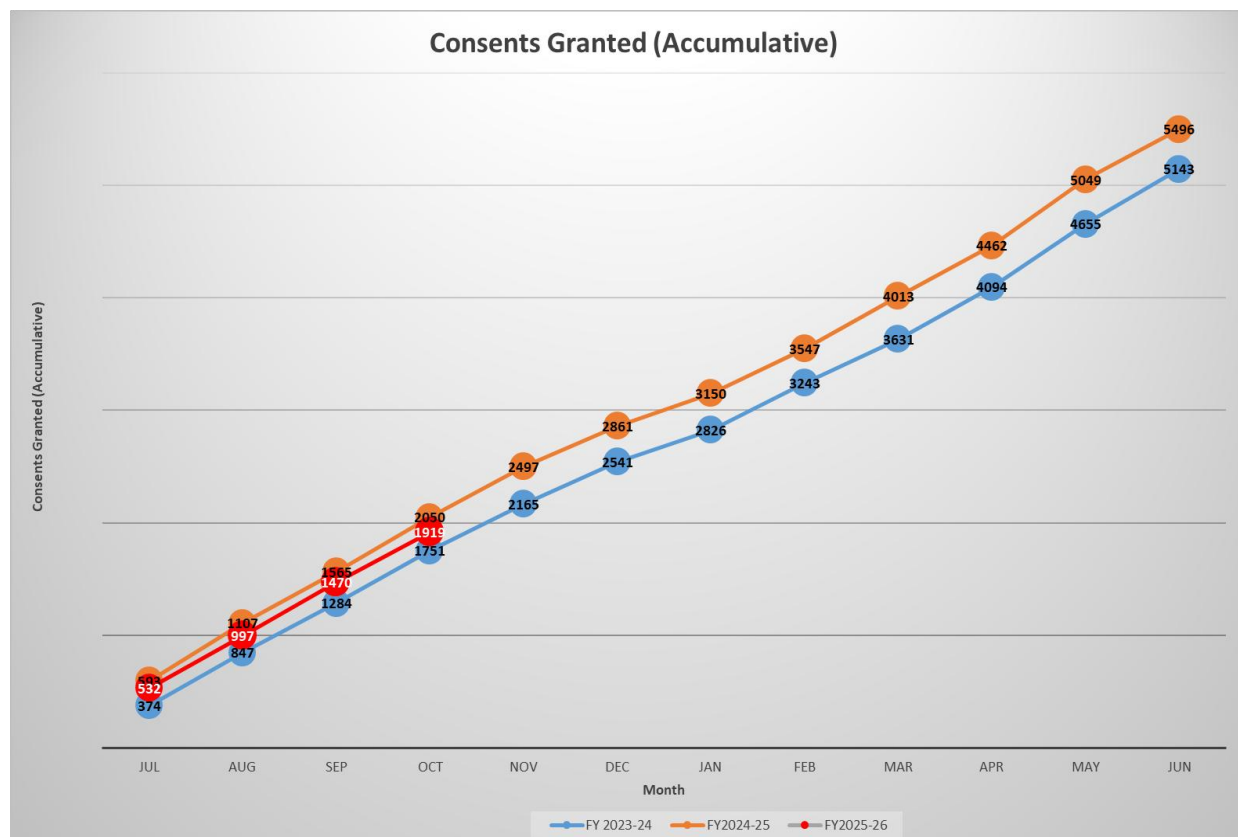
Contents

- Consents Granted
 - Level of Service Summary
 - Customer Satisfaction
 - Earthquake Prone Buildings
 - Significant Consents
 - Government Reform and Changes
-

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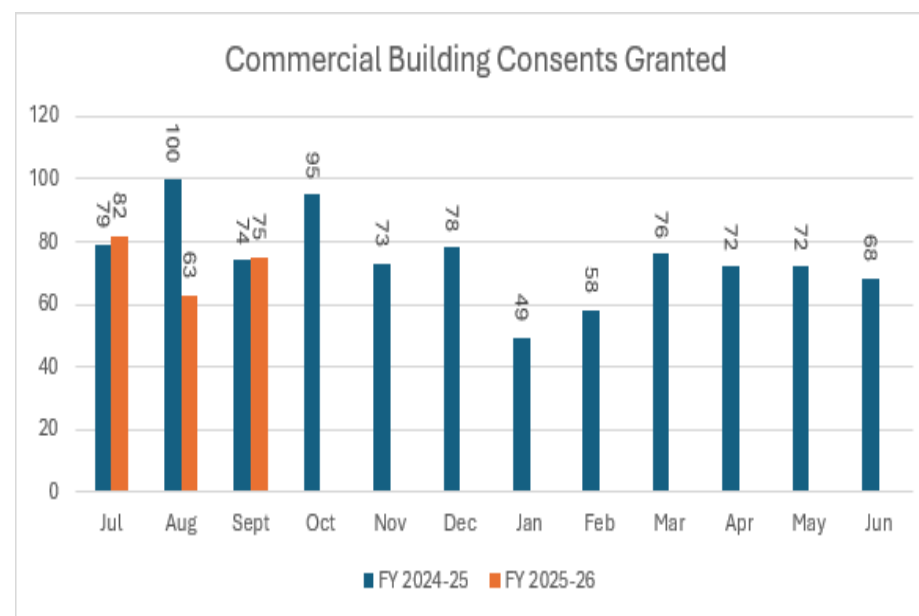
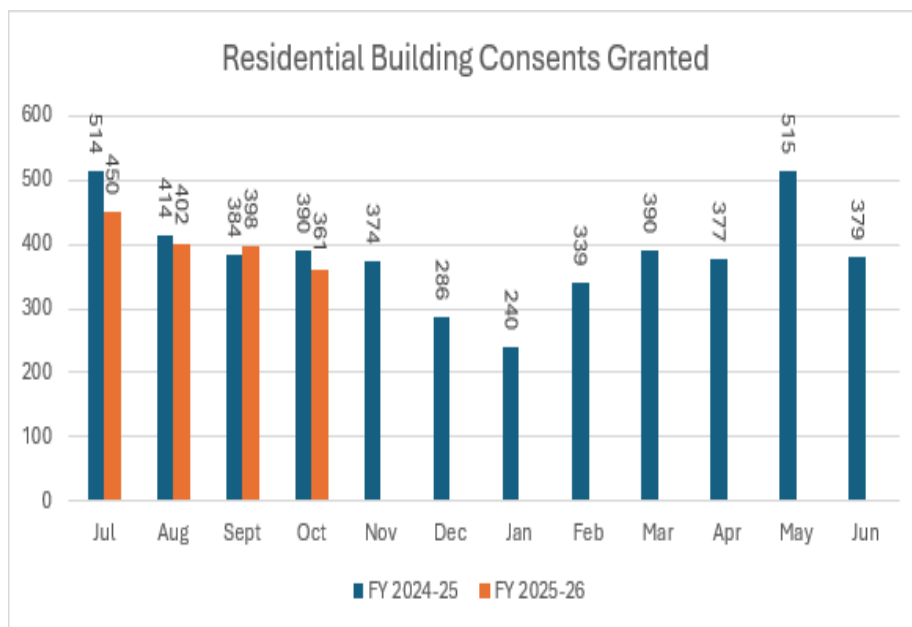
Consents Granted

YTD Consents Granted



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Residential vs Commercial Consents Granted



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Levels of Service Summary

LoS results for the period July 2025 – October 2025

Measure:		July	August	Sept	Oct	YTD	Target
Grant Building Consents	LOS	97	97	97	96	97%	95% within 19 working days
Grant Building Consents (STF)	STF	99	100	99	98	99%	20 working days (statutory deadline)
Ensure % satisfaction with building consents process	LOS	82	79	81	81	81%	Target is 79%
Grant Code Compliance Certificates	LOS	86	94	90	82	88%	95% within 19 working days
Grant Code Compliance Certificates (STF)	STF	90	95	92	87	91%	20 working days (statutory deadline)
Carry out building inspections in a timely manner	LOS	96	93	93	93	94%	80% within 3 working days
Customer satisfaction with building consenting pre-application service	LOS	100	100	100	100	100%	Target is 90%
Audit Building Warrant of Fitness to ensure public safety and confidence	LOS	70	90	98	116	374	Audit 20% of stock annually (1143 audits)
Pools are inspected in accordance with legislative requirements	LOS	84	124	168	121	497	Inspect 1074 pool and spas annually
Process PIM applications within statutory timeframes	LOS	100	100	100	100	100%	PIM only 90% within 20 working days

LOS = LTP Level of Service
STF = Statutory Time Frame

Will meet target
Requires remedial action

Processing Timeframes

Building Consents Granted (processing timeframes)

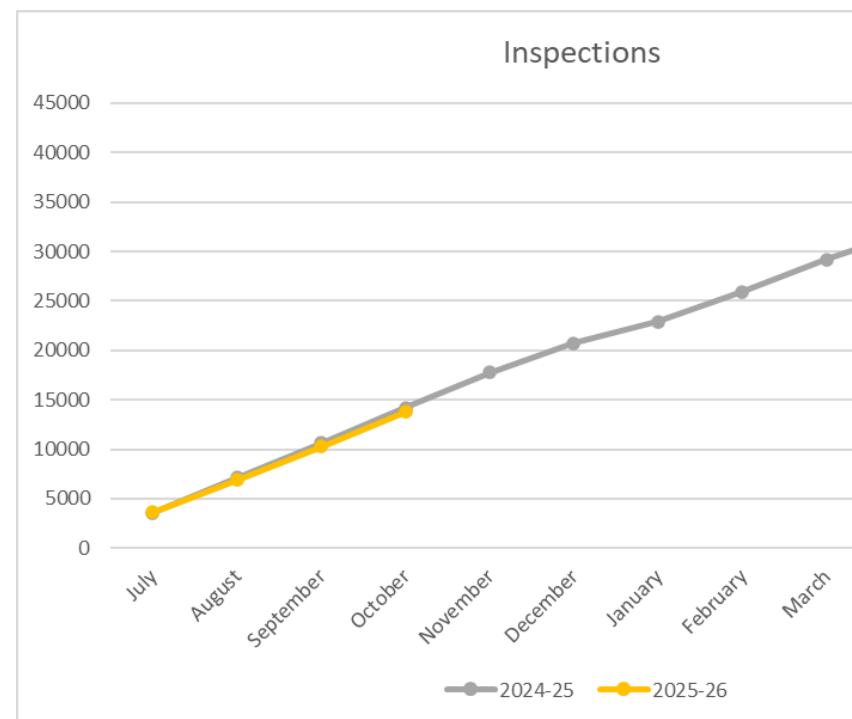
- Year to date, 99% of consents have been processed within statutory timeframes. Against the LTP target of 95% of consents granted within 19 days, the year-to-date result is 97%.
- For information, the full year results for the previous three financial years were:

Financial year:	Percentage:
2024 - 2025:	96.1%
2023 - 2024:	73.0%
2022 - 2023:	64.5%
2021 - 2022	42.4%

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Inspections

- 94% of inspections have been completed within 3 working days of the customer request.
- Demand for inspection services remains high.
- 13775 inspections were completed for the year to date (average 3443 per month).
- Inspection Fail Rate: 27%.



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Code Compliance

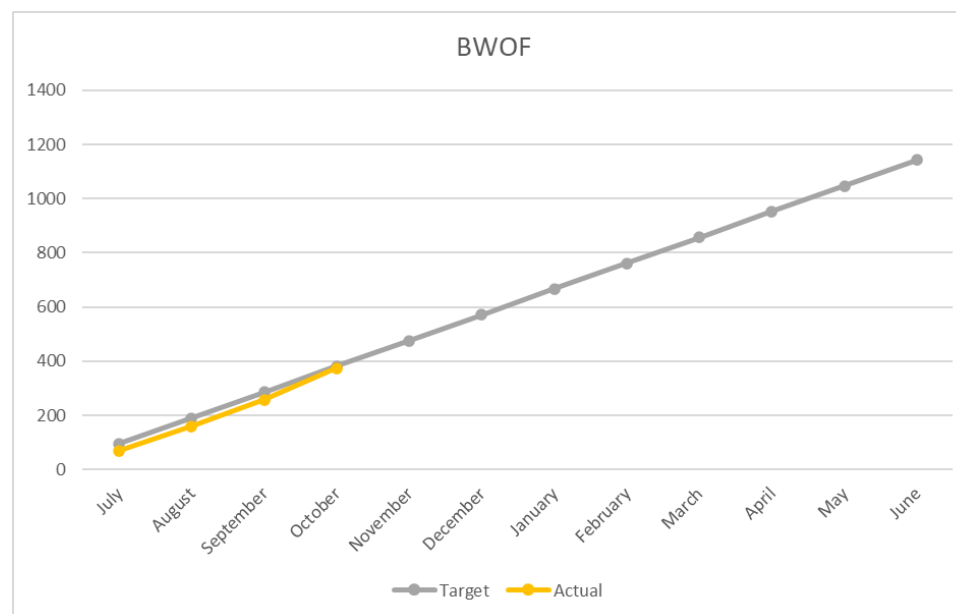
Year to date

- 91.0% of code compliance certificates issued within statutory timeframes (20 working days).
- 89% of code compliance certificates granted against the LTP target of 95% of consents granted within 19 days
- For information, the full year results for the previous three financial years were:

Financial Year:	STF (20 days) percentage	LTP LOS (19 days) Percentage
2024 – 2025:	93.4%	91.5%
2023 – 2024:	89.8%	83.3%
2022 – 2023:	88.1%	81.9%

Building Warrant of Fitness

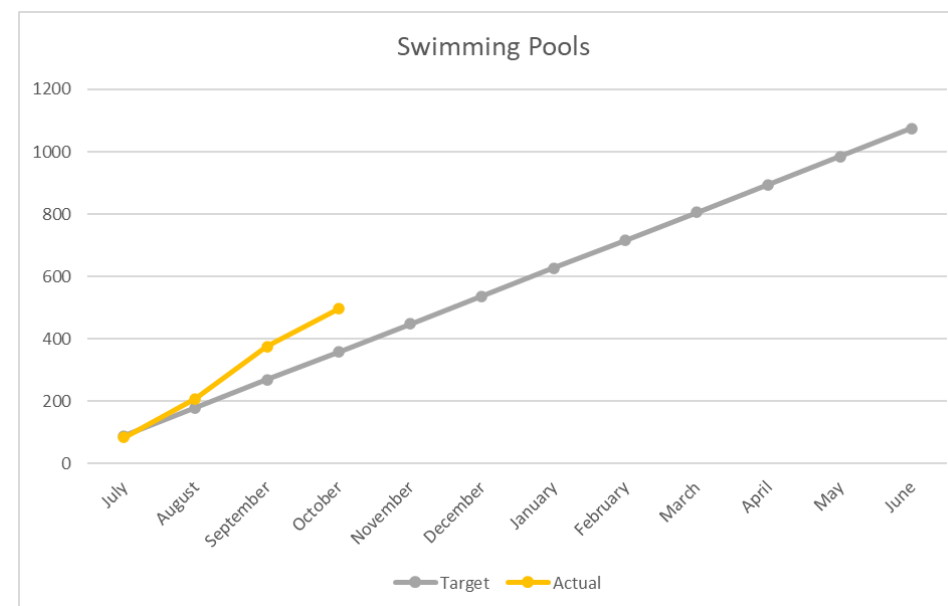
- Year to date 374 building warrants of fitness have been audited.
- The annual target is 20% of the building stock or 1143 buildings.



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Swimming Pool Inspections

- Year to date 497 pools have been inspected.
- There are 1074 due for inspection this financial year.



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Customer Satisfaction

Our customer satisfaction score for the YTD period 1 July – 31st October 2025 is 81%

Last financial year, our overall score for the FYE was 81 %

See what some of our customers say about us....

What our customers say about us...

- *“Whole process was fast, clear & efficient straightforward Couldn't be happier. Everyone I've dealt with has been absolutely fantastic. All good”*
- *“It was really good to work with you on the consenting of this project, you were extremely helpful when we sought clarity and it made the whole process far easier. We have worked in many different regions across the country and I certainly found CCC to be one of the easier considering the nature of the project. We look forward to being able to carry out more work in the region”*
- *“I have written a formal thank you for the awesome work Kevin and his team supported us with. The empathy and understanding of our situation was so refreshing and I loved that I felt I had a 'human' looking after our application”*
- *“Just wanted to send you a quick note of appreciation for your support through this process”*
- *“I would like to thank Chan Bee Geok and make note that I have dealt with consent officers across the country and have never come across someone so willing, kind and courteous, as well as efficient in her work. Well done Bee. Well done keep it up CCC”*
- *“I have found the process with the consent and CCC Teams seamless. Very approachable and helpful. Website is great and Duty Planners are knowledgeable and helpful. Really good overall. Keep up the good work!”*
- *“Helpful and supportive – the personal touch was a breath of fresh air – the process was straightforward – overall full marks CCC”*
- *“About a month ago, I was facing serious difficulties with my builder, during this difficult period, I reached out to the Christchurch City Council, and Os patiently listened to my story, calmly helped me analyze what documentation I needed, and guided me step by step through the process. Her clear explanations and encouragement allowed me to begin completing the required documents one by one. Every interaction with Os has provided me not only with practical guidance but also with emotional support. Her professionalism, patience, and empathy made a profound difference for me and restored my confidence in the City Council's support”*

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Earthquake Prone Buildings

Earthquake Prone Buildings

- During the six-month period, the Council received confirmation that 50 buildings were removed from the register with 11 buildings being demolished and 37 buildings strengthened. 2 buildings were reassessed in this period.
- There are 448 Christchurch based buildings remaining on the National Earthquake Prone Building Register.



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Earthquake Prone Buildings

Proposed Changes to the Earthquake Prone Building System

Currently there is a proposal to amend the Earthquake Prone Building Legislation 2017, due by the middle of the year 2027.

A summary of the proposed changes are:




- Unreinforced masonry buildings (Façade strengthening only)
- Post 1976, three or more stories of heavy construction (Concrete frame buildings only)
- The term % NBS will no longer be used when identifying Earthquake Prone Buildings



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Significant Consents



Significant Building Consents (July - October 2025)

Name of Building	Address ^A	Value of Building Work (\$)	Building Consent Details	
Health NZ, Waitaha Hillmorton Adult Acute Facility (AAF) BCN/2024/7722	1 Lincoln Road	\$90,000,000	Construction of hospital (Waitaha Hillmorton) - 80 Bed Adult Acute Mental Health Facility (Building 24), Central Energy Centre (B19), New emergency water tank and bike enclosure and relocation of the Training Rooms (B13) and Gazebo	
Canterbury Museum & Robert McDougall Gallery and Museum BCN/2024/6147	11 Rolleston Ave	\$80,400,000	Alterations to museum (Canterbury Museum & Robert McDougall Gallery and Museum) - Stage 4 of 5 - Creation of connected basement (below ground works) and base isolation works, above ground structure and façade, services, ceilings, wall and floor finishes - Subject to a waiver C3.6 & C3.7 For more updates of the project, https://www.odt.co.nz/star-news/star-christchurch/historic-christchurch-building-being-lifted-stilts	
Woolworths NZ Warehouse BCN/2025/781	146 Shands Road, Hornby	\$30,000,000	Alterations to warehouse - extension of warehouse - new staff facility and offices - subject to section 77 certificate	

Creating a PowerPoint presentation

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Significant Building Consents

Name of Building	Address	Value of Building Work (\$)	Building Consent Details	
Warehouse for Mainfreight BCN/2025/642	23 Quadrant Drive, Hornby	\$25,000,000	Construction of Warehouse and associated office	
Project Ark BCN/2025/6207 and 2025/2785 (two building consents)	170 Oxford Terrace	\$6,000,000	<p>Alterations to [Oxford Tce] Hotel - Stage 4 of 7 - Structural works for L14 and roof. Façade and architectural enclosure details for the L14 & rooftop area. Fitout of Rooms 0310 & 0311.</p> <p>Alterations to [Oxford Tce] Hotel - Stage 5 of 7 - Ground floor envelope, fitout of back of house including commercial kitchen, lifts and additional services, hotel room fitout (Levels 2-13 including east extension), including amendments to L2-13 wall framing.</p> <p>For more background information on the building, https://www.mainlandcapital.co.nz/news/joint-venture-to-restore-iconic-christchurch-hotel/</p>	

Government Reform and Government-led Change

Government-led Change

- Small standalone dwellings
- Sheds and other detached buildings
- Performance reporting (quarterly and 3 day inspections)
- New compliance pathways for overseas building products and standards
- Opt-in Self certification of builders, plumbers and drainlayers carrying out work on simple residential dwellings
- Standardisation of building consenting data information

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5. Climate Resilience Strategy Implementation Report December 2025



Reference Te Tohutoro: 25/1845487

Presenter(s) Te Kaipāhō: Jessica Allison-Batt

1. Detail Te Whakamahuki

Purpose and Origin	On 15 November 2023 the Council requested (CNL/2023/00147) six-monthly reporting on the implementation of the Climate Resilience Strategy (the Strategy). This session presents the December 2025 report on Council progress.
Timing	This information session is expected to last for 30 minutes.
Outcome Sought	The Council receives an update on implementation of the Climate Resilience Strategy and opportunities for action.
ELT Consideration	Engagement is undertaken with relevant Heads of Service on Unit specific updates prior to finalisation of this regular reporting.
Next Steps	The next six-monthly report is scheduled for June 2026.
Key points / Background	<p>This report includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An overview of the Strategy, with key policy and programme updates.• The status of actions across Council in the attachment.
Useful Links	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Otautahi-Christchurch-Climate-Resilience-Strategy.pdf

Attachments Ngā Tāpirihanga

No.	Title	Reference	Page
A 	Climate Resilience Strategy Implementation Update December 2025	25/1952230	54
B 	Attachment to report 25/1952230 (Title: Status of climate actions December 2025)	25/2348225	61

Signatories Ngā Kaiwaitohu

Author	Jessica Allison-Batt - Principal Advisor Climate Resilience
Approved By	Lisa Early - Team Leader Climate Resilience

Memos

Memo

Date: 16 December 2025
From: Jessica Allison-Batt, Principal Advisor Climate Resilience
To: Mayor and Council
Cc: Executive Leadership Team and Heads of Service
Reference: 25/1952230

Climate Resilience Strategy Implementation Update December 2025

1. Purpose of this Memo Te take o tēnei Pānui

- 1.1 On 15 November 2023 the Council requested (CNL/2023/00147) six-monthly reporting on the implementation of the Climate Resilience Strategy (the Strategy). This paper provides the December 2025 report on Council progress.
- 1.2 The information in this report is not confidential and can be made public.

2. Update He Pānui

Structure of this report

- 2.1 This report includes:
 - An overview of the Strategy for the Council and key policy and programme updates.
 - The status of cross Council actions at **Attachment A**.

Overview of the Climate Resilience Strategy

- 2.2 The Council's Climate Resilience Strategy¹ identifies 10 programme action areas where action by Council and the wider community can support a low emissions and climate resilient future for the city. The Council also set ambitious targets for emissions reductions:

Target	2030	2045
District (excluding methane)	A 50% reduction from the baseline financial year 2016/2017 levels (excluding methane).	Net zero greenhouse gas emissions.
District methane	At least a 25% reduction in methane emissions.	50% reduction from the baseline financial year 2016/2017.
Council operational	Net carbon neutral by 2030.	

¹ <https://ccc.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Environment/Climate-Change/Otautahi-Christchurch-Climate-Resilience-Strategy.pdf>

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- 2.3 Climate actions are led across the organisation and progress on key actions is reported in **Attachment A**. The Climate Resilience team supports Council implementation and reporting on the Strategy [see action 68]. This includes:
- Preparation of emissions inventories [69], policies, and reduction plans [70]
 - Coordination with partners including the Mayoral Forum on climate action [71]
 - Provision of advice to staff and Council on climate change, including to enable informed investment decisions through the Long Term Plan.

Overview of progress on Council climate actions

- 2.4 The status of cross Council actions (**Attachment A**) is provided below. Most actions are on track. Delays primarily relate to central government reforms which have paused plan changes.

Status of climate actions	Totals
Closed	2 ²
On track	39
Recurrent	5
Delayed	4
Total	50

- 2.5 The Council's organisational greenhouse gas emissions are a key performance indicator. In FY24 Council operations were estimated to produce a gross 32,854 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂-e). The FY25 emissions inventory will be provided to elected members in 2026. It is currently undergoing independent audit and will show an increase in emissions.
- 2.6 The Council publishes information on delivery against its Community Outcome - A Green Liveable City - on its Community Outcomes Monitoring page³. Key indicators are under the headings: 'We build climate resilience' and 'We reduce emissions'.
- 2.7 Many of the climate actions in the first iteration of climate reporting (from 2023) have been completed or are now business as usual with reporting through usual corporate processes. Open actions at **Attachment A** include:

Lead	Description
Strategic Policy and Resilience	Climate change policy and programme work continues to be delivered by Climate Resilience [68-71 and 124], the Climate Hazards Adaptation Planning programme (CHAP) [75, 79, 80, and 82] and Strategic Asset Management [123].
Waste	Actions [108-114] are progressing well and continue to be tracked as part of the Council's waste minimisation plan.
Transport	Initiatives include cycleway implementation [102], public and active transport investments [104 and 105], travel demand management [103] and strategy implementation for Council [100] and the Greater Christchurch Partnership [101].

² Action 74 has been consolidated with action 75 and action 98 with 99, simplifying reporting.

³ <https://ccc.govt.nz/culture-and-community/statistics-and-facts/community-outcomes-monitoring>

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Parks	The Urban Forest Plan [88], and core work programmes that support nature-based approaches to managing climate risk [85 and 91], as well as fruit tree planting [118], biodiversity and partnerships funds [90], and investigation of a biochar facility [89] are captured in this reporting.
Three Waters	Three of these actions are expected to close in early 2026 [83, 84, 87]. Business as usual investment continues in actions that reduce risks from climate change induced hazards such as flooding, drought and rising ground water [94].
Planning	District planning [76, 86, 93] has faced delays due to central government regulatory change including a freeze on planning processes to enable work towards the new RM system.
Facilities	Actions tracked are supporting energy efficiency [121], emissions reductions [120], and solar generation [125].
Other	A number of open actions relate to community development, economic development, innovation and improvement and residential processing.

- 2.8 More detailed operational reporting is found in the Unit quarterly updates.
- 2.9 It is timely, as actions are completed, and as key central government reforms take effect, for the Council to consider new opportunities for actions to strengthen implementation of the Strategy and align these with investment decisions made through the coming Long Term Plan. Pace is also required to support the Council's targets for organisation and district emissions reductions by 2030.

Opportunities and challenges for this Council term

Reducing operational emissions and lowering cost to the Council

- 2.10 An emissions reductions plan [70] has been drafted to support the Council to lower its emissions and generate cost savings. The draft plan will be presented in early 2026.
- 2.11 Work is also underway to verify the amount of carbon sequestered from Council tree planting to build an understanding of Council's net emissions (emissions minus carbon sequestered).

Reducing district emissions and delivering community benefits and savings

- 2.12 A wide range of work is underway to lower District emissions over the long term. To build momentum and demonstrate commitment to the 2030 District target, Council investment in key actions in this Long Term Plan is crucial. Staff are researching possible opportunities.
- 2.13 A proactive approach can benefit our community by improving health outcomes and increasing economic vibrancy. For example, the Climate Commission estimates up to NZ\$1.1 billion per year by 2035 in national health gains related to air quality from faster climate action in transport and electrification⁴. There are opportunities for new businesses in a low emissions economy. Measures that improve building design, cool urban areas, and enable solar can lower energy costs for households and businesses and improve energy security. Provision of public and active transport choices can reduce the household costs of using private vehicles.

⁴ [Climate Change Commission Emissions Reductions Monitoring Report 2025 page 69](#)

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Building resilience to climate change as a Council and a District

- 2.14 Climate change effects are already here and will increase over time. This is leading to extreme weather events, and rising sea and groundwater levels, with risks including flooding, erosion and wildfire. The impact on Council and community assets is likely to be significant.
- 2.15 International evidence shows that every dollar invested in resilience saves \$4 - \$8 in recovery costs. The Council is taking a proactive approach with work underway including:
- Understanding climate risk, with a range of tools and resources being made available both internally and to the wider community to enable informed responses
 - Adaptation planning with the community to identify preferred adaptation pathways for areas affected by flooding, erosion, and rising groundwater
 - Establishing a Climate Resilience Fund [80]
 - Building adaptive capacity in the community including through educational programmes, a climate toolkit [82], and related community engagements.

Securing investment from the government in local climate action

- 2.16 An ongoing challenge remains insufficient central government investment in local infrastructure to meet the challenges of climate change, including public and active transport. On a per capita basis the city receives substantially less funding for this critical infrastructure than Auckland and Wellington. This is a missed opportunity to boost economic vibrancy and deliver health and financial benefits to our residents.
- 2.17 The Council can be a strong voice for residents and help proactively reduce climate risk to our community through advocating for appropriate co-investments (and supporting policies) that meet the needs of Christchurch as a growing urban centre.

Detailed project updates

Canterbury Climate Partnership Plan

- 2.18 Through the Canterbury Mayoral Forum our Council is collaborating with 10 councils across the region to implement the Canterbury Climate Partnership Plan⁵. This Plan was launched by the Mayors and Minister of Climate Change in December 2024, and its vision is for a thriving, climate resilient, low-emission Canterbury⁶. The Plan adopts central government's emission reduction targets and contains 10 action areas to be jointly delivered through the regional climate partnership.
- 2.19 Our Council's contribution to the partnership in the 2024-34 Long Term Plan is \$301,000 over 3 years out of a total partnership budget of \$1.47 million. A staff Working Group and councillor Canterbury Climate Champions Reference Group help develop and implement the actions. One councillor can be nominated from Christchurch City Council to the Champions Reference Group.
- 2.20 There is regular reporting to the Policy Forum, Chief Executive Forum and Mayoral Forum who have governance over this Plan. Implementation reporting can be found on the Canterbury Mayoral Forum website.
- 2.21 Through the Working Group, staff are supporting a range of projects. Christchurch staff are involved in Action 1 (understanding climate risks and improving resilience), Action 2 (regional

⁵ <https://canterburymayors.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/COR9403-CCPP-Document.pdf>

⁶ This video was used to launch the plan: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=geaH-vQpAps&t=91s>

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emissions reduction planning), and Action 7 (embedding climate change within council processes), and Christchurch City Council is leading Action 8 (climate funding and financing).

2.22 Examples of work under Action 8 include:

- Developing and sharing a funding database for councils and community groups to understand what funding exists in Canterbury to support climate action
- Surveying councils in the region about their needs for climate-related funding
- Exploring new avenues for private investment to fund climate resilience and restoration work, through Christchurch's involvement in the European funded RISE-IN project⁷ [99]
- Meeting with government, institutional and private funders exploring opportunities to support climate-related investments in Canterbury.

2.23 Under Action 1, Christchurch hosted a workshop with regional partners on risk management tools and approaches. Regional approaches to climate risks can better address issues or opportunities that go beyond territorial boundaries. Under Action 2, staff are involved in hosting stakeholder workshops to develop an emissions reduction plan for the region. This action should assist District emission reductions.

CHAP education update

- 2.24 A short free online course on climate risk will soon be available to residents, helping learners explore climate science, adaptation strategies, and the roles of science and mātauranga Māori in responding to environmental challenge. Building on the successful schools-based, Council-funded Climate Change Curriculum run by Future Curious, the new course has been further developed with input from UC's School of Earth and Environment and Department of Political Science and International Relations, with climate practitioners, rūnanga, and community members. The first course will begin in 2026.
- 2.25 This course aligns with the Strategy's aim to prepare communities for the impacts of climate change, helping residents understand the risks and opportunities ahead and how they can be part of the solution. This builds on the Council's work with communities to plan for the future of our public assets, and to raise awareness of climate hazards and how we can best adapt. For more information on the CHAP programme, refer to actions 75, 79, 80, and 82 at **Attachment A**.

Parks Education Team programmes

- 2.26 For the last 20 years, the Council has offered a range of environmental, city infrastructure and citizenship programmes that are free to schools. These programmes provide relevant and authentic learning experiences through hands on activities. Learning areas covered include sustainability, climate change, biodiversity, geology, waste management, water conservation, civil defence, and local government.
- 2.27 Around 14 thousand people participate in programmes each year⁸, achieving satisfaction ratings from participants of between 99 and 100 percent. This demonstrates the value of this service to learning and community groups in Ōtautahi Christchurch.
- 2.28 One of the programmes offered - Future Proof Climate Change - focuses on the global and local challenges we are facing and encourages mitigation and adaptation action. In the last 12 months we have run 24 sessions of this programme with over 760 people (children and adults), who have been 100% satisfied with their experience. The activities cover what the greenhouse effect is, where emissions are coming from, and practical solutions that we can all embrace.

⁷ <https://www.rise-in.eu/>

⁸ Taking an average over the past 5 years.

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- 2.29 Council primarily funds this work, and we are fortunate to have a fixed-term funding contract with the Ministry of Education (around 20% of the annual budget). Programmes are free to learners as equity of access is an important element of the kaupapa.

Enviroschools programme update

- 2.30 Christchurch City Council contributes \$85,000 (2025/26 annual plan) towards the Enviroschools programme, an environmental action-based programme where young people are empowered to design and lead sustainability projects in their schools and early learning centres, communities and country.
- 2.31 Enviroschools is coordinated regionally by Environment Canterbury with the support of ten regional partners. In Waitaha Canterbury, 44% (89) of schools have taken part, and 11% (46) of early childhood learning centres, reaching 30,800 students.
- 2.32 The programme aligns with the Council's climate change goals through focusing on waste minimisation, climate change mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity and water quality.

Eco Design Advisor service update

- 2.33 The Council's Eco Design Advisor service has progressed an initiative which will see Heat Kits become available to residents via Christchurch libraries. Heat Kits comprise practical tools including thermometers that enable users to identify areas in the home where heat is being lost and take steps to respond. Detailed project scoping is underway, with an indicative timeline of 6 to 12 months for roll out of this resource to the community. This empowers residents to reduce energy costs and lower emissions and follows on from successful case studies in Dunedin and Auckland.
- 2.34 The service has also completed roll out of provision for certificates of energy efficiency to be displayed on Land Information Memoranda in the District. This is an initiative to promote energy efficient low emissions buildings at the point of sale. This brings Christchurch into alignment with Auckland and Dunedin authorities which currently offer this service. As of writing, 10 LIMs have been processed, and staff are contacting owners in the Four Avenues to advise them of this opportunity to record their certificates of energy efficiency.

Update on the enabling environment

Emissions reductions

- 2.35 The Climate Change Commission's 2025 monitoring report on emissions reductions suggests urgent action is required to address risks to New Zealand's future emissions budgets. This includes strengthening the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) and implementing additional targeted policies for renewable energy, transport and agriculture.
- 2.36 The government's decisions have included:
- Weakening of the legislative framework, including the Climate Change Response Act and Climate Related Disclosures regime. Changes proposed include limiting the advice from the Climate Commission on government emissions reduction plans.
 - Reducing the national methane target and deferral of targets for central government carbon neutrality to 2050, alongside a decision to exclude agriculture from the ETS.
 - Investment to enable importation of LPG gas in response to declining natural gas reserves.
- 2.37 These proposals are likely to increase District emissions when compared to earlier policy settings. This makes delivering local benefits from climate action harder.

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- 2.38 The Ministry for the Environment consulted on a proposed amendment to New Zealand's Second Emissions Reduction Plan (2026 to 2030), related to the government's announcement on not progressing with an on-farm emissions pricing system by 2030. Given a three-week consultation period, staff drafted a submission reiterating the points made in the Council's previous submission on the Emissions Reduction Plan.
- 2.39 The Ministry for the Environment released an Assessment Framework for Carbon Removals. Staff consider that the Framework aligns with the Council's Carbon Removals Policy and its ongoing implementation.

Adaptation

- 2.40 Central government's position on adaptation policy and funding remains relatively unclear. More information about the National Adaptation Framework was released in October, centred on four pillars: sharing information about risks and responses; clarifying roles and responsibilities; guiding investment in risk reduction; and establishing cost-sharing mechanisms.
- 2.41 The Framework signals the release of a national flood map (likely incorporating the more detailed assessments undertaken by local government), with an emphasis on ensuring people are informed about their risks and are incentivised to make good decisions. Upcoming clarity on the role of local government is signalled, noting that managing natural hazard risk is a core responsibility for the Council. Cost-sharing remains the least progressed pillar, yet clarity about private property buy-outs is needed. The Framework signals that a transitional period is needed for the market to incentivise risk reduction, with interim arrangements for private property retreat or rebuilds currently not specified.
- 2.42 The Council can monitor progress in this area and advocate for what is best for Christchurch communities.

3. Conclusion Whakakapinga

- 3.1 Staff are working on new opportunities for actions to strengthen implementation of the Climate Resilience Strategy. Further advice on climate change planning and actions will be presented to the Policy and Planning Committee. The next report on Climate Resilience Strategy implementation across Council will be in June 2026.

Attachments Ngā Tāpirihanga

No.	Title	Reference
A	Status of climate actions December 2025	25/2348225

Signatories Ngā Kaiwaitohu

Authors	Jessica Allison-Batt - Principal Advisor Climate Resilience Lisa Early - Team Leader Climate Resilience
Approved By	Elizabeth Wilson - Team Leader Policy David Griffiths - Head of Strategic Policy & Resilience



Attachment A: Status of climate actions December 2025

Reference	Description	Climate Action Programme	Lead	Update December 2025	Status
4	Sustainability fund to support community action to build climate resilience.	1. Building the foundations partnerships & resourcing	CHAP	The Sustainability Fund opened for applications on 1 December and will close on the 23rd of January 2026. To provide more certainty and guidance for applicants, changes have been made to the application and website communications, as well as bringing in a cap on the maximum amount allocated to a single organisation. Final decisions and allocation of funding is expected in April 2026. The budget for this fund is set aside and planned for (\$400,000). The entirety of this is expected to be spent in this one funding round.	Recurrent
68	Six-monthly progress reports on implementing the climate strategy.	1. Building the foundations partnerships & resourcing	Climate Resilience	December report complete. Next report due in mid-2026.	Recurrent
69	An independently verified inventory of the Council's operational greenhouse gas emissions is released annually.	1. Building the foundations partnerships & resourcing	Climate Resilience	The annual inventory process is underway. Initial results indicate an increase in reported emissions.	Recurrent
70	An Emissions Reduction Plan for the Council's operational emissions to be developed.	1. Building the foundations partnerships & resourcing	Climate Resilience	Amendments are being made to a draft Emissions Reduction Plan following a workshop with ELT. The draft will go to Council in early 2026.	On track
71	Develop a Canterbury Climate Partnership Plan working with the Mayoral Forum.	1. Building the foundations partnerships & resourcing	Climate Resilience	Staff are contributing to implementation of projects within the Plan.	On track
74	Supporting Community Boards to include climate resilience considerations in their area plans.	1. Building the foundations partnerships & resourcing	Community Development	Work to support Community Boards is being advanced under action 75 below. This action will be removed from future reports to avoid duplication.	Closed
75	Using the Risk Explorer, risk screening and assessment to better understand multiple climate risks and their impacts on assets and communities.	2.Understanding the local effects of climate change.	CHAP	Work to enhance the Risk Explorer over the past six months has strengthened the quality and reliability of information available to support risk-based decision-making across Council. This has included filling data gaps, updating vulnerability assumptions and refining methodology for risk assessment. A phased rollout is underway to build staff capability. Training for Champion Users began in November 2025, with wider access planned from February 2026. This will help ensure more consistent, risk-informed planning and investment across business units. Two outputs are being prepared to communicate the risks to the district. Council risk profiles will focus on risk to Council's assets and will support Council asset management and decision making. Community risk profiles will focus on risk to different areas and wards, supporting community understanding and community board planning. These are both planned for public release around March/April 2026.	On track
76	Complete the review of the extent of Flood Management Areas to inform Plan Change 17.	2.Understanding the local effects of climate change.	Planning	Component parts of this plan change are unaffected by the recent "Plan Stop" legislation (i.e. those related to managing risks from natural hazards). The Earthworks component requires the Minister to approve an exemption to enable the Council to notify that part. Following lodgement of the application for an exemption, the expectation is that a decision by the Minister could occur in early 2026 to enable the plan change to proceed.	Delayed
78	Developing community resilience and response plans for target groups.	1. Building the foundations partnerships & resourcing	Community Development	Currently tracking ahead of Level of Service target (30 per year).	On track

Reference	Description	Climate Action Programme	Lead	Update December 2025	Status
79	Expand the Climate Hazards Adaptation Programme to support more areas affected by climate risks to develop adaptation plans with signals and triggers for action.	3.Proactive climate planning with communities	CHAP	<p>Additional resources have now been established within the Climate Hazards Adaptation Planning (CHAP) programme through Long Term Plan funding. This added capacity will support the development of a monitoring framework to guide when action is needed, enable faster delivery of adaptation planning, and embed climate resilience within key asset areas, including Parks, Three Waters, and Transport.</p> <p>Coastal community boards have been engaged to discuss options for where adaptation planning could next be undertaken. The Coastal Hazards Working Group has recommended that these options be presented to the new Council after the election, allowing the incoming Council to set the future direction of the programme.</p>	On track
80	Investigate options to fund climate resilience and adaptation in Christchurch.	3.Proactive climate planning with communities	CHAP	The Climate Resilience Fund was confirmed through the Long Term Plan. There is no further update at this time.	On track
82	Develop and share a Climate Adaptation Toolkit that provides information to individuals on how to reduce potential impacts of climate hazards such as flooding, wildfire heat and high winds to residential properties.	3.Proactive climate planning with communities	CHAP	Brochures are available in libraries and service centres. The full suite of adaptation tips is available on the Council website and hazard videos are being pushed at the appropriate times (e.g. high heat, drought and wildfire marketing will start in summer 2025/26). Options are being explored to reach a wider audience, such as placing materials in home improvement stores and including them with property information provided by Council and real estate organisations.	On track
83	Develop the Three Waters Climate Change Response Implementation Framework.	4. Adapting and greening infrastructure systems	Three Waters	An initial draft of the Framework has been completed. Next steps include further development of the draft within Three Waters and socialisation of the draft with other selected teams within Council to ensure coordination with related workstreams where possible.	On track
84	Develop and implement the Three Waters Embodied Carbon Estimation Tool for targeted capital projects such as pipe renewals. Ensure renewals and new infrastructure are resource efficient, low carbon and fit for our changing climate.	4. Adapting and greening infrastructure systems	Three Waters	Usability, incoming data quality from completed assessments in projects, and applicability of the outputs of the 'Three Waters Embodied Carbon "3WEET" Estimation Tool' are being reviewed internally and will provide information for next steps.	On track
85	Regeneration area work to improve resilience to flooding, sea level rise and rising groundwater.	4. Adapting and greening infrastructure systems	Parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Stopbank construction at Avonside Drive has been delayed due to difficulties in obtaining gravel of the specification required. This is resolved now, and stopbanks are nearly complete. Opening of temporary stopbank now expected around end of the year.Waitaki Stormwater Management Area project delayed due to delayed delivery of Orion enabling works and a re-tender process of the physical works due to not being able to reach a satisfactory agreement with the main contractor. Timeframe unclear, ideally underway early next year.Hearing set down for the Southshore Estuary Edge consent for December 8th 2025. Expert evidence well underway. This project remains on track.Bexley back wetland wrapped into an expanded fast-track consent scope. This remains on track.Goodman Street Wetland site works are completed.	Delayed

Reference	Description	Climate Action Programme	Lead	Update December 2025	Status
86	Proposed rules in Plan Change 14 to require tree canopy retention.	2.Understanding the local effects of climate change.	Planning	A change to the District Plan to insert new rules to increase tree canopy cover will require an exemption from the Minister due to the “Plan Stop” legislation. The Council resolved on 10 September 2025 (CNCL/2025/00319) to apply under section 80V of the Resource Management Act for some plan changes to be exempt from section 80P (prohibition against notifying a plan change), however the Tree PC was not part of the list. An advancement of a Tree PC will need to occur after 2027 and will be subject to new legislation.	Delayed
87	Multi-hazard study	4. Adapting and greening infrastructure systems	Three Waters	The multi-hazard study stage 3 report has been submitted for review, including modelling of vertical land movement and updated alternative options reporting. The report has been provided to the external peer review panel. The review is expected to be completed by the end of November 2025 with report finalisation and communication on study outcomes to ELT and Elected Members expected in the first quarter 2026.	On track
88	Further implementation of the Urban Forest Plan improving canopy cover throughout Christchurch.	5. Carbon removal and natural restoration.	Parks	The key opportunity to support climate resilience from implementation of the urban forest plan is ensuring canopy cover targets are delivered through aligned capital investments across asset classes resulting in increased planting in underserved areas of the district. Council is on track for an updated canopy cover by end of the year and in process of engaging Canterbury University to provide a method for calculating carbon sequestered. This will help focus efforts on underserved areas.	On track
89	Explore the establishment of a biochar facility in Christchurch to help store carbon and restore soils in the Avon River Regeneration Area, and potential use of low carbon asphalt solutions.	5. Carbon removal and natural restoration.	Parks	City to Sea East is out to tender, and low carbon asphalt specs have been requested as part of this. Discussions are ongoing around establishing the facility with local suppliers.	On track
90	Council’s Biodiversity Fund and three-year Environmental Partnerships Fund.	5. Carbon removal and natural restoration.	Parks	The Environmental Partnership Fund was opened in July 2025. It has since allocated \$469,840.00 in a non-contestable round, and the first contestable round opened in October. The Biodiversity Fund also opened a contestable round in October.	Recurrent
91	Further implementation of the Ōtākaro Avon River Regeneration Plan to enhance biodiversity, amenity and resilience to climate impacts & further work on the Styx Vision 2000-2040 & restoration of Port Hills Reserves.	5. Carbon removal and natural restoration.	Parks	2025 planting season is complete, and planning is well underway for 2026 season. All projects listed initially have been completed.	On track
93	Plan Change 7 to limit indigenous vegetation clearance in coastal environments.	2.Understanding the local effects of climate change.	Planning	The Council resolved on 10 September 2025 (CNCL/2025/00319) to apply under section 80V of the Resource Management Act for PC7 to be exempt from section 80P (prohibition against notifying a plan change) and section 80Q (requirement to withdraw a proposed plan change). Following lodgement of the application for an exemption, the expectation is that a decision by the Minister could occur in early 2026 to enable the plan change to proceed.	Delayed
94	Encourage the use of swales, rain gardens, retention basins and other water sensitive design solutions for new developments and renewals.	4. Adapting and greening infrastructure systems	Three Waters	<p>Green infrastructure and water-sensitive design are promoted through various guidelines and approaches. The design principles and engineering criteria in the Waterways, Wetlands, and Drainage Guide and Infrastructure Design Standards help to support climate resilience and sustainable water management. The promotion of green infrastructure through these approaches and has resulted in approximately 20 hectares of land as water sensitive stormwater infrastructure and wetlands handed over from private developers since July 2025.</p> <p>Furthermore, since July 2025, the team has undertaken 5 Industrial Stormwater Discharge Licence (ISDL) site audits, with another two sites planned for Nov-Dec. The audits contribute towards improved quality of our waterways by targeting high risk sites and encouraging good management practices and continued</p>	Recurrent

Reference	Description	Climate Action Programme	Lead	Update December 2025	Status
				<p>maintenance of stormwater management systems.</p> <p>Additional projects and activities of significance in this area, which have been completed or are scheduled for completion this reporting period, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Over 30,000 native plants have been established on erosion prone areas of the Port Hills, bringing multi-value benefits including sediment source control and decreasing rainfall runoff rate and volume thereby reducing flood potential.The Surface Flooding Reduction Programme priority projects have been endorsed by Council and the delivery of these projects is underway, addressing historical flooding in identified parts of the city.The delivery of the stormwater hydraulic models for the Haswell and Styx River catchments has provided much increased accuracy and reliability for flood management and communicating on flooding matters to the community.The Council's web-based Flood and Floor Level Viewer received its first major update after more than 10 years, providing a greatly increased level of accuracy on flooding over the urban areas of the city and enabling the community to plan more effectively for flood management.	
96	Encourage sustainable and resilient business practices.	6.Economic transformation and innovation.	ChristchurchNZ	ChristchurchNZ's energy advisor, in partnership with EECA, has provided assessments and advice to 6 businesses with another 3 in progress, delivering significant energy savings. Delivered a business sustainability workshop with 6 companies and provided 4 businesses with advisory and implementation support through Deta Consulting. Working on the potential to create a version of the ClimateWise platform that reflects Christchurch (currently Auckland). ClimateWise is a platform that has been designed to help SMEs with risk identification and adaptation planning.	On track
97	Include Climate Resilience in business clusters and attract climate specific events.	6.Economic transformation and innovation.	ChristchurchNZ	<p>ChristchurchNZ:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Attracted the UN Climate Adaptation Futures Conference to Christchurch (Oct 25), nearly 2,000 attendees (refer also action 99).Launched the Waitaha Canterbury Aerospace Strategy (June 25) promoting sustainable aerospace and aerospace for good with a goal of 50% of aerospace companies achieving net zero operations by 2035.Partnered with Aerospace NZ, hosting delegates to visit local companies involved in decarbonising aerospace and supporting capabilities in advanced manufacturing – including Argus ManuTech, Fabrum, Kea Aerospace, Dawn Aerospace and the University of Canterbury School of Engineering.Updated its website to include a sustainable conferences focus: https://www.christchurchnz.com/meet/plan-your-event/toolkit/purposeful-business-events <p>Christchurch Antarctic Office:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Hosted delegates and invited guests to the Antarctic Season Opening (Oct 25). The programme highlighted Christchurch's research capability in climate-related science, international science collaboration with the hosting of the German research aircraft HALO led by the German Aerospace Centre (DLR) and supporting infrastructure such as Te Whaki to position Christchurch as a centre for ongoing climate-related research and innovation.	On track
98	Support local innovation to address climate change.	6.Economic transformation and innovation.	Innovation and Improvement	This action is being combined with action 99 below to reduce duplication, both areas of focus are led by Innovation and Improvement.	Closed

Reference	Description	Climate Action Programme	Lead	Update December 2025	Status
99	Harness opportunities to innovate on shared climate challenges through global relationships and local innovation.	6.Economic transformation and innovation.	Innovation and Improvement, Parks	<p>Christchurch City Council is a participant in the RISE-IN (Resilient Investment for Sustainable Environments) initiative, which pioneers innovative green financing solutions for climate adaptation. Coordinated by the Polytechnic of Milan, it includes two experimental restoration projects within the Ōtākaro Avon River Corridor (OARC). This five-year project is part of the European Union's Horizon Europe programme. The proposal was a collaboration between Christchurch City Council's Parks Unit and Smart Christchurch team, ChristchurchNZ, the Bioeconomy Science Institute, and the University of Canterbury, and we will receive approximately \$2.9 million for its delivery. Both projects aim to help bridge the gap between environmental resilience and financial viability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Soil Carbon Improvements and Monitoring: This research enhances climate resilience by testing soil amendments like biochar and microbial additions to enrich soils and improve carbon sequestration while also using remote infra-red sensors to monitor and verify the changes.• Harvestable Landscapes: This project focuses on developing sustainable models for renewable harvesting of biomass, which can be sold as biomaterials to local business. <div>Funded by the European Union</div> <p><i>Acknowledgement: RISE-IN receives funding from the European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA) and Horizon Europe, under Grant Agreement no. 101214441. Disclaimer: Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or CINEA. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.</i></p> <p>Council and CNZ worked together to showcase city initiatives and areas of innovation in a shared exhibition booth at the UN Climate Adaptation Conference. This was a collaboration between the Smart Christchurch Innovation and Improvement, CNZ, CHAP, Climate Resilience and Parks teams. Council staff engaged with attendees and shared many Council initiatives at the stand, while ChristchurchNZ bought three key sustainable businesses along who also shared their initiatives (refer also action 97).</p>	On track
100	Finalise and implement the Christchurch Transport Plan	7.Low emissions transport system	Transport	Following the adoption of the Ōtautahi Christchurch Future Transport Strategy in March 2025, the next stage of the work is the preparation of an implementation plan. Staff are on track to test a draft implementation plan with Councillors in the first half of 2026. A core purpose for this plan is to support Councillor decision-making in the lead-up to the 2027-30 LTP.	On track
101	Implement the Greater Christchurch Public Transport Futures business case.	7.Low emissions transport system	Transport	We are continuing a low-cost, low-risk programme for FY25–28 to cut bus delays and improve reliability within approved LTP budgets. With NZTA advisors, we are finalising a Point of Entry for targeted bus-priority and stop upgrades on Routes 1 and 5, seeking NLTP inclusion of a Single Stage Business Case focused on the highest-priority hotspots. In parallel, Lincoln Road (Route 7 Stage 2B) is progressing toward early-2026 construction.	On track
102	Ongoing roll-out of cycleways programme across the city.	7.Low emissions transport system	Transport	Construction remains ongoing on two major cycleways being Nor'West Arc, and South Express, with Northern Line through the Papanui area recently being completed. The section of Wheels to Wings that connects Nor'West Arc to Northern Line is progressing with construction anticipated to start early 2026. The remaining lengths of Wheels to Wings, and Northern Line have budgets allocated in the Annual Plan between FY28 – 32.	On track

Reference	Description	Climate Action Programme	Lead	Update December 2025	Status
				This leaves three remaining major cycleways with funding available in the Draft Annual Plan to allow route section confirmation and concept designs to continue, construction funding is allocated towards the end of the LTP. Cycleways are not a central government priority for this NLTP.	
103	Work on 'Better off Projects.'	7.Low emissions transport system	Transport	We currently have 85 schools on our Good-to-Go travel planning programme, and are continuing to deliver workshops on: speeds, how to catch a bus, active travel and safety. We have begun engaging with secondary schools and delivered safe cycle routes to school rowing teams and developed and delivered "Inside the Truck Drivers seat" workshop. We are preparing for phase 2 roll out of "Ride Your Way" cycle ways campaign. This will run over January – April 2026.	On track
104	Work with Big Street Bikers to Investigate and implement a wider plan for Locky Docks- electrified secure bike and scooter parking.	7.Low emissions transport system	Transport	Three sites are now operational (Upper Riccarton Library, 152 Hereford St and Rauora Park). We are nearly 1 year through our 3-year pilot. Quarterly monitoring of usage will now begin. Bike parking questions are being drafted to add to the Life in Christchurch survey.	On track
105	Plan for the next stage of Mass Rapid Transit route protection and business case development.	7.Low emissions transport system	Transport	The MRT project is now at a route protection stage and involves undertaking an RMA designation process. A core team has been stood up within CCC, and the technical work programme has commenced. A project Steering Group, consisting of senior leaders from CCC, Canterbury Regional Council and NZTA has been established to provide project governance.	On track
106	Provide the Eco-Design Advisor service to residents and building professionals.	8.Energy efficient homes and buildings	Residential processing team	The service has completed 326 consultations for the year 2024-25 (ending end of June); the target was 300. This year, the service has already completed, to date, 111 consultations (same target). Key updates in the period include support for a range of tools and advice that can enable the community to act, lowering emissions and saving money from energy efficiency in their daily lives. Further detail is provided in the body of this report.	On track
107	Work with and advocate to central government for the building for climate change programme and greenhouse gas emission standards for buildings in New Zealand.	8.Energy efficient homes and buildings	Residential processing team	The EDA is collaborating with MBIE on developing the parameters around the definition of sustainable buildings (this includes reports on carbon emissions) and around a new initiative on rooftop solar and sustainable buildings. https://www.mbie.govt.nz/about/news/green-light-to-rooftop-solar-and-sustainable-buildings	On Track
108	Initiatives to better utilise our organic resources including establishing an ecogas facility in Hornby.	9. Towards zero waste	Waste	Consent was granted in August 2025. Appeals period ended in September 2025 with no appeals received. Service agreement has been finalised and executed post-consent issue. Onsite construction works commenced on 20 October 2025. Site is projected to be fully operational by September 2025 with full tonnage transfer from existing facility to ecogas facility by October 2025.	On track
109	Update the Council's Waste Management and Minimisation Plan to align with climate goals.	9. Towards zero waste	Waste	Waste assessment was completed in October 2025. Draft WMMP is scheduled for public consultation in Feb 2026 with a Hearings Panel sitting in March 2026. The WMMP is scheduled for adoption by June 2026, subject to Council approval.	On track
110	Developing the risk and adaptation tool to support the long-term management of closed landfills.	9. Towards zero waste	Waste	Adaptation tool is now being field tested. Final adoption is due by June 2026.	On track
111	Remediation of key sites projected to be affected by climate change.	9. Towards zero waste	Waste	Allandale is in the planning phase. Horseshoe Lake is in the monitoring and data gathering phase. Bexley is in the design phase. Updates on each project are available through the CPMS.	On track

Reference	Description	Climate Action Programme	Lead	Update December 2025	Status
112	Promote options for reuse and recycling of items not collected by Council, such as sharing and second-hand services and business and community recycling services.	9. Towards zero waste	Waste	The Bromley organics processing plant post-closure options will be shared with Council early in 2026.	On track
113	Explore circular economy opportunities for the district and establish a circular economy directory.	9. Towards zero waste	Waste	The draft WMMP sets out several options that will support improved resource recovery.	On track
114	Support Canterbury Waste Minimisation Grant and Learning through Action Programmes.	9. Towards zero waste	Waste	New smart grant process was used in 2025. The successful projects are now underway. The reporting and eligibility criteria are now being reviewed in time for the 2026 funding round.	On track
116	Conduct a food resilience policy review and deliver key actions to support resilience.	10.Sustainable food system	Community Development	We ran a large successful stakeholder workshop for people across the food system, attended by 75 people from across the food system sector. We are starting to analyse this data now. Final engagements with underrepresented sectors such as farmers and residents are occurring in November. A review committee has been created to review the draft policy. The draft will be completed by the end of 2025 for review by the committee.	On track
118	Support community gardens and fruit and nut trees in public places.	10.Sustainable food system	Parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A project has been started with the Christchurch Foundation to invite businesses to donate funding towards the planting and upkeep of fruit trees as part of the Urban Forest Plan.The Urban Forest Plan is working with the Canterbury Community Gardens Association who want to plant 50 fruit trees to celebrate their 50-year anniversary in 2026.Support continues for community rangers.	On track
120	Council will progressively transition its vehicles to EVs or, where operational requirements cannot otherwise be met, to the lowest possible emissions alternatives.	7.Low emissions transport system	Facilities	Our renewals programme for this year is still going through planning and procurement. We are anticipating we will see new vehicles starting to arrive in the new year. Our June update noted replacement of 50 vehicles and a 36 percent reduction in emissions from these replacements.	On track
121	Council will implement an energy management system for key buildings to lower emissions and realise cost savings. For the period we are targeting having Kaizen energy for at least 5 major buildings.	8.Energy efficient homes and buildings	Facilities	Nine more buildings (running total of 22) now have Building Analytics and Kaizen Energy running, including six libraries, two community centres, and the hot pool. The software has already helped identify issues across different sites, allowing us to fix them quickly. We are starting to see real energy savings in several libraries, including Tūranga Central (↓7~8% July to September 2025 compared to 2024), Bishopdale (↓ 20% FY25 compared to FY24), Lyttleton (↓ 22% January to September 2025 compared to 2024), Sumner (↓8.57% September 2025 compared to 2024), and Upper Riccarton (↓10.17% September 2025 compared to 2024). In some cases, the system picked up faults early, preventing energy use from going up.	On track
122	Coastal Hazards Plan Change	2.Understanding the local effects of climate change.	Planning	Progress on the Coastal Plan Change is continuing with the expectation a draft Plan Change will be considered for notification in mid-2026.	On track
123	Development of asset management frameworks including consideration of capturing data about vulnerability to	4. Adapting and greening infrastructure systems	Asset Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Work is underway on asset management frameworks.Council-wide Condition Assessment Guidelines completed, endorsed, and approved by Asset Management Governance Group.	On track

Reference	Description	Climate Action Programme	Lead	Update December 2025	Status
	climate impacts and about assets that sequester carbon (including trees).			<ul style="list-style-type: none">Draft Council-wide Strategic Criticality Framework has been developed, and it is currently being reviewed by relevant Heads of Service.Asset Data Standards are currently being developed and will include appropriate attributes to capture data about condition, criticality, vulnerability and additional climate related information as required.	
124	Develop policy and staff guidance material to support appropriate investment decisions on Council assets according to climate change risk.	4. Adapting and greening infrastructure systems	Climate Resilience	Draft policy and guidance documents are being developed and tested with staff across the Council.	On track
125	Develop a Solar and Battery Strategy to guide approach and investment.	8. energy efficient homes and buildings	Facilities	<p>We have now received Council approval guidance for the Solar and Battery Strategy.</p> <p>Power Purchase Agreement (PPA): We are currently in discussion with Meridian Energy regarding the commercial and technical details of a solar Power Purchase Agreement. Internal advice is being sought from the Legal and Procurement teams on the next steps. The aim is to have the arrangement in place by the 2026 calendar year. This PPA will use an offsite solar farm to partially supply electricity to our major facilities, including all swimming pools, Tūranga, CWTP, NPW, major pump stations, Lichfield Car Park, Bus Interchange, the Civic Building, Art Gallery, and several large libraries.</p> <p>Resilient/Emergency Hubs: We have secured EECA co-funding to install solar panels and batteries at several community facilities across the Peninsula area. The project is planned for completion by the end of FY26. We are currently engaging a consultant to complete the initial design and cost assessment.</p> <p>Batteries: We are working with Orion on a potential battery installation at Te Hāpua Haswell Centre to help reduce pressure on the local network. The project is under negotiation and will proceed if mutually beneficial. We continue to monitor the battery market for affordable and emerging technologies.</p>	On track

Action Items Closed Since June 2024

For ease of reference action items closed since June 2024 are listed below. The June 2024 climate resilience report can be referred to for information on delivery since launch of the strategy in 2020.

Reference	Description	Climate Action Programme	Lead	Final update
72	New letter of expectations for ChristchurchNZ and Venues Otautahi including expectations on climate change considerations and emissions reductions.	1. Building the foundations partnerships & resourcing	Finance	Letters have been updated to reflect Council's commitment to climate resilience and expectations on its arm's length entities.
73	Explore including climate related risk and financial disclosure information alongside the Council's annual report.	1. Building the foundations partnerships & resourcing	Finance	Analysis revealed potential risks around inclusion of this information alongside the annual report. For this reason, further work will not be taken forward at this time.
74	Supporting Community Boards to include climate resilience considerations in their area plans.	1. Building the foundations partnerships & resourcing	Community Development	Work to support Community Boards is being advanced under action 75. This action will be removed from future reports to avoid duplication.
81	Complete adaptation planning in Lyttleton Harbour and Port Levy.	3.Proactive climate planning with communities	CHAP	On 4 March 2025 the Council's Hearings Panel adopted the Coastal Hazards Adaptation Plan for Whakaraupō Lyttleton Harbour and Koukourarata Port Levy.



92	Develop a Carbon Removal (offsetting) policy to account for sequestration via planting trees on Council land.	5. Carbon removal and natural restoration.	Climate Resilience	A carbon removals policy and implementation plan has been adopted.
95	Update the Christchurch Green House Gas Emissions Tracker to better reflect long term trends overtime.	6.Economic transformation and innovation.	Innovation and Improvement	The greenhouse gas emissions tracker phase two has been completed. It now shows data going back to 2020, allowing trends to be shown overtime.
98	Support local innovation to address climate change.	6.Economic transformation and innovation.	Innovation and Improvement	This action is being combined with action 99 to reduce duplication. Both areas of focus are led by Innovation and Improvement.
115	Establish a sector wide group (acting as a Food Policy Council) to help shape and guide food resilience across the local food sector.	10.Sustainable food system	Community Development	Climate resilience working group has been established. This includes a focus on food policy.
117	Host the Sustainable and Edible Garden Awards and explore options for expanding to all Community Board areas.	10.Sustainable food system	Community Development	There was no interest from further community boards to expand the awards to their board area. This item has been closed.
119	Join the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact to connect other municipalities fostering regenerative urban food systems.	10.Sustainable food system	Community Development	Council joined the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact in October 2024.

6. Draft Council submission on the Planning and Natural Environment Bills

Reference Te Tohutoro: 25/2625507

Presenter(s) Te Kaipāhō : Ben Rhodes, Manager Planning and Helaina Gregg, Principal Advisor Planning and Strategic Transport

1. Detail Te Whakamahuki

Purpose and Origin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff are seeking feedback on the draft submission to the Environment Committee regarding the Planning and Natural Environment Bills.
Timing	This information session is expected to last for 45 minutes.
Outcome Sought	Following an overview of the content of the draft submission, Elected Members will be given an opportunity to provide feedback. This is to enable staff to make any updates to the submission and return to the Council on 11 February 2026 for final approval.
ELT Consideration	N/A
Next Steps	<p>Submissions to the Environment Committee are due on Friday 13 February 2026.</p> <p>Following the workshop, the draft submission will be updated and circulated to Elected Members on Friday 23 January 2026 for their feedback.</p> <p>The submission will be brought back to the Council on 11 February for approval and submitted on 13 February 2026.</p> <p>The Government has signalled that the Bills are expected to become law in mid-2026 before the general election period.</p>
Key points / Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Government has been progressing significant reform to the Resource Management (RM) system, working towards the replacement of the Resource Management Act (RMA) 1991. On 9 December 2025, the Government introduced two new Bills to replace the Resource Management Act. The Bills were referred to the Environment Committee on 16 December 2025, who are now calling for public submissions. The replacement legislation proposes two new Acts: the Planning Act and the Natural Environment Act. The key driver of the reform is to simplify the planning system, reduce duplication, and cut unnecessary red tape, creating a more efficient and streamlined framework for managing New Zealand's natural and built environments. The submission will focus on the changes that have significant implications for Council, including but not limited to, the system's architecture and the role of local decision-making, public participation, regulatory relief and ensuring the new system can deliver well-functioning urban environments.
Useful Links	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning Bill

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Natural Environment Bill• Ministry for the Environment Factsheets• Press release from Minister for RMA Reform
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Attachments Ngā Tāpirihanga

There are no attachments to this coversheet.

Signatories Ngā Kaiwaitohu

Author	Helaina Gregg - Principal Advisor Policy
Approved By	Ben Rhodes - Manager Planning Mark Stevenson - Head of Planning & Consents

7. Items Closed to the Public

The information session/workshop items noted from the next page will not be open to the public under the sections of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA) outlined in the table on the following page. The full wording of the noted LGOIMA sections is found in [section 6](#) or [section 7](#) of the Act.

In the Council's view, these reasons for exclusion are not outweighed by public interest considerations in section 7(1) favouring their release.

The public can ask the Ombudsman to review this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

ITEM NO.	GENERAL SUBJECT OF EACH MATTER TO BE CONSIDERED	SECTION	SUBCLAUSE AND REASON UNDER THE ACT	PUBLIC INTEREST CONSIDERATION	POTENTIAL RELEASE REVIEW DATE AND CONDITIONS
8.	COUNCIL PRIORITIES - MINISTER FOR SOUTH ISLAND	S7(2)(B)(II)	PREJUDICE COMMERCIAL POSITION	THE CONTENT OF THIS ITEM CONTAINS DETAILS OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES THAT MAY IMPACT ON EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS SHOULD THE PROJECTS BE SELECTED, OR NOT.	15 JANUARY 2027 ONCE THE COUNCIL HAS AGREED PRIORITIES.