
Workshop - Council NOTES

Date: Tuesday 27 January 2026
Time: 10 am
Venue: Camellia Chambers, Level 2, Civic Offices,
53 Hereford Street, Christchurch

Present

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

Principal Advisor

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

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



The agenda was dealt with in the following order.

1. Apologies Ngā Whakapāha

Apologies were received from Councillors Keown and MacDonald for absence.
Councillors Donovan and Harrison-Hunt attended via audiovisual link

***Secretarial note:** Apologies were received at the start of the public excluded session. Councillor Keown attended the public session via audiovisual link after his earlier apology for absence.*

4. Items Closed to the Public Ngā Take mō te wāhanga o te hui e rāhui ana ki te hunga tūmatanui

The session commenced at 10.00 in public excluded to consider Item 5 – *Event Transport Proposal* advertised at the end of the public agenda.

The public were admitted to the workshop at 10.30 am.

Councillor Keown joined the workshop via audiovisual link at 10.34 am during Item 2.
Councillor Donovan joined the workshop via audiovisual link at 10.38 am during Item 2 and left at 11.00 am at the end of discussion on Item 2.

2. Simplifying Local Government reform. Draft Council submission for review.

Council Officer David Griffiths – Head of Strategy Policy & Resilience - joined the table to present Item 2 (refer attached presentation) and answer questions from elected members.

Key presentation points:

- The Simplifying Local Government Reform draft proposal suggests that a Combined Territories Board (CTB) comprising the mayors of each region:
 - replace regional councillors and be responsible for governance of regional council functions; and
 - develop a Regional Reorganisation Plan (RRP) within two years that sets out its preferred long-term governance model.
- The draft Council submission focuses on developing a process to achieve optimal outcomes and notes that:
 - The reform is a critical, once-in-a-generation opportunity for Christchurch that will shape how services and infrastructure are delivered for decades. It could also lead to major changes in how people are represented in local decision-making.
 - The Council supports the intent of the proposal to simplify functions and reduce duplication to improve long-term performance, resilience and value for money but has concerns about the overall process.
 - The Council needs to engage early so Christchurch and its residents' needs are clearly reflected. Strong, evidence-led input can improve performance, reduce duplication, and support better outcomes. Weak engagement risks one-size-fits-all or compromise RRP

outcomes that don't serve Christchurch or the wider region and may shift cost and risk onto Christchurch ratepayers.

- The reform carries several risks including limited capacity for the CTB to perform regional functions while also leading major redesign, and decisions becoming negotiated compromises instead of evidence-based. Christchurch's scale and needs could be diluted by regional or one-size-fits-all solutions. There are also risks of perceived bias in the secretariat, cost-shifting onto Christchurch ratepayers, and delays that reduce momentum and lead to rushed decisions later.
- The Council wants a genuine functional review that tests what works before deciding structure, with evidence-led options and space for sub-regional groupings where appropriate. Strong governance, an independent and appropriately resourced secretariat, and embedded Treaty partnership are essential. The process should be transparent about costs and affordability for Christchurch and the wider region and maintain early momentum so functional analysis can begin promptly.
- The submission will be updated as necessary in response to today's workshop, then finalised and presented to the Policy & Planning Committee for approval on 11 February 2026, ahead of lodgement by 20 February 2026. Staff understand the current timeline is for the matter to go to Cabinet at the end of the quarter, with a Bill expected mid-year.

Key discussion points:

- Elected members discussed the following:
 - The reform timeline and its implications for the Council's long-term planning.
 - How a representation system could fairly and equitably reflect each territorial authority while accounting for population differences.
 - The transparency of Environment Canterbury's spending across the region.
 - The importance of clearly communicating proposed changes, their rationale and their benefits to the public throughout the process.
- In response to elected member questions, staff confirmed:
 - Any formal Council position regarding the current Environment Canterbury councillors or the mandate of current Mayors to make region-wide decisions would need to be established through a Council resolution.

Attachments

- A Simplifying Local Government submission presentation 

The workshop adjourned at 11.00 am and reconvened at 11.25 am.

Councillor Donovan rejoined the workshop via audiovisual link at 11.26 am and left at 11.37 am during Item 3.

3. Annual Plan 2026/27 - General Revaluation and Rates Update

Council Officers Bruce Moher (Head of Finance), Mitchell Shaw (Principal Advisor Finance) and Steve Ballard (Group Treasurer) joined the table to present Item 3 (refer attached presentation) and answer questions from elected members.

Secretarial note: *The presentation attached below contains minor amendments to the document attached to the agenda.*

Key presentation points – Annual Plan 2026/27 financial update:

- Updated financials, since 17 December 2025, show a proposed Draft Annual Plan rates increase of 6.93% plus 1.02% for Te Kaha giving a total average rates increase of 7.95% for 2026/27.
- Fees & Charges have been updated for inflation, with some new fees added for the Otākaro Avon River Corridor private-initiative processes.

Key discussion points – Annual Plan 2026/27 financial update:

- Elected members discussed the levies on Te Kaha tickets.
- In response to elected member questions, staff confirmed:
 - 100% of the analytical savings have been applied to debt reduction via increasing ratings for renewals in the proposed draft Annual Plan 2026/27.
 - Staff have reviewed the opening costs and revenues from Parakiore and this information will be reported through the January Finance & Performance report.
 - The inflation figure of 2.96% used in the presentation represents the impact of inflation on rates in 2026/27. Not all costs are inflated, and costs may also be spread across more than one year. The actual inflation rates are 3.1% for operational expenditure and 3.4% for capital expenditure.

Key presentation points – rates revaluation:

- The underlying philosophy of the rating system is that property values are a broad indicator of ability to pay. The bulk of rates are collected in proportion to property values. Like most councils, Christchurch City Council uses capital value (CV). To ensure rates reflect current market conditions, property values need to be kept as up to date as possible, requiring a comprehensive revaluation every three years.
- Draft numbers were presented to the Council at the end of last year and these have not materially changed. Overall CV change is +3.5%, with significant variation across sectors.
- Audit sign-off for the General Revaluation has been delayed to 20 February 2026, but no material changes are expected.
- Using current rating differentials, and given an overall average rates increase of 7.95%, this would lead to rates increases being felt unevenly with residential increases of around 5.5% and business increases being more than 14%.
- Staff recommend reducing the Business Differential from 2.22 to 2.00 in the Draft Annual Plan to smooth impacts. This would lead to following changes to average rates increases:

	2.22 business differential	2.00 business differential
Residential	5.5%	7.4%
Business	14.3%	8.7%
Remote Rural	4.6%	8.0%


- The business differential was increased at the last revaluation from 1.7 to 2.22.

- Minor rating policy updates include changes to the definition of short-term accommodation to remove the 60-day minimum requirement and clarification of remission dates for earthquake-damaged properties.

Key discussion points – rates revaluation:

- In response to elected member questions, staff confirmed:
 - Public notice of rates revaluation figures will be on 25 February 2025. Updated figures should be live on the Council website on that day or soon after. The Council's website is being updated to simplify the objections process. Staff will work with Quotable Value to process as many objections as possible by 30 June 2026.
 - Most of Christchurch City Council's rates are value-based rather than fixed. Increasing the fixed portion would shift more of the rates burden onto lower-value properties, while higher-value properties pay less, regardless of whether they are residential or business.
 - Applying a rating differential to derelict properties is difficult, largely because it is hard to legally define what constitutes a derelict property. Staff's proposal is that any adjustment to the business differential be carried through to the city vacant differential to keep the ratios consistent.
 - The revised definition of short-term accommodation will shift the burden of proof from the Council to the accommodation owner, making identification easier for staff in 2027, with changes arising from that implemented in FY28. However, the Council will still bear the identification costs.

Attachments

- A Annual Plan 2026/27 - General Revaluation and Rates Update presentation [⇒](#) 

Workshop concluded at 12.00 pm.