
Workshop - Council NOTES

Date: Tuesday 3 February 2026
Time: 10 am
Venue: Camellia Chambers, Civic Offices,
53 Hereford Street, Christchurch

Present

Chairperson	Mayor Phil Mauger
Deputy Chairperson	Deputy Mayor Victoria Henstock
Members	Councillor Kelly Barber
	Councillor David Cartwright
	Councillor Melanie Coker
	Councillor Pauline Cotter
	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

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The agenda was dealt with in the following order.

1. Apologies Ngā Whakapāha

There were no apologies.

Councillor Cartwright joined the Workshop at 10.03 am during Item 2.

Councillor Fields joined the Workshop at 10.19 am during Item 2.

2. Draft submission on development levies proposals

Council Officer Ellen Cavanagh – Senior Policy Analyst joined the table to present Item 2 (refer to the attached presentation), answer questions, and receive feedback from elected members.

Key presentation points:

On 26 November, the Government released consultation material and an exposure draft of parts of the Local Government (Infrastructure Funding) Amendment Bill, which will replace development contributions with a new development levies system.

Development contributions and development levies are broadly similar in that they are both one-off charges that are paid for by developers when undertaking development. The Government states that the aim of levies is to better recover the costs of growth infrastructure from those who benefit from that investment and provide more flexibility for councils compared to the current development contributions scheme.

The overarching principle of development levies is ‘growth pays for growth’. Water organisations will also be able to charge development levies relating to the activities for which they are responsible.

The Government has called for submissions on the proposals which are due Friday 20 February 2026 and staff have prepared a draft submission in response. A final draft will be presented for endorsement at the Policy and Planning Committee meeting on Wednesday 11 February.

The legislation is expected to be in effect in 2030.

Staff flagged the following key points in the draft submission:

- The Council used to have more control over where growth will occur through the release of land using the regulatory planning system. There is less certainty now.
- A significant change proposed is the introduction of a catchment system. Generally, councils can only apply one levy per community area, so only one flat levy across the City would apply (although conceivably there could be a separate one for Banks Peninsula).
- High-cost areas can be charged a base levy plus an additional charge. Council staff are generally supportive of the approach, with some caveats.
- Staff understand what government is trying to do with bespoke assessments, but these should only be done in limited circumstances.
- Staff provided comment on the prescribed methodology, and proposed changes to the current approach proposed. Staff believe the Council needs to be able to adopt a different approach for certain activities.
- Administration fees should cover costs of assessments.
- The Crown should pay fees.

Key discussion points:

- There was a view expressed that under the current regime there is “cross subsidisation” between areas within Christchurch.
- Confirmation was given that development levies will apply to granny flats.
- Concern was expressed that a change from a floor area calculation to a floor area and bedroom calculation for HUE, would mean that high density housing would subsidise low density development.
- Confirmation that the new regime would not explicitly prohibit continuation of the central city residential rebate.
- There was a question as to whether the new regime be more resource intensive than the current. It was noted that the new regime will require upfront resourcing but will give more direction. Although there will be a transition cost this could be offset by increased revenue.
- There was a discussion on the desirability of developers providing infrastructure in a timely fashion and a comment that it would be good if the new regime could facilitate such an approach.
- Feedback was given that it would be good if the new regime could assist the Council in seeking payment from adjacent councils for the development of regional facilities (e.g., Te Kaha).
- Staff noted that more engagement was required on development types
- It would be good to know the cost to the Council of developing a new system.
- The question was asked whether the new regime will cost house builders more or less. Staff stated that this will depend on where the development is. The Council will know more later (Mid-2026).

Attachments

A Development Levies - proposed Council submission 

Councillor Cotter left the meeting at 10.46 am and returned at 10.48 am during Item 3.

Councillor Keown left the meeting at 10.59 am and returned at 11.01 am during Item 3.

3. Traffic Signal Operation and Optimisation

Council Officers Stephen Wright – Acting Head of Transport & Waste Management, Lachlan Beban – Principal Advisor Transportation, and Gerard Rooney – Real Time Operations Engineer joined the table to present Item 3 (refer attached presentation) and answer questions from elected members.

Key presentation points:

The purpose of the Workshop was a response to a request from the Finance and Performance Committee on 17 December, for advice on whether to consult on improving traffic flow through targeted traffic signal optimisation and green light rephasing.

The Workshop advised elected members on the scale and scope of the Council’s traffic signal and transport technology assets, how these systems operate, the level of control available, how they are managed, and how real-time optimisation services are provided.

Council Officers outlined the scope and impacts of different approaches to traffic signal optimisation and re-phasing.

The Workshop provided practical examples of where and how optimisation opportunities can be identified, including:

- Central City traffic signal timings and coordination
- Right-turn arrow operation
- Improvements to pedestrian protection (red left and right turn arrows)
- Public transport signal optimisation

In addition, staff addressed common issues and questions relating to traffic signal operation, explaining how signals work and the impacts and considerations that must be considered when designing signal phasing and timings.

It was noted that asset age is a contributing factor in relation to the range of functionality available to actively manage traffic signal operation. Generally, the older the infrastructure, the more limited the feature set becomes to adjust settings and optimise performance.

Since 2020, there has been no dedicated budget for signal optimisation. Signal optimisation is currently being carried out as part of business-as-usual and resources are made available from existing staff within the Real Times Operations team, or through asset renewal projects.

All signal optimisation and changes to signal timings require careful balance and prioritisation. Simply put, increasing green time for one approach at an intersection means reducing green time for another.

The presentation and workshop outlined some of the common issues raised by road users in relation to signal timings, explored potential opportunities to improve efficiency, and highlighted the possible impacts of making changes.

Questions and key discussion points:

As there were many questions from elected members arising from the presentation, and the Workshop time remaining was limited, the Chair suggested that staff come back to a future Council Workshop to respond to these questions.

Attachments

- A Traffic Signals Operation and Optimisation 

Workshop concluded at 11.16 am.