

Taranaki Regional Council

2018/2028 Long-Term Plan CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

Working with people | caring for Taranaki



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About this Consultation Document

This Consultation Document is part of the process of preparing the *2018/2028 Long-Term Plan*.

Long-Term (10-year) Plans are produced every three years (in place of Annual Plans) and set out the Council’s plans and programmes for the coming decade, with a particular focus on the first three years.

The Consultation Document aims to clearly and succinctly describe the key issues from the Long-Term Plan and highlight the key choices and implications (for example, the impact on rates).

Under the latest legislation, this Consultation Document is the lawful basis for engagement with the community on the matters that the Council is proposing to put in the Long-Term Plan.

Introduction: From the Chairman

We are pleased to present the Consultation Document on the Taranaki Regional Council's proposed *2018/2028 Long-Term Plan*. We believe it strikes a good balance, allowing for prudent management of resources while confidently embracing bold new ambitions.

The Council continues to take a business as planned approach across all of its activities including resource management, biosecurity, hazard management, transport, recreation and culture, and regional advocacy.

But we are also looking to lift a number of our long-running and successful programmes to new levels. We do this out of a strong conviction that the region has what it takes to meet fresh challenges and secure a better future for its people, environment and economy. This conviction is based on years of working alongside the community to achieve good results.

For example, this document details how and why Taranaki is well placed to play a leading role if New Zealand is to achieve its aspiration to be predator-free by 2050. A path is laid out for this region to follow.

And from figurative paths to literal ones, you will also find details of how we propose to build on recent exciting developments at Pukeiti. The iconic property with its internationally significant garden is also set to be a pivotal point in the proposed Taranaki Crossing, adding the region's burgeoning reputation as a visitor destination.

The Council is also confident about its plans to build on recent gains in freshwater quality; to develop its education programme; and to broaden and deepen its relationship with iwi and hapū.

Financially, the impact of our proposals for ratepayers is relatively minor. The Council is proposing an increase of 3.5 percent in its general rates take for 2018/2019. In the last three years, the average general rates increase has been 0.97%. Over the life of the *2018/2028 Long-Term Plan* the general rates increase averages out at 2.8%

This Consultation Document sets out the details and implications of what we're proposing, and how you can tell us what you think about them before we make final decisions.

You can make a submission online at www.trc.govt.nz, or by email or letter. If you want more information, you can see the complete proposed *2018/2028 Long-Term Plan* on our website, or at our office at 47 Cloten Road, Stratford. You can give us a call on 0800 736 222 and talk to one of our staff.

We look forward to hearing from you.



David Macleod
Chairman

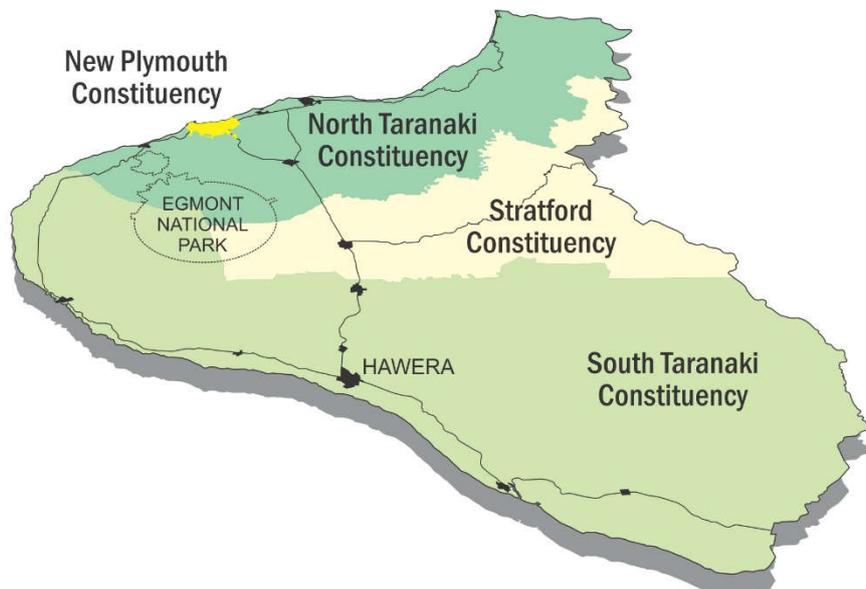


Your councillors

Your Councillors prepared this *Long-Term Plan* with the assistance of Council staff and many others. You are welcome to contact Councillors to discuss this Consultation Document or the proposed *2018/2028 Long-Term Plan*.

The Taranaki Regional Council has eleven representatives elected by the community through local body elections every three years, elected as follows:

New Plymouth constituency	Five members
North Taranaki constituency	Two members
Stratford constituency	One member
South Taranaki constituency	Three members



Our future Taranaki and the Taranaki Regional Council



- Managing and protecting natural resources
- Targeting pest plants and animals
- Riparian management
- Self-help possum control



- Environmental monitoring
- Council gardens
- Buses
- Civil Defence Emergency Management
- Restoring native habitats



- Yarrow Stadium
- Port Taranaki
- Advocating for the region
- Flood protection

Ongoing programmes



Extending our programmes



Major initiatives

Building on our strengths

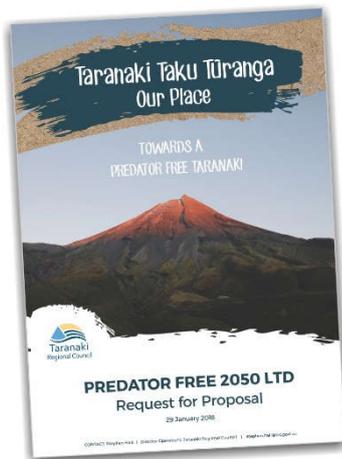
The Council intends continuing to develop and refine our flagship programmes that are enjoying so much success. We also aim to lift a number of them to a higher level to put Taranaki at the forefront and ensure the region is well placed to meet whatever challenges the future brings. With continued community support, much can be achieved.

Of particular interest to the Council is the rapidly gathering momentum to bring two visions to reality: Regional predator-free status, and development of the Taranaki Crossing as a Great Walk on a par with New Zealand's existing recreational attractions of world-wide renown. This Consultation Document gives you an opportunity to express your views on our plans to help achieve these goals.

Other initiatives outlined here include broadening the reach of our education programme; and continuing to develop the way in which we work with Māori.

The Council will also continue with its core work and long-standing programmes. All of our activities are firmly aimed at improving lifestyles, supporting livelihoods and taking Taranaki forward.

Ramping up biodiversity protection - towards a predator-free Taranaki



Biodiversity is an excellent example of the way the regional community in Taranaki works together to achieve a common aim, particularly to eradicate the pests that are recognised as today's greatest threat to native plants and wildlife.

The Council believes Taranaki is very well poised to embrace a bold new vision: regional predator-free status by 2050. Taranaki's advantages are compelling – the commitment and enthusiasm of its people, a well-established culture of cooperation among relevant groups and agencies, and relatively compact geography. Adding to this impetus are the potential support and resourcing from the central Government's Predator Free New Zealand 2050 programme, and from a growing number of philanthropic organisations taking a strong interest in this field. And even greater momentum comes from rapidly developing advances in ever-more-efficient trapping technology.

As an initial step, the Council proposes to commit to an initial three-year spending programme. A key element would be a large-scale predator control and suppression covering the entire Waiwhakaiho catchment trial, foreshadowed in last year's Annual Plan. Added to this would be another trial aimed at completely eliminating possums in a 5,000-hectare area west of the mountain including public conservation land and private land, and covering rural and built-up zones. A separate programme is also proposed to reduce predator numbers on 70,000 hectares of land in and around Mt Taranaki.

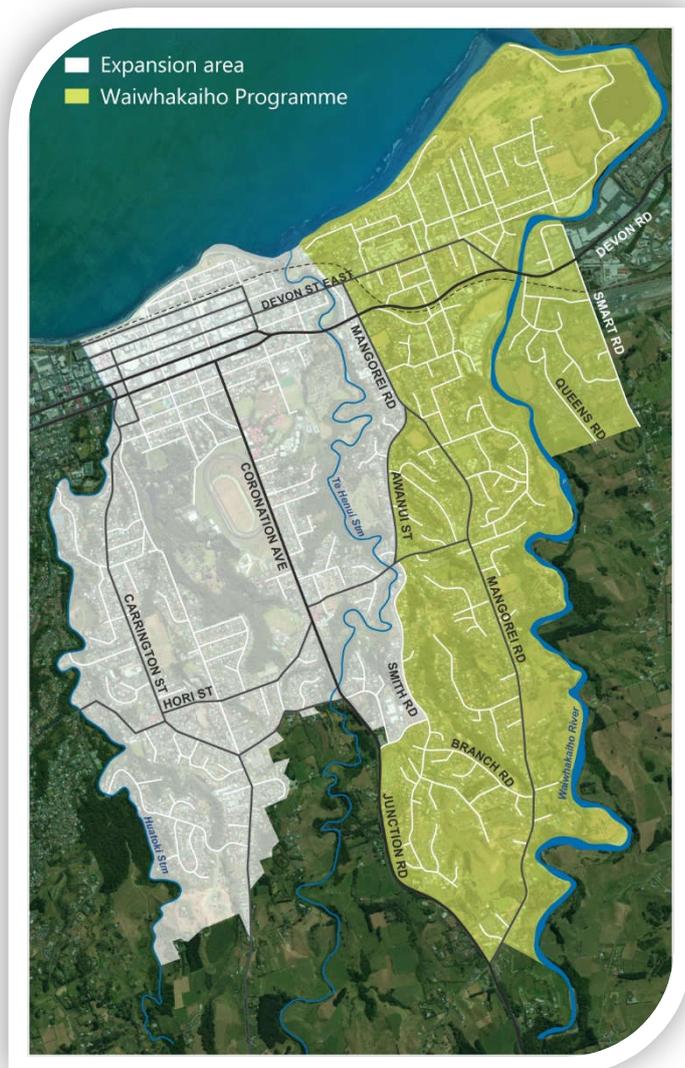
These programmes would draw on the resources and expertise of the Council, its Wild for Taranaki partners and central Government's Predator-Free New Zealand 2050 programme.

Beyond the first three years, the Council would consider extending these activities across large chunks of the ring plain, also connecting and expanding large existing predator control programmes in the eastern and northern hillcountry.

It's important to note that these programmes proposed for the first three years are worthwhile in their own right and will achieve valuable, sustainable outcomes even if the longer-term predator-free goal has to be modified, delayed or abandoned.

WHAT IT MEANS FOR RATEPAYERS:

Over three years, the predator control programme is budgeted to cost approximately \$7 million. Of this, \$5.3 million needs to come from external sources before the project can begin. The project will not proceed in the above proposed form without the \$5.3m of external funding. The Council's share is \$580,000 a year over three years, or \$1.74 million over the three years. The Council's share is from general funds (sourced from general rates and investment returns). Annually, the \$580,000 equates to \$1.67 for every \$100,000 of a property's capital value. A property with a capital value of \$400,000 would contribute about \$6.67 a year.



OPTIONS FOR CONSULTATION:

- No change, that is carry on with the current predator control programmes as outlined in the *2017/2018 Annual Plan*. The \$580,000 a year for three years will not be expended and the associated funding will not be required.
- Implement the proposed first three years of a region wide predator control programme, focusing on the Waiwhakaiho catchment, around Mt Taranaki and trialling possum eradication at an operational cost of \$580,000 per year, subject to securing external funding partnerships – this is the Council's preferred option.
- Extend the implementation beyond three years at a higher cost over a wider area subject to securing external funding partnerships. If external funding is secured for longer than three years, the project will be extended at \$580,000 pa. This extended funding will be included in the preparation and adoption of the *2021/2031 Long-Term Plan*.

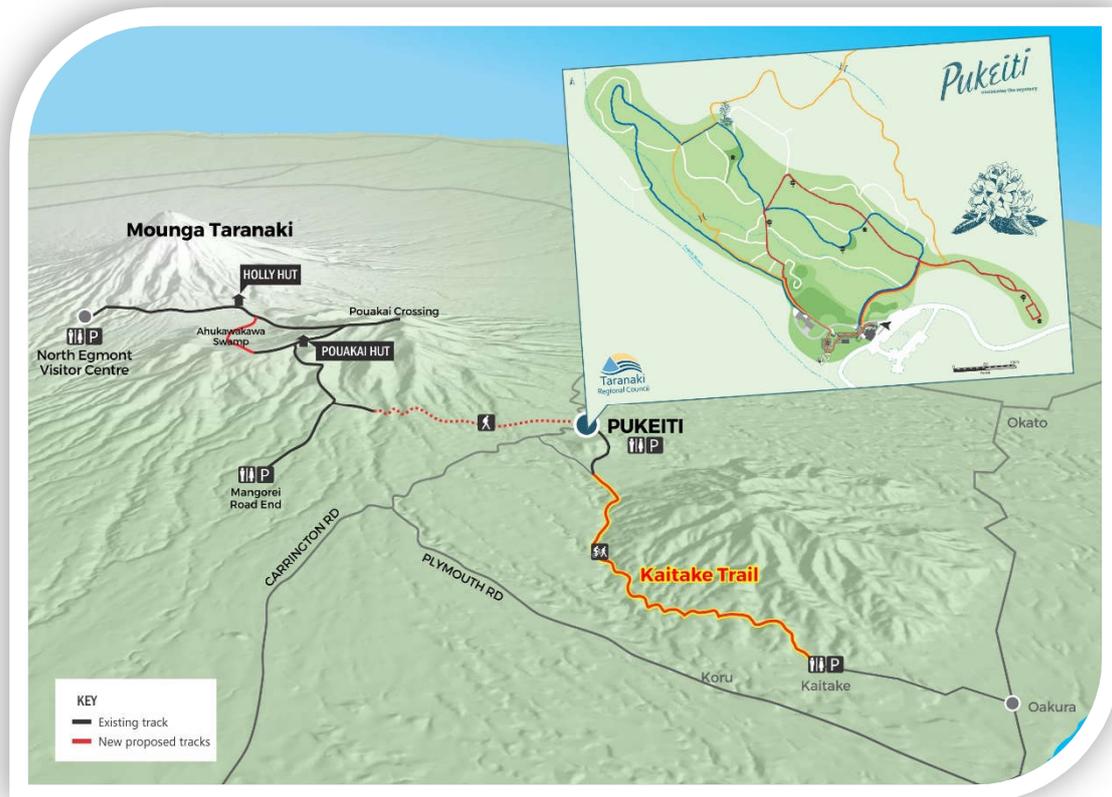
Pukeiti – pivotal point in new Taranaki Crossing

As a result of the Council’s upgrades at Pukeiti over the past three years, the world-class heritage garden now offers a world-class visitor experience. This is borne out by visitor numbers and feedback. But the Council believes Pukeiti’s potential is still far from fully tapped and given location, history and high quality, it is perfectly placed to become a hub in a wider visitor experience centred on the ‘Taranaki Crossing’ from the mountain down its western flanks to the surf. A number of agencies are working together to develop the concept.



This Council believes it’s appropriate to make a significant investment to further the Taranaki Crossing project, as part of our work in improving lifestyles and taking Taranaki forward. Proposals over the coming six years are:

- To complete the existing upgrade programme at Pukeiti, including the replacement Lodge, carpark extension, landscaping, and new features for children’s activities.
- To construct a trail from Pukeiti down a New Plymouth District Council paper road, to the coast at Oakura, as an integral part of the Taranaki Crossing. This link would include a short canopy walk within the Pukeiti portion of the trail. This Kaitake Trail segment of the larger Taranaki Crossing would be implemented as a joint project between the Taranaki Regional Council, and the New Plymouth District Council requiring the agreement of both authorities. It would be a high quality walkway and cycling track. The Taranaki Crossing is identified as a key action arising from Tapuae Roa – the regional development strategy for Taranaki.
- To complete outer tracks and a lookout at Pukeiti.
- To establish a family tramping hut within Pukeiti, as well as a new link to nearby commercial accommodation.



WHAT IT MEANS FOR RATEPAYERS:

For capital developments at Pukeiti, including construction and ongoing maintenance funding for that portion of the proposed Kaitake trail that would lie within Pukeiti, the Council proposes spending \$5.9 million over 10 years (\$1.439 million in 2018/2019). This equates to increased depreciation charges of less than \$50,000 a year. Operational and maintenance costs will be funded from existing budgets for Pukeiti. For that portion of the proposed Kaitake Trail that would be formed on the New Plymouth District Council paper road, it is proposed that the Council provide to the New Plymouth District Council a grant of \$3.5 million over a three year period to develop the trail with any ongoing maintenance costs lying with the NPDC. This grant would not be funded directly by rates, but from Council cash reserves, resulting in a loss of interest income to the Council of approximately \$140,000 a year.

OPTIONS FOR CONSULTATION:

- Undertake no future developments at Pukeiti, instead focusing on completion of existing developments - at a cost of \$900,000 of new capital over three years.
- Undertake a range of new developments at and linked to Pukeiti, positioning it as a recreation hub for a range of activities, including funding the creation of a new track linking Pukeiti to the coast – a key component of the Mountain to Surf Taranaki Crossing – at a capital cost of \$1.439 million in 2018/2019 and \$5.9 million over 10 years, plus an operating grant of \$3.5 million spread over three years (2019/2020 to 2021/2022). This is the Council’s preferred option.
- Do not fund the new track linking Pukeiti to the coast, but undertake a range of new developments at Pukeiti, focusing only on the 360ha Pukeiti property and not the Taranaki Crossing link to the coast – at a capital cost of \$1.439 million in 2018/2019 and \$5.9 million over 10 years.

Extending our existing programmes

Freshwater quality

The Council's [Riparian Management Programme](#) is now moving into its final phase. Farmers on the ring plain and further afield have voluntarily protected thousands of kilometres of streams with fences and millions of native plants. Regulations will be developed, primarily to bring a remaining few land owners into the programme.

Revision of the Council's [Fresh Water Plan](#) continues to involve ongoing effort on a number of fronts and remains a work-in-progress. Meanwhile, we continue to get very good results from our comprehensive freshwater monitoring programmes. These programmes demonstrate we are improving year on year and show our freshwater quality is as good as or better than many other regions. Practical measures, such as our riparian management programme, and new requirements firmly based on existing regulations, are bringing about region-wide improvements, for example, to dairy effluent treatment, to the benefit of freshwater quality throughout the region.

The Council is also well-placed to meet central Government's new [freshwater monitoring requirements](#) as the regulations are developed and released.

Education

The Council's long-running education programme has, over the years, reached into every school in the region at relatively modest cost. In 2016/2017, more than 8,000 students were involved in class visits or field trips under the programme. Feedback from schools, teachers and students is consistently positive.

The Council intends to continue this fruitful partnership with the region's schools, and also to broaden its educational outreach by funding a regional position for the Enviroschools organisation. This organisation takes a whole-school approach to promote long-term action on sustainability and environmental protection. It currently works with 20 schools and six kindergartens in the region. The number of schools could potentially double with Council support.

Working with iwi and hapū

In the past year the Council has deepened its connection with Māori, welcoming three iwi-chosen representatives on to each of its two key standing committees, Consents and Regulatory, and Policy and Planning.

The Council is looking to extend the relationship in operational areas, particularly relating to resource consents. This move is prompted in part by new legislative requirements – but also because the time is right. All but one of the region's eight iwi have reached Treaty settlements with the Crown, and the final one is well into negotiation.

The Council is working with iwi and with the Taranaki Mayoral Forum to find the best way to make progress. It is most likely to involve helping iwi to extend their capacity to contribute to resource consent processes and policy processes, as well as extending the Council's own capacity to engage with iwi and hapū.



Getting on with business

The Council will continue with core business and long-running programmes, seeking as always to maintain high standards and make further improvements.

This includes efficiently [processing resource consents](#); [setting, monitoring and enforcing environmental standards](#); [providing and promoting public transport services](#); [maintaining Tūpare and Hollard Gardens](#), as well as Pukeiti, to a high standard and promoting their use; and [advocating on behalf of Taranaki on matters of regional interest](#).

The Council will also maintain its existing [flood protection schemes](#) for the Waiwhakaiho and Waitara Rivers, and develop its flood diversion scheme for Opunake in partnership with the South Taranaki District Council. It will continue its involvement with the [Taranaki Civil Defence Emergency Management Group](#), noting that administrative arrangements are changing following a review of structure and delivery.

The Council also intends maintaining the successful partnership with the New Plymouth District Council in which the NPDC operates and funds the operations of [Yarrow Stadium](#) and this Council funds its long-term maintenance and development. A detailed investigation is currently under way into the work required to bring the stands up to adequate earthquake standards. When details, options and costings are clear, the Council envisages consulting the regional community on the next steps that should be taken.

The bottom line

The programmes and activities outlined above represent, in some cases, significant enhancements to what's occurred in previous years. For most ratepayers, however, the financial impact can be measured in tens of dollars over the course of a year.

The Council is proposing an increase of 3.5 percent in its general rates take for 2018/2019. In percentage terms it is slightly higher than increases in recent years. But it is off a low base – this Council remains one of the lowest-rating local authorities in New Zealand.

Port Taranaki Ltd is forecasting a period of good and improving trading conditions in the short to medium term. This will result in increased dividends. The Council has taken a conservative approach to estimating dividends after consulting with Port Taranaki Ltd. The forecast dividend levels are \$8m pa over the ten years of the *2018/2028 Long-Term Plan*. The Council has accepted these estimates of dividend flows.

Dividends are a significant portion of the Council's revenue streams. Port Taranaki Ltd operates in a highly-competitive trading environment and there are no guarantees that it will be able to continue to deliver forecast dividend levels. Accordingly there is a risk that profits and dividends may fall at some future point. This is the biggest risk to the delivery of the Council's proposed programmes.

Over the ten years, there are fluctuations in the level of changes in general rates. Unchanged, these fluctuations would result in significant increases in some years and significant decreases in other years. To smooth the impact of rates changes, the Dividend Equalisation reserve is going to be utilised. In the early years of the *Plan*, the Reserve will fund the impact of changes to works programmes. In the later years, funds will be transferred back to the Reserve. The net impact of this approach is to eliminate the fluctuations in rates changes but, by the end of the life of this *Plan*, retain the overall value of the Reserve—refer to the graph on page 17. See the following pages for a more detailed breakdown.

Plans for the next ten years



The Council intends to keep strongly focused on its core activities, all of which are important for the social, cultural, economic and environmental well-being of the region. All contribute to the achievement of overall sustainability for the region and the goals of *Tapuae Roa – the regional development strategy for Taranaki*. These activities include:

- protecting our rivers, lakes and water from pollution
- managing the wise and productive use of water and soil
- protecting the quality of our air
- managing our coastal resources wisely
- controlling animal and plant pests
- providing flood protection
- protecting biodiversity
- promoting efficient and safe transport networks
- providing public transport services, especially for transport disadvantaged people
- ensuring emergency and civil defence systems are well prepared for and respond effectively in times of need
- managing regional garden amenities and supporting the protection of heritage
- ensuring the ongoing development and maintenance of Yarrow Stadium
- owning and ensuring good governance of Port Taranaki Ltd
- advocating for and promoting the best interests of Taranaki people and the sustainable development of the region.

Taranaki Regional Council: Why, how and what

Mission

To work for a thriving and prosperous Taranaki by:

- Promoting the sustainable use, development and protection of Taranaki's natural and physical resources;
- Promoting and providing for Taranaki's regionally significant services, amenities and infrastructure; and
- Safeguarding Taranaki's people and resources from natural and other hazards;

GROUPS OF ACTIVITIES

Resource management



Transport



Hazard management



DESCRIPTION

The Resource management group of activities promotes the sustainable use, development and protection of Taranaki's natural and physical resources of land and soil, water, air, and coast in accordance with the Council's statutory duties, regional planning objectives and agreed national and other standards.

The Transport group of activities promotes an affordable, integrated, safe, responsive and sustainable transport system that assists economic development and safety and personal security, improves access and mobility, protects and promotes public health and ensures environmental sustainability.

The Hazard management group of activities enhances the safety and wellbeing of the public and protects property from hazards and minimises damage by floods and river erosion.

AIMS

- Protection of the life-supporting capacity of water in-stream uses and values
- Efficient allocation of water for consumptive use
- Maintenance and enhancement of all water quality in our rivers and lakes, groundwater and coastal waters
- Protection of riparian land in intensively farmed (predominantly dairying) catchments
- Sustainable land use in accordance with the physical capabilities of the land and soil resources
- Enhanced opportunities for sustainable development and best use of hill country
- Maintenance of a high standard of ambient air quality
- Resource management policies, plans and strategies that deliver efficient and effective management of the natural and physical resources of the region and are acceptable to the community
- Efficient and effective resource consent processing, administration, compliance monitoring and enforcement

- Land transport policies and activities that deliver efficient, effective and value for money transport solutions, land transport infrastructure and services for Taranaki.
- Provision and increasing use of community passenger transport services
- Safe navigation for all users of the waters of Port Taranaki and its approaches

- A civil defence emergency management system that delivers efficient and effective civil defence emergency management in Taranaki that is acceptable to the community
- Effective emergency readiness and response capability and capacity in the region
- Accurate and timely flood warnings
- Flood protection and drainage schemes that protect life and property

- Representing Taranaki's interests and contributions to the regional, national and international community.

Recreation, culture and heritage



Biosecurity and biodiversity



GROUPS OF ACTIVITIES

Representation, advocacy and investment management



DESCRIPTION

The Recreation, culture and heritage group of activities supports and develops regional gardens, maintains an ongoing partnership relationship with Puke Ariki regional museum and library and ensures the continuing maintenance and development of Yarrow Stadium and the TSB Superscreen as part of a prosperous and vibrant Taranaki.

The Biosecurity and biodiversity group of activities minimises the actual or potential impact of pest plants and animals on the environment and on the Taranaki economy and community and maintains and enhances the indigenous biodiversity of the Taranaki region.

The Regional representation, advocacy and investment management group of activities maintains effective and open community representation as an important part of the democratic process; advocates on behalf of the Taranaki community on matters of regional interest; implements and further develops a programme of information transfer, advice and education on the Council's activities; and ensures that the equity, property and treasury investments owned by the Council are managed efficiently.

AIMS

- Tupare, Hollar Gardens and Pukeiti recognised as regionally or nationally significant gardens
- A role in implementation of the Taranaki Crossing linking Pukeiti to the coast
- Partnership relationship with the Puke Ariki regional museum and library
- Presentation and operation of Yarrow Stadium as one of New Zealand's premier regional sporting stadium and venue

- Pest management plans that deliver efficient and effective management of the Council's biosecurity functions
- Pest animals controlled to minimize their adverse effects on biodiversity, primary production and the regional economy and environment
- Pest plants controlled or eradicated to minimize their adverse effects on biodiversity, primary production and the regional economy and environment
- Maintenance and enhancement of indigenous biodiversity
- Continue programmes to ensure Taranaki is one of the most advanced biodiversity regions in New Zealand and place the region to contribute to New Zealand's predator-free goals

- Effective advocacy on behalf of the Taranaki community on matters that affect the statutory responsibilities of the Council or that relate to matters of regional significance which are of interest or concern to the people of Taranaki
- Port Taranaki Ltd ownership as a strategic investment
- Effective management of property and treasury investments owned by the Council

We will do this by leading with responsibility, working co-operatively, encouraging community participation, and taking into account the Treaty of Waitangi.

Major objectives for each of the Council's business groups over the next decade are set out below.

Resource Management

Prepare, adopt and maintain a comprehensive suite of legally compliant, high quality and publicly considered [policies, plans and strategies](#) that will deliver to the Taranaki community, efficient and effective management of the Council's functions and Taranaki's natural and physical resources.

In 2018/2019, progress the review of the Regional Fresh Water and Land Plan and complete the review of the Regional Coastal Plan.

Process some 4,000 applications for [resource consents](#); administer all current resource consents; undertake [compliance monitoring](#) of resource consents, including carrying out more than 33,000 inspections of agricultural and small business premises and completing over 1,500 tailored compliance monitoring programmes for major consents. Respond to [pollution incidents](#) and where necessary undertake successful [enforcement action](#). These activities will be carried out in an efficient and effective manner.

During 2018/2019, over 400 applications for resource consents are expected to be processed with not less than 100% of accepted resource consent applications being processed within statutory timeframes. There will be approximately 150 compliance monitoring programmes designed and implemented for major consents and 3,300 inspections of agricultural discharges and minor industrial operations will be completed. Further, all pollution and other complaints will be responded to, and where necessary control, clean-up and enforcement actions will be initiated.

Monitor and investigate the [state of the environment](#) in Taranaki and the effects of the implementation of policies and plans according to monitoring procedures and programmes. This will be done by applying recognised and reputable methods of data collection, analysis and reporting.

In 2018/2019, the annual state of the environment monitoring programme will be undertaken and the programme for the 2019/2020 year will be comprehensively reviewed. Live regional data on hydrology, meteorology, soil moisture and bathing beach water quality will be available on the Council's website.

Provide relevant research information for resource management purposes through a series of [resource investigations and projects](#).

In 2018/2019, the projects include continuing to support the best practice dairying catchments study in the Waiokura Stream catchment; supporting studies into the behaviour and bioavailability of cadmium in agricultural soils and fertilizer; investigating the benefits of riparian management for ecological health; and engaging in Envirolink and other science research project development opportunities and strategies for regional councils.



Promote [sustainable land management](#) and [riparian management](#) by providing property planning services, in conjunction with landowners, which identify actions for land use management on individual properties. The Council intends, by the end of the period of this *Plan*, to have active or completed riparian plans in place for over 99% of dairy farms and active comprehensive farm plans in place for over 69% of hill country in private ownership. Over the life of the *Plan*, approximately three million plants – mostly native species – will have been supplied to holders of these plans to support its sustainable land management programme, making it one of the largest water and soil management programmes in New Zealand. By 30 June 2020, 100% of riparian plan streams to be protected by fencing and 90% protected by vegetation, where recommended.

During 2018/2019, prepare comprehensive, agroforestry and conservation farm plans covering not less than an additional 1,000 hectares and complete 100 riparian management plans. Monitor and report on the implementation of 2,600 riparian management plans and 100 farm plans. Approximately 450,000 plants will be supplied to plan holders for planting. Timely, high quality advice to promote sustainable land and water management throughout Taranaki will be provided.

Promote the protection of the environment through a programme of [enhancement grants](#).





During 2018/2019, continue to use environmental enhancement grants for the protection of regionally significant or important wetlands or parts of the environment identified as regionally significant.

Biosecurity and Biodiversity

Prepare, adopt and maintain a comprehensive suite of legally compliant, high quality and publicly considered [policies, plans and strategies](#) that will deliver, to the Taranaki community, efficient and effective management

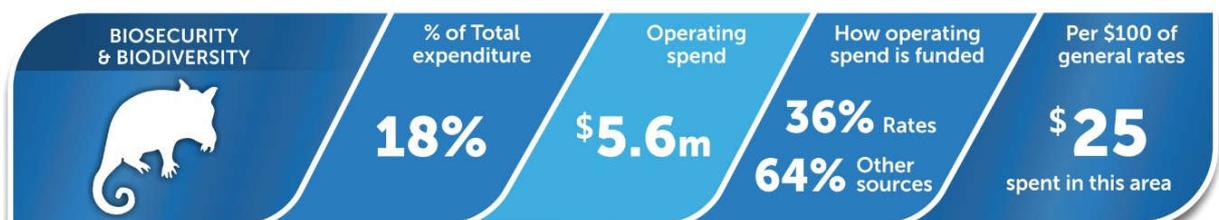


of the Council’s biosecurity functions.

In 2018/2019, the Council will implement the Pest Management Plan for Taranaki.

Control [pest animals](#) to minimize their adverse effects on biodiversity, primary production, and the regional economy and environment in accordance with the approved pest management plan.

In 2018/2019, the Council will, as part of its self-help possum control programme, ensure that landholders keep possum populations below acceptable limits (residual trap catch rate below 10%) on the 235,000 hectares of land already within the programme.





Control and/or eradicate **pest plants** to minimize their adverse effects on biodiversity, primary production, and the regional economy and environment in accordance with the approved pest management plan.

In 2018/2019, the Council will undertake the direct control and eradication of all known infestations of Senegal tea, climbing spindleberry, Madeira Vine, moth plant and giant reed in the region; confine the spread of or reduce the extent of 'eradication' and 'containment' pest plants through a programme of inspections and where necessary enforcement on all properties; and take necessary actions on all pest plant complaints.

Maintain and enhance the indigenous **biodiversity** of the Taranaki region, working alongside landowners and other groups and agencies according to the Council's policies and biodiversity strategy priorities.

During 2018/2019, prepare at least 20 biodiversity plans per annum for properties containing key native ecosystems (KNE), initiate and support implementation of work programmes on all KNE's with a biodiversity plan and undertake a trial programme to test large-scale predator suppression and eradication techniques across a landscape scale. The trial will target possums, mustelids (weasels, ferrets and stoats), feral cats and rats.

Transport



Promote an integrated, safe, responsive and sustainable land transport system for Taranaki; promote the provision of [community passenger transport](#) in Taranaki; and assist the [special transport needs](#) of the transport disadvantaged. Promote [safe navigation](#) for all users of the waters of Port Taranaki.

In 2018/2019, the Council will maintain the Regional Land Transport Plan for Taranaki and the Regional Public Transport Plan for Taranaki. Continue to operate extended passenger transport services in New Plymouth urban areas and regional Taranaki, and the total mobility subsidy assistance programme, subject to funding approval processes. Continue to provide harbourmaster and harbour warden services for Port Taranaki to implement relevant harbour bylaws and regulations.



Hazard management



Promote and enhance, within the Taranaki community, an integrated, comprehensive [civil defence emergency management](#) system.

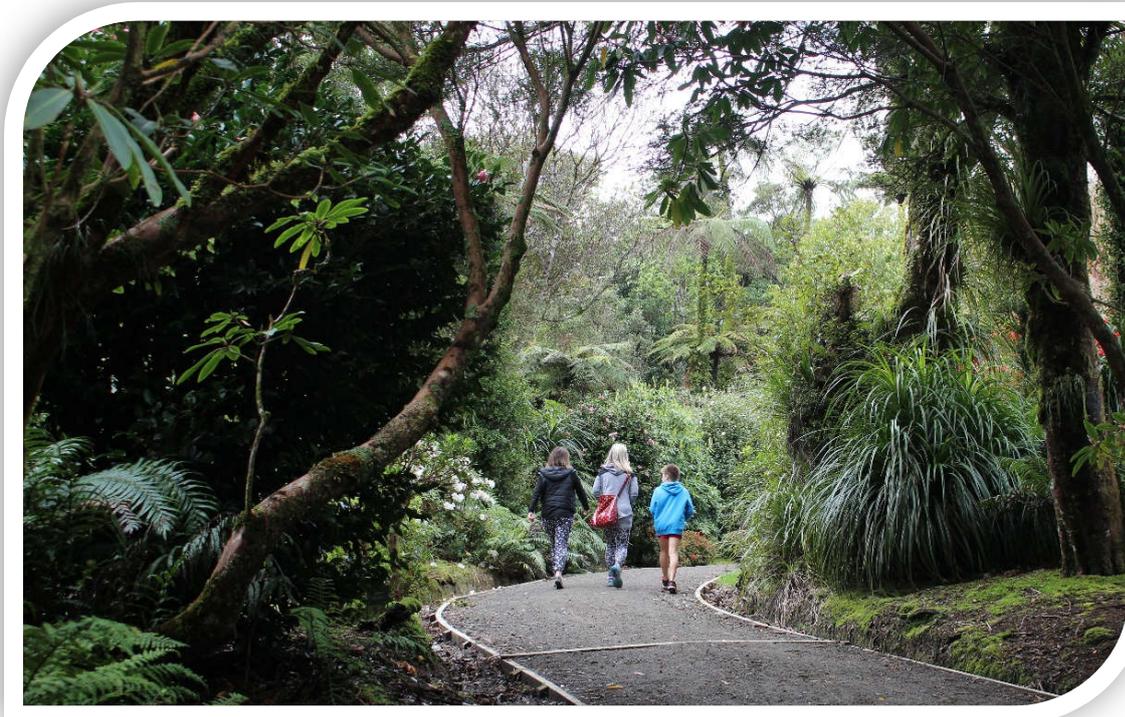
In 2018/2019, the Council will implement the Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Plan for Taranaki and the 2018/2019 Taranaki Civil Defence Emergency Management Annual Business Plan.

Manage and maintain the Waitara and Waiwhakaiho [flood protection schemes](#) and manage other minor river control schemes to accepted or agreed design standards to minimize or prevent damage by floods and river erosion. The Council will continue to provide accurate and [timely flood warnings](#) and flood control advice, and undertake minor works and associated actions to minimise or prevent damage by floods and river erosion.

In 2018/2019, all flood control schemes will be maintained to the 1 in 100 year levels of protection or to the standard set in the relevant asset management plan for minor schemes. Rainfall and river levels will be monitored and timely flood warnings issued.



Recreation, culture and heritage

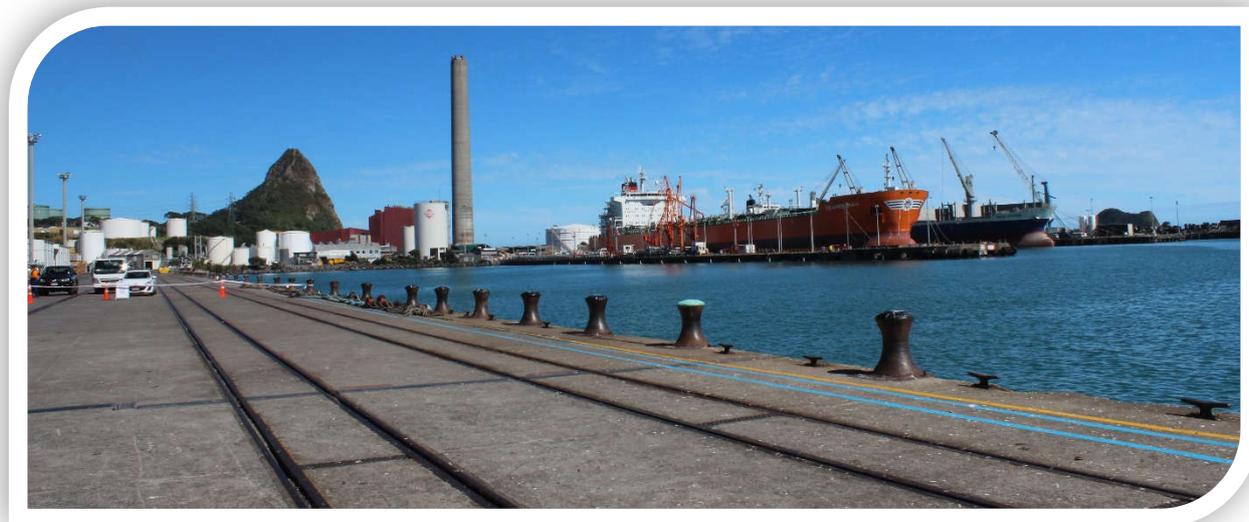


Facilitate the continued development and maintenance of [Yarrow Stadium](#) and ensure that [Tupare, Hollard Gardens and Pukeiti](#) are maintained as regionally significant recreational and heritage amenities.

In 2018/2019, continue to provide funding for the ongoing maintenance and upgrade of Yarrow Stadium through the Taranaki Stadium Trust. Continue to implement the Pukeiti asset management plan. Maintain an ongoing partnership relationship with the Puke Ariki regional museum and library, including the ongoing use of display and presentation material within an annual project.



Regional representation, advocacy & investment management



Ensure that the Council-owned port company, Port Taranaki Ltd is efficiently managed as a successful business and that property and treasury **investments** are efficiently managed. Promote **community awareness** and understanding of the Council's functions and activities, and make quality and timely information publicly available. This area of activity will include further development of the social media, mobile and on-line presence. Continue its **environmental education programme** where, over the period of this Plan, with approximately 50,000 school students in class visits, field trips and visits to educational areas.

Specifically in 2018/2019, engage with the community across a range of channels including print and digital publications, news media, websites, mobile and social media, and implement an environmental awards programme. Provide an environmental education programme for school children and the wider community including class visits, field trips and the Pukeiti Rainforest School.

Ensure that **public representation** by the Council and its Committees is carried out effectively and efficiently according to statutory requirements and advocate on behalf of the Taranaki community on matters of regional interest or concern

Over the life of this *Plan* the Council intends to retain a strong financial position with no public debt and maintain sound financial performance with minimum required rate increases.

The total rate take (general and targeted rates) is planned to increase by \$613,463. Specifically for 2018/2019, the general rate will increase by \$266,415 or 3.5%. The uniform annual general charge will be \$56. Rates for Yarrow Stadium remain unchanged from last year. River control and flood protection targeted rates will increase by \$10,260 and targeted rates for passenger transport services will increase by \$341,463.



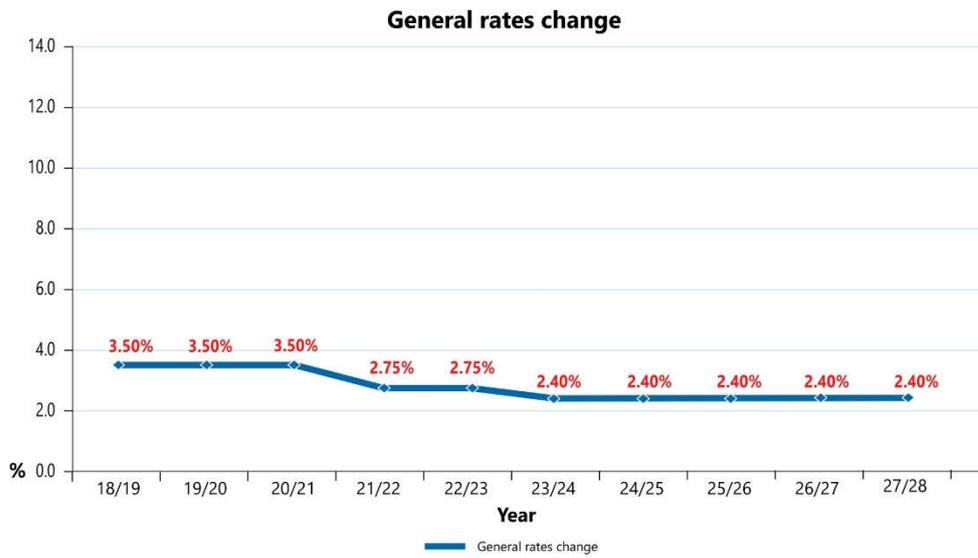
Financial information



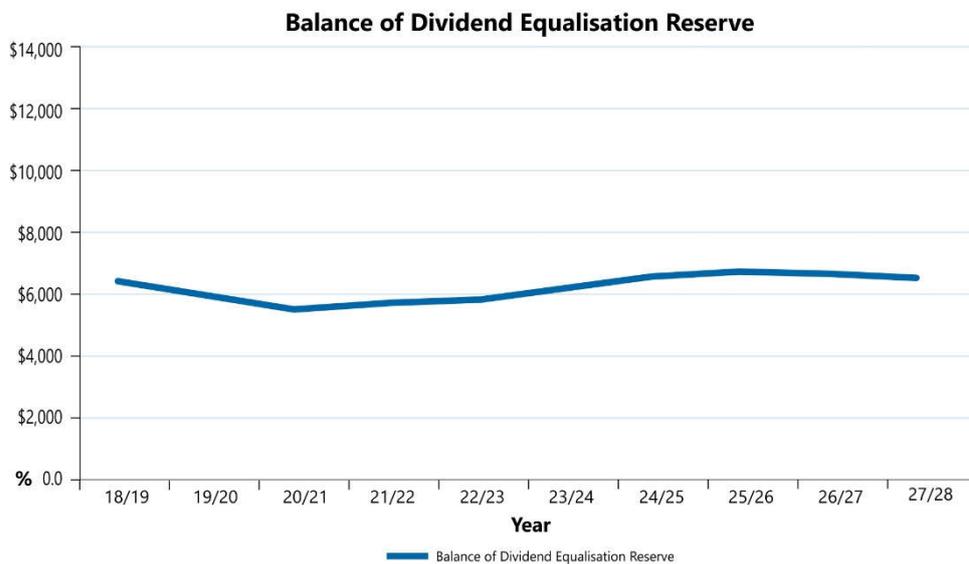
The Council is in a strong, stable and sustainable financial position. The Council's *Financial Strategy* and the proposed *2018/2028 Long-Term Plan* deliver a full range of works programmes, including a number of new initiatives and/or extensions of existing programmes, whilst maintaining that relative financial strength. The increased works programme is funded by an increase in the level of dividends from Port Taranaki Ltd combined with some changes in general rates.

The key points in the *Financial Strategy* are:

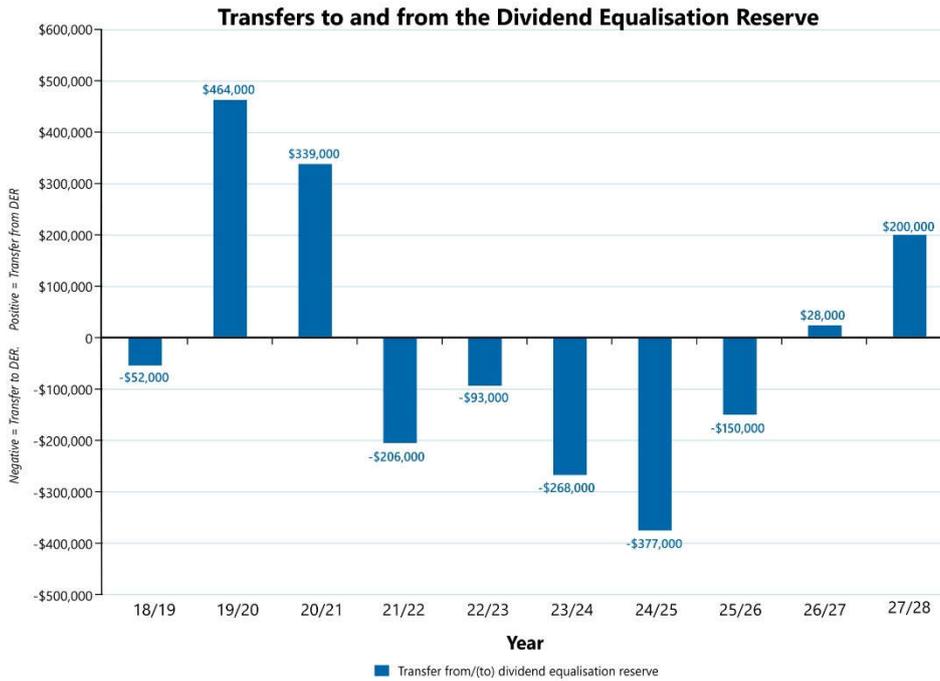
- the range of programmes provided for in the adopted suite of plans, strategies and policies are being delivered by the *Plan*
- the financial resources required for these programmes are included in the estimates
- the financial resources required for the delivery of the proposed new initiatives and/or extensions of existing programmes are fully provided for in this *Plan*
- the maintenance and development of the Council's flood control schemes, regional gardens and Yarrow Stadium (except as noted elsewhere) are provided for in this *Plan*
- over the life of the *Plan*, there is a balanced budget, albeit there are surpluses and deficits in individual years that are accommodated by the use of the Dividend Equalisation Reserve
- there are no current plans for external public debt over the life of this *Plan*
- the strong financial position is retained over the life of this *Plan*.



Over the ten years, there are fluctuations in the level of changes in general rates. Unchanged, these fluctuations would result in significant increases in some years and significant decreases in other years. To smooth the impact of rates changes, the Dividend Equalisation reserve (the Reserve) is going to be utilised.

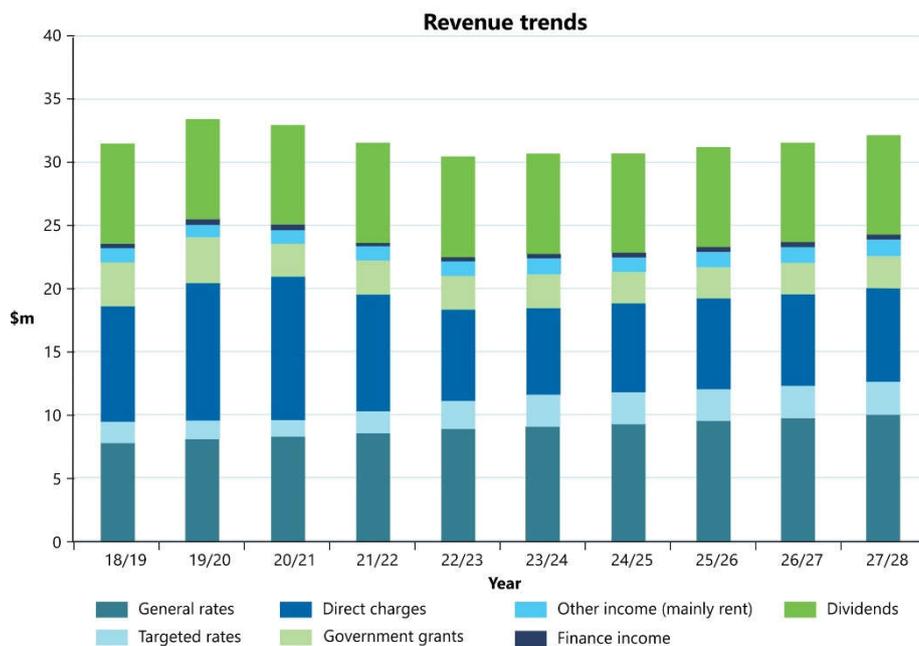


In the early years of the *Plan*, the Reserve will fund the impact of changes to works programmes. In the later years, funds will be transferred back to the Reserve.



The net impact of this approach is to eliminate the fluctuations in rates changes but, by the end of the life of this *Plan*, retain the overall value of the Reserve. Specifically, this *Plan* provides for the following movements in the Reserve:

By any metric (such as rates per dwelling, rates per capita, etc.), rates are the bottom end of rates set by local authorities in New Zealand. The recent history is of minimal rates increases. The rates and rate increases are underpinned by returns from investments (particularly dividends from Port Taranaki Ltd). Significant rate increases have only occurred when dividends from Port Taranaki Ltd have dropped.

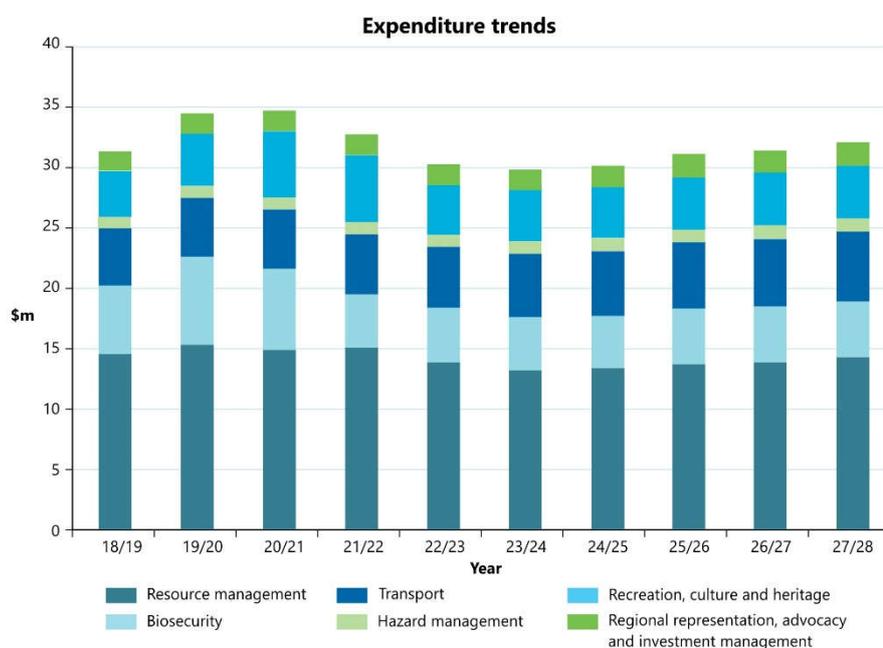


Port Taranaki Ltd is forecasting a period of good and improving trading conditions in the short to medium term. This will result in increased dividends. The Council has taken a conservative approach to estimating dividends after consulting with Port Taranaki Ltd.

Dividends are a significant portion of the Council’s revenue streams. Port Taranaki Ltd operates in a highly-competitive trading environment and there are no guarantees that it will be able to continue to deliver forecast dividend levels. Accordingly there is a risk that profits and dividends may fall at some future point. This is the biggest risk to the delivery of the Council’s proposed programmes.

The Council has a range of tools in place to manage this risk, but ultimately a reduction in dividends would increase the rates requirement. The Council will, where feasible and financially prudent, use the Dividend Equalisation Reserve to smooth the impact of dividend fluctuations on general rates. As a guide, a \$75,000 reduction in dividends equates to a 1% increase in general rates. Therefore, a reduction in dividends of \$1m would result in a general rates increase of approximately 12 to 13%.

Provided Port Taranaki Ltd delivers the dividend levels forecast and there is no change in the key forecasting assumptions, total rates will not exceed 60% of total revenue and total rates increases will not exceed 5% of total expenditure.



The Council is not proposing any significant changes in its approach to funding operating and capital expenditure. Accordingly, there is no significant change in the incidence of rates and charges and how that burden is distributed across the regional community. There are no proposed changes to its *Revenue and Financing Policy*.

The following are examples of the level of total rates that different groups of ratepayers will incur in 2018/2019 under the proposed *2018/2028 Long-Term Plan*. All figures are GST exclusive. These figures are calculated on the equalised capital value of each district. The actual rates struck will be on the unequalised capital value. Accordingly, there will be some differences (expected to be minor) between the figures below and the final rates figures charged.

Ratepayers in the New Plymouth and North Taranaki constituencies:

In these constituencies ratepayers incur a mixture of capital value general rates, uniform annual general charges, capital value targeted rates and land value targeted rates. To determine the rates for any property, refer to the table for that type of property and then look by capital value (columns) and land value (rows). For instance, a residential ratepayer with a capital value of \$300,000 and a land value of \$100,000 will pay \$138.61 in total regional council rates (see highlighted example below).

Commercial and industrial property

Capital value of property:	\$200,000	\$300,000	\$500,000	\$750,000	\$1,000,000
Land value of property:					
\$50,000	\$117.02	\$143.73	\$197.16	\$263.94	\$330.72
\$100,000	\$124.61	\$151.32	\$204.75	\$271.53	\$338.32
\$150,000	\$132.20	\$158.92	\$212.34	\$279.13	\$345.91
\$300,000	\$154.98	\$181.69	\$235.12	\$301.90	\$368.68
\$500,000	\$185.35	\$212.06	\$265.49	\$332.27	\$399.05

Residential property

Capital value of property:	\$200,000	\$300,000	\$500,000	\$750,000	\$1,000,000
Land value of property:					
\$50,000	\$110.66	\$137.38	\$190.80	\$257.59	\$324.37
\$100,000	\$111.90	\$138.61	\$192.04	\$258.82	\$325.61
\$150,000	\$113.14	\$139.85	\$193.28	\$260.06	\$326.84
\$300,000	\$116.85	\$143.56	\$196.99	\$263.77	\$330.56

Small holdings property

Capital value of property:	\$200,000	\$300,000	\$500,000	\$750,000	\$1,000,000
Land value of property:					
\$50,000	\$110.16	\$136.87	\$190.30	\$257.08	\$323.86
\$100,000	\$110.89	\$137.60	\$191.03	\$257.81	\$324.60
\$150,000	\$111.62	\$138.33	\$191.76	\$258.54	\$325.33
\$300,000	\$113.82	\$140.53	\$193.96	\$260.74	\$327.52

Farmland property

Capital value of property:	\$500,000	\$1,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$3,000,000	\$5,000,000
Land value of property:					
\$250,000	\$190.74	\$324.30	\$591.43	\$858.57	\$1,392.83
\$500,000	\$191.91	\$325.47	\$592.60	\$859.74	\$1,394.00
\$1,000,000	\$194.24	\$327.81	\$594.94	\$862.08	\$1,396.34
\$1,500,000	\$196.58	\$330.15	\$597.28	\$864.41	\$1,398.68
\$2,000,000	\$198.92	\$332.49	\$599.62	\$866.75	\$1,401.02

Ratepayers in the Stratford and South Taranaki constituencies:

In these constituencies, ratepayers incur a mixture of capital value general rates, uniform annual general charges and capital value targeted rates.

Stratford constituency

Capital value of property:	\$200,000	\$500,000	\$1,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$5,000,000
Total rates	\$91.80	\$145.51	\$235.01	\$414.03	\$951.07

South Taranaki constituency

Capital value of property:	\$200,000	\$500,000	\$1,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$5,000,000
Total rates	\$91.74	\$145.36	\$234.72	\$413.44	\$949.61

The Council has no external public debt. There is nothing planned that will incur external public debt over the life of the Long-Term Plan. Regardless, the Council is required to develop limits on debt. Accordingly, if the Council had public debt, the total interest expense on net external public debt would not exceed 40% of total annual rates and levies and the net external public debt per capita would not exceed \$500.

In summary, the Council forecasts the maintenance of prudent financial planning that ensures:

- The delivery of agreed levels of service and works programmes in accordance with the suite of regional plans, policies and strategies.
- Modest rates increases for the next 10 years.
- No external public debt of the life of the Long-Term Plan.
- Balanced budget over the ten-year life of the *2018/2028 Long-Term Plan*.

The full *Financial Strategy* can be found at www.trc.govt.nz/LTP-consultation-document/

Infrastructure Strategy

The Council has a 30-year *Infrastructure Strategy* that focuses on its river and flood control scheme, as it has no other infrastructure for which such a strategy is required.

Flood management and river control is a relatively minor component of the Council's operations, accounting for approximately 1.6% of total operating expenditure. At 30 June 2017, the Council's flood control schemes were valued at \$12.5 million out of total Council assets of \$87 million.

The Council has two significant flood control schemes on the Waitara and Waiwhakaiho Rivers and a number of other relatively minor schemes.

The Council has completed upgrades of the Lower Waiwhakaiho Flood Control Scheme and the Lower Waitara River Flood Control Scheme to provide 1% annual exceedance probability (AEP) – or one-in-100 year protection – with allowance for climate change through to 2060.

Asset management plans have been prepared for all schemes.

The land use in the areas protected by the Schemes is a mixture of residential, commercial and industrial. The 1% AEP protection standard is considered to be the accepted standard for these schemes.

Significant changes in land use are not likely to occur in the areas protected by the Schemes. In the very unlikely event that a significant change in land use were to occur, the protection standard provided by the Schemes would still be appropriate and, therefore, a further capital upgrade would not be required.

There is no planned upgrade to the level of service provided by the Schemes before 2060. The risk to the Schemes' infrastructure arising from natural disasters is low. The nature and ongoing maintenance of the assets make them resistant to significant damage in large flood events. Any damage that did occur would be funded from Scheme reserves. Annual repair budgets provide for the repair of flood damage to the Schemes and if unspent, accumulate in the Scheme reserve accounts.

In summary, the Council's river and flood control schemes are designed and built to modern flood protection standards with appropriate provision for climate change over the life of the *Infrastructure Strategy*. Specifically:

- There are no plans to increase the level of protection provided by the Schemes (that is, there are no new capital expenditure programmes).
- Maintenance and repair budgets have been fully provided for.
- The risk to the Schemes' infrastructure arising from natural disasters is low.
- Regardless of the level of risk, the Council has reserves and a strong balance sheet to enable it to respond to and repair and damage from flood events.

The full *Infrastructure Strategy* can be found at www.trc.govt.nz/LTP-consultation-document/

Independent auditor's report

on Taranaki Regional Council's consultation document for its proposed 2018-28 Long-Term Plan

I am the Auditor-General's appointed auditor for Taranaki Regional Council (the Council). Section 93C of the Local Government Act 2002 (the Act) requires an audit report on the Council's consultation document. We have done the work for this report using the staff and resources of Deloitte Limited. We completed our report on 20 February 2018

OPINION

In my opinion:

- the consultation document provides an effective basis for public participation in the Council's decisions about the proposed content of its 2018-28 long-term plan, because it:
 - fairly represents the matters proposed for inclusion in the long-term plan; and
 - identifies and explains the main issues and choices facing the Council and region, and the consequences of those choices; and
- the information and assumptions underlying the information in the consultation document are reasonable.

BASIS OF OPINION

We carried out our work in accordance with the International Standard on Assurance Engagements (New Zealand) 3000 (Revised): *Assurance Engagements Other Than Audits or Reviews of Historical Financial Information*. In meeting the requirements of this standard, we took into account particular elements of the Auditor-General's Auditing Standards and the International Standard on Assurance Engagements 3400: *The Examination of Prospective Financial Information* that were consistent with those requirements.

We assessed the evidence the Council has to support the information and disclosures in the consultation document. To select appropriate procedures, we assessed the risk of material misstatement and the Council's systems and processes applying to the preparation of the consultation document.

We did not evaluate the security and controls over the publication of the consultation document.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COUNCIL AND AUDITOR

The Council is responsible for:

- meeting all legal requirements relating to its procedures, decisions, consultation, disclosures, and other actions associated with preparing and publishing the consultation document and long-term plan, whether in printed or electronic form;
- having systems and processes in place to provide the supporting information and analysis the Council needs to be able to prepare a consultation document and long-term plan that meet the purposes set out in the Act; and

- ensuring that any forecast financial information being presented has been prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice in New Zealand.

I am responsible for reporting on the consultation document, as required by section 93C of the Act. I do not express an opinion on the merits of any policy content of the consultation document.

INDEPENDENCE

In carrying out our work, we complied with the Auditor-General's:

- independence and other ethical requirements, which incorporate the independence and ethical requirements of Professional and Ethical Standard 1 (Revised); and
- quality control requirements, which incorporate the quality control requirements of Professional and Ethical Standard 3 (Amended).

Other than our work in carrying out all legally required external audits, we have no relationship with or interests in the Council - or any of its subsidiaries.



Melissa Youngson
Deloitte Limited
On behalf of the Auditor-General, Hamilton, New Zealand

This Consultation Document was prepared from a range of policies and procedures. These include the Council's planning framework, outcomes, assumptions, the performance management framework, infrastructure strategy, financial strategy, budgets/estimates, accounting policies, financial statements, charging policies and funding and financial policies. All of these policies and procedures have been collated as a draft of the *2018/2028 Long-Term Plan*. The policies and procedures, together with the draft of the *2018/2028 Long-Term Plan* are available online at www.trc.govt.nz/LTP-consultation-document/ or hard copies can be supplied upon request – phone 06 765 7127 or email info@trc.govt.nz.

Tell us what you think

You can have your say online, by email or through the post. And if you want to, you can come along and explain your views personally to Councillors.

All submissions will be carefully considered before final decisions are made.

If you want more information, see the proposed *2018/2028 Long-Term Plan* at www.trc.govt.nz. Or you can inspect a copy at the Council's office, at 47 Cloten Road, Stratford, or at District Council service centres and libraries. You can also call us on 0800 736 222.

Making a submission

Submissions must be received by **4pm on Friday 6 April 2018**.

Online: www.trc.govt.nz

Email: info@trc.govt.nz ('Long-Term Plan submission' in subject field)

Post: 2018/2028 Long-Term Plan Submission
Chief Executive
Taranaki Regional Council
Private Bag 713
STRATFORD 4352

Or deliver your clearly-labelled submission by hand to the reception desk at 47 Cloten Road, Stratford.

The submission form on the following pages can be used for written submissions.

What happens next?

Submissions open: 5 March 2018

Submissions close: 6 April 2018

Submissions heard and deliberated upon: 7 May 2018

Adoption of *2018/2028 Long-Term Plan*: 15 May 2018

2018/2028 Long-Term Plan becomes operative: 1 July 2018

Submission form

Submitter

Title *(please circle)* Dr Mr Mrs Ms Miss **Other** *(please specify)*

First name

Surname

Organisation/group *(if applicable)*

Postal address *(Please provide full postal address, including rural delivery and postcode)*

Postcode

Phone *(daytime)*

Mobile

Email

I wish to present my submission personally at a hearing scheduled for 7 May

Yes No

Signed

Your submission

Note that your submission and any information you supply as part of it is considered public information and will be available in reports and documents relating to this process and will be published on our website, www.trc.govt.nz.

Towards predator-free Taranaki

Do you think the Council should implement the first three years of a region-wide predator control programme, focusing on the Waiwhakaiho catchment, around Mt Taranaki and trialling possum eradication at an operational cost of \$580,000 per year?

Yes No

Comment

Pukeiti/Taranaki Crossing

Do you think the Council should undertake a range of new developments at and linked to Pukeiti, positioning it as a recreation hub for a range of activities, including funding the creation of a new track linking Pukeiti to the coast – a key component of the Mountain to surf Taranaki Crossing – at a capital cost of \$1.439 million in 2018/2019 and \$5.9 million over 10 years, plus an operating grant of \$3.5 million spread over three years (2019/2020 to 2021/2022)?

Yes No

Comment

Other proposed changes

Tell us what you think of our proposals to:

- Further develop its relationship with Māori, focusing on operational areas.
- Commit more resources to freshwater monitoring.
- Broaden our educational outreach by funding a regional Enviroschools position.

(Note: Changes to arrangements with iwi and hapu, and changes to freshwater monitoring, are driven in part by central Government requirements. The status quo is not an option.)

Comment



Taranaki Regional Council

47 Cloten Road
Private Bag 713
Stratford 4352

 06 765 7127
0800 736 222

 info@trc.govt.nz

 www.trc.govt.nz

 TaranakiRC

 TaranakiRegionalCouncil

