

Comments

LTP 2021-31

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| Comment ID | 1027 |
| Response Date | 12/04/21 4:59 AM |
| Status | Submitted |
| Submission Type | Web |
| Version | 0.1 |

First name

Surname

Email address

Are you submitting on behalf of an organisation? No, I'm submitting as an individual

Are you willing to tell us more about yourself? Yes

Which age category are you in? 40-64 years old

Which suburb or area do you live in?

Do you think we've prioritised the right issues and opportunities? No

What do you feel are the significant challenges and opportunities we face?

A 27% rate rise (for my property) does not seem to be about prioritisation more about being everything to everyone. ECAN should prioritise affordability and living within reasonable levels of expenditure first and then design its work program. This should deliver increases which are affordable and equitable amongst ratepayers. Elected officials have a fiduciary duty to spend ratepayers funds in an efficient and economical manner.

Which of the proposed options would you like to see us progress with? Other option (please specify)

ECAN should focus on its primary remit and contain its budget to a reasonable level of annual increases, certainly not more than 5% on an ongoing basis. On this basis neither option is acceptable and the council and management need to go back and rework the plan to deliver affordability to ratepayers.

It is important that we hear what you would like to keep in the plan, what you think should be removed, and anything that you think we have missed?

ECAN needs to focus on cost control and its core remit - to me this would be Land and Water, Flood protection, biosecurity, habitat protection and restoration and regional transport. I find the consultation document difficult to follow and confusing it is almost impossible to make out from the consultation documents what rates revenue is actually being spent on and this is not helped by the reclassification of portfolios. It is for example extremely concerning to see the "Hazards Risk and Resilience" portfolio expenditure go from \$29.7m under option 1 to what would appear to be \$71.6m under the Climate Change and Biodiversity portfolios a 140% increase! It is not clear to me why such a large increase is needed or what the outcomes for ratepayers are! Initiatives which do not have tangible benefits should be revisited with extreme scrutiny. These would appear to be items such as leading community resilience, investing for the future, youth engagement, climate change resilience, etc.

Do you generally support the activities proposed in the following portfolios:

| | |
|---|--------|
| Water and Land | Yes |
| Biodiversity and Biosecurity | Yes |
| Climate Change and Community Resilience | No |
| Air Quality, Transport and Urban Development | Unsure |
| Regional and Strategic Leadership | No |

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Do you have any further comments on the activities proposed in specific portfolio/s (please select all those you wish to comment on): | . | Water and Land |
| | . | Climate Change and Community Resilience |
| | . | Regional and Strategic Leadership |

Water and Land portfolio comments:

ECAN needs to engage with central government on the essential fresh water package and ensure ratepayers are delivered value for the investment already made in the land and water regional plan. Not simply drop the current plan and create a new one at further ratepayer expense

Climate Change and Community Resilience portfolio comments:

The 140% increase in expenditure from the old "Hazards Risk and Resilience" portfolio (\$29.7m) to under option 1 to what would appear to be \$71.6m for the Climate Change and Biodiversity portfolios is an unacceptable increase. I cannot find reasonable justification for such increases in the consultation documentation.

Regional and Strategic Leadership portfolio comments:

An increase from \$31.7 to \$45.1m in total expenditure is a 42% increase it is unclear to me how ECAN needs an additional almost \$15m to perform its central operational function. It looks like the plan includes a significant number of "nice to have" not "must have" initiatives which increase cost with limited tangible benefit.

| | |
|---|------------------------------|
| Is the proposed increase in rates affordable for your household? | Neither option is affordable |
|---|------------------------------|

Any further comments on affordability for your household?

This increase is over \$5k per annum for my business this is in addition to consenting and monitoring costs. This comes at from what i can see no identifiable increase in services by Ecan to my property

and only minor (the same as the increase for an average residential property) increase in benefits to my family.

Is the proposed increase in rates affordable as a whole for the Canterbury community? No

Any further comments on affordability for the community?

ECAN needs to develop a fiscally responsible LTP that delivers real value to rate payers and has a fiduciary focus to expenditure. This is certainly not the case of the proposed LTP.

Do you support the changes we're proposing to how we apply Uniform Annual General Charges? No

Any further comments on Uniform Annual General Charges?

The UAGC needs to be higher to reflect the equitable distribution of cost and benefit across all households. This should be offset with a fall of the General Rate. It is not reasonable for this material increase in general expenditure to be loaded to rural areas that are receiving the same (and more likely less) benefit on a per person basis (noting that a lot of the new initiatives are likely to be focused on urban areas).

Would you support the use of borrowing for operating expenditure to offset some of the first year rates? No

Any further comments on the use of borrowing for operating expenditure?

Any entity needs to live within its means A 27% rate increase unaffordable for ratepayers and as such ECAN. ECAN needs to revisit its budget and find a way to manage its operations within a reasonable c.5% rate increase. Borrowing to fund operational expenditure only loads future ratepayers with further costs in the form of interest and debt repayment. It is not fair of future generations either - it is borrowing from them to pay for today's largesse.

Do you support the rationale and proposed changes in the draft Fees and Charges Policy? Yes

Any further comments on the Fees and Charges Policy?

Fees and charges should be targeted to users of those services. This should not result in double charging though as could possibly be happening for rural rate payers as there are high upfront rates charges funding freshwater programs for example and additionally targeted charges.

Where do you live in Canterbury? Select your district below: Ashburton district

Would you like to see us investing in the following initiatives in your area? Kaikoura

Would you like to see us investing in the following initiatives in your area? Hurunui

Would you like to see us investing in the following initiatives in your area? Waimakariri

Would you like to see us investing in the following initiatives in your area? Christchurch

Would you like to see us investing in the following initiatives in your area? Selwyn

Would you like to see us investing in the following initiatives in your area? Ashburton

The Hekeao Hinds Managed Aquifer Recharge is a pilot of environmental infrastructure to address water quality. To continue enhancing this infrastructure, the project would require ongoing targeted rates from the Ashburton district. Find out more [link]. Do you want to see this project continue? Yes

Would you like to see us investing in the following initiatives in your area? Mackenzie

Would you like to see us investing in the following initiatives in your area? Timaru

Would you like to see us investing in the following initiatives in your area? Waimate

Would you like to see us investing in the following initiatives in your area? Waitaki

Do you wish to speak to your submission? Yes

We may use your phone number to contact you to arrange attendance at a hearing. This information will be kept private.

Phone number

Would you like to be kept up-to-date with the outcome of this consultation? Yes

How did you find out about giving feedback? . Word of mouth

Your information is held and administered by Environment Canterbury in accordance with the Privacy Act 2020 and Environment Canterbury's Privacy Policy.

There is personal information/contact details in my submission I do not want disclosed: Yes

Tell us which information you do not want disclosed:

Full Name, Address, Email, Phone Number