

We listened

Christchurch City Long Term Plan 2015–2025

Christchurch City Council's Long Term Plan 2015–2025 reflects the wishes and needs of the city's residents. This final version of the Plan, published after many months of preparation and community consultation, sets out a budget for the 10 next years and beyond.

With the launch of the Smart Choices campaign in September 2014 we began talking to residents to get a sense of what was important for them as the city continued to recover from the earthquakes.

The campaign ran for seven weeks and included a four-page leaflet sent to all Christchurch homes. The leaflet explained sources of Council funding, what it is spent on, and our commitments under the Cost Sharing Agreement with the Crown. It outlined six options for balancing our budget in the face of an estimated shortfall of up to \$900 million related to the earthquakes.

More than 5,000 people visited the Smart Choices website which received 14,000 page views. Just under 400 comments were submitted online, by email or on postcards available at community events, libraries and service centres.

The Mayor hosted two breakfast meetings for invited guests and elected members. Elected members and staff also gathered feedback in public places such as shopping centres and markets, and at community events. These 30 or so engagement sessions reached a wide range of residents, including some who would not normally take part in formal consultation.

Comments collected from all these sources were summarised and helped shape the content of the Long Term Plan, along with recommendations from staff and the aspirations of elected members and the Mayor.

In line with its obligations under the Local Government Act, the Council adopted a Long Term Plan Consultation Document 2014–25 on 10 March 2015.

This document formed the basis for the formal public consultation process. It outlined key issues covered in the Plan, the Council's proposed solutions, and preferred options for achieving them. By this stage the estimated funding shortfall was \$1.2 billion.

The Council then invited residents to give feedback on the proposals; what they liked and the changes they wanted.

The 96-page consultation document was published in full on the Council and Smart Choices websites, with hard copy versions available at Council libraries and service centres, and at 11 public meetings.

Ways to give feedback were widely publicized through advertising, media releases, posts on the Council's Facebook page, emails to Smart Choices website subscribers, stakeholder updates, public meetings, 6,500 postcards distributed through cafes and Council libraries and service centres, and a leaflet sent to all households.

The Mayor, Chief Executive and other senior staff also gave presentations on the consultation document at breakfast meetings for the business community, residents' groups, non-government organisations and other key stakeholders.

Although online responses were encouraged as a quick and easy method of making formal submissions, hard copy submission forms were readily available.

This year we also introduced less formal ways for residents to give their views. People took advantage of five Mayor in the Chair sessions in the Council chamber where they could tell councillors their ideas for the Long Term Plan.

Posts on the Council's Facebook page about major issues, such as asset sales and how much to spend on road repairs, generated more than 1,000 comments. These comments, along with those made at community meetings and public events, were summarised for elected members.

The Council received just under 3,000 formal written submissions on the Plan and they included a number with large petitions attached.

The following emerged as key issues: proposed rates rises, asset sales, anchor projects, community facilities, housing, transport, roading, water networks, Central City parking and development in the eastern suburbs.

Staff reviewed all the submissions and responded with additional information as appropriate, before they were sent to the Mayor and Councillors for consideration. About 300 people opted to present their submissions in person over nine days of public hearings.

The Council discussed the wide range of issues raised and deliberated over changes to the draft Plan before adopting the final document on 26 June 2015.

Changes from draft to final

The final Long Term Plan 2015–25 largely adopts the activities and budgets proposed in the draft plan. The changes outlined below stem from public submissions made to the draft plan and adjustments to the timing and scope of some major works projects.

The Council has budgeted \$9.9 billion (excluding housing) to fund the city over the next 10 years, compared to \$10.4 billion in the draft plan.

- \$5.3 billion from rates — down \$300 million
- \$1.1 billion from borrowing — down \$200 million
- \$3.5 billion from user charges, fees, rents, subsidies, insurance proceeds, dividends and asset sales.

Rates

Rates rises in the final Long Term Plan are lower than originally proposed, and a planned change to eligibility for the 25 per cent rural discount on general rates was dropped.

Average rates increases for existing ratepayers		
Year	Draft LTP	Final LTP
2015/16	8.75%	7.98% *
2016/17	8.5%	7.18%
2017/18	8.5%	6.98%
2018/19	7.5%	5.74%

* Includes 1.93 per cent earthquake levy

Capital release — asset sales

The Council approved the following release of capital from companies it owns through its commercial arm Christchurch City Holdings Ltd (CCHL).

- \$200 million in 2015/16
- \$200 million in 2016/17
- up to \$350 million in 2017/18, if required

Changes to capital expenditure have already had an impact on our debt profile, so we may not need to proceed with projected capital releases in 2016/17 and 2017/18. The timing and amount of the capital release programme in those years will be reviewed as part of the 2016/17 Annual Plan. We may also consider the future of Enable once it becomes a mature business.

Strategic assets

CCHL companies Orion New Zealand Ltd, Lyttelton Port Company Ltd, Christchurch International Airport Ltd, and EcoCentral Ltd will remain on the Council's list of strategic assets, along with the Town Hall and the Council shareholding in Vbase Ltd. Any sale of these assets will require further public consultation.

The Council's Significance and Engagement Policy will be amended to remove the following from the list of strategic assets:

- City Care Ltd
- Red Bus Ltd
- Enable Services Ltd
- Addington Arena (currently called Horncastle Arena)
- Lancaster Park
- all Council-owned and operated off-street parking facilities

Major works projects

The programme following changes were made to the capital works programme.

- Aspirational Red Zone projects dropped (\$6.2 million).
- Central City Bus Interchange, contribution of \$23.2 million delayed until the Council takes over ownership from the Crown in 2019
- Cathedral Square revamp delayed until 2019/20
- South Library and Service Centre earthquake repairs delayed to coincide with the opening of the New Central Library in 2018
- Belfast Library land purchase scheduled for 2015/16 delayed until 2021
- Governor's Bay Wharf receives \$512,000 Council contribution to rebuild costs

The Chief Executive will request staff to work with the group of independent advisors assisting with a review of the capital programme.

Roading

An Accessible City

\$29.5 million of the proposed \$73 million budget be brought forward to years 1-5 of the Long Term Plan, and the balance to remain funded in years 5-10.

Northern Arterial

The Cranford Street northern arterial extension and 4-laning project and associated roads of national significance projects were removed from the LTP. They will be reconsidered as part of 2016/17 Annual Plan, and at the same time that the Papanui Road and Main North Road bus priority lanes, and any required intersection safety improvements will be prioritised.

Annex/Birmingham/Wrights route upgrade

Brought forward from 2019/20–2021/22 at a total cost of \$9.1 million (\$1.7 million in 2016/17 and \$7.3 million in 2017/18).

Recreation

- The \$2.98 million budgeted for repairs to the Milton Street Depot will instead be spent on repairing and reopening the Wharenui Recreation Centre (\$2.4 million, but possibly much less) and the repair or rebuild of Avebury Park Paddling Pool.
- Funding for the Linwood/Woolston pool has been brought forward three years, \$7.2 million in 2016/17 and \$10 million in 2017/18.

Community funding and partnerships

- A proposed two per cent cut to community grants was removed from the Long Term Plan.
- A proposal to inflation-adjust community funding each year, to be consistent with the approach taken for funding Canterbury Development Corporation and Christchurch and Canterbury Tourism, will be referred to the working party on community funding.
- The Council asked the Chief Executive to develop a framework for potential Council/community partnerships. This will include, but is not limited to, the management, maintenance, repair and restoration of community facilities. It will also address health and safety.
- The Council acknowledged the invitation from the Lyttelton Time Bank to become a member. (Time banking is a system where Time Bank members providing services earn a currency called “time dollars.”)
- The Council also agreed to
 - explore ways of using the time banking movement to deliver social and community outcomes

- look at the relationship between time banking and a complementary community currency
- allocate funding for a feasibility study on a community currency, subject to reprioritisation from within the community planning budget.
- explore with Life In Vacant Spaces the concept of community brokerage for public realm.

Central City development contribution rebates

Residential

Following a detailed report from staff, the Council agrees to extend the central city residential development contributions rebate scheme by providing a further \$10 million.

- The rebate will be available until 30 June 2017 or when the fund is exhausted - whichever comes first.
- Previous use credits are to be extinguished on the granting of the rebate for a particular development. Future previous use credits will be limited to those valid for the new development.
- Staff will report back on modifications to the policy to simplify the urban design assessment.
- Other provisions of the current policy are retained

Commercial/non-residential

The Council agreed to provide a development contributions rebate for non-residential developments in the Christchurch central city business zone to the value of \$5 million over five years.

The Council agreed to the urgent preparation and adoption of a development contributions rebate policy for all non-residential developments in the central city business zone.

- A rebate of all required development contributions is provided for all non-residential developments in the central city business zone that are granted building consent from policy adoption to 30 June 2020.
- Previous use credits are to be extinguished on the granting of the rebate for a particular development. Future previous use credits are limited to those valid for the new development.

The net rates impact for both these rebates will be 0.01 per cent in 2015/16, 0.04 per cent in 2016/17, 0.08 per cent in 2017/18 and 0.05 per cent in 2018/19 and 0.01 per cent in 2019/20.

Eastern suburbs

New Brighton regeneration project

The Council approved the allocation of \$3 million for a New Brighton Regeneration Project led by development authority Development Christchurch Ltd.

The regeneration project will include:

- development of hot salt water pools in New Brighton
- staged development of the New Brighton Suburban Master Plan
- an independent report by the end of November 2015 into a design-based feasibility of a promenade / beach walk at North Beach (including scientific and cultural values), as proposed by the Community Connection Nga Ngaru Trust. Any subsequent studies arising out of the report are to be undertaken in consultation with the trust, Environment Canterbury and Ngāi Tahu.

Rawhiti Golf Course

The Council will enter into a management agreement with the Rawhiti Golf Club to operate the course for public use and maintain it to, or above, the current scope and standard.

Conditions of the management agreement:

- there is no additional cost to rates
- public access is maintained
- up to three years free rent, followed by a rental assessment based on the financial performance of the club.

The Council will also lease buildings on the site to the club, and ensure appropriate licence agreements are in place to operate a golf club over the current golf course on Rawhiti Domain.

South New Brighton Holiday Park

Closure of the camp was signaled in the draft consultation document, but the Council has agreed to await the outcome of preliminary discussions with existing lessees as per its resolution on 14 May 2015.

Banks Peninsula projects

- The Council will proceed with the Stage Two Wainui Wastewater Reticulation and Treatment Scheme (financial year beginning 1 July 2018) and in the meantime explore the possibility of a targeted rate or other cost sharing arrangements for earlier implementation.
- Staff will work with the Robinsons Bay Reserve Management Committee and the Robinsons Bay Residents Association to ensure that spending allocated for the Robinsons Bay reserve and wharf is in line with community agreed priorities.
- Akaroa sea walls — add \$180,000 year 1

- Little River master planning — add \$15,000 year 1
- Diamond Harbour master planning — add \$15,000 year 1
- Akaroa wharf replacement. Remove \$210,000.

Other changes to the draft Plan

- The Council agreed to support the Spine of the Lizard network of walking tracks project, on the understanding that there is no financial implication to this decision.
- As part of the Estuary Edge Master Plan project priority will be given to identifying the cost and feasibility of tracks and fences so funding can be provided for this work in 2016/17, and it is to be treated as a standalone project to speed delivery.
- Installation of additional rubbish/recycling bins by the Sumner Lifeboat buildings.
- Enable kerbside bin collection within central city residential zones.
- Staff will work with the Sydenham Church Heritage Trust to urgently provide advice on the costs of the removal, clearance and storage of the Sydenham Church remains, and on the proposed future use of the site, with a report back to the Council by the end of August 2015.
- \$35,000 for energy efficiency carried forward into the 2015/16 budget.
- \$750,000 allocated to a Flood Defence Fund over the next three years.
- \$250,000 in transition funding allocated for legal and policy advice to develop the city's transition plan.
- The Council reinstated funding for EnviroSchools at \$30,000 per year for 2015/16 and 2016/17 from the grants fund.
- The Matuku Waterway will be transferred from the Land Drainage Operations Programme to the Land Drainage Recovery Programme.

Reports for more information

The following proposals were referred to the Chief Executive for prioritisation/action within existing budgets, with a report back to Council before the end of August 2015:

- increase levels of maintenance for Sumner Esplanade and street cleaning
- include Bradshaw Terrace, Riccarton in the street renewals programme
- prioritisation of footpath repair for access to schools and community services/facilities
- flooding at Templeton be resolved
- bus shelters (provision for more and accessibility)

The Chief Executive will separately report on:

- options for bringing some or all of City Care operations back into an internal Council works unit or a separate works department, including information on reduced overheads and other efficiencies, and options for transferring the remaining SCIRT programme to the Council.
- ICT Budget as part of Great for Christchurch.
- The requirements of community organisations for affordable space to be assessed for future funding allocation.
- an analysis of existing Master Plans in order to ensure that we have the best model so that future plans are informed by the analysis, and implementation is properly funded.