

Overview, submissions outside a Council activity, and out of scope submissions

TO	Thames-Coromandel District Council
FROM	Scott Summerfield - Policy and Planning Manager
DATE	8 May 2018
SUBJECT	Overview, submission outside a Council activity and out of scope submissions

1 Purpose of report

This is one of a series of reports which presents the submissions received on the 2018-2028 Long Term Plan, staff analysis and recommendations for Council consideration. The focus of this report is a general overview of consultation and matters to consider for deliberations, submissions made which did not relate to a Council proposal or activity, and out of scope submissions.

2 Background

Consultation on the TCDC 2018-2028 Long Term Plan ran from 16 March to 16 April 2018. 774 submissions were received within that timeframe, with an additional 11 late submissions accepted by Council. 128 submitters spoke to their submissions at Council hearings in Whitianga and Thames from 1-3 May.

620 members of the public attended 19 public, ratepayer and school board of trustee meetings from 27 February to 11 April. Staff also attended market days in Thames, Coromandel, Whitianga, Coroglen and Whangamata to speak with submitters.

Regular polls on the major consultation proposals were run on Facebook throughout the consultation period, receiving 745 votes on the polls and 101 comments received on the posts. The greatest reach of any post was 6,583 people with all other posts ranging between 1,000 - 6500 people reached.

Advertising and promotion of the Long Term Plan and opportunities to speak with staff ran on all major radio stations, and in all district wide and local newspapers leading up to and during the consultation. A rates demand insert was delivered to over 17,000 ratepayers' homes, with an email attachment included for another 1,000 or so. Billboards promoting the Long Term Plan consultation period were erected on major transport routes around the district. Promoted online ads for the LTP were targeted to Thames-Coromandel based users through Metservice, Google, Facebook and NZ Herald.

3 Issue

Council decisions are required on the proposals included in the consultation document and on the matters raised by submitters.

4 Discussion

Council's Long Term Plan is premised on a set of planning assumptions which were progressively adopted from June 2017 to February 2018. These relate to demographic change, the economy, inflation, pricing, climate change, legislative change, Treaty of Waitangi settlements, and significant land use changes. It is important to bear these assumptions in mind when deliberating on submissions to this Long Term Plan and in making final decisions on the plan.

Below is a table setting out the project population change at 10 year intervals in each community board area and main settlement in the district. Given the disconnect between population numbers and dwellings/rating units, the number of dwellings and rating units by community board area and main settlement are also shown.

	2013	2018	2028	2038	2048	Change (to 2048)	Average annual change	Annual average growth rate
District								
Usually Resident population	27,340	29,042	29,591	29,031	28,144	804	23	0.1%
Total Dwellings	24,164	26,766	28,650	29,368	30,346	6,182	177	0.7%
Total Rating Units	n/a	27,866	29,935	30,838	32,001	4,135	138	0.5%
Coromandel - Colville Community Board								
Usually Resident Population	2,953	3,170	3,270	3,210	3,105	152	4	0.1%
Total Dwellings	2,375	2,657	2,953	3,092	3,274	899	26	0.9%
Total Rating Units	n/a	2,673	3,006	3,182	3,401	728	24	0.8%
Mercury Bay Community Board								
Usually Resident Population	7,484	8,289	8,748	8,838	8,821	1,337	38	0.5%
Total Dwellings	7,688	8,800	9,585	9,867	10,259	2,571	73	0.8%
Total Rating Units	n/a	9,506	10,359	10,708	11,167	1,660	55	0.5%
Thames Community Board								
Usually Resident Population	10,487	10,722	10,706	10,349	9,861	-626	-18	-0.2%
Total	5,156	5,389	5,596	5,633	5,672	517	15	0.3%

	2013	2018	2028	2038	2048	Change (to 2048)	Average annual change	Annual average growth rate
Dwellings								
Total Rating Units	n/a	5,537	5,793	5,879	5,968	431	14	0.3%
Tairua-Pauanui Community Board								
Usually Resident Population	2,365	2,540	2,551	2,486	2,421	56	2	0.1%
Total Dwellings	3,831	4,328	4,623	4,802	5,110	1,279	37	0.85
Total Rating Units	n/a	4,551	4,863	5,059	5,384	832	28	0.6%
Whangamata Community Board								
Usually Resident Population	3,674	3,926	3,908	3,747	3,548	-126	-4	-0.1%
Total Dwellings	4,524	4,949	5,174	5,206	5,206	682	19	0.4%
Total Rating Units	n/a	4,932	5,166	5,208	5,217	285	10	0.2%

	2013	2018	2028	2038	2048	Change (to 2048)	Average annual change	Annual average growth rate
Thames								
Usually Resident population	7,854	7,983	7,928	7,658	7,309	-545	-16	-0.2%
Total Dwellings	3,569	3,699	3,776	3,776	3,776	207	6	0.2%
Total Rating Units	n/a	3,803	3,898	3,916	3,934	131	4	0.1%
Whitianga								
Usually Resident Population	4,550	5,040	5,330	5,420	5,463	913	26	0.5%
Total Dwellings	3,246	3,705	4,026	4,151	4,358	1,112	32	0.8%
Total Rating Units	n/a	4,081	4,419	4,562	4,787	706	24	0.5%
Coromandel								
Usually	1,718	1,803	1,831	1,771	1,691	-27	-1	0.0%

	2013	2018	2028	2038	2048	Change (to 2048)	Average annual change	Annual average growth rate
Resident Population								
Total Dwellings	1,067	1,152	1,239	1,258	1,285	218	6	0.5%
Total Rating Units	n/a	1,238	1,332	1,357	1,391	152	5	0.4%
Whangamata								
Usually Resident Population	3,674	3,926	3,908	3,747	3,548	-126	-4	-0.1%
Total Dwellings	4,524	4,949	5,174	5,206	5,206	682	19	0.4%
Total Rating Units	n/a	4,932	5,166	5,208	5,217	285	10	0.2%
Tairua								
Usually Resident Population	1,314	1,407	1,419	1,379	1,355	41	1	0.1%
Total Dwellings	1,502	1,691	1,900	2,045	2,303	801	23	1.2%
Total Rating Units	n/a	1,745	1,957	2,104	2,365	619	21	1.0%
Pauanui								
Usually Resident Population	780	850	840	820	788	8	0	0.0%
Total Dwellings	2,153	2,440	2,487	2,487	334	10	0.4%	0.4%
Total Rating Units	n/a	2,482	2,532	2,536	2,540	58	2	0.1%

Council also adopted the sea level rise scenarios from the Ministry for the Environment's 2017 guidance for local government on planning for coastal hazards as an assumption underpinning the Long Term Plan. Submissions were received relating to this assumption, most in favour however with some submitters disputing the underlying science. Council does not generate its own scientific position on these matters, rather the assumption is based on central government guidance to all councils on what is considered appropriate sea level rise scenarios to plan for. For the purposes of the Long Term Plan this assumption means that Council infrastructure will be tested against those sea level rise scenarios before proceeding. This does not preclude budgeting for defences against coastal hazards as part of a project, and does not bind Council to act on restricting development within projected future inundation areas or to initiate immediate retreat from low-lying coastal areas.

A range of submissions were received for which staff have been able to give accurate advice on in the short timeframe available between consultation closing and Community Board/Council deliberations. Staff have identified investigations, either within existing

budgets or with new budgets requested, where there is a broad understanding and agreement with what the submitter has requested. In cases where no useful advice has been able to be given, there is no recommendation for Council. However, all submissions received will be considered further as part of the preparation of the 2019/20 and 2020/21 Annual Plans and elected members and the submitter are able to raise the specific matter for further discussion with staff in the coming years.

With less than two months until the beginning of the first year of the Long Term Plan, additional projects raised through submissions which are ill-defined at this point or a significant budget increase should be well-scrutinised by Council. It is both reasonable and practical for Council to consider submissions on new projects further, either through investigation budgets in the first years of the Long Term Plan, or to revisit the matter as part of a coming annual plan.

Submissions received not related to a Council activity

A range of submissions were received which do not relate specifically to a Council activity however are within the scope of the Long Term Plan for Council to consider. These include submissions relating to how Council generates its income through rating, climate change/environmental leadership and Council's engagement with Maori.

4.1 Rating matters

- One submitter wanted to see more of their rates spent funding improvements in their local area.
- One submitter was concerned at potential debt increases.
- One submitter requests the Council consider having a national, regional and local discussion about:
 - If raising rates based on valuations is necessary or ethical when times are this tough
 - If what rate payers are funding should be essential/core services that councils are elected to deliver
 - How rates rebates thresholds are decided and if they should be available to more families with young children
 - If the new electricity subsidy should be available to more families
- Four submitters requested that Council reduce rates and focus purely on core services supporting the residents and ratepayers not catering to tourism.
- One submitter suggested the Council should lobby government to introduce a tourist tax to make up the shortfall of funding.
- One submitter requested parking permits for MB South residents for any paid parking area as locals should not pay for services for tourists.
- Two submitters requested that Council cap rate increases, suggested at 2%.
- One submitter requested a review of the rating system.
- One submitter requested that all of the rates increase go on the property value based components of the rates.

Analysis

Staff recommend Council give consideration to these submissions before adopting the 2018-2028 Long Term Plan, and in the development of subsequent annual plans.

Disability access

- One submitter notes that beach access and access to pathways and outdoor areas in the Mercury bay and Coromandel areas is difficult if not impossible for those with disabilities. They request that there be designated disability carparks available at each beachside carpark for use year round. They also suggest that there could be sealed, wheelchair access walkways which run past seating on the waterfront at some of the smaller beachside towns such as Hahei.

Analysis

Council has a disability strategy which guides design and implementation of new projects and upgrades.

Recommendation

Continue to undertake disability access considerations for all public car parking, access ways and community facilities.

Sports fields in Whitianga

- The Whitianga Waterways request the Council establish an appropriate service standard for the provision of sports fields; undertake an audit which identify the unrecovered costs of acquiring and developing its existing sports fields; introduce a development contribution which funds, unrecovered costs to date and future costs of sports field acquisition and development.

Analysis

The Audit and Risk Committee is setting up a sub-committee to consider matters related to the Development Contribution Policy. The Council did not consult on the policy therefore has no ability to change the policy for this Long Term Plan.

Freedom camping regulation and infrastructure

- The NZMCA recommends the LTP includes sufficient recognition, resourcing and prioritisation to support the continued growth of the domestic motor caravanning sector with a particular focus on the follow areas:
 - New infrastructure development, e.g. public dump stations and refuse bins;
 - An integrated and permissive freedom camping management regime; and
 - Recognition of the NZMCA's Motorhome Friendly Scheme.

Analysis

Staff will continue to work with NZMCA on freedom camping matters.

Climate change/Environmental leadership

- One submitter asked that Council be a leader in climate change mitigation.
- One submitter requests Council create a budget to mitigate the effects of sea level rise.
- One submitter supports the application of climate change assumptions on Council business.
- One submitter asked that Council become more environmentally friendly as an organisation (car-pooling, EV, zero-waste workplace.)
- One submitter asked that Council spend more on Thames and the Coromandel to become a centre for sustainability excellence.
- One submitter suggests there is not enough mention of broader environmental protection such as improved river quality and regulation of control of the proposed developments of nonresidents.
- One submitter supports early and effective action to addressing all environmental issues arising from climate change.
- One submitter suggests that the use of 14mm per year for sea level rise is incorrect and data indicates it is only rising at 1.3mm. Also that is not evidence there is an increase severe and extreme storm events (and infrequent tsunamis). They request that Council consider the different treatment of the rising and sinking areas of the coromandel (from natural geologic (tectonic)forces) are dealt with differently.
- Mercury Bay Forest & Bird note that Council has opted to assume the minimum transitional New Zealand -wide sea -level rise allowances and scenario and recommend using the worst case scenario They request that Council put more focus

on this issue, as it is an increasingly concerning one, and the effects on our District very pronounced. We saw little if any reference to climate change, and the effects and implications of current predictions on any of the proposals in this LTP.

Analysis

Council has included the Ministry for the Environment Guidance for Local Government on Responding to Climate Change as the basis for assumptions on climate change as part of the LTP.

A Coastal Management Strategy was developed and consulted in 2017 and considers Council's response to coastal risks and hazards; and makes budgetary provision for investigative and physical works. This important strategic document will be adopted alongside the LTP in June 2018.

Council is awaiting further central government direction on climate change/coastal hazard before taking any further action.

Provision of social housing

- Transition Town Thames asks that Council work with community providers to explore options to support minor housing in Thames.
- One submitter requests that Council provide accommodation in Cooks Beach as there is a shortage of housing for workers.
- One submitter asked that more work was done by Council to guarantee affordable housing in Thames and to support access to the community for those without a vehicle.

Analysis

Council's focus in the area of housing is to work with developers to make the process easier and remove barriers to development. Also the new District Plan promotes development in the Totara Valley in Thames. To support and encourage development in this area, it has been proposed through the LTP to get ahead of development and provide key infrastructure like road sealing, wastewater, water supply and stormwater infrastructure.

Depreciation reserves

- One submitter suggests that Council's stated intent to rebuild depreciation reserves to \$124M by 2028, while acquiring new assets of \$126M appears contradictory, particularly in the light of the intent to eliminate external debt. It seems that this can only be accomplished through internal debt to its mandated limit, and a substantial increase in rates far beyond that already signaled in the financial projections accompanying the LTP. The proposed Financial Strategy makes no mention of asset re-valuations. The submitter requests that Council disclose this information for the purpose of consultation.
- One submitter did not support the use of depreciation being used on new assets and should be solely used for the purpose of replacing existing assets.

Analysis

Council's Long Term Plan financial assumptions and statements are independently audited prior to the adoption of the consultation document, and again before final adoption of the Long Term Plan. Any issues arising with financial information is best identified through this process by professional auditors. No issues were identified in the audit of Council's consultation document and supporting information.

Sports events in Thames

- One submitter suggests that with the new Jack McLean Recreation Centre, upgrades old Thames High School Gym, and the main auditorium at the Thames Civic Centre, Thames now has capacity to bid for age group level or minor code indoor sports events on a regional or national basis. Likewise that a sub-regional aquatic facility and upgrading of Rhodes Park grow Thames capacity to hold sports here. Project funding could be sourced from Trust Waikato for these sub-regional type projects.

Analysis

Staff will consider this as part of the wider investigation into the sub-regional aquatic facility and Rhodes Park.

Dog control

- One submitter requests the removal of the requirement for a statutory declaration in the front of a JP relating to working dogs, where the property is a working farm in the rural zone. Alternatively where the dogs in question are still the same ones from the previous year and have been the subject of a declaration the previous year. Suggest some research is done to find out how many people own more than 3 dogs and pay for more than 3 dogs. If there are none it just makes the declaration issue an unnecessary burden of work on ratepayers without any benefit to the community whatsoever.

Analysis

This will be referred to the appropriate staff to consider as an operational matter.

Submissions not requiring recommendation

- Oppose the proposed targeted fixed rate of \$ 200.00 per annum for small bed and breakfast operations.
- One submitter request Council works with the government to come down on non-self-contained campervans.
- One submitter suggests Council consider the problematic link between growth of visitors and tourists and the increase in freedom camping with increased damage to public reserves.
- One submitter asked that tourism was not promoted as this is less of a cost on infrastructure required for them.
- Two submitters requested Council consider the arts in the Coromandel Peninsula a core activity and actively support the arts.
- One submitter requested higher levels of visibility and recognition of the districts Maori heritage. Consult with iwi about signage programme to mark significant sites, and potentially build local cultural tourism run and owned by iwi.
- One submitter requests leadership from Council on Te Tiriti issues and in fulfilling its social and cultural role.
- One submitters raised their disappointment that the written plan both on line and in booklet form do not have any Te Reo, or acknowledgement of the bicultural background of our area, or any mention of local Iwi or Hapu. The submitter suggested the council has a responsibility under the Treaty of Waitangi to include and acknowledge the area, its history and the role of local Maori and should have some Te Reo, a mihi and a whakatauki somewhere in the document.
- One submitter requests Council work to improve/resolve internet and mobile coverage in Hot Water Beach.
- One submitter requested improved internet services for Wyuna Peninsula.
- Four submitters ask Council to ensure the retention of the Emergency Helicopter Service operating in Whitianga.
- One submitter asks that support for the Mangrove management bill is removed and instead focus on sediment management.

Out of scope submissions

- One submitter raised concern about the status of the Williamson Park issues and the growing community resentment around the approach to date from the community board and council staff.

To be referred to Waikato Regional Council

- One submitter requested we regularly test (especially in summer months) the Taiwawe stream and estuary to monitor bacteria levels.
- Two submitters requested that Council put a stop to all aerial droppings of 1080 poison and the use of Brodificumm poisoning.

5 Suggested resolution(s)

That the Thames-Coromandel District Council:

1. Receives the 'Overview, submission outside a Council activity and out of scope submissions' report, dated 8 May 2018.

<<Insert DW Link or place Attachment here>>

Attachment B