

Waimakariri District Council

Agenda

Tuesday 17 February 2026

11.30am

Council Chamber
215 High Street
Rangiora

Members:

Mayor Dan Gordon

Deputy Mayor Philip Redmond

Cr Tim Bartle

Cr Brent Cairns

Cr Wendy Doody

Cr Tim Fulton

Cr Jason Goldsworthy

Cr Bruce McLaren

Cr Niki Mealings

Cr Shona Powell

Cr Joan Ward

AGENDA CONTENTS – COUNCIL MEETING 2 DECEMBER 2025		
<u>Item Number</u>	<u>Item Topic</u>	<u>Pages</u>
Reports		
3.1	Declaring Designations Part of the Partially Operative District Plan Operative	5 – 11



The Mayor and Councillors

WAIMAKARIRI DISTRICT COUNCIL

AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE WAIMAKARIRI DISTRICT COUNCIL WILL BE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, RANGIORA SERVICE CENTRE, 215 HIGH STREET, RANGIORA, ON TUESDAY 17 FEBRUARY 2026 COMMENCING AT 11:30AM

Sarah Nichols
GOVERNANCE MANAGER

**Recommendations in reports are not to be construed as
Council policy until adopted by the Council**

BUSINESS

Page No

1. APOLOGIES

2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Conflicts of interest (if any) to be reported for minuting.

3. REPORT

- 3.1. **Adoption of the Draft 2026/2027 Annual Plan and Consultation Document** – Chris Genet (General Manager Finance and Business Support) and Simon Hart (General Manager Strategy, Engagement and Economic Development)

5 - 11

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Receives** Report No. 260120008286.
- (b) **Adopts** the Draft Annual Plan 2026/27 (Attachment i / TRIM No. 260210023362*) as the principal document relied on for the content of the Draft Annual Plan 2026/27 Consultation Document.
- (c) **Adopts** the Consultation Document (Attachment ii / TRIM No. 260210023366) as the Statement of Proposal for public participation in decisions on the content of the Draft Annual Plan 2026/27 and as the information for consultation in relation to:
 - i. the draft 2026/27 Development Contributions Schedule as approved at the Council meeting on 27 January 2026.
- (d) **Approves** the proposed fee increases as set out in the fees and charges schedule in the draft Annual Plan 2026/27.
- (e) **Notes** the Annual Plan Engagement Schedule with the special consultative procedure to open on 20 March 2026 and close on 20 April 2026.
- (f) **Notes** the Draft Annual Plan and Consultation Document refers to further information and reports and this information will be provided on the Council website during the special consultative procedure from 20 March 2026 to 20 April 2026.
- (g) **Notes** that the average rate increase per property is 4.91% and that this is consistent with achieving the Council's Financial Strategy set out in its Long-Term Plan 2024-2034 LTP).

- (h) **Delegates** to the Mayor and Chief Executive authority to amend the Consultation Document following Council comments and to the General Manager Finance and Business Support authority to make necessary minor edits and corrections to the Draft Annual Plan 2026/27 prior to publication.

4. **NEXT MEETING**

The next ordinary meeting of the Council is scheduled for Tuesday 3 March 2026, commencing at 9am to be held in the Council Chamber, Rangiora Service Centre, 215 High Street, Rangiora.

WAIMAKARIRI DISTRICT COUNCIL**REPORT FOR DECISION**

FILE NO and TRIM NO: LTC-03-22/ 260120008286

REPORT TO: COUNCIL

DATE OF MEETING: 17 February 2026

AUTHOR(S): Chris Genet, General Manager Finance & Business Support
Simon Hart, General Manager Strategy, Engagement and Economic Development

SUBJECT: Adoption of the Draft 2026/27 Annual Plan and Consultation Document

ENDORSED BY:   
(for Reports to Council, Committees or Boards) General Managers Chief Executive

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to recommend to Council the adoption for consultation the Draft Annual Plan 2026/27 and Consultation Document 2026/2027 (CD). A proposed Annual Plan Engagement Schedule is included in 4.7 of the report.
- 1.2. This Annual Plan is very consistent with what was forecast for year 3 of the Long Term Plan. While we are not required under legislation to consult on the Annual Plan using the Special Consultative Procedure SCP (as no fundamental changes), Council considers it good practice to go through and SCP to engage with the community.

Attachments:

- i. Draft Annual Plan 2026/27 (TRIM No. 260210023362) (*circulated separately*)
- ii. Consultation Document 2026/27 (TRIM No. 260210023366 (*circulated separately*))

2. RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Receives** Report No. 260120008286.
- (b) **Adopts** the Draft Annual Plan 2026/27 (Attachment i / TRIM No. 260210023362*) as the principal document relied on for the content of the Draft Annual Plan 2026/27 Consultation Document.
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 - i. the draft 2026/27 Development Contributions Schedule as approved at the Council meeting on 27 January 2026
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- (f) **Notes** the Draft Annual Plan and Consultation Document refers to further information and reports and this information will be provided on the Council website during the special consultative procedure from 20 March 2026 to 20 April 2026.

- (g) **Notes** that the average rate increase per property is 4.91% and that this is consistent with achieving the Council's Financial Strategy set out in its Long-Term Plan 2024-2034 LTP).
- (h) **Delegates** to the Mayor and Chief Executive authority to amend the Consultation Document following Council comments and to the General Manager Finance and Business Support authority to make necessary minor edits and corrections to the Draft Annual Plan 2026/27 prior to publication.

3. **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1. The Draft Annual Plan 2026/27 presented for approval is a requirement of the Local Government Act 2002 and sets out the activities, services and investment planned for the Council over the year and how council sets out how to fund its activities and services. The Annual Plan is for the second year of the LTP that is prepared every three years.
- 3.2. Section 95 States the Council must prepare and adopt an annual plan for each financial year. Section 95 (2A) provides exemption of consulting if the annual plan does not include significant or material differences from the content of the LTP for the financial year to which the proposed annual plan relates. Even though this Annual Plan does not differ significantly to the LTP, Council considers it is good practice to consult with its community each year.
- 3.3. Section 95B, states the purpose of the Consultation Document is to provide a basis for effective public participation in local authority decision-making processes relating to the activities on costs and funding, as proposed for inclusion in the annual plan by:
 - (a) Identifying significant or material difference between the proposed Annual Plan and the content of the LTP for the financial year to which the annual plan relates; and
 - (b) Explaining the matters in paragraph (a) in a way that can be readily understood by interested or affected people and;
 - (c) Informing discussion between the local authority and its communities about the matters in paragraph (a).
- 3.4. Local Government Act 2002 states that it is Council's discretion to decide what is appropriate to include in the Consultation Document.
- 3.5. The Annual Plan is not required to be audited.

4. **ISSUES AND OPTIONS**

Draft Annual Plan 2026/27

- 4.1. Preparing the Draft Annual Plan for consultation and achieving a balance between affordable rate levels and maintaining the level of service delivery has been challenging. Key factors that have been addressed within the Draft Annual Plan are set out below.
 - 4.1.1. Continuing general inflation impacting the Local Government sector will increase the cost of service delivery. The BERL forecast for the Local Government sector for cost increases in 2026 year is 3.5%, compared with current forecast inflation in the LTP of 2.3%.
 - 4.1.2. An increase in three waters assets values (which reflect the cost of replacing existing assets) by 27% at the 30 June 2024 valuation has had a direct impact on depreciation expense. The 2026/27 budgets are the first year the increase in depreciation has been rated for due to timing of the valuation.
 - 4.1.3. Falling interest rates have allowed a reduction in forecast interest costs, helping offset some of the cost increase.

- 4.1.4. Lower than requested NZTA funding for roading for the period 2024 -2027 has required the roading programme for maintenance, renewal and capital works to be revised and reduced to stay within LTP funding levels.
- 4.1.5. Inclusion of necessary costs associated with the set-up of the Council's inhouse business unit, the Waimakariri Water Services Unit as it's delivery vehicle for water services. The business unit is planned to be established by 1 July 2026. Set up costs have been loan funded over ten years.
- 4.1.6. Reduction in planning costs in line with work programmes for the District Planning Unit. In July 2025 Council completed the decision phase of the district plan review. Work programmes for 2026/27 will focus on the 21 appeals which have been lodged and responding to Resource Management reform.
- 4.2. There are other factors that may have an impact on future costs, including continuing costs from central government policy changes and reform programmes and significant contract renewals (including those for greenspaces and district road maintenance).
- 4.3. The Draft Annual Plan proposes an average rating increase of 4.91%, lower than the 4.95% forecast in the 2024- 2034 Long Term Plan. This is an average across all rating units and will vary depending on the individual property. Because the factors affecting rate increases noted above have a disproportionate impact on water and wastewater rates, rating units that are serviced by water and wastewater systems will generally have a higher increase than those that are not serviced. The proposed rates increase this is consistent with achieving the Council's Financial Strategy set out in its Long-Term Plan 2024-2034 LTP).
- 4.4. Increases to fees and charges were included in the draft budgets for the Recreation Activity for 2026/27 approved at the Council meeting on 27 January 2026. The increases for community facilities are inflation-based increases, but some larger increases are proposed for cemeteries. The recommendation is that plot purchase fees, which were not reviewed for a number of years prior to 2020, again be increased by a higher percentage continuing a gradual move to be in line with levels other Councils are charging. The higher fee better reflects the cost of developing the cemetery land to provide areas for burial. Additional income is required to develop ashes plots due to increasing demand.

Updated Development Contributions Policy Schedule

- 4.5. At the meeting on 27 January 2026 the Council approved a proposed update to the Development Contribution Policy, Schedule and Maps for 2026/27, to be consulted on as part of the Annual Plan. These proposed updates are to some of the development contributions payable and to allow for annual increases/decreases based on project changes, and to align it with district plan changes.

Consultation

- 4.6. Key topics that the Council is seeking feedback on within the Consultation Document are:
- Changes to Local Government - summary of the raft of reforms coming the sectors way. We highlight what is important to our Council and ask for residents' views.
 - Local Water Done Well - an update on the establishment of our in-house water services delivery unit.
 - Capital Programme - this is an explainer about how we budget for growth. We've been open about our lower than expected delivery in previous years and seek support to bring our delivery levels back to achievable rates.
 - Rangiora Eastern Link - as we progress this project we have a better understanding of costs. We are updated residents as the costs have increased. However, the Council still views this as essential infrastructure that can be delivered in a cost-effective way.

- 4.7. The key communications and actions planned over the consultation period are set out in the Engagement Schedule below.

Activity	Action
Consultation Document	Distributed to Council Service Centres and other public places
Engagement events	Events are planned in Rangiora, Woodend, Oxford, Kaiapoi and Pegasus
Media releases/ news stories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One released day before consultation opens • Second two weeks into engagement opens reminding there is 2 weeks left to provide feedback • Third after engagement closes outlining next steps
Community noticeboard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To include media release content through the engagement period in the column
Newspaper adverts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northern Outlook • North Canterbury News • Smaller Community Newspapers i.e. Oxford, Pegasus, Woodend, Kaiapoi
Mayoral columns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarising engagement topics and encouraging residents to provide feedback. • Columns included in North Canterbury News
Digital Slides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Slides to be used across screen network at Council buildings
Video series	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An introductory message on what the Annual Plan is, what the key issues are, why it is important for the community to participate, and how they can provide feedback • Short snappy videos – clear messaging and call to action. Every video will link to online engagement
Radio Ads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quick summary of Annual Plan topics with call to action directing people to online engagement • Second reminder with two weeks to go • Third spot to encourage 'final week to tell us what you think'
Social media – Facebook Instagram	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular social media posts at each stage of the Annual Plan engagement • Posts are sponsored / boosted to increase reach • Drop in events posted on our page and community targeted • Encourage people/ groups and organisations to share our posts
Billboards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated with our print ad collateral the billboards will be used in Rangiora and Kaiapoi. Outlining key topics in Draft Annual Plan and call to action for feedback
Letterbox drop - mailbox A5 flyer delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated with our print ad collateral the A5 will outline key topics in Draft Annual Plan and call to action for feedback
Internal Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methods: Workplace, CE Update, Project pages • Informing staff about the process to arm them with information in case they are asked any questions by friends, family, or members of the public
Email to target local groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email to all community and residents' groups/associations with links to online engagement encouraging them to participate

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Engagement and e-news platforms to send emails to those registered with link to online engagement
Public events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These events are limited due to the restrictions of numbers due to Covid and Council's acknowledging the Health and Safety precautions
Let's Talk – Engagement page	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let's Talk engagement page set up showing project lead, topics, various engagement opportunities as well as the process for providing feedback • Link to Submissions Manager and other engagement tool – poll or Q&A option • CD is online and available for download • Aim to be transparent about the implications of decision making on rates and the impact on the ability to deliver the longer-term work programme for the district • Easy for people to share via social media

Key Dates

- Consultation period - 20 March to 20 April 2026;
- Council hearing of submissions - 6 May - 7 May 2026;
- Council deliberations on submissions - 26 May - 27 May 2026;
- Adoption of the 2026/2027 Annual Plan - 16 June 2026.

Implications for Community Wellbeing

The adoption and implementation of the Annual Plan following consultation will make an important contribution to the well-being of the community.

- 4.8. The Management Team has reviewed this report and support the recommendations.

5. COMMUNITY VIEWS

5.1. Mana whenua

Te Ngāi Tūāhuriri hapū are consulted through various forums and groups contributing to the LTP and subsequent Annual Plans.

5.2. Groups and Organisations

There are groups and organisations likely to be affected by, or to have an interest in the subject matter of this report and they will be able to make submissions as part of the consultation process.

5.3. Wider Community

The wider community is likely to be affected by, or to have an interest in the subject matter of this report and they will be able to make submissions as part of the consultation process.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1. Financial Implications

The Draft Annual Plan 2026/27 proposes a District average rate increase of 4.91%. The Long-Term Plan signalled an increase of 4.95%. This increase is consistent with the Council's Financial Strategy which is designed to keep the Council in sound financial health over the coming ten years.

The forecast accounting surplus for the year is \$39.4m. This includes non-cash vested assets revenue of \$26.6m (this is the value of land and infrastructure assets transferred to the Council from land developers). Excluding vested assets, the surplus is \$12.8m. This surplus is required to fund capital expenditure.

By 30 June 2027 the Council's net asset value is estimated to be \$2,897m with net debt of \$232m. The forecast net debt is well within Council's Treasury Policy limits as set out in the table below.

Staff have reviewed the need to use Consult 24 software for processing of submissions. It has been decided the software is only necessary every three years for the Long-term Plan, or where we anticipate a significant level of submission on an Annual Plan. As a result Consult24 will not be used to process submissions for the annual plan this year. This represents a cost saving of approximately \$31,800.

Measure	Limit	Actual 2024/25	Annual Plan 2026/27
Gross interest paid on term debt will not exceed 15% of gross operating revenue	15.0%	7.6%	5.9 %
Net debt as percentage of operating revenue shall not exceed 250%	250%	134%	135%
Net cash inflow from operating activities exceeds gross annual interest expense by two times	2.0 times	3.2 times	6.1 times
Net interest is a maximum of 25% of rates revenue	25.0%	7.8%	6.8%
Net debt as a percentage of total assets will not exceed 15%	15%	6.7%	6.5%
Liquidity ratio of greater than 110% (LGFA ratio)	110%	164%	115%

6.2. Sustainability and Climate Change Impacts

The recommendations in this report do have direct sustainability and/or climate change impacts. Sustainability and Climate Change Impacts have been considered in each of the Council activity statements.

6.3. Risk Management

The Key Assumptions and Risks determined within the LTP have been used as the underlying basis in preparation of the Annual Plan.

6.4. Health and Safety

There are not health and safety risks arising from the adoption/implementation of the recommendations in this report.

7. CONTEXT

7.1. Consistency with Policy

This matter is a matter of significance in terms of the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy, and the report sets out the community engagement process that will be undertaken in relation to the Draft Annual Plan, including the arrangements for the delivery of water services.

7.2. Authorising Legislation

Preparation of the Annual Plan is in accordance with the Local Government Act 2002. Consultation on the arrangements for delivering water services is in accordance with the Local Government (Water Services Preliminary Arrangements) Act 2024.

7.3. Consistency with Community Outcomes

The Council's community outcomes are relevant to the actions arising from recommendations in this report.

The Draft Annual Plan contains Councils plans for achieving community outcomes and applies to specially to the outcomes.

There are wide ranging opportunities for people to contribute to decision-making by national and regional organisations that affect the district.

7.4. **Authorising Delegations**

The Council has the decision-making responsibility for the Annual Plan 2026/27 and proposals in relation to arrangements for delivering water services.