

KEY DECISIONS

IN THE LEAD UP TO THIS LONG TERM PLAN WE PRODUCED A CONSULTATION DOCUMENT TO HELP EXPLAIN KEY ISSUES AND DECISIONS COUNCIL WAS FACING. IT SET OUT OPTIONS WE WANTED FEEDBACK ON TO HELP US IN MAKING CHOICES AND SET FUTURE DIRECTION.

Following a month-long consultation process that resulted in 665 submissions and three days of verbal hearings, Council made a wide range of decisions about the 10-year plan.

Council would like to formally acknowledge those who took time to be involved and give their feedback.

The key issues as presented in the consultation document are included on the following pages, along with the decisions Council went on to make for this plan.



LIVING & WORKING IN CLUTHA UPDATE

Our Living & Working in Clutha Strategy is one of our key guiding documents. It explains how we're intending to promote the well-being of the Clutha District's communities. It focuses on priorities we think have a crucial part to play.

We asked if we still have our priorities right and should we continue our focus on promoting growth and opportunities in the Clutha District and to look forward to maintaining the momentum of past years, focussing on making Clutha a great place to live, work and play.

Investing in Infrastructure

We are focused on maintaining our key infrastructure for residents and future generations, and enabling investment where benefits are clear. We will also look to facilitate growth where there is potential for this, to help achieve our goal of growing the population and the rating base. Council is focused on maintaining the affordability of its infrastructure. For more details refer to the Infrastructure Strategy 2024/54.

Facilitating More Quality Housing

Quality housing is a key aspect of liveability in the Clutha District. Having the security of a home that is safe, warm, dry and affordable is a key foundation to the wellbeing of our people.

However, Clutha District's housing market continues to be under pressure, with challenges to the availability of quality housing for both ownership and rental. Demand for social housing is also growing. We intend to play an active

leadership role to enable housing solutions by continuing to build on partnerships with communities and central government. We will continue to facilitate residential development to add more quality housing in the district, whether that be residential subdivisions, or single houses and infill development in our towns.

Filling Our Jobs

Actions that help to enhance economic growth are critical to the ongoing sustainability and liveability of the Clutha District. For this to be achieved we need to ensure job opportunities are filled and we have a vibrant and diverse workforce with the skills to meet the changing needs of the district. This will continue to be crucial to our success both now and into the future.

For the Clutha District this means continuing to:

- Provide recruitment support for our businesses.
- Provide supporting infrastructure which enables businesses to flourish.
- Being open for business in terms of visiting and investing here.
- Use what it has available to fully support our residents.
- Attract investment and ensure economic and community development underpins our actions and decisions.

LIVING & WORKING IN CLUTHA FRAMEWORK



Reducing Our Environmental Footprint

We want to help promote a district that plans for a sustainable future, through effective planning of infrastructure, efficient delivery of services, along with protection, maintenance and enhancement of our natural and built environments. Focus areas include waste reduction, water conservation and quality, and protecting and enhancing habitats of local significance. Other initiatives include supporting infrastructure for electric vehicles and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Addressing Climate Change

Climate change is presenting challenges and opportunities to the district. Council's Clutha District Climate Change Strategy provides an understanding of the climate change impacts in the Clutha District and how to help deliver resilient infrastructure services, and guide decision making.

Healthy and Safe Communities

Clutha is a caring and supporting community, yet there are many challenges to health, safety and wellbeing. This includes a relatively small and aging population, social issues such as drugs and excess alcohol use, and public transport options are limited making connectivity and access to health services vital. Council is committed to supporting the community in this area through its community programs and other activities.

Supporting Culture & Heritage

The preservation and celebration of cultural and heritage values is part of what makes Clutha a great place to live, work and play. We are looking to showcase our rich culture and heritage to better share and celebrate who we are. This includes sharing community stories, making historical objects and records more accessible; and incorporating our local history and culture into community facilities such as halls and public spaces.

KEY ISSUE: LIVING & WORKING IN CLUTHA

SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

The feedback received through consultation confirmed community support for the seven priority areas presented in the 'Living and Working in Clutha' strategy.

The consultation document asked respondents to rate the importance of each of the seven priority areas, which include: Quality Housing, Healthy and Safe Communities, Culture and Heritage, Climate Change, Infrastructure and Investment, Environmental Footprint, and Filling Jobs.

There were 464 Submissions received using the voting buttons and 164 who chose to leave a written response. The choices were from 1 (negative) to 5 (positive).

Infrastructure received the most positive response with 42% believing we have our priorities right, and this is of very high importance, 41% of respondents believe our Healthy and Safe Communities priorities are right. The average score overall was 3.13 over all sections showing that they all hold importance to the community.

There were some contrasts this time often between the voting and the written comments especially with Climate Change, where there were often stark contrasts between either being a very negative response to others who believe it is one of the highest priorities. Hence receiving a lower score of 2.63. (153 out of 434 respondents rated this lowly).

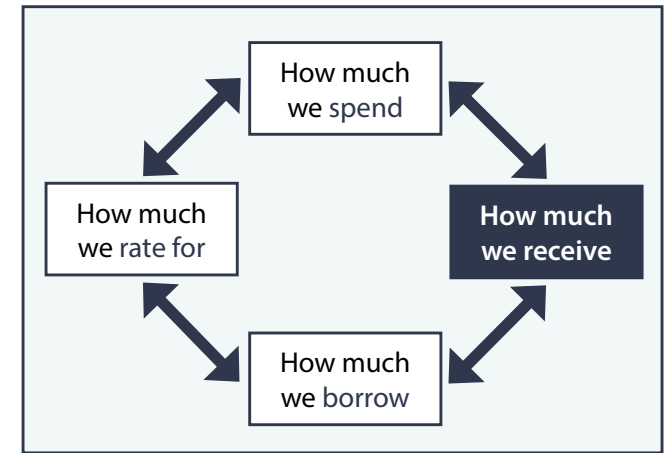
COUNCIL'S DECISION:

THAT COUNCIL CONFIRM THAT THE LIVING & WORKING IN CLUTHA STRATEGY IN GENERAL HAS THE RIGHT PRIORITY AREAS FOR THE CLUTHA DISTRICT.

We consulted on:

MANAGING RATING IMPACTS AND RATES REBATES

Our Financial Mix



We outlined our rates reality and asked for feedback on how to manage the rates increases and rates rebates initiatives

The reality of cost increases, impacts of inflation, our previous decisions and investment in infrastructure means some dramatic increases for the future.

Rates are one of the most important sources Council uses to fund the cost of its services. We are continually being asked to cut costs but keep delivering the same or better services, and we have unavoidable cost drivers. We are dealing with high inflation, high interest rates coupled with rising compliance and insurances costs.

Once we included all our costs in our budgets, we looked at the rates increase. Of the approximate \$15M in required increases, \$12M is attributable to three waters expenditure. The pure rates increase, once we had incorporated the required water expenditure, was 45% which is unaffordable. Council considered this unsustainable and looked at possible solutions to mitigate this huge increase.

The only option we had available to us was to borrow in years 1 & 2 and repay this money in later years of the Long Term Plan, meaning we have an unbalanced budget in the first two years of the long term plan. This resulted in

average rate increases of around 14% for the first three years.

The challenges we face

Three waters is back - We are unsure of the future of three waters at this stage, but regardless our communities need the provision of three waters services.

Costs of providing three waters/ever increasing central government standards - We decided to bring three waters operations in-house from the 1st July 2023. The transition costs associated with this move including increasing the size of the workforce, in conjunction with new drinking water standards introduced in January 2023, have resulted in higher costs of operating and providing three waters services, and greater investment in three waters infrastructure. In addition, there has been two years of deficits caused by higher costs of operation and transition that have to be funded by the three waters activity.

Debt capacity - while Council can borrow to pay for our infrastructure renewals, increases in levels of service and growth, we also need to

be mindful of our debt capacity. Council has applied, and received a AA-credit rating which allows us to increase our debt capacity. This is a prudent action when combined with the proposed significant rates increase.

Getting used to higher rates increases - although Council has historically been successful in holding rates at low levels, the funding system we were using was not working and the need for investment is huge. As cost pressures increased, the unsustainable nature of funding three waters infrastructure became apparent. However, we can say that staff and Elected Members will lobby central government for greater support and align what communities want and need to the resources we have available to deliver them.

Investment in infrastructure - many of our assets are getting near the end of their lifespan, meaning we require major investment to bring the assets up to standard or replace them.

Cost escalations - even before COVID-19 tipped the world on its head, we were facing big increases in the cost of providing our services, and that hasn't changed. Like many other Councils, we are facing escalations in the cost

of investing in our infrastructure and providing our services well in excess of what was expected in our previous planning cycles.

Quantum of investment required - even if we closed every park, library and sportsground, and cancelled all our economic and social development activities, the savings from these alone would still not offset the investment required

Initiatives to reduce the impact Council continues to subsidise rates for everybody from investment returns to a limited extent (\$800K in 2023). With rates forecasted to increase beyond previous years 4% cap, the impact on discretionary income on low-income ratepayers is disproportionate to those ratepayers with more income. The Rates Rebate Scheme paid by the NZ Government has a maximum rebate of \$750 which does not increase any further as rates increase.

We considered an option for an additional rebate of \$250 to lessen financial hardship for those more vulnerable ratepayers as part of our consultation.

Investment returns

Overall, we want to maximise investment returns while preserving ratepayer funds. In 2024 we received a 14.36% return on our investment portfolio.

We were able to retain just over \$1 million of the \$2.4 million in investments that were returned this year, to buffer against future years' increases.

Funding decision

Historically, Council has not completed all of the budgeted three waters work for a variety of reasons such as project team and consultant capacity, resource consent requirements and increasing costs requiring project reviews. This has been improving in recent years and Council is on-track to complete nearly 80% of projects in the current year.

In order to reflect this in reality, Council has decided to fund urban three waters projects as an overall capital project fund rather than funding individual projects – this is for urban water, wastewater and stormwater. These overall capital budgets will be funded at 85% for the entire 10-year period in the LTP to reflect that not all projects get completed. Out of this process a total of \$26 million was removed. These activity areas are almost completely funded through urban targeted rates and loans are raised after work is completed so the actual cost of work will be funded as it is now. This will also provide some additional flexibility to adjust funding as required and this will be reported to Council on at least a quarterly basis.

This decision results in an average reduction in 3 waters capital funding over the first three years of the LTP of \$1.8 million per annum or about 3.89% of the total capital programme per annum. Over the full 10-year period of the LTP this decision reduces three waters capital funding by an average of \$2.6 million per annum or about 6% of the total capital budget.

KEY ISSUE: KEEPING RATES DOWN

SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

The first question asked to the community was: Which of the following two options do you prefer to manage rating impacts?

1. A high rating increase in year 1 (2024-2025) followed by lesser increases in subsequent years.
2. Any rating increase to be spread over the first 3 years of the Long Term Plan (Council's preferred option).

There were 357 respondents in this area with 91.04% (325) of respondents voting for option 2, and 8.96% (32) voting for option 1, showing overwhelming support for spreading the cost over a longer period of time. The written submissions were varied and signalled how difficult

it is financially for some parts of our community.

The second question asked was: Should the Council provide an additional rebate of \$250 for those receiving the maximum government rebate, to lessen financial hardship for vulnerable ratepayers, paid for from the budgeted investment returns?

431 respondents used the voting buttons with 223 (51.74%) voting no and 208 (48.26%) voting yes. Once again there were many varied responses indicating difficult financial times.

COUNCIL'S DECISION:

Council approved an overall average rates increase of 14.36%. Council also confirmed the option of using borrowing to keep rates under the limit set in Council's Financial Strategy. Council notes the overall rates for the 2024/34 LTP meets the 30% cap in accordance with section 21 of the Local Government Rating Act. Council also decided not to provide an additional rebate.

**We
consulted
on:**



INVESTING IN INFRASTRUCTURE

We are a widespread district of over 6,000 km² including various towns and smaller settlements that all have their own infrastructure needs. Council has a key role in maintaining and providing infrastructure and is responsible for managing around one billion dollars worth of infrastructure, including the third largest local roading network in the country.

What we're planning

In recent years there has been a substantial investment in infrastructure, and our communities are experiencing the benefits of these works. Our roading network is generally in good condition when compared to other similar networks and this has reduced capital works for sealed roads, compared to 10 to 15 years ago.

However, the challenges of changes in government policy on three waters services means the district has to take on substantial commitments over coming years to ensure quality drinking water, wastewater treatment and stormwater infrastructure renewals.

We have also considered community facilities on a case-by-case basis and adapted. In some instances, we have adopted divestment strategies for facilities, which is the most sustainable long-term option.

Our challenges

Council faces the challenges of balancing the known with the unknown. Increasingly, we face added pressure financially, geographically, and politically.

These include:

Restructuring reforms – Between 2018 and 2023 the regulatory framework we operate under was significantly reformed. Following a change in government in late 2023, some of these reforms are subject to significant change.

High inflation – Since 2020 New Zealand has experienced significant inflation, impacting Council's purchasing power.

Our changing community – Some are growing, some are declining and as a society we are getting older.

Climate change – These challenges are expected to impact our district with an increased risk to infrastructure from flooding, coastal inundation and heavy rainfall events.

Natural disaster resilience.

Balancing affordability with service levels – How to manage rates when the assumption is that the District is "going it alone" for three waters services.

Our proposed investment

Many of these proposed projects are expected to see us through for many decades. We're operating in a constantly changing environment with a lot of uncertainty. The 'doability' of what we're proposing will be a significant challenge and risk. Funding is also a huge consideration. We know we will need to use debt to fund these over time, to make it fairer so the current generation doesn't foot the whole bill.

There are challenges and calls to make for adapting to the impacts of climate change as our district gets wetter, windier and warmer. We're also mindful of how we can prepare ourselves for natural disasters or other unknowns that might come our way.

Council's mandate has been to forge ahead to ensure compulsory work is done, especially towards improving wastewater discharges and ensuring safer drinking water. Our approach is to be flexible and adaptive, as we know there will undoubtedly be changes, challenges and opportunities to navigate.

Infrastructure investment underpins our standard of living and our ability to live, work and play.

Following our previous successes in capital project deliverables, along with the Central Government Three Waters Reform repeal, we are once again proposing to increase our capital expenditure. However, Council went line by line to reduce what was originally consulted on, to make cost savings. Out of this process a total of \$26 million was removed.

Achieving this capital works programme is based on the assumption we will receive the appropriate rates and borrowing. And in roading projects that we receive the appropriate New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) funding.

Timing adjustment for transportation spending

The bulk of Council's transportation funding is approved by the NZTA in 3 yearly blocks. This is a partnership between NZTA (on behalf of the Government) and Council. NZTA supports the programme with 67% of the funding and Council rates for the other 33%. Unfortunately, we will not have final confirmation of the approved level of funding for the next three-year period until September 2024. In the past, not all of the requested funds had been approved and for the last two funding cycles Council spending has been less than planned in year one with this balanced out in years two and three.

To avoid over-rating in year 1 (if we don't get the funding we have requested), Council has decided to defer 15% of the rates funded transportation programme to year 3 of the Long Term Plan. This will enable us to confirm the level of funding in year one and then adjust the second- and third-year programmes to match the approved funding. If we do need to do more work in year 1 and this is approved by NZTA, then we have a deferred maintenance fund that will allow us to fund our share even though we haven't rated for it in year 1.

MANY OF THESE PROPOSED PROJECTS ARE EXPECTED TO SEE US THROUGH FOR MANY DECADES

We outlined key projects and programmes in the coming ten years.

Safer drinking water (\$16.3M)

Compliance with the NZ Drinking Water Standards is a legal requirement. The level of treatment necessary is dependent on the quality of the water source. Work for all our rural treatment plants continues to take place.

Greenfield Water Scheme (\$8.0M)

Additional funding of \$5.435 million was approved to complete the project. This includes construction of 49.8km of pipeline, three booster pump stations, a water treatment plant and three bore drillings, expected to be completed by the end of the year. The new scheme will provide a better and more reliable water source for consumers on the Balmoral 1 and 2, Tuapeka East and West rural water schemes, and the Waitahuna and Lawrence townships. Given the project was over 80% complete, Council felt there was no other option but to finish the project. We do acknowledge that the cost of a water rate for those consumers after year four of the LTP is significant, and Council will lobby Central Government for support. The need for additional funding was due to increased costs of materials, labour, treatment plant equipment, inflation, and overall cost increases.

Increasing standards for discharges to the environment (\$107M)

New rules and regulations have influenced levels of treatment for wastewater. Several of our wastewater treatment plants are currently working through resource consent and compliance renewals. Consequentially, of the \$107M planned expenditure over the next ten years, \$87.5M is associated with consent/compliance requirements.

Improving stormwater protection (\$12.5M)

How we collect and dispose of stormwater run-off affects residents, their properties and businesses. To quantify what level of protection we have, we talk about frequency. For example, at the moment our pipe systems are designed to manage between a 1-in-5 and a 1-in-10 year event. Several flooding risks exist in some of our smaller communities, and a programme of upgrades is underway over the next 10 years.

These projects are in Milton, Owaka, Lawrence, Tapanui, Heriot, Clinton, Waiholo and Pounawea. The proposed projects will mean a higher level of protection for communities during heavy rainfall events. Heavy weather events are becoming more common, so we're investing in stormwater systems with more capacity.

Community housing improvements (Estimated cost: \$6.5M)

To assist members of our community who are in the lower income brackets and to keep up with demand, we are planning a programme of new builds, which would increase our residential housing units from 98 to 108 residential units across the Clutha District. This programme has been deferred for three years.

During the past three years all of our units have been brought up to Healthy Home Standards, making them warmer and drier.

Securing the future for Mt Cooe Landfill (\$16.2M)

The current resource consent at Mt Cooe Landfill expired in 2023. Council has submitted an application for the renewal of this consent, allowing operations to continue until it is approved. The request for renewed consent encompasses not only the current landfill area, but also proposed extensions and upgrades, which are designed to support the landfill's



operation for an additional 35 years. These enhancements are coupled with ongoing investment in waste minimisation and recycling initiatives, which have successfully reduced the annual influx of waste, extending the landfill's lifespan and minimising cost impacts for both residents and businesses.

Efficient sealed road renewals (\$46.3M)

Post COVID-19 has seen significant increases in roading costs and as such we are aligning our budget expenditure to meet these increases.

We continue with our strategy on maintenance and renewals of our local road network, where we are focusing on roads that have the biggest economic benefit to the district with the aim of giving ratepayers the best 'bang for their buck'.

We actively monitor the performance of our sealed roads to signal when we need to program specific sites into our planned program of works.

Strengthening our bridges (\$8.2M)

As we improve how freight moves around New Zealand, trucks are becoming both longer and heavier with 50 tonne loads becoming the norm. At the moment a large part of our local roading network, i.e. access to farms and forestry, is not accessible by what are referred to as High Productivity Motor Vehicles (HPMVs). Council's delivery partner for roads, NZTA (Waka Kotahi) is looking to actively support us to open up more of the local network to HPMV vehicles.

Critical bridges (to commence 2034-54) (\$22.3M)

There are four large and economically critical bridges that may require replacement within the next 30 years: Clydevale Bridge, Papatowai Bridge, McLennan Bridge and Bridge 462 (Tuapeka Flat Road).

Milton Main Street improvements (\$3.9M)

Milton Main Street upgrades will continue but the scope of work has been pared back. In the previous LTP (2021-31) a budget of \$5 million was approved for main street upgrades and work completed to date includes the replacement of stormwater and wastewater pipes. There was a budget of \$2.05 million left and Council has decided to increase this to \$2.25 million and there is also \$1.6 million carried forward from the previous year. This budget will allow for stage two to be completed, including the undergrounding of power lines, installation of streetlights, reinstatement of footpaths, and kerbs at the pedestrian crossings, and completion of the Gray Street Plaza (inclusive of the carpark at the destination toilets) but not the original landscaping and street enhancement plans. Further investment to complete the original upgrade would require Council to go back and consult with the community. We feel it is important to finish the work, albeit at a reduced scope and budget, rather than be set back by further delays due to consultation.

Balclutha Streetscape stages 2 and 3 (\$537K)

Council approved a revised budget of \$394,000 towards sealing the public carpark beside Countdown and the Te Pou Ō Mata-Au Clutha District War Memorial and Community Centre (TPŌMA) carpark. Sealing the gravel area near the old War Memorial Hall has been a priority since the streetscape project began about 15 years ago. However, it was deferred until the future of the hall and any upgrades in that area were confirmed. A chip seal option will be used (like the Cross Recreation Centre) rather than a full asphalt seal. There is also a contribution of \$200,000 from a nearby development towards the sealing of the carpark.

A budget of \$143,000 has been allocated to concrete the Balclutha Destination Toilet area with some seating, above-ground planters and signage. \$740,000 was required to complete the Rough & Milne Landscape Architects ferry theme concept that Council had previously approved, but we feel it is more appropriate to reduce the scope of work and consider further landscaping in the future.

Footpath renewals (\$8.1M)

Council is committed to bringing all of our existing footpaths up to an acceptable standard. This programme is expected to take approximately 15 years with expenditure of over \$8 million in the next 10 years.

Milton Community Library and Swimming Pool Complex (\$19.4M)

The revised cost for the pool and library in Milton has come in at around \$19.4 million. Given that it is considerably more than the current approved budget of \$17.6 million and due to the level of significance, Council has no choice but to go back and consult again with the community as a Special Consultative Process as per its Significance and Engagement Policy. However, Council has also decided to keep the existing \$17.6 million budget in the 2024-34 LTP, until a decision is made from the consultation.

The new Milton community library and pool complex is being designed as an effective solution to replace the current facilities, both of which have a range of issues.

Balclutha Library renewals (\$80K)

The Balclutha Community Library is extremely well used with approximately 1,000 visits per week but has a number of structural and spatial issues. Most urgent of these is the need to address the ongoing watertightness and ventilation issues, to ensure the continued safe operation of the library (\$80K).

A number of submitters to the LTP suggested the Balclutha Community Library could be transferred to the Te Pou Ō Mata-Au Clutha District War Memorial and Community Centre (TPŌMA). Given the age and state of the current building, Council will set up a steering group to investigate all future options for the Balclutha library, including working with the owners of TPŌMA, to see whether it was feasible to operate the library in TPŌMA.

The long-term future of the library can then be properly assessed. Funding of \$4.9M for a replacement library in the 10 year period was removed.

West Otago Community Centre & Tapanui Library

Council has brought forward \$60,000 to investigate the option of working with the West Otago Community Centre (WOCC) committee to consider the option to move the Tapanui Community Library into the WOCC building.

WOCC is currently undergoing stage 3 of its upgrade project which focuses on the replacement of the 730m² roof structure, internal refurbishments and installation of a type 4 fire detection and alarm service.

This is to ensure it is fully waterproof, strengthened, compliant and in a good condition to serve the West Otago community well into the future.

However, the Tapanui library building will require significant remedial work in the next 10 years including a roof replacement and work to ensure it is fully accessible, as currently the building lacks adequate space and there are issues around earthquake readiness.

Council removed funding of \$696K from the 10 year period pending the results of the investigation.

KEY ISSUE:

INVESTING IN INFRASTRUCTURE

SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

We asked submitters to rate the importance of each of the seven priority areas, on a scale between 1 (Not important) and 5 (Very important). The twelve major topics had varying votes between 428 and 470 each.

Safe Drinking Water: 390 of 470 votes (83%) say we have our priorities right by voting 4's and 5's. 16 comments support the importance of fixing it.

Increasing Standards for Discharges to the Environment: 357 of 442 submissions told us that we are doing medium to well in this area, with most votes (81%) being between 3 and 5.

Improving our Stormwater: 372 of 442 submissions told us our priorities are in a strong position, with 84% voting between 3 and 5.

Community Housing Improvements: 171 written responses and 443 voting responses were received. 57% of votes were between 3 and 4. Means testing of future inhabitants was strongly supported.

Securing the Future of Mt Cooee Landfill: 81% of 435 respondents voted between 3 and 5, showing overall support for our direction.

Efficient Sealed Road Renewals: There was strong support for our direction to deliver sealed roads. 87% of 447 votes were between 3 and 5, with 62 written submissions. Many pointed out the need to seal more roads and continue on the upkeep.

COUNCIL'S DECISION:

COUNCIL CONFIRMED THE INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY 2024/54 HAS THE PRIORITIES RIGHT FOR INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE CLUTHA DISTRICT.

We
consulted
on...



SUSTAINABLE FUTURES

CLIMATE CHANGE

Managing risk and providing for community resilience in relation to climate change was acknowledged as a key responsibility for Council.

This includes addressing coastal and flood defences, emissions monitoring (landfills), land use and built environment, and infrastructure.

SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

Of the 3 questions asked, the overall score of support (out of 5) was very similar (2.61 for the draft Climate Change Strategy, 2.62 for the principles of the draft Climate Change Strategy, and 2.54 for the Action Plan and its priorities).

Out of all submitters to the LTP, 395 submitters (63%) responded to the Climate Change section. The majority of

these submitters selected at least a “3” for each of the questions on the scale of supporting the draft Climate Strategy. Overall, the balance of submitters are more supportive (compared to less supportive) of the draft Climate Change Strategy).

It is important to note that the analysis does not include those LTP submitters that did not respond to the Climate Change section in the LTP, nor any people who did not submit on the LTP.

The “Anything Else” matrix showed that almost half of the comments (47%) presented a negative sentiment, with only 5% being positive and 48% being either mixed or neutral.

Out of all submitters to the LTP, 148 submitters (23%) responded with comments to the “anything else?”

question. In analysing submissions, two common themes emerged:

- “Climate Change is a myth/hoax/propaganda/not real”.
- “There are more pressing concerns than climate change”.

Submissions also included general comments regarding supporting the Climate Change Strategy/not supporting the Climate Change Strategy.

COUNCIL'S DECISION: Council chose to include an additional budget of \$40,000 for each year of the LTP for climate change projects.

WASTE MANAGEMENT AND MINIMISATION

As part of the LTP consultation, Council reviewed and sought feedback on an updated Waste Management and Minimisation Plan that will come into effect from 1 July 2024, as part of its mandatory obligations under the Waste Management Act 2008.

SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

Council received 356 responses to the consultation questions on Council's Draft 2024 Waste Management and Minimisation Plan. Of these responses, 124 provided additional comment and 16 residents spoke to their submissions. 2 written submissions were also received.

The consultation document asked respondents on a scale of 1 to 5 if they agreed with the Waste Management and Minimisation Plan's goals and objectives, outlined targets and action plan.

Feedback received during the consultation strongly favoured exploring options for diverting waste through reuse and recycling over landfill. The most frequently mentioned materials were green waste and glass. A consistent theme emerged against the development of Mt Cooe Landfill, with a preference for considering alternative waste disposal options and focusing on resource recovery. Additionally, at least one-third of the comments addressed kerbside collection, with a similar number of respondents both for and against changes to the service.

While the feedback varied from strong disagreement to strong support, the message was clear that better communication and engagement with the community was needed, and, that the key actions identified in the plan will help address these issues and opportunities.

IN SUMMARY

The key actions in the 2024 Waste Management and Minimisation Plan are:

- Promote upstream waste hierarchy, minimisation, and local circular economy principles through collaboration.
- Divert more from kerbside collection services.

- Improve access to appropriate waste services for townships and the rural communities they support.
- Using Council facilities to divert more from the overall waste stream: Ensure regulations and collaboration enables Clutha District's objectives, targets, and resilience.
- Investigate and provide effective environmental and economic disposal solutions.

COUNCIL'S DECISION: Council adopted the Draft 2024 Waste Management and Minimisation Plan.

TRANSFER STATION USE

Transfer stations provide additional services around our district. We asked for feedback about how important transfer stations are, as we will be reviewing these with our new waste services in the next few years.

SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

Council received 366 responses to the question "If you do not live in Balclutha, how important is it to have a transfer station in your local town for the following materials: waste, recycling (plastics, steel and aluminium cans, paper, cardboard and glass) and greenwaste?". Of these responses 149 provided additional comments. 16 residents spoke to their submissions.

During the consultation period, a total of 24 comments were received concerning glass management at transfer stations, and 28 comments focused on green waste. A recurring theme in these comments was the suggestion to crush glass and compost green waste locally or on-site at the transfer stations. However, there was also considerable support for maintaining these sites as collection points only.

Additionally, 33 comments were made regarding changes to the kerbside collection services. The feedback was mixed, with some supporting a change in the system and others favouring the current service.

COUNCIL'S DECISION: Council will review the Transfer Stations and consider the impacts of the potential extension of kerbside collections services and the operations of Mt Cooe, including further consultation with the public.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

COMMUNITY HOUSING

Council's community housing units provide an affordable housing option for elderly and other vulnerable persons.

The LTP consultation included a review of Council's community housing asking whether we take a Community Housing approach, rental subsidisation through rates, and means testing of rentals.

SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

Primarily the issue of community housing fits within vibrant rural towns and communities. There is also a strong element of community housing within the healthy and sustainable environments.

There were 3 LTP questions focusing on community housing. The summary of these 3 questions and the responses were:

1. How community housing approaches were funded: 72% of feedback supported rates neutral approach to community housing.
2. Subsidisations of tenancies through rates: 81% of feedback indicated no rates subsidisation of community rentals.
3. The introduction of means testing: 80% of feedback indicated that CDC should introduce means testing.

COUNCIL'S DECISION: Council confirms the housing be self-funded (rates neutral) with no subsidies, but that the vulnerable should be considered first.

Means testing will be investigated further.


COMMUNITY POOLS AND MUSUEMS

During the LTP Council received a number of varied requests for funding support from a number of community groups running the pools and libraries throughout the Clutha District.

Whilst some funding was granted it was identified that a full review is required to analyse how they are funded, and address the future development and financial needs of each facility to ensure there is fairness across the district.

Such a review will be carried out for next year's annual plan.

We
consulted
on...



PROJECTS SUPPORTING LIVING & WORKING

After receiving feedback, we agreed to support a variety of projects supporting Living & Working throughout Clutha

KĀKĀ POINT TOILETS

During consultation, Council sought public feedback on options from maintaining the existing toilets and changing facilities through to providing funding towards incorporating new toilets and changing rooms within the Kākā Point Surf Lifesaving new clubroom facility, which is planned for construction in 2025.

SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

There were 501 respondents who indicated a preference for one of the options in the LTP consultation document. The most popular was option 4, combining with the new club facility (188 votes, 38%), followed by option 1, maintaining the current facility.

There were also 192 comments provided by respondents in LTP submissions.

The most common category (with 98 comments) combines feedback that new community facilities should be a lower priority, that the proposed options are too expensive, or that the existing facilities are fine as they are.

The importance of community assets was noted by 30 respondents, and 7 people noted that some form of upgrade is required urgently.

Of those who expressed a clear opinion, 34 preferred a combined facility (option 4), while 15 said that separate facilities (option 3) would be better.

There were nine comments that new toilets should be funded and/or led by the

community.

There were eight comments that toilets should be located elsewhere. Suggestions included Willsher Bay, beside the Kākā Point playground, or at a higher elevation to avoid sea level rise and coastal erosion.

COUNCIL'S DECISION: Council chose to keep the facilities separate. Council approved a budget of \$440,000 (funded from rates) and will work with the Kākā Point Community Group to replace the current public toilet and develop a new toilet and changing room facility on the existing site. Secondly Council approved funding of \$310,000 towards the new clubrooms this time coming from investment funds surplus.

WEST OTAGO VINTAGE MUSEUM

The West Otago Vintage Museum was seeking financial support towards a new \$870,000 purpose-built storage facility to house its vast collection of vintage farm machinery, including some of the rarest tractors in the world in working condition. The club believes this will support West Otago as a tourism destination and demonstrate the important history of agriculture and forestry's evolution in the area.

SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

There were 425 respondents who indicated a preference for one of the three options listed in the consultation document. Of these:

- 60% preferred option 1 (does not support funding for the West Otago Vintage Museum).
- 23% preferred option 3 (Council funding of up to \$200k for the West Otago Vintage Museum from Investment Surplus).
- 17% preferred option 2 (Council funding of up to \$200k for the West Otago Vintage Museum at a rating cost of \$1.52 including GST per annum for every UAGC in the district for 25 years).

COUNCIL'S DECISION: Council approved funding of \$200,000 funded from investment fund surplus.

GROWING TOURISM

The Clutha Destination Strategy aims to grow visitor spending in the district and increase the part it plays in our local economy. It aims to manage the growth of respectful tourism, including growth of visitor spending and increasing tourism jobs and businesses. Some of the initiatives involved include destination management and developing visitor experiences in iconic key areas such as The Nuggets near Kākā Point and Gabriel's Gully near Lawrence.

This work, carried out by Council's economic development contractor Clutha Development was being funded by central government's post-Covid stimulus funding until 2021/22.

SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

Submitters were asked to rate the importance of growing tourism on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being not important and 5 being very important.

There were 456 respondents to this question. 27% of respondents felt tourism was not important, while 23% felt it was very important. Overall, there was an average score of 2.95 and this demonstrates support for funding initiatives to grow tourism.

196 submitters provided 335 comments specifically on the question asked directly to the question “how important is it to fund initiatives to grow tourism?”

The most common themes include:

There should be investment in tourism by growing and developing more local tourism activities and increasing the length of stay – visitor nights (60 comments).

This was followed by tourists using public facilities and investment should be in these such as public toilets (41 comments).

A strong theme was funding tourism is unaffordable and is not a priority (37 comments). This followed with tourism is not core business of Council and the focus should be on core infrastructure investment (21 comments).

Positive experiences and impacts of projects with tourism benefits that had investment and recent development such as the Clutha Goldfields cycle trails (24 comments).

Another strong theme was that the district’s location with state highway 1 and natural features means the district sells itself. (26 comments).

A few people noted the return of investment tourism has in the economy (16 comments). Other commentators suggested alternative ways to gather tourism revenue to fund destination management (15 comments).

Another strong theme was the role of Clutha Development and information centres/site in tourism and destination management (33 comments). Some submitters had no clarity of what they do, while others strongly backed the work they do in this space.

COUNCIL’S DECISION: \$195,000 from Council’s investment funds surplus has been allocated to Clutha Development for Destination Management Tourism activities.

LIVING & WORKING PROJECTS UPDATE

OUR LONG TERM PLAN CONFIRMS OUR SUPPORT FOR OUR PLACE COMMUNITY PLAN PROJECTS THROUGHOUT THE DISTRICT

Our Place Community Plans support the Living & Working Strategy by identifying the projects the community tell us are important and providing a platform to facilitate priority projects through the district’s main towns.

Council has encouraged partnerships with community groups which have ambition and desire to drive community improvement projects. These groups have access to multiple external funding sources, that help to minimise rates impact for these projects.

Since 2016 the Clutha District Council has developed plans for Balclutha, Waihola, Milton, The Catlins, Lawrence-Tuapeka, Kaitangata, West Otago,

Clutha Valley, Clinton and Taieri Mouth.

The ideas centre on what Council can do with key facilities and how to work with the community to make things happen.

Once a Community Plan is approved by Council the real work begins and it is not always smooth sailing. Bringing the aspirations of these Community Plans to fruition takes work, and also time.

The next page provides a list of Council’s funding requests granted for Our Place community plan projects.

OUR PLACE COMMUNITY PLAN REQUESTS

Taieri Mouth

The Our Place Taieri Mouth Community Plan was formally signed off on 20 June 2024. As with all the previous community plans developed throughout the district, a budget of funding is set aside to support the projects identified in the plan should the community wish to proceed with them. A budget of \$65,000 from the investment funds surplus has been allocated to improve the maintenance of existing community facilities and reserve, enhance existing community facilities and reserves, new recreational facilities and walking and cycling opportunities around Taieri Mouth.

Balclutha

Centennial Park Carpark – Council will carry forward existing funding of \$24,000 for carpark construction at the South Otago Athletics Club to the 2024-25 year.

Centennial Park Playground Stage 2 – \$300,000 has been allocated from investment surplus funds towards the second stage of the destination playground. The group intends to apply for external funding applications and fundraise, as the projected cost is around \$1 million.

Catlins

Kākā Point Esplanade Playground – Previous budgets of \$50,000 and \$42,400 have been carried forward for this project. The Kākā Point Community Group has also raised about \$38,000 for this project and the group intends to commence construction in the 2024-25 year. Work may be undertaken in stages.

Kākā Point Tarata Street Playground - \$20,000 has been carried forward for improvements.

Pounawea Playground - \$20,000 has been carried forward for improvements.

Papatowai Picnic Area - \$20,000 has been carried forward and the community is developing plans for this area.

Owaka to Pounawea Cycle Trail - \$15,000 has been allocated for the first three years of the 2024-34 LTP to support Owaka Going Forward's project to complete the track from the Hina Hina Bridge and Pounawea and to progress stage 2 from the bridge towards Owaka.

Milton

Parks and Reserves - \$176,000 has been carried forward. Other projects are progressing from improving drainage at Moore Park and additional Taylor Park fence repairs.

Dog Park – Council approved funding of \$30,000, previously allocated to improve Milton reserves, for the development of a dog park at Taylor Park.

Lawrence

Entrance to Gabriel's Gully – \$50,000 has been carried forward for design plans and improvements at the entrance including improvements to reserve, carpark and/or toilet.

Mountain Bike Trail Network – Council approved \$40,000 of funding towards the development of the Lawrence trail network. The Lawrence Bike Club have made good

progress on this project over the last two years with the club raising over \$100,000 and has a goal to raise another \$105,000. The club would like to use the Council funding to enable them to complete a trail from Wetherstons Creek Reserve through to Gabriel's Gully.

West Otago

Community Plan Projects – \$189,054 has been carried forward for community plan projects. In the 2022/23 Annual Plan \$220,000 was allocated and of that \$29,096 has been allocated for upgrades to the Bushyhill Street Playground, the Heriot Tennis Court and improvements and to Whiskey Gully.

Clinton

Residential Development - \$14,087 has been carried forward for residential development projects.

Community Facilities – Council approved \$20,000 from its investment fund surplus and carried forward \$9,329 for improvements to the Triangle Reserve Playground, Tennis Court Reserve and Truck Park. These are being led by the Clinton Community Group and Clinton Lions. The community will contribute almost \$90,000 toward these three projects.

Walking and Cycling - \$10,000 has been carried forward for investigations into trail options.

Clutha Valley

Community Facilities and Reserve Improvements - \$50,000 has been carried

forward to develop a scope of work and implementation plan for the Tuapeka Mouth Domain, including the relocation of a Council-owned toilet block.

Tuapeka Mouth Punt - \$10,000 has been carried forward for work to develop the punt.

Promote Heritage - \$10,000 has been carried forward for work to protect and enhance heritage values in the Clutha Valley.

Walking and Cycling - \$10,000 has been carried forward for work to develop the bike trails.



COMMUNITY FUNDING REQUESTS

COUNCIL RECEIVED A NUMBER OF REQUESTS FROM GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS, AND THE FOLLOWING WERE GRANTED:

Groups and individuals

New toilet at the Henley Boat Ramp - \$30,000

Lawrence Chinese Charitable Trust restoration project – building consent fees waived via Council's Fees Reimbursement Scheme.

Southern Youth Development bike refurbishment programme - \$11,100

Simpson Park Sporting Complex replacement of bench seating - \$2,088.50

Catlins Historical Society for information services - \$22,030 (2024/25, 2025/26 & 2026/27)

Catlins Coast Inc – development of Care Code and tear off map - \$1,650 & \$3,300 (2024/25, 2025/26 & 2026/27)

Clutha Community Hub Charitable Trust operation grant - \$80,000

Clutha District Combined Museums operation grant - \$58,994 (2024/25, 2025/26 & 2026/27)

Clutha District Emergency Services Trust – \$2,500 (2024/25, 2025/26 & 2026/27)

Clutha Foundation - \$10,000 (2024/25, 2025/26 & 2026/27)

Clutha Super Masters Games - \$700 (2024/25, 2025/26 & 2026/27)

Clutha Recreation Centre Inc - \$54,944 (2024/25 and then inflation adjusted for 2025/26 & 2026/27)

Gore and Clutha Whanau Refuge Police Safety Order house - \$35,000

Life Education Trust - \$6,000 (2024/25, 2025/26 & 2026/27)

Milton Information Centre for information services - \$13,108.84 (2024/25, 2025/26 & 2026/27)

Southern Youth Development youth programme - \$38,580 (2024/25, 2025/26 & 2026/27)

Sport Otago operation grant - \$49,247 (2024/25 and then inflation adjusted for 2025/26 & 2026/27)

Surf Life Saving New Zealand lifeguard services - \$30,000

South Otago Historical Society Museum curator funding - \$35,000

Tuapeka Goldfields Museum Society Inc for information services - \$65,000 (2024/25, 2025/26 & 2026/27) & \$19,000 curator salary (one year)

Waikoikoi Hall Board grant increase due to costs - \$2,000 (2024/25, 2025/26 & 2026/27)

Owaka Swimming Baths Inc operation grant - \$12,530

Tuapeka Aquatic Centre operation grant - \$16,250

Sport New Zealand Rural Travel Fund subsidise top up travel for young people - \$15,000 (2024/25, 2025/26 & 2026/27)

Youth Development Fund - \$4,000 (2024/25, 2025/26 & 2026/27)

Community boards and promotion groups

Lawrence Tuapeka Community Board

Council will investigate the formation of a rate and its impact for a Lawrence Developments organisation and how it could be funded, to help manage major new developments in the area like Gabriel's Gully Destination Plan.

Further footpath and kerb and channel work in Colonsay Street area is planned once the stormwater work is complete.

A budget of \$25,000 has been approved from cemetery reserves to enable the Chinese Remembrance Memorial and maintenance works.

Council will review the isite funding as part of the next review of the Revenue and Financing Policy.

Council has approved \$60,000 to support improvements to the Zig Zag track and visual enhancement.

Kaitangata and District Promotions Inc.

Council will trial an "Otta seal technique" in two sections of Water Street in Kaitangata to address dust concerns.

Clinton Community Committee

Council will engage with the committee and further refine work programmes regarding kerb and channelling, better footpath access, identified roading issues, green waste disposal

and security cameras (including funding options for consideration) for the next annual plan.

Milton Area Promotions

Provision for a dog park is included in the Greater Taylor Park Reserve Management Plan and Council would welcome the opportunity to work with the group to continue to develop this project with local support.



