

Council Members

Chair: Cr Colin Smith
Cr Allan Birchfield
Cr Andy Campbell
Cr Ashley Cassin

Cr Chris Coll
Cr Peter Ewen
Cr Mark McIntyre



WEST COAST
REGIONAL COUNCIL

Public Copy

West Coast Regional Council AGENDA

Council Meeting

Date: Tuesday 6 October 2026
Time: Following the completion of the Operations Committee Meeting
Venue: West Coast Regional Council Chambers,
388 Main South Road, Greymouth

This meeting will also be live streamed via West Coast Regional Council's YouTube Channel: @westcoastregionalcouncil5171

Order of business

1. **Welcome (*Haere mai*)**
2. **Apologies (*Ngā Pa Pouri*)**
3. **Declarations of Interest**
4. **Public Forum, Petitions and Deputations (*He Huīnga tuku kōrero*)**
5. **Late Items**
6. **Confirmation of Minutes (*Whakau kōrero*)1**
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11. **Confirmation of Public Excluded Minutes**
 - 11.1 Council Meeting Public Excluded Minutes – 1 September 2026
12. **Actions List – Public Excluded**

D. Lew
Chief Executive

Purpose of Local Government

The reports contained in this agenda address the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002 in relation to decision making. Unless otherwise stated, the recommended option promotes the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of communities in the present and for the future.

Health and Safety Emergency Procedure

In the event of an emergency, please exit through the emergency door in the Council Chambers.

If you require assistance to exit, please see a staff member. Once you reach the bottom of the stairs make your way to the assembly point at the grassed area at the front of the building. Staff will guide you to an alternative route if necessary.

Late Items

The Chairperson will give notice of items requiring urgent attention not on the agenda as follows.

Matters Requiring Urgent Attention as Determined by Resolution of the Council:

A meeting may deal with an item of business that is not on the agenda where the meeting resolves to deal with that item and the Chairperson provides the following information during the public part of the meeting:

1. The reason why the item is not on the agenda; and
2. The reason why discussion of the item cannot be delayed until a subsequent meeting.

Items not on the agenda may be brought before the meeting through a report from either the chief executive or the Chairperson. The item may be allowed onto the agenda by resolution of the Council.

Minor Matters relating to the General Business of the Council:

A meeting may discuss an item that is not on the agenda only if it is a minor matter relating to the general business of the meeting and Chairperson explains at the beginning of the public part of the meeting that the item will be discussed. The meeting may not make a resolution, decision or recommendation about the item, except to refer it to a subsequent meeting for further discussion.

**6 Confirmation of Council (Public) Meeting Minutes
(1 September 2026) and Extraordinary Council
(Public) Meeting Minutes (15 September 2026)**

Author Nethmi Kavindya Kavindya, Administrative Support
Officer

Public Excluded No

Report Purpose

The purpose of this report is to receive the minutes of the Council (Public) meeting of (1 September 2026) and Extraordinary Council (Public) meeting of (15 September 2026).

Recommendation

It is recommended that Council resolve to:

- 1. Confirm that the minutes of the Council (Public) meeting held on 1 September 2026 (Attachment 1) are a true and correct record.*
- 2. Confirm that the minutes of the Extraordinary Council (Public) meeting held on 15 September 2026 (Attachment 2) a true and correct record.*

Attachments

Attachment 1: Minutes of the Council (Public) meeting held on 1 September 2026.

Attachment 2: Minutes of the Extraordinary Council (Public) meeting held on 15 September 2026.

WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 1 SEPTEMBER 2026
AT THE OFFICES OF THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL,
388 MAIN SOUTH ROAD, GREYMOUTH, COMMENCING AT 12.48PM**

PRESENT: C. Smith (Chair)
A. Birchfield
A. Campbell
A. Cassin
C. Coll
P. Ewen
M. McIntyre – (via Zoom)

IN ATTENDANCE: D. Lew (Chief Executive)
M. Smith (Group Manager Regulatory and Policy)
J. Field (Group Manager Office of the Chief Executive)
C. Weeks (Group Manager Corporate Services)
C. Brown (Manager West Coast Emergency Management)
C. Chinn (Principal Governance Advisor)
N. Kavindya (Administrative Support Officer)

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone and opened the meeting.

2. Apologies

There were no apologies.

3. Declarations of Interest

The Chair called for declarations of interest. There were none.

4. Public Forum, Petitions and Deputations

There were no public forums or deputations.

5. Late Items

No late items were raised for discussion.

6. Confirmation of Minutes

6.1 Minutes of Council Meeting 4 August 2026

The Chair invited corrections to the minutes of the Council (Public) meeting held on 4 August 2026. No changes were noted.

Moved (M. McIntyre / A. Cassin) that the minutes of the Council (Public) meeting held on 4 August 2026 are a true and correct record.

Carried

6.2 Minutes of Extraordinary Council Meeting 25 August 2026

The Chair invited corrections to the minutes of the Extraordinary Council (Public) meeting held on 25 August 2026.

The Council noted the following key point:

Cr P. Ewen raised that the recording of his apology in the minutes was incorrect, stating that he had given written instruction that no apology was to be recorded. The Chair noted the amendment to the minutes.

Moved (A. Campbell / C. Coll) that the minutes of the Extraordinary Council (Public) meeting held on 25 August 2026, with the inclusion of an amendment to record Cr P. Ewen's clarification regarding his apology, are a true and correct record.

Carried

7. Actions List

The Chair noted there were no Public Actions outstanding.

8. Chair's Report (verbal update)

The Chair provided a verbal report to Council noting that the preceding month had been an exceptionally busy period for both Councillors and the operational team. Significant work had been undertaken across business-as-usual activities, alongside matters considered at recent Council meetings, including local government reform, matters relating to Westport and Franz Josef, and the regional pest management policy review.

The Chair acknowledged and expressed his appreciation to the operational team and Councillors for their continued work and commitment during a period of considerable pressure.

Moved (A. Birchfield / M. McIntyre) that Council receive the Chair's report.

Carried

9. Reports

9.1 Approval of the Updated WCRC Delegations Manual and Westport and Hokitika Rating District Joint Committee Terms of reference

J. Field presented the report and the revised Delegations Manual, which showed the proposed amendments as tracked changes. J. Field advised that other than minor amendments the Manual had not been updated since the commencement of the current triennium.

The key changes to the Delegations Manual included:

- moving all terms of reference from the main body of the Manual into appendices to improve readability and usability;
- substantially revising the people capability delegations and transferring matters relating to rules and policies into more appropriate instruments, including policies and employment agreements;
- restructuring the financial delegations by role type rather than individual staff members to accommodate future changes to positions and appointments; and
- adding delegations relating to the Harbourmaster role under the Maritime Transport Act.

A summary table outlining all changes was included in the report.

Cr C. Coll identified a minor error on page 21 of the paper, where the order of reference to the Westport and Hokitika Rating Districts appeared to be transposed incorrectly in relation to respective approval dates of 5 April and 10 June. J. Field confirmed the error and noted that it would be corrected.

Cr A. Birchfield commented on the increasing length of the Delegations Manual and expressed a preference for a more concise document.

Moved (A. Birchfield / C. Coll) that Council:

1. Receive the report.

2. Approve the amendments to the updated WCRC Delegations Manual as highlighted in the marked-up version (Attachment 1) for adoption and publication via the WCRC website: and
3. Note that staff are monitoring progress of the Local Government Systems (Improvement) Amendment Bill and the Resource Management Act amendment Bill through Parliament, and if passed, they will trigger further changes to the Delegations Manual.
4. Note that any amendments to delegations related to the updated Procurement Policy, once finalised, will be reflected in an updated Delegations Manual subject to Council approval of the Policy.
5. Approve the updated joint agreement and Terms of Reference for the Westport Rating District Joint Committee (Attachment 3) and updated Joint Agreement and Terms of Reference for the Hokitika Rating District Joint Committee (Attachment 4) and note the final co-signed versions will be appended to the updated Delegations Manual.

Carried

9.2 Adoption Report: Rates Resolution 2026–27

C. Weeks presented the report, highlighting the following key points:

- The 2026/27 Rates Resolution had been prepared based on the rates structure adopted through the Annual Plan process and checked to ensure its accuracy.
- Following legal advice, amendments had been made to improve the clarity of the document, reflect updated property valuations and ensure it met legislative requirements.
- The total rates requirement for 2026/27 was \$15.3 million, excluding GST.
- A management review confirmed that the rates were materially correct and that no errors or issues had been identified.
- Rates invoices were expected to be issued on 23 September 2026, with payment due by 20 October 2026. The invoices would include a message from the Chair and guidance to help ratepayers understand their invoice.

Cr P. Ewen raised concerns about the effect of the Government's proposed 4% rates cap on Council's ability to maintain existing service levels. He queried whether the Uniform Annual General Charge (UAGC) could be increased as part of Council's future rating approach. C. Weeks advised that his understanding was that the proposed cap would apply across all rating types, including general and targeted rates.

D. Lew advised that the distribution between the general rate and the Uniform Annual General Charge (UAGC) would remain a matter for Council to determine within the overall cap. He agreed to confirm:

1. whether the Uniform Annual General Charge (UAGC) would be subject to the proposed Central Government rates cap of 4%; and
2. whether Council had capacity to increase the UAGC under the proposed reforms.

This was noted as an action.

D. Lew noted the potential effect of the proposed cap on targeted rates agreed with rating districts and suggested that Council could seek a Government exemption where an agreed targeted rate increase would cause the overall cap to be exceeded. Cr C. Coll supported this approach.

Cr A. Cassin noted the practical challenges associated with the proposed cap.

Cr A. Birchfield advised that he would vote against the resolution, consistent with his previous opposition to the general rate increase, the emergency management targeted rate and funding for the combined Te Tai o Poutini Plan. The Chair noted his position for the record.

The Council acknowledged the significant work undertaken by C. Weeks and his team in preparing the Rates Resolution.

Moved (A. Cassin /M. McIntyre) that Council:

1. Receive the report.
 2. Approve recommendations 1-10, including subparts A-X, as outlined on pages 1-11.
- Carried (Cr A. Birchfield voted against the motion)

10. Motion into Public Excluded Business

Moved (M. McIntyre / C. Coll) that:

1. The public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting, namely – **agenda items 11 to 12** (all inclusive).

General subject of each matter to be considered	Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter	Ground(s) under section 48(1) of LGOIMA for the passing of this resolution
11.1 <i>Minutes of Council public excluded meeting – 4 August 2026</i>	<i>s7(2)(a) – the withholding of the information is necessary to protect the privacy of natural persons, including that of deceased natural persons</i> <i>s7(2)(b)(ii) – the withholding of the information is necessary to protect information where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information</i> <i>s7(2)(j) – the withholding of the information is necessary to prevent the disclosure or use of official information for improper gain or improper advantage</i>	<i>S48(1)(a)(i) – the public conduct of the whole or the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding would exist under section 6 or section 7</i>
12 <i>Actions List – public excluded</i>	<i>No public excluded actions</i>	<i>No public excluded actions</i>

13. Reports- public excluded	<i>No public excluded reports</i>	<i>No public excluded reports</i>
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Carried

The meeting moved into a public excluded session at 1.13pm.

14. Council Resumes in Public Meeting

The meeting concluded at 1.14pm.

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Chair

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Date

Attachment 6.2 Minutes of the Extraordinary Council (Public) meeting held on 15 September 2026

WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 15 SEPTEMBER 2026

AT THE OFFICES OF THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL, 388 MAIN SOUTH ROAD, GREYMOUTH, COMMENCING AT 9.31AM

PRESENT: C. Smith (Chair)
A. Birchfield
A. Campbell
A. Cassin (via Zoom)
C. Coll
P. Ewen
M. McIntyre

IN ATTENDANCE: D. Lew (Chief Executive)
J. Field (Group Manager Office of the Chief Executive)
M. Beagle (Group Manager Catchment Management)
C. Weeks (Group Manager Corporate Services Development Manager)
T. Hopkins (Capital Programme Manager)
C. Mills (Project Accountant – via Zoom)
P. Blackwood (Chief Engineer)
P. Bicknell (Resilient Westport Lead Comms & Engagement and Land Access)
S. Mutch (Principal audit E&Y – via Zoom)
P. Rossiter (Project Manager – via Zoom)
T. Wyndham-Smith (Principal Communications and Engagement Advisor)
A. South (via Zoom)
C. Chinn (Principal Governance Advisor)
N. Kavindya (Administrative Support Officer)

1. Welcome (*Haere mai*)

The Chair welcomed everyone and opened the meeting.

2. Apologies (*Ngā Pa Pouri*)

There were no apologies.

3. Declarations of Interest

The Chair called for declarations of interest. There were none.

4. Reports

4.1 Westport Flood Protection Scheme – Special Consultation Process Document

D. Lew introduced S. Mutch, auditor from Ernst & Young acting on behalf of the Auditor-General, to provide an update on the audit of the Special Consultation Document prior to its release.

S. Mutch advised that the audit work was substantially complete and that the underlying modelling, project costings and funding documentation were sound.

S. Mutch recommended two additional disclosures in the consultation document:

- a statement noting that NIFF's approval to extend the external funding timeframe remained outstanding; and
- the risks associated with changes in the local government environment and proposed rates capping, including the need for permission to apply the forecast higher rates in 2029–30 if a rates cap was introduced.

These amendments would provide additional information for readers without creating further audit qualifications. The existing qualification concerning completion of the project within four years would remain, given the scale of the work and outstanding consents.

The audit opinion was being finalised with the Auditor-General and was expected to be issued that week, subject to Council adopting the document with the amendments.

Cr C. Coll asked whether the reference to the NIFF funding extension could be removed if approval was received before the audit opinion was signed. S. Mutch confirmed that the reference could be removed in those circumstances but would need to remain if approval was still outstanding.

S. Mutch then left the meeting.

P. Rossiter explained that the decision before Council was whether to begin community consultation. It did not commit Council to proceeding with the project. The decision on whether to proceed would be made in early December, following consideration of consultation feedback and further information, including the funding position. He advised that the auditor's comments concerned disclosure and transparency and did not prevent consultation.

P. Bicknell presented the report and outlined the requirements for the SCP document. She noted the following:

- The auditor's report would be added once finalised, and the recommendation would be amended to reflect the auditor's requirements.
- Replacement financial statements for Option 1 had been provided for pages 28 and 32.
- The rate figures in the SCP document would be corrected from 140.1% to 149.8% on page 13 and from 143.7% to 153.3% on page 14.
- The two amendments requested by S. Mutch would be incorporated that day, with the revised document provided to the auditor the following day for sign-off.

C. Weeks explained that the financial information reflected the proposed changes to the 2024–34 LTP. The proposed LTP amendment would return to Council for approval in December following consultation. He noted that it was expected to be in place for approximately six months, ahead of the next Council-wide LTP being approved in June 2027.

P. Bicknell advised that the existing LTP and proposed amendments would be presented alongside each other on the Council website, together with the SCP document and submission forms. Links would also be available from the Westport Council website with links back to the Regional Council website. Submissions could be made online, by email or on paper.

Cr A. Birchfield queried how Council could adopt the document while further changes were required. P. Bicknell proposed amending recommendation 2 to make adoption subject to the amendments being completed to the auditor's satisfaction by Friday, 18 September 2026.

D. Lew advised that if the auditor's approval was not obtained by that date, consultation would not commence on Monday, 21 September, and the matter would return to Council.

In response to Cr M. McIntyre, P. Bicknell confirmed that the deadline applied to the auditor's approval.

Cr A. Birchfield also queried whether Council should await confirmation of the NIFF funding. D. Lew advised that consultation could proceed if the pending approval was disclosed. He confirmed that Councillors and the community would be informed immediately once the approval received.

Moved (M. McIntyre / C. Coll) that Council:

1. Receives the report.
2. Adopt the attached Special Consultation Procedure document for community consultation from 21 September to 21 October 2026, subject to amendments to the documents to the satisfaction of the Auditor by Friday, 18 September 2026.

Carried (Cr A. Birchfield voted against the motion)

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 9.52am.

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Chair

.....
Date

7**Actions List****Author**

Nethmi Kavindya, Administrative Support Officer

Public ExcludedNo

Report Purpose

This report is a summary of items that require actions.

The responsible managers have updated the list and will address their respective action items.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Council resolve to:

- 1. Receive the actions list and information noted.*

Attachments

Attachment 1: Actions List Public – Update

ACTIONS LIST – Public

Item No.	Reference	Date of Meeting	Item	Officer	Update
1.	ACT0133	01-Sept-26	Confirm (1) whether the Uniform Annual General Charge (UAGC) is subject to the proposed Central Government rates cap of 4% and (2) whether Council had capacity to increase the UAGC under the proposed reforms.	Group Manager – Colin Weeks	Complete – <i>The UAGC is included in the proposed 4% rates cap. The cap is based on the average rates charged per rating unit and includes general rates, the UAGC, targeted rates and penalties on unpaid rates. Council could increase the UAGC, but only within the overall 4% limit. If Council was already at that limit, any UAGC increase would need to be matched by a reduction in another rate covered by the cap, unless an exemption was approved.</i> <i>The total revenue from UAGCs plus specified fixed targeted rates must not exceed 30% of the local authority's total rates revenue.</i>

REPORT

9.1 **Proposed Participation in the Ratepayer Assistance Scheme (RAS)**

Author Jo Field, Group Manager Office of the Chief Executive

Authoriser Darryl Lew, Chief Executive

Public Excluded No

Report Purpose

To seek Council's support in principle for participation in the proposed Ratepayer Assistance Scheme (RAS) and to signal support for the legislative changes required to establish the scheme.

Report Summary

The Ratepayer Assistance Scheme (RAS) is a proposed national initiative being developed by local government leaders to provide lower-cost financing options for ratepayers and developers. The scheme is modelled on the successful Local Government Funding Agency (LGFA) structure and would be established as a Council Controlled Organisation (CCO).

RAS is intended to support three products:

1. Rates Postponement for eligible homeowners.
2. Impact Loans for resilience and affordability improvements.
3. Deferred Development Contributions.

The scheme is designed to leverage the collective strength of participating councils to secure lower-cost finance than may be available through commercial providers. Participation would require councils to provide information support, assist with promotion of the scheme, and provide a joint and several guarantee similar to the existing LGFA model.

Eight councils have funded development (Auckland, Hamilton, Tauranga, New Plymouth, Palmerston North, Hutt City, Wellington) and they are now seeking wider support.

This report seeks Council's support in principle for participation in RAS while further details regarding governance, shareholding and legislative requirements continue to be developed.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Council resolve to:

- 1. Receive the report.*
- 2. Support in principle Council's participation in the proposed Ratepayer Assistance Scheme (RAS).*
- 3. Support the development of enabling legislation required to establish the Ratepayer Assistance Scheme.*
- 4. Authorise the Chief Executive to continue engagement with the scheme promoters and report back to Council as further details become available.*

Issues and Discussion

Background

At the Mayors, Chairs and Iwi Forum held on 20 August, Mayor Nick Smith presented the proposed Ratepayer Assistance Scheme (RAS).

The proposal has been developed in response to affordability challenges faced by ratepayers, homeowners and developers. Mayor Smith noted that the scheme is modelled on the Local Government Funding Agency (LGFA), which has successfully reduced borrowing costs for councils through pooled borrowing arrangements and collective guarantees.

Eight councils (Auckland, Hamilton, Tauranga, New Plymouth, Palmerston North, Hutt City, Wellington and Queenstown Lakes) have funded development to this stage, with leadership from Local Government NZ. They are also supported by LGFA, Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority, and Rewiring Aotearoa.

The establishment of RAS will require enabling legislation. Council endorsement is being sought across the local government sector to demonstrate support for the initiative and assist in progressing the legislative process.

Proposed approach

RAS would provide three financing products:

Rates Postponement

The proposed rates postponement product would allow eligible homeowners aged 55 years and over to defer payment of rates while retaining at least 20% equity in their property.

RAS would pay rates directly to councils, ensuring councils continue to receive rates revenue. The debt would accumulate against the property and generally be repaid upon sale or transfer of the property.

The model is intended to provide a more affordable alternative to reverse mortgages for asset-rich but income-poor homeowners.

Impact Loans

Impact loans would provide lower-cost financing for approved household improvements that increase resilience and affordability. Examples include solar panel installations and similar investments.

Funds would be paid directly to accredited suppliers following completion of the approved works.

Deferred Development Contributions

Developers would be able to defer payment of development contributions through finance obtained via RAS. The loan would be secured against the development and progressively allocated to individual property titles as sections are created.

Future property owners would repay their share through a levy in addition to rates. The arrangement aims to reduce upfront infrastructure costs and support housing delivery.

Operating Model

The proposed governance structure mirrors the LGFA model.

Key features include:

- Establishment as a Council Controlled Organisation (CCO).
- Shareholding shared between local government, LGFA and central government.
- LGFA expected to manage debt raising and market access functions.
- Councils able to participate without becoming shareholders, although shareholding is encouraged.

Participating councils would be expected to:

- Promote available RAS products through council communication channels.
- Provide links and information to ratepayers.
- Share relevant property and rating information, including LIM and rating database information where appropriate.
- Provide a joint and several guarantee based on their ratepayer base, similar to the current LGFA framework.

Options Analysis

The options for Council are as follows:

Option	Advantages	Disadvantages
Support participation in principle	Signals support for a potentially beneficial national initiative; allows Council to remain engaged in development of the scheme; may provide future benefits to ratepayers and developers.	Final participation arrangements, risks and obligations remain under development.
Do not support participation at this stage	No commitment to future obligations.	Council loses the opportunity to help shape the scheme and may be excluded from potential benefits available to participating councils and ratepayers.

Staff recommend supporting participation in principle while continuing to assess the detailed framework as it develops.

Costs and Benefits

Potential benefits include:

- Improved affordability options for ratepayers.
- Support for older residents who are asset-rich and income-poor.
- Lower-cost financing for sustainability and resilience improvements.
- Administrative efficiencies through a nationwide rates postponement model.
- Continued receipt of rates revenue by councils where rates postponement loans are approved.

Potential costs and obligations include:

- Council participation in a joint and several guarantee framework.
- Administrative support associated with information sharing and promotion.
- Potential future shareholding contributions should Council elect to become a shareholder.

Considerations

Implications/Risks

The scheme remains under development and will require enabling legislation.

Key risks include:

- Legislative uncertainty.
- Final governance and funding arrangements yet to be confirmed.
- Potential exposure associated with any joint and several guarantee arrangement.
- Reputational risk should the scheme not proceed as anticipated.

These risks can be further assessed as additional information becomes available.

Significance and Engagement Policy Assessment

This paper is not considered significant under the Significance and Engagement Policy. There are no issues within this report which trigger matters in this policy. Should we sign up to the scheme in future, that would likely need to be considered through consultation.

Tangata whenua views

No specific engagement with tangata whenua has occurred on this matter. Should the proposal progress further, appropriate engagement can be undertaken as part of future decision-making processes.

Views of affected parties

There are no other affected parties needing to be consulted.

Financial implications

There are no financial implications arising from supporting participation in principle. Future financial implications may arise if Council chooses to become a shareholder or when detailed participation requirements are confirmed. Any future commitments would be brought back to Council for consideration.

Legal implications

The proposed scheme will require enabling legislation before it can be implemented. Should Council ultimately participate, legal review will be required regarding information sharing arrangements, guarantee obligations and any shareholder commitments.

Attachments

Attachment 1: Summary of the RAS from the LGNZ website.

The Ratepayer Assistance Scheme: The opportunity for New Zealanders



Growing cost of living challenges

Energy bills

More than two-thirds of homeowners are worried about their electricity bills. 140,000 households took out loans to cover electricity costs last year, with 38,000 households disconnected due to unpaid bills.

Rates bills

As rates (and other local government charges) continue to rise alongside other costs of living, an increasing number of households are struggling to pay their rates.

Councils are hearing from ratepayers who are choosing to give up heating their homes and giving up balanced diets rather than not pay rates.

Expensive housing

NZers need about 19 years of disposable income to afford a house, against an OECD average of 10 years.

The shortage of housing is a major contributor, with upfront costs including council Development Contributions (of \$20-30k+ per property) a factor.

Existing approaches not cutting it

Swapping retailers to save 5% when bills have gone up 20% barely helps, while energy retailers recommend households go without to lower bills (shorter showers, another blanket). Various Government energy payments and grants are meeting **less and less** of households' energy bills. Existing bank green loans have limited eligibility and therefore limited impact.

Council rates postponement schemes are **inconsistent, inefficient and risky**. The more "successful" they are, the less councils can spend.

When first introduced in 1973, the maximum **Rates Rebate** covered around 60% of the average rates bill (100% of the rates bill for many homes). Over time this has **diminished** and it now covers around 20% of the average home's rates bill.

NZ **reverse mortgage** interest rates are very high (currently ~8% p.a.)

Current reforms moving to a Development Levy System may see the equivalent of Development Contributions rise, as the burden of additional infrastructure costs is rebalanced to those benefiting, away from general ratepayers.

Councils have limited financial capacity to spread these costs over time for ratepayers.

RAS products

Energy IMPACT loans

Ratepayers can choose to install solar, home batteries, hot water heat pumps, and/or heat pumps, at the very attractive RAS interest rate and at terms that largely match the expected lifetime of the upgrades.

Rates postponement

Ratepayers 55+ (and those eligible for Rates Rebate) can defer repayment of their council rates until they sell their property. Can decide to do each year.

Deferred development contributions

Allowing the upfront infrastructure payments to councils for new housing, often \$30-60,000+, to be spread over 30 years

Significant benefits

Immediate energy bill relief

Rewiring Aotearoa estimates the average household installing a decent size solar system can save around **\$1,000 a year**, and with solar, batteries and upgrading to space and hot water heat pumps will save well in excess **\$2,000 a year** under the RAS. Including all loan repayment and financing costs. Wider energy and sustainability benefits will follow.

Tangible, immediate rates relief

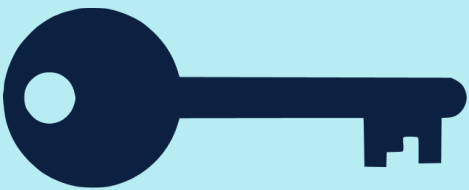
Seniors and New Zealanders on fixed/low incomes will be able to keep an average around **\$4,000 a year** in their pockets (avoiding hardship / mitigating cost of living challenges), repayable on sale of their home.

These homes will also be able to choose to fully defer repayment of energy IMPACT loans (above), meaning a potential \$7,000-\$8,000 a year to meet the costs of living.

More housing unlocked

Upfront costs from councils for new housing including **granny flats** will be able to be spread over 30 years.

It is expected that \$150-200 million a year in these loans will be borrowed.



Central Government unlock



The ask of Government...

- Legislative change as early as feasible in 2026 (see next page)
- One-off \$6-7m shareholding investment (20%), with remaining 80% from councils and the NZ Local Government Funding Agency (LGFA)
- Stand-by liquidity facility
- Central government investment and support is required to secure further local government sector funding, and to help demonstrate central government "proximity" to the RAS to ensure it can obtain a very high credit rating

What is it?

- Affordable, accessible long-term finance for ratepayers.
- Extension (and activation) of existing local government powers, but significantly more efficient and effective, and ‘off balance sheet’.
- National shared service available to all local authorities in NZ, removing existing administrative burden and centralising the specialist capabilities required.
- Enables billions of private capital from NZ and overseas to easily flow to deliver public and private outcomes for NZ.
- A mechanism to efficiently access significant residential property equity (currently ~\$1.2 trillion) to achieve public and private benefits
- Builds on success of NZ Local Government Funding Agency (LGFA).
- Focussed on delivering public benefits (including sustainability), rather than maximising profit.
- RAS is part of local government sector’s response to central government’s request for sector innovation/solutions to sector challenges

RAS background

- Eight councils (Auckland, Hamilton, Tauranga, New Plymouth, Palmerston North, Hutt City, Wellington and Queenstown Lakes) have funded development to this stage, with leadership from Local Government NZ.
- Active support additionally from LGFA, Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority, and Rewiring Aotearoa.
- Lead advisor is Cameron Partners, supported by PwC and Simpson Grierson
- Minister Watts' strong signal of support in early 2025 encouraged councils to fund further development and undertake the significant work of the last six months.

The organisation

- A Council Controlled Organisation jointly owned and governed by councils, LGFA and Government
- LGFA expected to provide debt financing directly to RAS until around \$1billion in loans. RAS may then issue debt in its own name, managed by LGFA who have the established processes and expertise.
- Largely following the proven organisational model of the LGFA.
- IT-heavy, keeping costs down.
- EECA is expected to be “implementation partner” for Energy IMPACT Loans: providing installer and product assurance, and providing for a positive and informed customer journey.

A few more things to know...

- Councils decide which RAS products to make available to their ratepayers
- Ratepayers “opt in” to use RAS products and (among other criteria) must have at least 20% equity in the property.
- Early repayment available without any penalty.

Ratepayer Assistance Scheme Act

RAS Act is required to:

- Enable lawful and flexible RAS levy creation
- Define RAS levy operation
- Ensure transparency, fairness and coordination with council systems
- Provide necessary tax and regulatory exemptions and protections

Quite simple drafting, with Local Government Borrowing Act 2011 and Infrastructure Funding and Financing Act a model / precedent.

Regulatory exemptions required to enable efficient financing and administration and are extension of exemptions already available to councils.

International precedents

British Columbia’s long-running property tax deferment scheme provides a highly successful precedent.

IMPACT loans align with Global Property Linked Finance Initiative Principles

While precedents exist, the efficiencies of RAS (and in turn interest rates available to ratepayers across RAS products) will be globally leading in its offerings and efficiency.

How are the interest rates low?

RAS is expected to offer finance at around 2% below banks’ floating mortgage rates (and most often below their 1 or 2 year “specials”) due to the involvement and support of local and central government, alongside:

- Strong underlying security against properties
- Layers of liquidity support
- Diversification of loans across many ratepayers and geographies
- A Joint and Several guarantee from local authorities

If the RAS were in operation today (November 2025), it would likely be offering an interest rate around 3.5% to 3.8% (depending on product). Current bank floating rates around 5.8-6.09% and most “specials” around 4.49% and reverse mortgage rates around 8%

RAS interest rates will initially be floating and calculated quarterly.

The ongoing evolution of the RAS

- New products can join the RAS, following local government-sector and Cabinet processes.
- These can include entirely new types of charges, and also expand existing IMPACT Loan offerings. For example:
 - Water IMPACT Loans could be offered for things like septic tank replacement and home water tanks, which could reduce the need for \$100s of millions in council infrastructure spending.
 - Larger community investment projects are possible such as seawalls and flood protection

The RAS stacks up financially

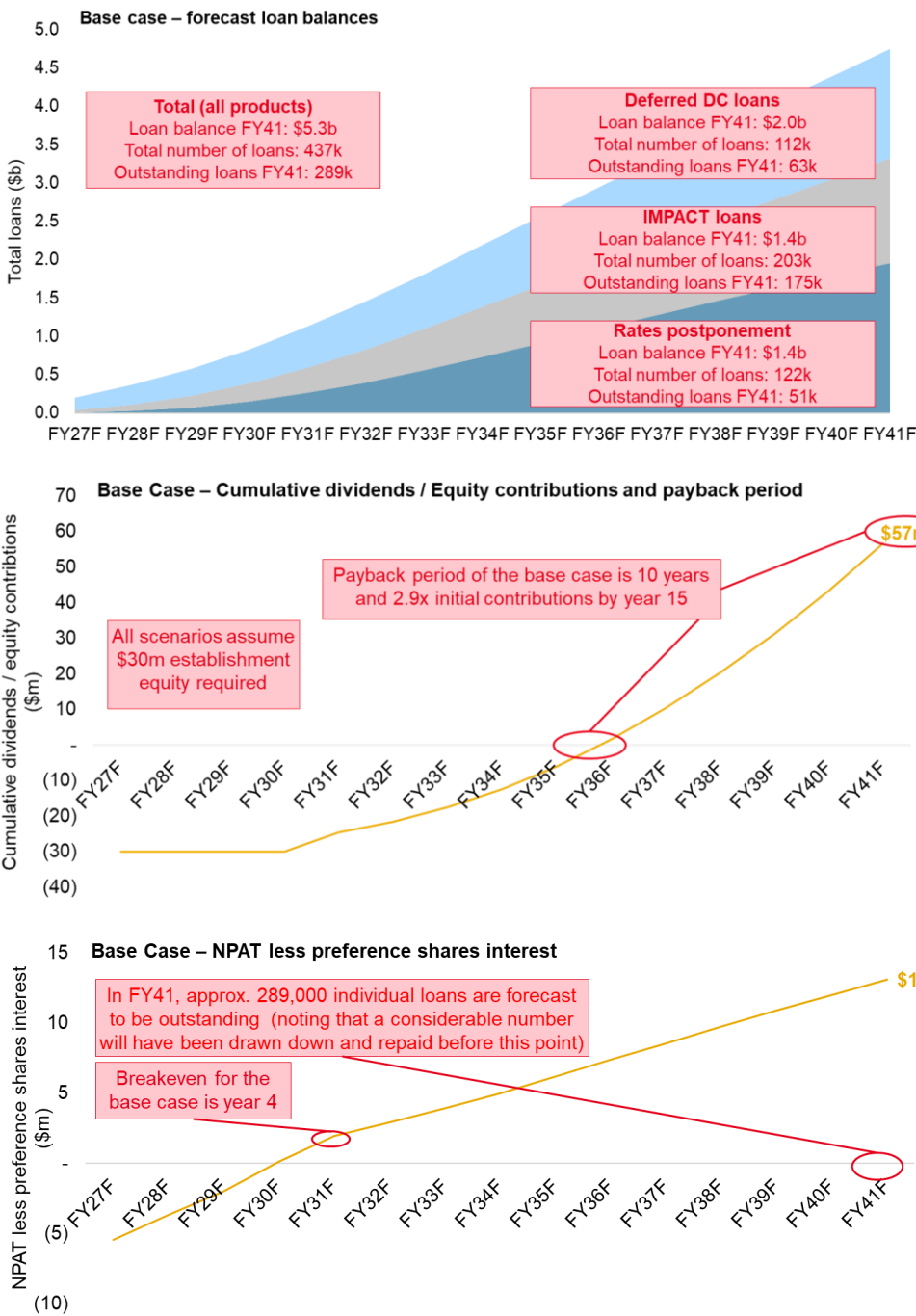
- Comprehensive Business Plan analysis, with the Base Case demonstrating:
 - RAS is expected to issue over 430,000 loans over first 15 years
 - break-even at year 4
 - full pay-back of initial equity capital by year 10
 - returns around 3 times initial investment by year 15.
- The base case is considered conservative. Eleven additional scenarios are shown in the business case and provide various insights. RAS costs met from a ~1% interest margin (with differential rates between products reflecting risk).

Wide benefits are expected

- The RAS is expected to contribute very large public benefits relative to the modest Government investment and indirectly contribute to Rebuilding the Economy and Improving Productivity by enabling equity tied up in housing to be invested in the economy, and by improving energy productivity.
- Significant positive externalities from those who **install energy upgrades**
- More energy for NZ:** conservative estimate of 65,000 additional solar installations unlocked through the RAS in the first 15 years (80% more than all current solar installs) will provide significant additional energy generation, with more than half of this likely to flow beyond the house producing, reducing the need for large-scale generation investment.
- Enhanced energy security:** through reduced reliance on imported fuels.
- Lower power bills for all:** in addition to saving money for the household, EECA estimates that the 41,700 batteries installed under the RAS are expected to deliver around \$50 million in the first 15 years in grid benefits nationally by reducing peak electricity demand and the need for costly grid upgrades, benefitting all consumers
- Improved energy productivity:** EECA estimates that by swapping 40,000 gas hot water heaters to hot water heat pumps, more than 850 Gigawatts of energy would be saved in the first 15 years, with associated cost savings of around \$50 million.
- Reduced pressure on NZs industrial sector:** which is undermined by rising electricity prices.
- Sustainability:** improved air quality and reduced carbon emissions.

Risks have been explored

- Significant work identifying and mitigating establishment and operational risks has been undertaken.
- Most significant establishment risks relate to not obtaining full **central government support**.
- The most significant operational risk relates to **IT operating costs** materially higher than forecast, which is mitigated through robust procurement involving independent experts, and a large contingency for IT.



Feedback and support

- The eight **Funding Councils** have provided significant at risk funding and been heavily involved in all aspects of the RAS development process, recommending the Business Case, subject to Government support as outlined.
- The RAS **Strategic Advisory Group** comprising Mayor Dr Nick Smith, Cameron Bagrie and Stuart Henderson intend to write a letter to the Minister for Local Government to note:
 - RAS is a robust, efficient platform that could be used for additional delivery of additional public value in future
 - RAS can help NZ make the most out of our untapped, unproductive property equity.
 - Assessment of financials in the business plan is conservative
 - Regulatory exemptions, and water being included, are crucial.
- PwC, Simpson Grierson and Cameron Partners** have been closely involved in RAS development and consider it robust, having raised no major issues.
- Councils beyond just those providing funding have indicated support.
- The **Property Council, UDINZ** and several large residential developers have come out in support of the Deferred Development Contributions product and GHD estimates uptake will be significantly above the Base Case forecasts.
- Rewiring Aotearoa** considers that the Ratepayer Assistance Scheme is the most impactful of 60 policies considered to accelerate electrification of the economy and drive down consumer power bills.

Next steps

Clear indication sought from Ministers (with Minister Watts responsible as Local Government Minister) as early in 2026 as practicable regarding their intent to take RAS to Cabinet for approval. This will enable Councils and LGFA to commence confirming further financial support. Assuming Cabinet approval, it will take 6-9 months before the first loans are available.

Once central government financial and non-financial support committed:

- RAS establishment board and establishment process will begin
- Councils and LGFA finalise the further required funding.

10 Motion into Public Excluded Meeting

Recommendation

It is recommended that Council resolve:

1. *That the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting, namely – **agenda items 11 to 12** (all inclusive).*

The general subject of each matter to be considered while the public is excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter and the specific grounds under section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this resolution are as follows:

General subject of each matter to be considered	Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter	Ground(s) under section 48(1) of LGOIMA for the passing of this resolution
11.1 <i>Minutes of Council (public excluded) meeting – 1 September 2026</i>	<i>s7(2)(a) – the withholding of the information is necessary to protect the privacy of natural persons, including that of deceased natural persons</i> <i>s7(2)(b)(ii) – the withholding of the information is necessary to protect information where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information</i> <i>s7(2)(j) – the withholding of the information is necessary to prevent the disclosure or use of official information for improper gain or improper advantage</i>	<i>S48(1)(a)(i) – the public conduct of the whole or the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding would exist under section 6 or section 7</i>

General subject of each matter to be considered	Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter	Ground(s) under section 48(1) of LGOIMA for the passing of this resolution
12. Action List – public excluded	<i>s7(2)(a) – the withholding of the information is necessary to protect the privacy of natural persons, including that of deceased natural persons</i> <i>s7(2)(b)(ii) – the withholding of the information is necessary to protect information where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information</i> <i>s7(2)(j) – the withholding of the information is necessary to prevent the disclosure or use of official information for improper gain or improper advantage</i>	<i>S48(1)(a)(i) – the public conduct of the whole or the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding would exist under section 6 or section 7</i>