

A message from the Chief Executive Garry Poole

Welcome to the Wellington City Council's 2010/11 annual plan.

This plan outlines a programme of work that continues with the broad range of high-quality services that make Wellington such a great place to live and do business.

We continue to operate in a demanding environment and therefore this plan is about consolidation. There are no major new projects that would add to the burden on ratepayers in challenging times, nor does it include reductions in services on which residents rely. As the mayor has noted we have taken the opportunity to bring forward some of our work to ensure the success of the Rugby World Cup and its legacy.

We'll also be responding to climate change. Building on the relationships we've developed with others to trial innovative technologies. This reflects the organisation's culture of always looking ahead to ensure our services are sound and can work towards our goal of being an affordable, vibrant, and internationally competitive city.

The overall programme agreed by the Council will see total rates rise by 3.24 percent taking into account growth in the rating base. This is substantially lower than what was forecast in the Council's long-term plan last year.

The amount for individual properties will vary depending on shifts in valuations and the impact of a change in the share of rates that the commercial sector has to pay. On average, the residential sector will have a 5.58 percent real rates increase while the impact on the city's commercial sector will be near zero.

Despite the lower increase the commercial sector will still pay more rates than a residential ratepayer on a property of equal value. This is because of the 'differential' – a part of our rating policy – that sees the commercial ratepayers pay 3.1 times more on a property of equal value. The lower increase is because the differential is being reduced. Last year the commercial sector paid 3.45 times more.

It is important to note that, while the Council has committed to some new projects for 2010/11, the increase in total rates also reflects cost pressures we face in delivering key services such as maintaining the transport network, community facilities and looking after the city's environment.

2010/11 is going to be a busy year, one that will be successful not only because of the commitment of the Council but because of our relationships and the work of Wellington's communities, businesses and mana whenua.

Ko te pae tawhiti whāia kia tata, ko te pae tata whakamaua kia tina.



GARRY POOLE

