

**7.9 Key Issue: Climate Change - How much should Council do?**

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**Recommendation**

That Council

1. Consider the feedback received from the community on the options consulted on relating to how much Council should do to prepare for climate change.
2. Council approves Option 3, do even more, with \$585,000 per annum of funding allocated to the climate change work programme acknowledging an additional rates increase required to fund this for the final Long Term Plan 2021-31.

**Purpose of Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to summarise the community feedback received on the options consulted on relating to how much Council should do to prepare for climate change over the period of the Long Term Plan 2021-31 (LTP).
2. The report provides analysis of issues raised by submitters in relation to the options consulted on, and other feedback received to support Council decision-making relating to the proposed budget for Council's climate change work programme for 2021-31, in accordance with section 78 of the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA).<sup>2</sup>

**Assessment of Significance and Engagement**

3. At the 15 February meeting Council determined that the extent of investment and the timing of Council's response to climate change was of high significance, particularly in relation to the current and future impact on the social, cultural, economic and environmental wellbeing of Timaru District's communities.
4. In accordance with this assessment Council's proposed response to climate change was included as a key issue within the LTP consultation document. Extensive community wide engagement has been undertaken as part of the LTP process. It is now for Council to consider the community views in relation to the options discussed, and the decision on how much Council should do to address climate change.

**Background**

5. In 2018, the then Mayor of Timaru District, Damon Odey, signed the Local Government Leaders' Climate Change Declaration on behalf of the Timaru District Council.

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<sup>2</sup> Section 78 of the LGA requires Council, in the course of its decision-making process in relation to a matter, to give consideration to the views and preferences likely to be affected by, or to have an interest in, the matter.

6. In recognition of this Declaration, and the increasing call for climate change action on international, national and local levels, Council began preliminary work to understand the impact of climate change on Council and on the Timaru District.<sup>3</sup>
7. As part of the development of the LTP 2021-31, Council held a number of workshops to prepare significant climate change forecasting assumptions for Council and the District. Also discussed was the inclusion of resourcing within the LTP to develop and assist with the delivery of a climate change strategy and work programme.
8. Council resolved that Climate Change be included as a key issue, with the following options forming part of the LTP Consultation Document:
9. **Option 1: Do the minimum.**
  - (a) This option would mean Council does not allocate dedicated funding or resource to focus on adapting to climate change or mitigating the impacts of climate change.
  - (b) Under this option, very little progress would be made on planning for climate change to ensure that the Timaru District remains resilient. Council would not be able to respond over the 10 years of the LTP to climate change affected communities, questions or requests for direction and engagement on how to adapt and mitigate the effects of climate change.
  - (c) This option would have no immediate impact on operating or capital budgets. It is anticipated that this option may have future negative impacts on both operating and capital budgets where the cost of retrospective, restorative or mitigating actions is factored in.
10. **Option 2: Do more (Council's preferred option, currently included in the draft budget).**
  - (a) This option funds a dedicated climate change resource to develop, amongst other initiatives, a Climate Change Strategy within the first three years of the LTP, focusing on:
    - (i) Adaptation: investing in research to better understand the climate change risks to Council's services, assets and infrastructure, and planning how Council can respond to these risks.
    - (ii) Mitigation: establishing Council's carbon footprint, and beginning work to reduce emissions from the services we provide for our community.
  - (b) This option would also provide for a small amount of Iwi, community and stakeholder engagement, working across the District with communities and businesses to lead and support climate change resilience efforts.
  - (c) This would enable Council to meet new legislative reporting requirements and to collaborate with the Canterbury Mayoral Forum Climate Change work stream.
  - (d) The draft LTP budget includes \$3.6 million of additional new operational funding (an average of \$360,000 per annum) that is funded from rates.

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<sup>3</sup> In late 2019 Timaru District Council and Environment Canterbury jointly commissioned NIWA and Jacobs to undertake Coastal Erosion and Coastal Inundation Assessments, to inform the District Plan Review. The outcomes of these assessments were presented to Council in July 2020, and the revised coastal hazards have been incorporated in the draft District Plan.

**11. Option 3: Do even more.**

- (a) This option would provide a greater amount of dedicated funding for climate change, allowing Council to accelerate and increase the work outlined in Option 2 by:
- (i) Undertaking more modelling of the impacts on specific Council services and extending this work to at-risk communities, looking at options to adapt or mitigate the effects;
  - (ii) Actively engaging with our community to adapt to climate change and reduce emissions across the District including an additional staff position; and
  - (iii) Dedicating more resources to work proactively with climate change affected communities and industries to plan for any adaptation needed.
- (b) This option would see \$5.9 million of additional new operational rates funding (\$590,000 per annum) allocated to a climate change work programme.

**Community Feedback**

12. 378 submitters provided feedback indicating which option they preferred on the Climate Change key issue with a strong majority of submitters directing Council to do more, or even more:<sup>4</sup>
- Option 1: Do the minimum – 99 submissions (26%)<sup>5</sup>
  - Option 2: Do more (Council’s preferred option) – 137 submissions (36%)
  - Option 3: Do even more – 142 submissions (38%) – including one submission containing 121 signatures in support
13. Climate change was well canvassed at the community engagement events with most stakeholders supporting Council’s plans to resource a climate change work programme. Feedback included highlighting opportunities for emissions reduction and greater sustainability across the district and the need for a collaborative approach to the development of a Climate Change Strategy.
14. An informal straw poll on the consultation options was undertaken using voting boxes at CBay Aquatic Centre between 4 and 6 May 2021 and at engagement events at the Timaru Farmers Market on 1 May 2021 and at The Crow’s Nest on 2 May 2021. Voters at both events indicated strong support for an increased Council role in climate change work with totals as follows.
- Option 1: Do the minimum – 21 votes (14%)
  - Option 2: Do more (Council’s preferred option) – 35 votes (24%)
  - Option 3: Do even more – 89 votes (62%)
15. Analysis of the feedback received shows public opinion is split into two philosophical camps – support for an increase in Council’s role in Climate Change work (Options 2 and 3), which is the clear majority; and opposition to Council’s proposed role in Climate Change (Option 1). A number of themes emerged within these two positions and are discussed below, providing

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<sup>4</sup> A further 13 submitters provided feedback but did not select a preferred option.

<sup>5</sup> Percentage calculated based on the 378 submissions received where an option was selected by the submitter, and does not include those submissions where the climate change key issue was not addressed.

some examples of feedback. Officer comment has been provided in relation to the key themes arising from the submissions.

### **Opposition to Council's proposed Climate Change Work Programme**

16. Feedback provided by those submitters who selected Option 1: Do the minimum generally addressed three concerns, set out below:
17. **Responding to climate change is not the role of local government:** Around 10 submitters highlighted this concern, suggesting in some instances that Regional Councils and Central Government are more directly responsible for climate change work, and that any territorial Council spend may result in duplication of efforts and costs for ratepayers. Some submissions also noted that Council should not take a leadership role within this space. Comments included:
  - "This is NOT a local body issue. The Government should be responsible for any concern re the emotional debated issue of climate change."
  - "Climate change is a huge issue – in fact, it's a Global Issue. Collaboration and direction needs to come first internationally and nationally down to a local level. Obviously TDC will need to have funds available to respond BUT it is NOT up to the Council to develop the strategy. I do not like the use of rate payer money to establish the Adaptation and Mitigation concepts outlined by TDC in their preferred option, and see more sense in funds being set aside to respond to central directives (as this is what will ultimately happen anyway)."
  - "District cannot afford it. Much to do with Central Government ideals. Central Government should be responsible for costs."
  - "This is the time to follow others and not be the leader. Too many Councils are making decisions that may/may not work. Wait and see before acting."
18. **Officer Comment:** Council has a number of obligations under current legislation to consider and plan for the potential impact of climate change such as, but not limited to, the Resource Management Act 1991, Local Government Act 2002, and Climate Change Response Act 2002. Doing nothing with regards to climate change is not an option available to any local authority under current and proposed legislation and regulations.
19. While climate change is an issue of global scale, the potential effects of climate change and the associated risks will be felt on a local scale. Council services, assets and infrastructure will be impacted at a local level; households and business within the Timaru District will be impacted; local industry and businesses will be required to reduce their carbon emissions. Local government is best placed to support local communities and respond to many of the issues likely to arise from climate change.
20. Council recognises the need for central government to provide a clear and consistent legislative framework for climate change adaptation and mitigation, particularly regarding who will bear the costs. Council will continue to advocate for this essential work to be expedited by central government.
21. Council may choose to delay any investment in preparing for climate change until central government legislation and direction is in place. However, officers consider it unlikely that any direction provided by central government would contain sufficient local detail to support Council's future decision-making in response to mitigating, and adapting to the effects of climate change at a district level.

22. Officers suggest that Council's future decision-making to protect and enhance its activities, and the environment, economy and social wellbeing of the District will be better supported by robust, locally informed climate change research, and that this will require more than a minimal investment.
23. **Wait for others to do the work first:** A number of submitters urged Council to wait for other local authorities, government, and other organisations to undertake the work first before following suit. Feedback included:
- "This is the time to follow others and not be the leader. Too many Councils are making decisions that may/may not work. Wait and see before acting."
  - "To rush in at this stage may leave future generations with bigger problems than we have now."
  - "Leave it to ECan."
  - "This sounds like a lot of planning and "research" absolute waste of money. Nothing is actually being done. Why reinvent the wheel look at research and plans made by other cities and towns around the world, why bother wasting money doing something someone has already done."
24. **Officer Comment:** Officers recognise the concern about duplication of work. As a member of the Canterbury Mayoral Forum's Climate Change Working Group Council will continue to collaborate closely and share resources and knowledge with other Canterbury councils. While this regional work is important, it does not provide the necessary level of detail to assess the risks and opportunities for Timaru District, nor does this work provide any assessment of the risks to Council's assets or services.
25. **Climate Change is not a key issue / adaptation and mitigation efforts not worth it:** Some submitters expressed views that the impact of climate change was not a key issue Council should be concerned with or invest in for reasons highlighted by the comments below:
- "Spending large amounts of money will not change our weather. People need to be trained in how to adapt to our changing weather patterns. If New Zealand went carbon neutral tomorrow the world's weather would not change one bit."
  - "Climates have been changing for millions of years, so most justifiably believe in climate change. Man's impact however is an entirely different matter. Its perhaps interesting that governments can sort COVID-19 well, yet by taxing this and that think they can change the worlds temperature. I reckon the sun just may have something to do with this. Sustainability is a different subject, people seem to get this confused."
  - "Not falling for the con. Culture of fear."
  - "Actual empirical evidence and the actual climate state is seriously at odds with "Modelling predictions Focus on reducing pollution, Better efficiency and recycling to reduce the impact of waste on the environment. A measurable cause and effect situation. Don't waste money chasing a theoretical possibility down a postulated bottomless pit with no scale of assessment."
26. **Officer Comment:** In response to this feedback from submitters, officers note that in 2018 Council approved the signing of the Local Government Leaders' Climate Change Declaration, acknowledging the importance and urgent need to address climate change for the benefit of current and future generations. In signing the declaration, Council committed to:

- (a) Develop and implement ambitious action plans that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support resilience within our own councils and for our local communities;
  - (b) Work with our communities to understand, prepare for and respond to the physical impacts of climate change; and
  - (c) Work with central government to deliver on national emission reduction targets and support resilience in our communities.<sup>6</sup>
27. Further, Council's LTP has been developed based on the assumption that:
- (a) Over the period of this LTP the effects of climate change are expected to impact on the social, economic, environmental, and cultural wellbeing of our communities, including the physical and built environment of the Timaru District, Council's activities and service delivery and potentially Council's financial position such as increased debt to cover costs of damage to infrastructure, changes in the rate take due to changes in land use as a result of changes in climatic conditions.<sup>7</sup>
28. Council's proposed Climate Change work programme, presented for feedback in the LTP Consultation Document, recognises Council's commitment to mitigation and adaptation action, and the assumption that climate change will have a considerable and increasing impact on the wellbeing of our communities. While a number of submitters provided links to resources challenging this assumption, officers did not identify, in those sources, any substantive or compelling evidence to justify Council reversing its position.

#### **Support for Council's proposed Climate Change Work Programme**

29. 74% of submitters who selected a specific option in their submission indicated they wished Council to "do more" or "do even more". The further comments that supported these submissions covered similar themes across the two options, many of these supporting Council's active involvement in both climate change adaptation and carbon emission mitigation efforts. The main topics addressed include:
30. **Recognition of the need for more climate change action by Council:** Submitters who supported either Option 2 or 3 made comments of general support and recognition of the importance of climate change action, with the need for urgency noted on a number of occasions. This feedback also made frequent reference to concern for the future, and future generations. Comments included:
- "Climate change is a reality and should be a priority."
  - "If we do nothing now it could be very expensive later. Once damage is done it may be too late."
  - "Climate change is not going to wait for us to act. It is happening and it is irreversible. The more we do now, the better off our tamariki and mokopuna will be in the future."
  - "Climate change is one of the most important and urgent issues of the time and will have impacts on many facets of the district including social and environmental."
31. **Officer Comment:** The proposed budget, research and planning work programme included in the draft LTP are intended to initiate the necessary climate change response action. By undertaking risk and carbon emission assessments for Council activities and for the district,

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<sup>6</sup> Local Government Leaders' Climate Change Declaration

<sup>7</sup> Timaru District Council Significant Forecasting Assumptions 2021-31, Climate Change, Adopted 9 April 2021.

Council will be able to more effectively plan to adapt to the impacts of climate change, and to mitigate the ongoing future harm caused by carbon emissions.

32. The particular focus on research and data gathering to support future development of a strategic plan for action in the first three years of the Plan is a recognition from Council that this work is essential for providing for the future wellbeing of the Timaru District.
33. **Collaboration with regional council and central government:** Similarly to those submitters who did not support Council action on climate change, there was an expressed desire for Council to engage and collaborate with Environment Canterbury, central government and other agencies to improve efficiency and collective outcomes. Submitters also noted the need for Council to work with, and support local agencies, businesses and industry to address climate change mitigation and adaptation. Comments to this effect include:
- “Important to work in collaboration with other agencies and enable the district to move forward as one in this space.”
  - “As a business owner we would like to support initiatives in this area but we don’t know where to start.”
  - “Working with such as Venture Timaru, Ara Polytechnic, agricultural-based industries and the SC Chamber of Commerce to encourage business training and innovation on carbon emission reduction as well as climate change adaptation plus encouraging lower volume/higher value tourism.”
  - “In principle we support the collation of data and the development of “in house” expertise. We also encourage the TDC to expand this work with the business community and invite engagement with the SCCC (South Canterbury Chamber of Commerce) team and members to implement a first stages approach to measuring carbon footprints in businesses, pursuing a whole of district approach.”
34. **Officer Comment:** Ongoing engagement and collaboration with Canterbury councils will continue under the proposed work programme within the draft LTP.
35. It is envisaged that all research undertaken by Council, including risk and carbon emissions assessments, will be shared with the whole community, although the proposed budget for engagement with the wider community and businesses is limited. Council may wish to consider increasing the budget to provide for a greater level of engagement to support district-wide efforts to reduce carbon emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change.
36. **Apply climate change lens to all Council activities:** Submitters want to see Council integrate climate change into all Council decision-making with mitigation and adaptation incorporated in all activity and asset planning. Comments addressing this theme include:
- “Prioritising climate change action provides an opportunity to case a climate lens across all Council activities proposed in the LTP to ensure that the Council’s activities complement climate goals and so that the Timaru district is on a pathway towards a climate just future for generations to come, as soon as possible.”
  - “Ensure climate change is core business for the Council and climate change considerations are consistently mainstreamed throughout all Council policy and procedures... Embed climate change and emission-reductions into all Council projects e.g. proposed projects such as Heritage Precinct, Art Gallery etc. must be planned as zero emission facilities, take full account of zero emission transport options etc.”

- “We think that climate change and environmental impact should not feature as a separate category in the LTP. It needs to be integrated into every action and every decision within every department. In some cases this will mean spending more within a department (but long-term saving suture disasters and livelihoods). In other cases, we see the potential for spending less.”
  - “We need to think about long term effects of climate change in every aspect of the LTP so focusing on this is important to me.”
37. **Officer Comment:** Officers note the importance of integrated planning for climate change is important across all Council activities. As much as has been possible with Council’s current knowledge about the impacts of climate change, activity managers have factored adaptation and mitigation into their activity management plans for the next ten years. For example, the Water Supply activity commissioned an assessment of the impact of increased drought conditions due to climate change on long-term water security for Timaru so that this could be factored into the 30 year Infrastructure Strategy. The Roading Activity Management Plan includes the use of emulsion for all road resurfacing, which has an approximately 50% emission reduction compared to traditional bitumen resurfacing, and the Theatre Royal and Heritage Hub project has included consideration of building energy efficiency in the concept design.<sup>8</sup>
38. The proposed budget will allow for more thorough assessments and planning for how Council activities and assets can factor in carbon emissions reduction and adaptation to the adverse effects of the changing climate. The research and data collection undertaken in the first three years of the LTP will more accurately inform activity management planning in preparation for the 2024-2034 LTP.
39. **Timaru District Council to be leaders:** 20 submissions emphasised a desire for Council to be a leader in climate change action, including one submission that contained 121 supporting signatories. These submissions called for Council to provide leadership both within the community and from a national perspective, with some referencing Council’s leading role in waste minimisation as an example of such leadership. Comments include:
- “We are relying on the leaders within the TDC to create and ensure a TDC climate action plan will allow our region, including business, households and organisations meet our Zero Carbon Act obligations but more importantly create a resilient, vibrant community with a strong local low carbon economy.”
  - “I want SC (South Canterbury) to be a leader in how local govt can be pro-active in dealing with climate change. I want TDC to give me (and everyone) clear leadership on how to deal effectively with climate change issues. The big stuff like where we can/can’t live, stop commerce from harming the populous, reduce our carbon footprint and my carbon footprint. Help the community develop jobs /employment options that are environment friendly.”
  - “We are in a climate crisis and the more we do now the better it will be for all our citizens as well as our environment. We cannot do too much help slow the effects of climate change. If we take this option we can become a leading district in addressing climate change and showing the country what is possible. Anything less is creating more work

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.roadscience.co.nz/bitumen-emulsion-and-carbon-emissions>



for those younger generations who do not deserve to take on the responsibility to fix what we have been unable to.”

- “It would be amazing to lead the way and SC become an example for other regions. Delaying action will be detrimental to our future. Let’s be responsible and take action. It will be great to recruit/engage expertise for the roles also. Attract expertise now before other regions decide to act in their LTPs. We were the first with the recycling bins, let’s be the first to get a meaningful plan in place that reflects the likely requirements of the Climate Change Commission.”

40. **Officer Comment:** The proposed budget will allow Council to develop a strategic plan that will ensure that Council and the Timaru District are well positioned to adapt to a zero carbon economy, and a world disrupted by the impacts of climate change.
41. The development of a strategic plan will further define Council’s leadership role in responding to climate change. Officers note that community, Iwi, business and other stakeholder engagement will be central to determining Council’s role in the future.
42. **Needs more investment:** A number of submitters who supported “Option 3: Do even more” also indicated that they wished Council spend more than \$5.9 million over the LTP on climate change.
  - “Furthermore only 0.6% of our rates (\$2.97/week for the average ratepayer) are allocated to Climate Change / Sustainability – we feel this is nowhere near relative to the importance of this issue. According to the pie chart below, Climate Change and Sustainability is slightly more important than cemeteries and slightly less important than public toilets!!”
  - “Budget too small. Responding by reducing emissions from Council activity as well as helping the District to react to/mitigate climate changes from storms, floods, droughts, coastal erosion. May require more than two staff to do that properly, so don’t be half-baked.”
  - “The 3 options don’t go far enough. Much more need to be spent in this area which is proposed to receive just 0.6% of TDC funding. At least 10% of TDC funding needs to be focused on climate change.”
43. **Officer Comment:** The proposed budget for the climate change work programme (Option 2) has been prepared on the basis of employing two officers to lead the development of a climate change strategy and undertake the necessary data collection and research. Some budget has also been provided, for the commissioning of technical assessments and engagement. Option 3 provides for a dedicated climate change engagement officer to work with our communities, Iwi, businesses and key stakeholders.
44. Any funding needed for remedial work on Council’s assets or services due to damage caused by the effects of climate change will need to be met through existing budgets or unplanned expenditure, as will any mitigation or adaptation initiatives identified in the development of the climate change strategy.
45. Officers anticipate that the climate change strategy will inform the development of the 2024-34 LTP, particularly the budgets associated with activity management plans. Funding for specific mitigation and adaptation projects will be able to be applied in a considered and responsible way once Council has a clear strategic direction and greater knowledge of the risks associated with climate change.

46. **Climate Emergency:** Three submissions (including one containing 121 signatures in support of the submission) requested that Council declare a climate emergency.
47. **Officer Comment:** Officers note that 17 councils across New Zealand, including Environment Canterbury have declared climate change emergencies, and on 2 December 2020 central government followed suit, committing to a carbon-neutral government by 2025.
48. Council may wish to consider declaring a climate change emergency.
49. **Suggestions for actions Council can take:** Submitters on this key issue provided suggestions for a range of mitigation and adaptation actions, including:
  - (a) Greater investment in active and public transport to reduce vehicle emissions;
  - (b) Electrification of council's fleet and public transport;
  - (c) Improved waste minimisation efforts to reduce emissions from landfill;
  - (d) Greater level of planting, especially of native species, across the District;
  - (e) Hard structure protection for coastal assets (eg Redruth landfill);
  - (f) Consideration of low emission construction and building efficiencies for all new Council facilities;
  - (g) Planning for more resilient infrastructure (eg stormwater networks);
  - (h) Close engagement with and guidance for community groups and businesses on emissions reduction.
50. **Officer Comment:** All feedback received on possible actions Council can take to reduce emissions and prepare for the impacts of climate change will be considered as Council develops a climate change strategy.

### Options and Preferred Option

51. Having considered the views of the community and those likely to be impacted by this decision, it is now for Council to determine its role and the level of funding allocated to preparing for Climate Change in the Long Term Plan 2021-31.
52. **Option 1: Retain budget of \$360,000 per annum (Option 2 in the consultation document) for climate change work programme:** This is Council's preferred option and has been included in the draft LTP budget.
53. This option was supported by 36% of those submitters who responded to this question in the consultation document.
54. The advantages of this option include:
  - (a) The establishment of a climate change work programme with dedicated resource to progress the development of a Council strategy in the first three years of the LTP.
  - (b) Council would be better placed to respond to the reporting requirements included in the Climate Change Response Act, and contribute to the Canterbury Mayoral Forum Climate Change Working Group.
  - (c) The development of a climate change strategy will help inform future action plans and the development of budgets for the 2024-34 LTP.

- (d) Responding broadly to the majority of the submitters who supported an increased Council role in responding to climate change (consultation options 1 and 2 – 74% support).
55. The disadvantages of this option include:
- (a) An increase in operating expenditure from previous Long Term Plan, impacting on the total rates increase required.
  - (b) This option provides only limited resource for engagement with the community, Iwi and key stakeholders on climate change issues, a topic that was widely supported by submitters.
56. **Option 2: Increase the budget \$585,000 per annum (Option 3 in the consultation document) to allow for increased levels of community engagement and education for climate change.**
57. This option received the most support following consultation, with 38% of submitters in favour.
58. The advantages of this option include those identified in Option 1 above, and:
- (a) Additional resource to support a great level of engagement.
  - (b) The aspirations of the highest number of submitters who advocated for Council to do even more are realised with an increased budget.
59. The disadvantages of this option include:
- (a) A greater increase in operating expenditure, further increasing the rates requirement by a further 0.14% over the 10 years from that which was indicated in the draft LTP.
60. Officers recognise the strong desire from the majority of submitters for Council to increase its leadership and engagement on climate change issues, as discussed above. Officers believe that the benefits to both Council and the community from providing additional resource to increase engagement and education warrant the increased budget required.
61. Officers are now recommending that Council approves Option 3 (as presented in the Consultation Document), providing \$585,000 per annum to resource Council's climate change work programme, ensuring greater levels of community engagement and education are possible.
62. **Option 3: Do not include any budget for the climate change work programme.**
63. This option received the least amount of support from submitters, with 24% indicating they wished Council to do the minimum to respond to climate change.
64. The advantages of this option include:
- (a) A reduction of \$360,000 per annum of operating costs in the draft LTP.
  - (b) The potential to benefit from a 'wait-and-see' approach regarding central government's legislative and regulatory response to climate change.
65. The disadvantages of this option include:
- (a) Failing to support Council's commitment under the Local Government Leaders' Climate Change Declaration, to develop and implement ambitious action plans that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support resilience within councils and for local communities.

- (b) A lack of locally-based research and in-house knowledge and expertise on the climate change impacts and emission reduction opportunities, limiting Council's ability to plan effectively in this space.
- (c) The aspirations of many submitters who have shown support for Council to undertake a greater role in responding to climate change would not be met.

### **Relevant Legislation, Council Policy and Plans**

- 66. **Climate Change Response Act:**<sup>9</sup> In 2019 the government passed the Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Bill, amending the Climate Change Response Act to provide a framework for New Zealand to develop and implement clear and stable climate change policies that contribute to the global effort under the Paris Agreement (to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius).
- 67. As a result of this amendment, the Act now requires local authorities (and other reporting organisations), to report to the Minister for Climate Change, or the Climate Change Commission on a range of risks, opportunities, financial planning and metrics and targets associated with the organisations climate change response.

### **Financial and Funding Implications**

- 68. The climate change work programme will be funded from rates.
- 69. The funding of the preferred option has been included in the Draft LTP budgets. Should Council wish to increase the budget for climate change to allow for increased levels of engagement and communication then further rates funding of \$225,000 per annum is required. This would require an additional rates increase.
- 70. As noted above, any funding needed for remedial work on Council's assets or services due to damage caused by the effects of climate change will need to be met through existing budgets or unplanned expenditure, as will any mitigation or adaptation initiatives identified in the development of the climate change strategy.

### **Attachments**

**Nil**

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<sup>9</sup> Section 5zw, Climate Change Response Act 2002.