

For the record



Basil Chamberlain
Chief Executive

The Taranaki Regional Council has recently published a Pre-Election Report, which is a mandatory requirement, to inform the regional community in the run-up to the local authority elections on 8 October.

As required by law, the report was prepared by the Chief Executive, and there was no involvement of the current elected councillors.

The report notes that the Council's strong operational and financial position should continue into the future.

Key points from the Pre-Election Report are outlined below.

Operational achievements

The Council has a successful record of achievement across all of its functions and responsibilities over the past three years and more. Highlights are:

- **Voluntary Riparian Management Programme**
The programme is improving water quality — 84% (12,099 km) of streambanks fenced, 69% (7639 km) protected with plants and 4.3 million plants supplied.
- **Taranaki's high quality environment**
Fresh water, coastal water and air quality is improving or being maintained. Best ever trends in freshwater quality.
- **Yarrow Stadium**
Secure long-term maintenance and development.
- **Bus passenger increase**
Increase in urban New Plymouth and regional Taranaki to over 582,000 passengers annually.
- **Resource consents**
100% processed in statutory deadlines. Compliance monitoring, public reporting and appropriate enforcement.
- **Taranaki's biodiversity protected**
Approx 100 biodiversity plans being actioned for key native ecosystems.
- **Animal and plant pest programme**
Reducing the impact of pests, including the self-help possum control programme on 240,000 ha.
- **Flood control upgrades**
Waiwhakaiho and Waitara flood schemes upgraded to 1 in 100 year protection.
- **Pukeiti, Tupare and Hollard Gardens**
Enhancing and securing future of these iconic gardens.
- **Ownership of Port Taranaki**
Holding strategic investment on behalf of regional community.
- **Puke Ariki foundation partner**
- **Regional advocacy**
Advocacy on significant regional issues and infrastructure improvements such as SH3 from New Plymouth City north and Normanby realignment.

Financial situation and forecast

The Council is in a very sound financial position and that is expected to continue over the medium term.

- **Strong balance sheet**
 - Assets of approx \$84million with no external public debt.
 - The Council's balance sheet is expected to remain strong, with no public debt.
- **Low rates increases**
 - Average 1.3% for past three years and 1% in 2016/2017.
 - Rates changes expected to continue at or below inflation.
 - One of the lowest rating councils in New Zealand.

The key risks to forecast:

- Potential changes to dividend returns from Port Taranaki Ltd. Dividends are budgeted to account for about 15% of the Council's total revenue. Changes could impact positively or negatively on rates. Estimates for future dividends are conservative and the Council works closely with Port Taranaki Ltd to communicate and coordinate financial planning.
- Potential significant changes in direction that are not planned. These could result from changes in the Council's mandated functions, structure or leadership.



Looking ahead

The Council remains strongly focused on its core activities for the well-being of the Taranaki region. Through its work programme and major projects the Council will:

- Protect and enhance the quality of our rivers, lakes, coastal waters, soil and air.
- Process and monitor consents, respond to pollution incidents and take appropriate enforcement action.
- Supply 450,000 riparian plants each year, with the aim of completing the Taranaki Riparian Management Programme by 2020.
- Work with landowners, and other groups to enhance the region's indigenous biodiversity.
- Control or eradicate pest animals and plants.
- Provide passenger transport services in urban New Plymouth and regional Taranaki.
- Enhance the comprehensive civil defence emergency management system in Taranaki.
- Complete the major upgrade of the Waitara flood protection scheme and maintain the Waiwhakaiho, Waitotara and other schemes.
- Continue to maintain and develop Yarrow Stadium and Tupare, Pukeiti and Hollard Gardens.
- Support Port Taranaki Ltd to ensure its continued growth and success and its critical role in the Taranaki economy.

The full report, along with more detailed information on the Council's past and planned performance and financial position is available on the Council's website www.trc.govt.nz.

The Council's role is to work for a thriving and prosperous Taranaki by:

- Promoting the sustainable use, development and protection of Taranaki's natural and physical resources.
- Safeguarding Taranaki's people and resources from natural and other hazards.
- Promoting and providing for Taranaki's regionally significant services, amenities and infrastructure.
- Representing Taranaki's interests and contributions to the regional, national and international community.

