

Financial Policies Deliberations Report

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with a summary of the analysis of submissions on the 2024-2034 Long-Term Plan Financial Policies consultation to support elected members in giving direction to Council staff on this policy review.

The purpose of the deliberations process is for elected members to consider the feedback received throughout the consultation and hearings and provide officers clear direction on preparing the final draft financial policies. It's important that feedback from community engagement and consultation, legislation, alignment with key strategic documents, and officer advice be considered as part of this process.

A full package of submissions has been provided as part of the 2024-2034 Long Term Plan Financial Policies Hearings Report, which can be found [here](#).

2. Recommendations

Officers recommend that the Council:

1. Receive the *Financial Policies Deliberations* Report.
2. Consider the submissions received through the consultation process.
3. Provide council officers with direction on preparation of the draft Remissions Policy, Remissions of Rates on Māori Freehold Land Policy and Revenue and Finance Policy.
4. Note that a Council meeting is scheduled for 22 November 2023 to consider adoption of these policies, as part of the 2024-2034 Long-Term Plan process.

3. Background

South Wairarapa District Council (SWDC) must adopt a series of policies as part of the Financial Strategy in preparation for the 2024-2034 Long Term Plan. The reviews of these policies are the first tranche of this work.

Councillors have been working for many months to understand their legal and financial responsibilities and the levers available for fair distribution of rates. This included a commitment from the previous Council to conduct a “first principles rating review” (the review) and has been insisted by some sectors of the community. The Revenue and Finance Policy puts in place the structure for how rates are set. To conduct a review of this nature requires a considerable amount of work and commitment that that the review will genuinely address long standing quirks in the rating model.

