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Role of this Annual Report

This Annual Report is provided to compare Western Bay of Plenty District Council's actual performance for the year against what was forecast in the Long Term Plan or Annual Plan.

Planning and reporting framework

Under the Local Government Act 2002, a Local Authority must prepare and adopt the following documents:

Long Term Plan (LTP)

Section 93 of the Local Government Act 2002 identifies Western Bay of Plenty District Council's plans for the Western Bay over a 10 year period. It is reviewed every three years. Council's latest LTP was agreed for 2024-34 and came into effect on 26 September 2024.

Annual Plan

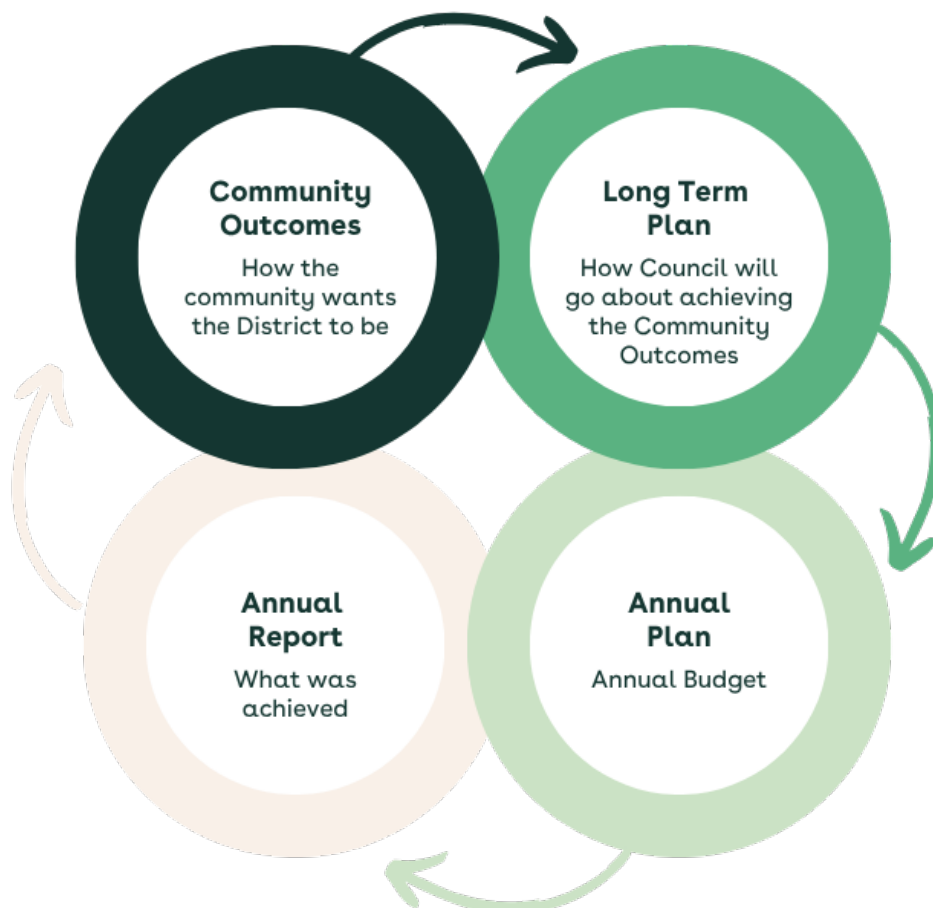
Section 95 of the Local Government Act 2002 is produced in the two intervening years between each LTP. It outlines any significant changes Council has made to the LTP and contains the annual budget.

Annual Report

Section 98 of the Local Government Act 2002 provides details of Council's actual performance for all activities against the plans for a specific year of the LTP or Annual Plan.

Summary Annual Report

Section 98 (4)(b) of the Local Government Act 2002 provides a summary of information contained in Council's Annual Report.



Statement of compliance and responsibility

For the year ended
30 June 2025

Council confirms meeting all the statutory requirements in relation to the Annual Report, as outlined in Schedule 10 of the Local Government Act 2002.

Responsibility

The Council and management of Western Bay of Plenty District Council accept responsibility for the preparation of the annual financial statements and the judgements used in them.

The Council and management of Western Bay of Plenty District Council accept responsibility for establishing and maintaining a system of internal control designed to provide reasonable assurance as to the integrity and reliability of financial reporting.

In the opinion of the Council and the management of Western Bay of Plenty District Council, the annual financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2025 fairly reflect the financial position, operations and service performance of Western Bay of Plenty District Council.



Miriam Taris
Chief Executive Officer

James Denyer
Mayor



From Plans to Progress

How we're creating a better-connected, more resilient Western Bay.

Kia ora koutou,

It's a privilege to present the Western Bay of Plenty District Council Annual Report for 2024/25.

This has been a year defined by delivery, discipline, and determination – three guiding forces that have shaped the way we've worked with and for our communities.

Together, they've enabled us to make real progress on the projects and services that matter most, manage your rates with care, and keep the Western Bay moving forward even in challenging times. And while we are guided by plans and policy, our drive comes from seeing first-hand the real impact these decisions have on people's lives.

Delivery – turning plans into progress

A record \$134 million in capital projects – nearly triple what we achieved in earlier years – reflects a planned step-up in delivering on the priorities our communities have told us matter most.

This increase isn't about spending more for the sake of it – it's the result of years of planning, funding, and ready-to-go projects now coming to life, thanks to strong partnerships, careful budgeting, and the dedication of the many teams involved in planning, designing, and delivering this mahi. Importantly, this significant level of investment was achieved with net debt only increasing by \$55 million – showing that we're building more while keeping debt growth under control.

From roads and stormwater to reserves and wastewater, this work is helping to create a better-connected, more resilient District. Projects like the ongoing roading improvements in and around Ōmokoroa, upgrades on No.1 Road in Te Puke, and the replacement of the No.4 Road bridge are just a few examples of plans turning into reality.

Some of the most visible results are in our community spaces. This year saw the opening of Te Ara Mātauranga – our new library, service centre and community hub in Waihi Beach – and Te Āhuru Mōwai o Hiria – modern elder housing at Heron Crescent in Katikati. These aren't just buildings; they're the result of years of planning, partnership, and persistence, reflecting our long-term commitment to wellbeing, connection, and supporting the communities we serve.



While large projects often grab the headlines, our delivery is also about the everyday essentials – clean drinking water, safe roads, well-maintained parks and libraries – the things that keep our communities connected and thriving.

In the past 12 months we've delivered more for our communities than ever before.

Discipline – making every dollar count

Behind every achievement is careful financial stewardship.

This year, we retained our strong Standard & Poor's AA credit rating for the seventh consecutive year – a clear sign that Western Bay continues to manage its finances well, even amid uncertainty and major infrastructure investment. This achievement stands out even more when compared with the current national trend, where many councils are facing credit ratings pressure.

In a time when many councils across the country are facing significant financial strain, this rating recognises our steady approach and confirms our commitment to doing right by our communities. Our community expects us to invest in the future while living within our means – and this shows we're doing just that: delivering for today and preparing for tomorrow, with a firm focus on financial sustainability.

That discipline has meant making hard calls when needed, prioritising projects, and ensuring that every ratepayer dollar goes as far as possible without losing momentum on the work that matters most – because we know every dollar represents the trust and contribution of the people who call the Western Bay home.

This discipline and focus has enabled us to reverse the 2024 deficit which stemmed from a slow economy and reduced growth-related revenue into a sustainable surplus. This surplus will gradually replenish our reserves and strengthen our resilience against future economic shocks.

It is also acknowledged that there were budgeting errors made that resulted in a rates deficit in the 2023/24 year that required additional rates over and above the initial proposed 7.4% and communicated increase, to an increase of 8.9% in the 2025/26 year. The lessons learned through the review conducted will ensure these errors are not repeated.

Determination – working together for what matters

None of this progress happens without the determination of our people – our staff, elected members, community partners, and you, our residents.

Your rates, feedback, and involvement are what make these outcomes possible. Together, we've advanced key projects, enhanced community spaces, and invested in essential infrastructure – all while navigating the challenges of a tight economic climate.

That same determination, shaped by first-hand experiences of what our communities face and need, will carry us into the next year as we continue to deliver both the major projects that shape our District and the small, everyday actions that make life better for our communities.

Looking ahead

While an Annual Report is about looking back, our focus is always forward. The achievements of this year give us a strong foundation for what's next – from the momentum of a well-planned project pipeline, to the resilience built through sound financial management.

October's local elections will mark the start of a new era in representation, with five Community Boards covering almost the entire Western Bay – giving more communities a stronger local voice alongside Council decision-making. These changes are designed to better reflect our growing and changing communities, and ensure fairer, more effective representation across the District.

For the first time, the District will also have a Māori Ward – Waka Kai Uru – providing dedicated Māori representation on Council. Alongside this, a binding poll will be held at the election to decide whether the Māori Ward will remain in place for future elections.

We know the year ahead will bring both challenges and opportunities. But with delivery, discipline, and determination at the heart of everything we do – and a clear understanding of the real impact our work has on people's lives – we're ready to keep moving the Western Bay forward, together.

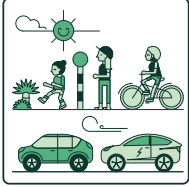
Ngā mihi nui,

James Denyer



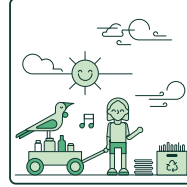
Mayor, Western Bay of Plenty District Council

Highlights



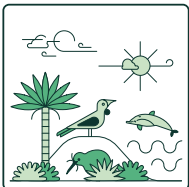
Transport

84.4km of roads resurfaced.



Waste

38% of waste that was collected by our Kerbside service was diverted from landfill.



Environmental Initiatives

18 community groups supported to improve environmental outcomes.



Libraries and Service Centres

Te Ara Mātauranga (Waihi Beach Library) project successfully delivered to the community. 265,899 visits to our libraries and service centres.



Community

Te Āhuru Mōwai o Hiria (new elder housing development) at Heron Crescent in Katikati successfully delivered.
28 projects successfully funded across the district by Community Matching Fund.



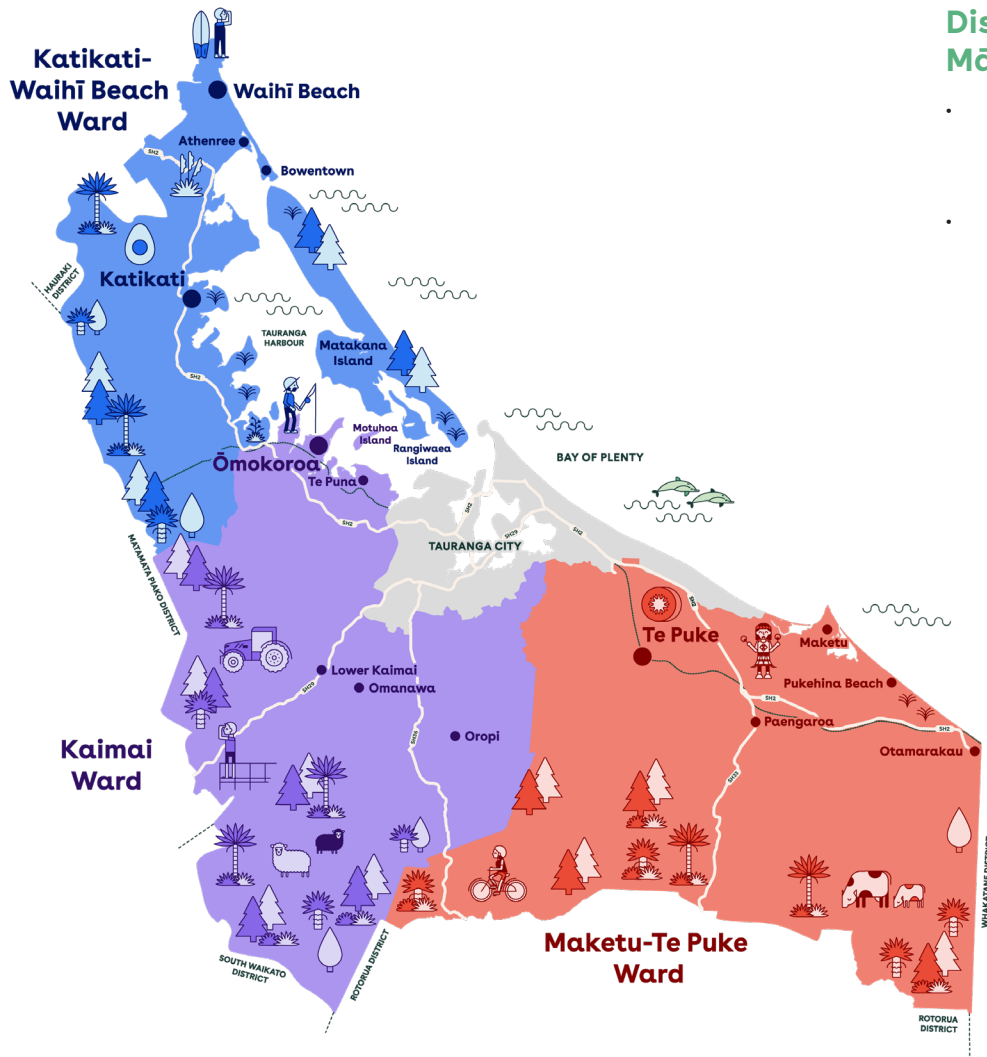
Consenting

We issued 386 dwelling consents and created 276 new lots. Which included 29 lots at Athenree Road in Athenree, 41 lots at Kayelene Place, 22 lots by Classic at 74 & 88 Prole Road, 36 lots by Goldstone at Harbour Ridge, and 52 lots by Neil Group at Te Awanui Waters.

Our District - Key facts

District-wide Waka Kai Uru Māori Ward

- District Māori population of 12,111 (Census 2023), an increase of 23% from 2018.
- Māori ethnicity makes up 22% of our rohe, 17% of Katikati-Waihi Beach Ward, 17% of Kaimai Ward, and 31% of Maketu-Te Puke Ward.*



Katikati - Waihi Beach General Ward

- Population of 16,378 (Census 2023), an increase of 1,161 people or 8% from 2018.
- Lower number of children at 15%, and higher number of people aged over 65 at 32%.
- European ethnicity is still highest at 84%, yet Māori has grown to 17% and Asian has grown to 6% of the population.*
- 79% of households are owned by occupants, and 21% are rented.
- Median personal income is lower at \$32,000 per year.

Kaimai General Ward

- Population of 20,227 (Census 2023), which is an increase of 2,955 people or 17% from 2018.
- Age distribution is fairly evenly spread with a higher number of children at 19%.
- European ethnicity dominates at 88%, with 17% Māori and Asian ethnicity only 3% of the population.*
- 80% of households are owned by occupants, and 20% are rented.
- Median personal income is higher at \$41,900 per year.

Maketu - Te Puke General Ward

- Population of 19,579 (Census 2023), an increase of 1,161 people or 6% from 2018.
- Higher number of children at 20% and young adults at 18% with much lower number of people aged over 65 at 17%.
- European ethnicity is relatively low at 68%, with much higher Māori at 31%, and Asian has grown to 12% of the population.*
- 69% of households are owned by occupants, and 31% are rented.
- Median personal income is \$39,100 per year.

*Some of our community identify as multiple ethnicities.

Our District, Our People



Western Bay of Plenty District is a largely rural area, surrounding the main urban centres of Waihi Beach, Katikati, Ōmokoroa and Te Puke.



Western Bay of Plenty District stretches from Waihi Beach to Ōtamarakau, covering 195,000 hectares of coastal, rural and urban areas and is one of the faster growing areas in New Zealand.



The Kaituna River drains the lakes of Rotorua and Rotoiti into the Maketu Estuary and out to sea, while smaller streams drain the eastern district into the Waihi Estuary.



Many people from other regions and countries choose the Western Bay as a place to settle for family, retirement and business reasons. High growth in the Western Bay saw the population increase by 10% from 50,904 in 2018 to 56,184 in 2023 (Census 2023).



Median household income is \$88,600 (Census 2023).



Horticulture and agriculture (mainly kiwifruit and avocado production) are the biggest drivers of the local economy, contributing 22% to GDP of \$3.3 billion in 2024 (Infometrics).



The Western Bay population tends to be older than New Zealand as a whole, with a median age of 45 years (Census 2023).



Ethnic diversity is increasing over time. 80% of people identify as European, 22% as Māori, 7% as Asian and 3% as Pacific.

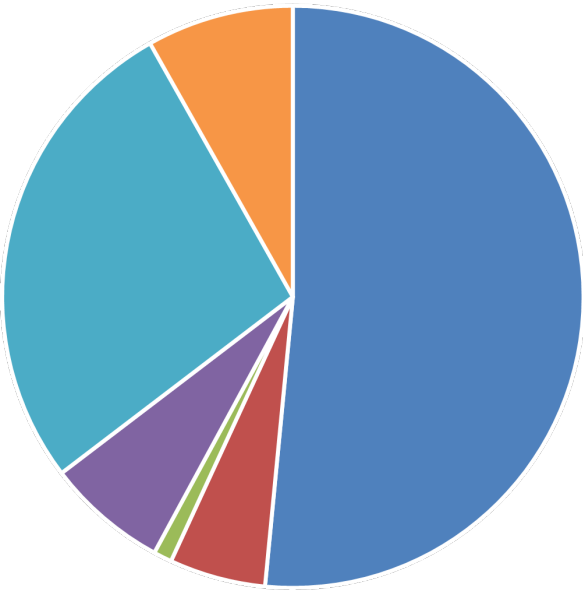
*Some of our community identify as multiple ethnicity.

Finance summary overview

Council Revenue 2024/25

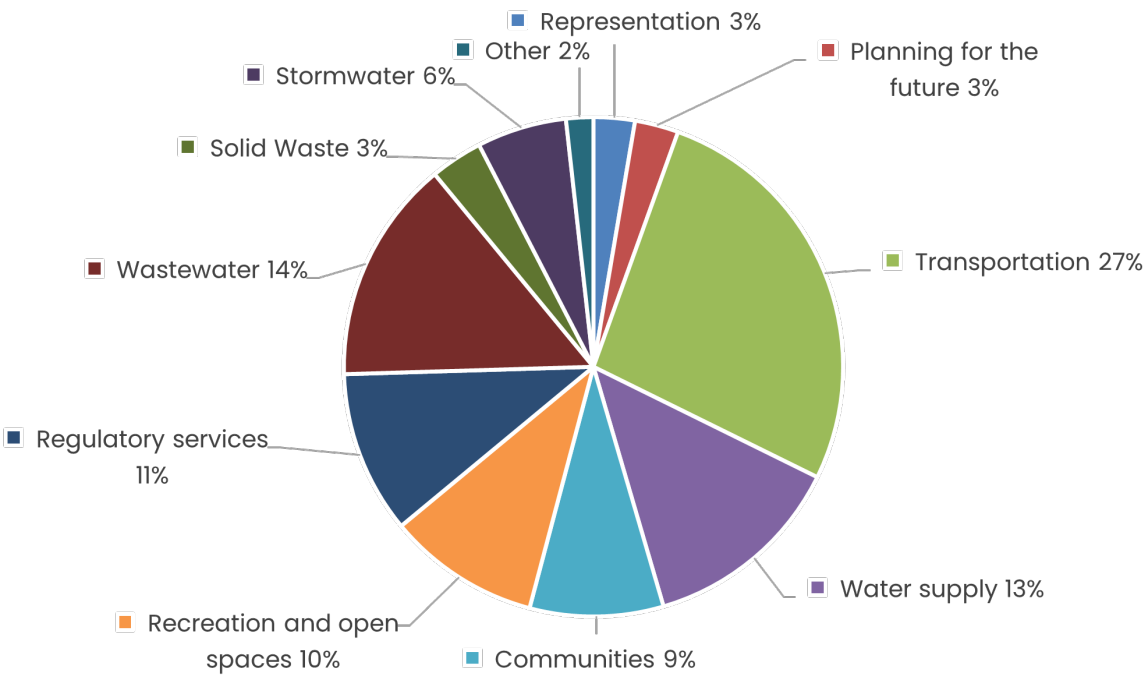
\$201.9 million

- Rates Revenue 52%
- Fees and Charges 5%
- Finance Revenue 1%
- Financial Contributions 7%
- Subsidies and Grants 27%
- Other Revenue 8%

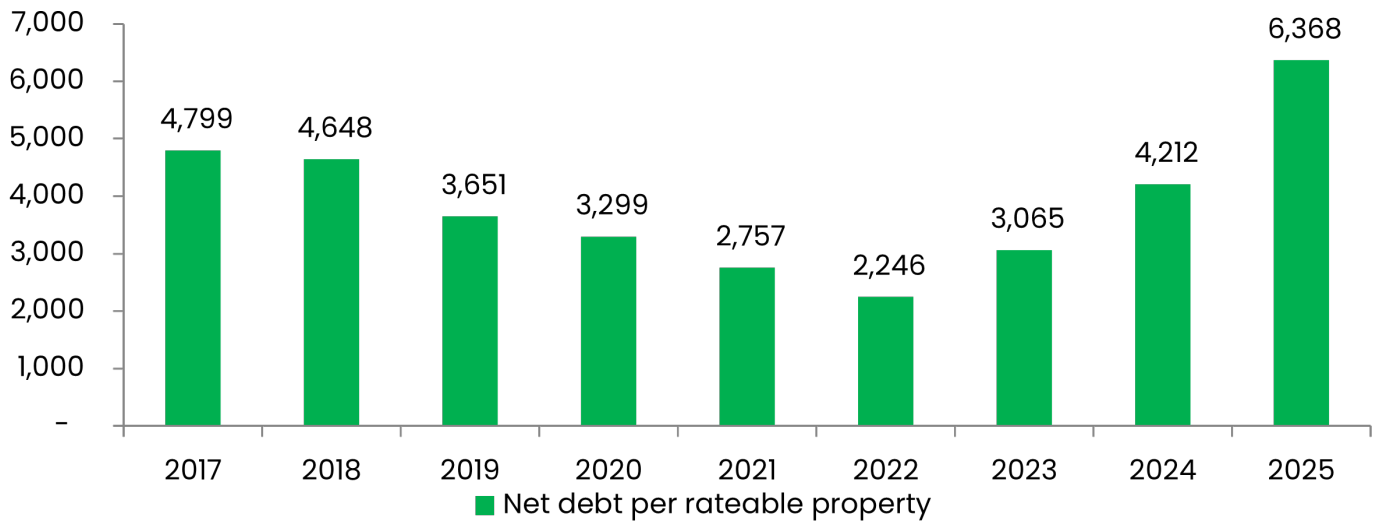


Council Operating Expenditure 2024/25

\$149.8 million



Net debt per rateable property



The Council



Currently owns \$2.07 billion worth of assets as at 30 June 2025, compared to \$1.95 billion as at 30 June 2024.



Net debt is \$159 million as at 30 June 2025, compared to \$104.03 million as at 30 June 2024.



Overall the District has equity of \$1.84 billion as at 30 June 2025, compared to \$1.79 billion as at 30 June 2024.



\$135.9 million of capital expenditure was spent on infrastructure and assets for the year ended 30 June 2025, compared with \$58 million for the year ended 30 June 2024.



\$201.90 million of total income generated in 2024/25 compared to \$143.98 million for the year ended 30 June 2024.



Doggy Day Out 2025, Ōmokoroā



Prole Road Urbanisation Project, Ōmokoroā



Te Āhuru Mōwai o Hiria, 26 new elder housing units in Katikati



Two Mile Creek Stormwater Project, Waihi Beach



Festival of Cultures 2025, Katikati