

FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE



DELIVERING ON COMMUNITY ASPIRATIONS

This plan marks the beginning of a new strategic direction for Wellington and the Council, a direction guided by the aspirations of Wellingtonians. The plan is the result of input by residents and organisations and extensive deliberations by councillors who have set a clear vision for the city. To a large extent, this document is an action plan for delivering on that vision.

The new direction builds on the successes of recent years, and addresses the challenges the city will face in the next 10 years. It aims to bring a balance – a balance between the essential day-to-day services that underpin an internationally competitive city and additional services that will ensure we all have a high quality of life as the city grows and changes.

In setting our direction, we have been mindful of the linkages between the different aspects of our work. When considering urban development, for example, we have also considered transport, the economy and the environment. Our programme reflects these linkages and the need to prioritise our work so that we can deliver despite a wider context that sees us facing increased costs in areas such as construction and fuel.

This is the second long-term plan we have produced under the Local Government Act 2002. It contains comprehensive information about our programme for the next decade, including budgets, performance measures, and reasons for providing each service. It also contains the policies that will guide our management of the city's finances in coming years: for example, how we will fund our activities and what borrowing levels we will maintain.

The plan will, of course, be updated as time passes – through annual plans in the next two years and a new long-term plan in 2009.

Several of the initiatives in this plan are aimed at making it easier for people to have their say. The plan itself reflects our commitment to democratic local decision making. It was agreed only after wide public consultation in which we received well over 1,300 submissions.

As ever, we aim to manage the city's assets and finances prudently and to ensure that ratepayers get value for money. As we prepared this plan, we carefully reviewed all capital spending and started an in-depth review of all of our operational activities, to ensure they meet our strategic objectives and that the benefits justify the costs.

In doing this we have been able to hold our average real rates increase for the first year of the plan to 5.0 percent, taking into account growth in the number of ratepayers. The actual movement in rates will vary from one ratepayer to the next, depending on changes in capital value and the continued movement of the rates differential between businesses and households.

This document is large because we need to meet extensive legislative requirements, and because we are committed to providing you – the city's residents and ratepayers – with comprehensive information about our work. There are many initiatives outlined here. They're explained in the summary on pages 6 to 25, and in the detail section starting on page 36.

We look forward to delivering on these initiatives to ensure that Wellington's future remains prosperous.



GARRY POOLE CHIEF EXECUTIVE