



A Message from Chief Executive Garry Poole

Ko te pae tawhiti, whaia kia tata; ko te pae tata, whakamaua kia tina – to seek out distant horizons and cherish those we attain.

This plan is about building on the city's strengths. It has been developed in the context of changing and uncertain economic times. The current global economic conditions affect Wellington but we are well placed to respond.

In the latest survey of New Zealand's largest cities we once again came out on top, with 95 percent of residents rating their quality of life as good or very good. The Council's strategy is to sustain this and Wellington as a vibrant, internationally competitive, and affordable city. This will require us to work in collaboration with others.

The services the Council delivers underpin these results. Many of the services we offer have been developed and invested in, on behalf of the community, over many years. Others are the results of partnerships or the continued support of local communities and users.

Our draft long-term plan provided the community with the chance to state the value they place on these services and to comment on the role the Council should play in either delivering these or encouraging others to. This debate took place in the context of wider challenges such as a growing population, increasing diversity, rising costs, economic uncertainty, public concerns about affordability, and environmental pressures associated with climate change and resource use.

After hearing Wellingtonians' views, the Council has adopted an approach that will maintain most services at the current level, fine tune our own processes to ensure they meet changing customer needs, complete projects that we've started, and focus on areas that underpin our strategic direction.

This plan also sets out our financial forecasts for the next 10 years.

These show:

- operating expenditure to increase from \$342 million in 2009/10 to \$455 million in 2018/19
- capital expenditure ranging from \$114 million to \$200 million each year
- total borrowings (net of our housing surpluses which are ring-fenced) to increase from \$325 million in 2009/10 to \$370 million in 2018/19
- total rates revenue to increase from \$214 million in 2009/10 to \$287 million in 2018/19
- total income (including rates) to increase from \$366 million in 2009/10 to \$530 million in 2018/19.

This equates to an indicative average rates funding increase of less than 3.5 percent per year over the 10 years. This is of course subject to change each year as we refine our budgets. For 2009/10, the average real rates increase will be 3.27 percent, after allowing for growth in the ratepayer base.

As the Mayor has noted, this reflects a Council decision to seek a balanced approach, which retains all that makes Wellington special, while also ensuring that rates remain affordable.

GARRY POOLE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE