



3 April 2020

Dear Mayor & Councillors,

RE: Annual Draft Plan -- Zero Rate Increase

It is an extremely difficult time in New Zealand at present and the situation is very fluid and the final answer for each person's financial situation and health is not assured. For sure, after the Covid 19 virus is eliminated, many ratepayers will be in a much worse financial state than when they were in early March 2020.

Even before this happened, the Papamoa Ratepayers & Residents Association made a submission for a Zero Rates increase for the year 2020/2021 which listed many ways council could cut expenditure and avoid increasing the rates.

There was one council meeting which set an exorbitant rate of 12.5%, and then another which backtracked (without any public submissions), but also removed any increase in the commercial rate share. Your own charts show that private ratepayers in Tauranga have some of the highest rates in NZ.

Rates are paid for council services and the maintenance of those services. Any growth should fund itself from the beginning and not increase the debt of the council. If it does increase council debt, then you should question if the growth is necessary and involve ratepayers in the decision to go ahead with genuine consultation.

In June 2020, the council will be deciding on controlling the kerbside pickup of rubbish, recycling and food scraps. This will be a large additional cost to each ratepayer. Why is this amount NOT included in the rate's debate. It looks like this is being introduced by stealth. Just look at the cost of the kerbside glass pickup which has risen by approx. 63% in 6 months.

To put these matters into the public domain for discussion, the PRRA has two bespoke websites running www.zerorateincrease.com & www.taurangarubbishoptions.com

These websites have had thousands of ratepayer visits to date. Over the next few weeks I will be sharing ratepayers comments. So far there are only three votes in support of a rates increase.

Throughout NZ other councils are settling on zero rate rises and Tauranga should follow suit for all the reasons above. The rubbish decision should be deferred for at least two years. See www.taurangarubbishoptions.com.

Yours faithfully

Philip Brown On behalf of the PRRA Committee

Attachments included