



**Local Government Elections 2025 are coming!  
YOUR VOTE, YOUR CHOICE**

**A PRESENTATION BY CONCERNED RATEPAYERS KAPITI  
Key Public Issues and  
The Upcoming Elections**

**3 August 2025**



# Concerned Ratepayers Kapiti

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## Who are we?

- We are a voluntary community group fighting for fair and sustainable rates on the Kapiti Coast.
- We are working to:
  - reduce the projected (and unreasonable) rate increases
  - challenge the KCDC to get its spending under control
  - reduce the focus and spend on non-core activities
  - make sure community views are heard and considered through 'consultation' processes
  - promote public engagement in KCDC activities
  - provide good information to support your vote in the next elections
  - encourage participation in the upcoming election.
- If you want things to change in Kapiti, you have the opportunity to make a difference. The 2025 local government elections are coming!



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## Today's Meeting

- The 2025 local government elections are coming! YOUR VOTE, YOUR CHOICE!
- Outline of key dates and stages
- Today we will discuss some key issues and areas of concern relating to KCDC focus, decision-making on expenditure, and accountability to the community – these are important issues to think about in preparation for your vote
- We will discuss:
  - Is the Council listening to the community? Consultation and accountability
  - Examples of Council spending choices
  - Monitoring Council performance
- STV (Single transferable vote) – your voting system for Kapiti
  - How it works – ranking and calculation of votes
  - Advantages and pitfalls to watch out for



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**Are You Getting Performance and Value for Money  
for Your Rates Dollar?**



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## Three Key Areas of Focus and Concern

- Consultation, community engagement and Council accountability in representation - *Is the Council listening to the community?*
- Council decision-making on financial management choices – *Is the community getting value for money in areas where ratepayers funds are being spent?*
- Council operational service delivery – *Is the community getting value for money in Council performance?*



## **Key Issue 1 - Is the Council Listening to the Community?**

KCDC has a 'formula' for public consultation and participation, which consists of:

- 'Have your Say' surveys
- 'Consultation documents'
- 'Community engagement drop-ins'
- Providing limited opportunities for public input to Council decision-making



## Is the Council Listening to the Community?

‘Have your say’ surveys:

- Frequent use of such surveys
- ‘Directed consultation’ - directing community response towards the option Council wants
- Targeted/leading questions – surveys frequently do not meet standard criteria for neutrality and objectivity in construction of questions
- Menu limitations
- Council response frequently over-rides or ignores majority community feedback



## Is the Council Listening to the Community?

Consultation documents:

- Generalised high-level documents and information, frequently lacking important detail
- Documents characterised by Council rhetoric and opinion - rather than neutral presentation of information pertaining to options.
- Provide a poor basis for the public to provide informed input to Council decision-making
- Difficult for members of the public to obtain detailed information relevant for public analysis and input – relevant reports and documents are difficult to find on KCDC website
- Council failure to consult on all matters that count – e.g. Council decision not to engage in public consultation AT ALL on KCDC's 2025/26 Annual Plan
  - Public input on 2025/26 Annual Plan limited to 3-minute slots for members of the public to speak at Council meeting to adopt the Plan and set the rate



## Is the Council Listening to the Community?

### 'Community engagement drop-ins'

- Council publishes a programme of set times in various locations across the district where members of the public can 'drop in' to obtain information on an issue KCDC is currently consulting on
- An efficient way for KCDC to conduct community engagement
  - Council delegates KCDC staff or staff of its private contractors to man the drop-in locations
  - Councillors 'drop in' from time to time

### BUT

- Does it serve the community well?
  - Sessions mostly timed for within working hours – prohibits working people from being able to contribute
  - Often the same generalised level of information as in 'consultation documents'



## Is the Council Listening to the Community?

Limited opportunity for public input at Council decision-making meetings:

- Frequency of decision-making at public-excluded meetings
- Limited or no public access to Council workshop sessions
- Mostly three-minute time slots for public input
- ‘Cut the mic’ instances, censoring comment from members of the public
- General lack of open public meetings on important topics



## What does the community think?

Data from KCDC Annual Residents' Satisfaction Surveys:

- Public perception that Council is making good decisions –  
2021/22 **49%**, 2022/23 **41%**, 2023/24 **45%**
- Public perception of ease of participation in decision-making -  
2021/22 **53%**
- Public confidence that the District is going in the right direction –  
2021/22: **49%**, 2022/23: **57%**, 2023/24: **56%**



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**Key Issue 2 - Is the community getting value for money in the choices KCDC is making on where ratepayer funds are spent?**



## Some examples of choices KCDC is making on where ratepayer funds are spent

**Economic Development** – projected spend of \$31 million over the 10 years of the Long-Term Plan, funding what?

- Development/updates of KCDC 'Economic Development Strategy'
- Current Economic Development Kotahitanga Board (EDKB) being re-organised as a Charitable Trust with a layered management structure – Board of Trustees with a Limited Liability Company (LLC) underneath
- Appointment of Trustees and Directors of the Company operating under the Trust – current Board is 50% iwi representatives, this will continue. About 50% of Trustees and Directors of the LLC will be iwi appointees
- The concept in a nutshell – KCDC is choosing to have a role in administering financial 'transfers'
  - Funds will be provided through a) a targeted 'business rate/levy' (approx. 28%) and b) rates (approx. 72%)
  - KCDC is taking money from businesses and ratepayers to re-allocate to selected businesses of KCDC's choosing
  - KCDC clips the ticket on the way to cover administration costs of this arrangement



## Examples of choices KCDC is making: Iwi Partnership Arrangement

- KCDC decided to establish a Māori ward, coming into effect at 2025 local government election
- In addition, Council decided to retain its current 'Iwi Partnership' arrangement - 'Whakaminenga o Kapiti'
- Whakaminenga o Kapiti is an agreement with three large 'manawhenua' iwi in the Kapiti District – Ngati Raukawa, Te Atiawa and Ngati Toa
- These three iwi exist outside the KCDC arrangement as the ART Confederation – a political and business collaboration of these three iwi, working together to promote their iwi corporate interests
- Seven representatives from the three iwi (selected by the iwi) and nominated Councillors meet monthly as the 'Whakaminenga o Kapiti' committee and
- The iwi representatives are also appointed to sit on other Committees of Council
  - The iwi representatives have voting rights on Council committees (though not at full Council meetings)
  - Iwi representatives also sit on the Board of EDKB and other advisory committees of Council



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## Examples of choices KCDC is making: Iwi Partnership Arrangement

- The ‘Whakaminenga o Kapiti’ arrangement costs ratepayers a minimum level of approx. \$2.5 million a year base running costs, consisting of:
  - KDCD provides funding for the three iwi of approx. \$495,000 per year in ‘capacity payments’, plus a stipend of approx. \$150,000 (\$50,000 to each iwi ) to sit on Council committees
  - In addition Council pays meeting fees and expenses to the appointed iwi representatives to attend meetings of the WoK committee and all other Council committees to which they are appointed
  - WoK has a grants budget for distribution for Maori development activities
  - The WoK is supported and facilitated by the Iwi Partnerships Team – Group management level division within Council which facilitates liaison with the 3 iwi, provides admin support to the WoK committee and provides training for Council staff in Te ao Māori values - \$1.5 - \$1.9 million a year
- In addition to the costs above of ‘iwi representation’, the Council also provides other financial contributions to the selected three iwi for specific purposes e.g. marae upgrades, grants for initiatives in Papakainga housing and other iwi projects



## Iwi Partnership Arrangements – Information and Questions

- Only approx. 30% of Māori in the Kapiti district have affiliation with the three iwi participating in the 'Whakaminenga o Kapiti' arrangement – according to KCDC documents.  
(According to 2018 Census stats, the number of people identifying as Maori in the Kapiti District was approx. 7,000. 30% of that is just over 2,000 people. Note the number of people identifying as Maori may have changed according to recent Census stats.)
- ART Confederation information claims about 40,000 people are affiliated with the ART iwi – but note most of these are outside Kapiti District, in an area that extends from Wellington to much of the lower North Island



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### Iwi Partnership Arrangements – Information and Questions

- These three iwi are large corporate businesses in their own right, with an estimated private collective wealth/asset base of approx. \$1.2 billion (Note KCDC's entire (public) assets = value \$2.46 bn)
- The three iwi are involved in huge developments generating commercial income e.g. Ngati Toa's extensive housing developments in Wgtn/Mana and investment activities, Raukawa's Wananga (tertiary education centre) at Otaki. The three iwi also receive extensive financial contributions from central government
- Should Kapiti ratepayers be funding wealthy business corporates, and paying for their representatives preferential access to Council deliberations and decision-making?
- Are the funds provided to these ART Confederation iwi the best way of 'honouring Te Tiriti' and ensuring Maori representation in Kapiti District – in addition to having a Māori ward?



## What does the community think?

- 69% of the Kapiti public did not support establishment of a Māori ward, but KCDC decided to go ahead anyway
- If they had been asked, would the public support retention of the ‘manawhenua partnership’ in addition to the Māori ward if they knew the costs?



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**Key Issue 3 - Is the community getting value for money in relation to Council performance?**



## Issues relating to Council performance

- Staffing costs have increased by 50% in the last few years, but Council performance has not
- A number of units within KCDC's management divisions and areas of activity achieved less than 75% of their annual performance targets in the 2023/24 financial year, and four units achieved less than 50% (according to KCDC's own data from the Annual Report for the 2023/24 year)
- Some units are consistently achieving low levels of performance in the last three years of Council Annual Reports (data in KCDC Annual Reports)



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Management Divisions	2021/22 % Achievement	2022/23 % Achievement	2023/24 % Achievement
<b>Infrastructure</b>			
Access and Transport	46%	46%	46%
Coastal Management	100%	100%	100%
Stormwater	100%	100%	100%
Water Management	82%	100%	91%
Wastewater Management	82%	100%	100%
Sustainability and Resilience	60%	60%	60%
Infrastructure - Overall performance achievement	73%	79%	77%
<b>Community Services</b>			
Parks and Open Spaces	90%	90%	100%
Recreation and Leisure	29%	71%	100%
Community Facilities	71%	86%	100%
Community Services – Overall performance achievement	67%	83%	100%



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Management Divisions	2021/22 % Achievement	2022/23 % Achievement	2023/24 % Achievement
<b>Partnerships</b>			
Tangata Whenua	33%	33%	33%
Community Support	75%	75%	75%
Governance	50%	50%	0%
Economic Development	100%	100%	100%
Partnerships – Overall performance achievement	60%	60%	50%
<b>Planning and Regulatory Services</b>			
Districtwide Planning	67%	67%	33%
Regulatory Services	67%	33%	67%
Planning and Regulatory Services – Overall performance achievement	67%	50%	50%
<b>Corporate</b>			
Corporate	100%	100%	100%
<b>OVERALL COUNCIL PERFORMANCE ACHIEVEMENT</b>			
Overall Council Performance	68%	76%	79%



## What do we know about Council performance in the 2024/25 year?

- KCDC reports every four months on performance – you can access these reports by typing ‘performance reports’ in the Search menu on KCDC’s website
- The latest year-to-date report (YTD to 28 Feb 2025) reports 83% achievement of service delivery targets (cf 2023/24 full year 79%) and that 55% of the Council’s ‘priority actions’ are ‘on track’
- However, interpretation of the YTD performance data is difficult because:
  - Many performance measures are annual targets so these are all excluded from the YTD reports and only reported in the full Annual Report
  - If activities are ongoing and Council staff decide that activity levels are ‘on track’ then the performance is reported as ‘100% achievement’
- Similarly KCDC reports a \$7.2 m operating surplus in the Feb YTD report, but
  - This reflects variables with staging of different projects etc and associated expenditures



## Issues relating to Council performance and staffing

- The trend in Council staffing and management structures and the nature of KCDC staffing positions echoes the trend seen in central government in recent years, including:
  - Extensive contracting out of functions to the private sector (for 'efficiency' reasons) has not seen a tandem reduction in Council staffing
  - The nature of staffing reflects a significant shift from 'operational' (technical) functions to 'corporate/administrative' (bureaucratic) functions
  - A significant number of Council staff are now involved in planning/policy analysis, 'communications', contract compliance and corporate services (HR, Finance etc)
  - 2024/25 figures indicate current ratio of staffing in 'operational' divisions (such as Infrastructure & Community Facilities) and 'corporate' functions is approx. 60/40
    - But this ratio is also misleading because some staff in operational divisions are also involved in activities such as policy/communications/admin functions



## Issues relating to Council performance and staffing

Information on KCDC management structures indicates this trend:

- In 2017, KCDC had 5 Group Managers overseeing three operational divisions (Infrastructure, Community Facilities and Regulatory Services) and 2 corporate divisions (Corporate Services and Strategy/Planning)
- In 2025, KCDC has 6 Group Managers overseeing 2 operational divisions (Infrastructure and Asset Management, and Customer and Community) and 4 corporate/administrative divisions (Corporate Services, Strategy/Planning, Iwi Partnerships and People and Capability i.e. HR)
- GM base salaries average \$250,000 per year, with some much higher
- There has also been an escalation of non-core activities over the last few years, since the 2019 Local Government Amendment (Wellbeing) Act. Additional ‘non-core’ functions are also reflected in the detail of staffing activities in annual and YTD performance reports



## What does the community think?

Data from KCDC Annual Residents' Satisfaction Surveys:

- Resident value-for-money satisfaction - 2021/22 54%, 2022/23 49%, 2023/24 46%
- Surveys indicate that the public want local authorities to focus on core services.



## Are the times a-changing?

- The Government has recently indicated its intention to:
  - Support the concept of rates-capping
  - Repeal the 2019 Local Government Amendment (Wellbeing) Act
- The Wellbeing Amendment 2019 has been a catalyst for Councils expanding their mandate into an escalation of ‘non-core’ activities. KCDC priorities reflect this with an expansion into areas such as additional social programmes and increased emphasis on iwi relations including:
  - Development of a Health Strategy
  - Huge expenditure on ‘climate change’ – CAP process
  - EDKB – working with Maori businesses to develop a Maori Economic Development Strategy
  - Establishment of the Kapiti Housing Solutions Trust
- At the recent LGNZ Conference, 82% of Councils voted to oppose rates capping and LGNZ also opposes the repeal of the ‘Wellbeing’ Amendment and Government direction to Councils to ‘get back to the basics’



## Are the times a-changing?

- On its 'Our Directions' introduction to the Feb 2025 YTD performance report, KCDC states its 'Vision' as
- '*Supporting sustainable development and communities by a strengthened focus on place, people and partnership*' and says
- '*Our community outcomes help us respond to our challenges and keep our focus on what matters most – the cultural, economic, environmental and social wellbeing of all the people in our district*'
- ***ASK THE CANDIDATES STANDING FOR ELECTION IN 2025 –***
  - *Do you agree with rates capping?*
  - *Do you support the repeal of the Wellbeing Amendment in the Act?*
  - *What do you think KCDC should do if the Amendment is repealed? Should KCDC modify its activities, or fight this and continue as currently?*



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## Learn more about the candidates before you cast your vote

- **“Meet the Candidates”** – we will be hosting our own meetings from 24<sup>th</sup> September – 2<sup>nd</sup> October. Other meetings will also be held by GreyPower, ItsInTheBallot and KCDC commencing 14<sup>th</sup> August.

This will provide a range of opportunities to hear from the candidates and for you to pose your questions.

- **Candidate Questionnaire** – we are sending a comprehensive questionnaire to all candidates and will publish the responses on our website as they come in.



## KEY DATES

**From 14<sup>th</sup> August – 2<sup>nd</sup> October** : “Meet the Candidates” meetings

**From Tuesday 9 – Monday 22 September** : Delivery of voting documents

**12 noon, Saturday 11 October** : Close of voting

**Friday 17–Saturday 18 October** : Declaration of result



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## **Understanding STV (Single Transferable Vote)**

**Your voting system for Kapiti local government elections**



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## HYPOTHETICAL CITY COUNCIL DOWNTOWN WARD ELECTION OF THREE (3) COUNCILLORS

Rank candidates in order of preference ... '1' '2' '3' etc

BROWN, Sandy

JONES, Sam

OWENS, Harry

SMITH, Ngaire

WATSON, Alice

Number  
here



3

1

5

2

4



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- **How You Vote:** Rank candidates in order of preference (1, 2, 3, etc.)
- **Your Choice:** You can rank as many or as few candidates as you wish
- **Single and Multi-Seat Elections:** (e.g., 3 councillors in Paraparaumu Ward)
- **The Goal:** System is designed to lead to greater representation

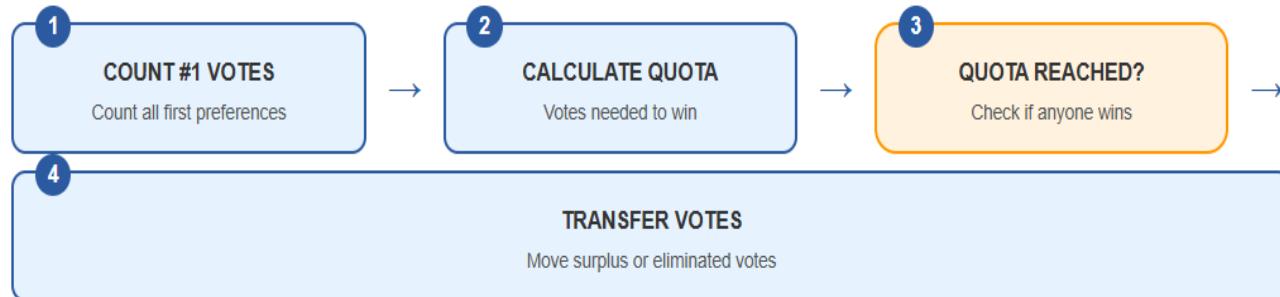
**Key Point:** You are NOT required to rank all candidates - only rank those you actually support



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## How STV Counting Works



Quota = Total Votes ÷ (Seats + 1) + 1  
Example: 7,200 votes for 3 seats = 1,801 quota

All Seats Filled?



YES: ELECTION COMPLETE

or

NO: REPEAT STEPS 3-4

**Content: Step 1:** Count all first preference votes (#1 choices)

**Step 2:** Calculate the quota - how many votes needed to win

- Simple formula: Total votes ÷ (number of seats + 1) + 1

- Example: 7,200 votes for 3 seats = 1,801 votes needed to win

**Step 3:** Elect anyone who reaches the quota, OR eliminate the lowest candidate

**Step 4:** Transfer votes to voters' next preferences

**Step 5:** Repeat until all seats are filled

**Key Insight:** Multi-seat elections need much lower support to win

First preferences rarely elect all representatives

**Most winners need transfer votes to reach quota**



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## Content: The 2025 Setup:

- **Paraparaumu Ward:** 11 candidates for 3 seats
- **Waikanae Ward:** 9 candidates for 2 seats
- **Single seats e.g. Mayor:** 6 candidates for 1 seat (quota  $\approx 50\% + 1$ ). Say approx. 8-9000 votes

## Strategic Considerations:

- **Multi-seat wards** (like Paraparaumu's 3 seats) offer the opportunities for strategic voting
- **Single-seat races** (like Mayor) are more straightforward
- **Your research** into candidate positions determines your ranking strategy

## Key Insight:

### Using 2022 Paraparaumu Data:

**Halliday:** Started with 1,690 votes (23%) - eventually won

**Cooper:** Started with 1,551 votes (21%) - eventually won

**Spiers:** Started with 1,129 votes (15%) - eventually won

They won because eliminated candidates' votes transferred to them through strategic preference patterns.



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## **Content: Common Misunderstanding:**

- Official literature often says "rank candidates in order of preference"
- Many people think this means you must rank ALL candidates

## **This is NOT true!**

### **2025 Reality Check:**

- **Paraparaumu Ward:** 11 candidates running - you definitely don't need to rank all 11!
- **Mayoral Race:** 6 candidates - only rank those you genuinely support
- **Any Ward:** Only rank candidates you genuinely support, whose values align with yours

### **Strategic Advantage:**

- Research candidates' positions on key areas and their ability to analyse information. Visit our page/FB link, we have insights into how existing Councillors have voted/acted over the last term.
- Rank only those who meet your standards
- Better to rank your top genuine choices than fill out the whole ballot

**Example:** If you've researched the Paraparaumu candidates and only trust 3 of the 11, just rank those 3!



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## **Content: Other Research Areas to Consider:**

- Consider issues that are important to you. Eg. candidates' positions on transparency, accountability, and fiscal responsibility
- Understand candidates' positions on support for community consultation and open decision-making

## **Voting Options You May Consider:**

- Use your research to rank only candidates you genuinely support
- Trust your research - don't feel pressured to fill out the entire ballot



# Discussion