



We asked candidates 15 questions. Ten questions are "Yes" or "No" questions (with candidates then able to explain their reasons).  
Their "Yes" or "No" answers to these 10 questions are summarised below. See our dedicated webpage for their rationale for their answers.  
For the full results and candidate responses, visit our dedicated webpage at: <https://concernedratepayerskapiti.org/candidates-for-the-2025-local-body-elections/>  
A blank space means the candidate did not answer the question. A blank column means that the candidate did not provide an answer to our questionnaire.

	Grant Bartlett Independent No	Jackie Elliot Independent No	Lawrence Kirby Independent Yes	Liz Koh Independent Yes	Rob McCann  No	Jo Turner Independent No	Joanne Welch We Love Kapiti No	Gavin Welsh Independent No	Marek Willis  No
Affiliation (if any)									
Current councillor?									
Affordability and Financial Management									
The Long-Term Plan (LTP) 2024–2034 outlines average rates increases totalling 115% over 10 years. If (re)elected, would you support these planned increases? If not: What level of average annual increases would you consider acceptable instead?	No. Supports capping rates at 5%	No. Wants rates to be pegged back to 5% of household median income, as it was previously.	No. Wants rates to be pegged back to 5% of household median income, as it was previously.	Open to setting rates at a different level to that stated in the LTP. The level of rates rise to be considered year by year.	Did not provide a "yes" or "no" answer. Stated that setting an arbitrary figure is not sensible, but will put a stop to frivolous spending.	No. An acceptable range would be in the range of CPI plus 1-2%.	No. Average rates increases should be no more than 3% per annum on average.	No. Answer did not provide an percentage figure for an acceptable level of rates increase.	No. Answer did not provide an percentage figure for an acceptable level of rates increase.
The LTP plans to spend an average of \$3.1 million per year on “economic development” over the next decade, mostly funded by residential rates. Would you support continuing this level of spending?	"Time to sharpen the pencil, Kapiti district simply cannot afford this kind of increase!"	Did not provide a "yes" or "no" answer, but detailed answer spending on business development funded by rates on businesses.	Did not provide a "yes" or "no" answer. Wants to "invest wisely" in business but also see the % paid by residential ratepayers decrease.	Did not provide a "yes" or "no" answer, but provided a detailed answer in support of the Council's current approach in this area.	Current budget is unrealistic and should be scaled back.	Should spend less - between \$1 to \$1.5 million per annum.	Did not provide a "yes" or "no" answer. Unclear what the candidate's position on this spending is.	No.	Did not provide a "yes" or "no" answer, but stated this spending needed to provide tangible benefits and be supported by cost-benefit analysis.
Funding to the Toi Mahara gallery increased from \$218,600 in 2022/23 to \$671,300 in 2025/26—a 207% rise. Would you support this level of funding continuing over the next three years?	Did not provide a "yes" or "no" answer. Answer outlined a proposal for the structure of libraries in the district.	"Libraries, galleries and the arts are great for Kapiti, but this was an inappropriate burden on ratepayers that I did not support".	Did not provide a "yes" or "no" answer, but detailed answer supports the current Council position.	Supports providing on-going financial support to the Gallery, but with the aim that the level of Council funding will reduce over time.	Did not provide a "yes" or "no" answer, but outlines some of the background to the current situation which led to "unacceptable" higher rates.	No. Supports funding closer to the original level of funding, with an increase for inflation.	No. Considers the level of funding in 2022/23 (\$218,600) more appropriate, with CPI adjustments thereafter.	Stated that supports the work of the Art Gallery Trust, but this is not core business of Council. Would explore alternative funding models.	Did not provide a "yes" or "no" answer, but stated the increase seemed excessive and could be reassessed.
KCDC plans to reduce its debt from a peak of \$345 million (in 2030) to \$262 million by 2034, largely funded through higher rates. Do you support this debt reduction strategy?	No. Would like to see debt reduced but not at a direct cost to the taxpayer.	Did not provide a "yes" or "no" answer, but detailed answer does not support the level of debt the Council has.	Supports reduction in debt but must be balanced with rates affordability	Yes	Prudent to reduce debt, but need to keep rates affordable, a balance not being achieved.	Supports reducing debt, but not by loading costs onto ratepayers.	No.	Supports debt reduction in principle but "would prioritise reviewing and reducing the peak debt target first".	Reducing debt is important, but shouldn't be at the expense of ratepayers. Would look for alternative means to reduce debt.
The Government is exploring the possibility of capping local authority rate increases. Do you support the idea of capping rate increases?	Yes.	No	No to a central government cap, but notes his proposal to limit rates to no more than 5% of median household income.	No	No	Yes	Yes	States there are risks with a centrally imposed cap; local authorities should ideally self-regulate rates increases.	Yes.
Past Council Voting Record - for Current Councillors Only									
Rates increase of 17% in 2024/25 and total rates increase of 115% over 10 years (vote at a Council Committee meeting, May 2024)	N/A	N/A	✘	✓	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Rates increase of 12% in 2024/25 and total rates increase of 89% over 10 years (vote at a Council Committee meeting, May 2024)	N/A	N/A	✓	✘	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Adoption of final Long Term Plan, with a 115% rates increase included (Council meeting vote, June 2024)	N/A	N/A	✓	✓	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Average Rates increase of 6.9% for 2025/26	N/A	N/A	✓	✓	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

	Grant Bartlett	Jackie Elliot	Lawrence Kirby	Liz Koh	Rob McCann	Jo Turner	Jo Welch	Gavin Welsh	Marek Willis
Transparency									
Do you believe KCDC currently engages well with the community on key plans like the LTP?		No. The detailed answer includes a number of proposals on how the Council could improve its engagement with the community.	States that the Council has improved its consultation over the past three years but still room for improvement	No. The detailed answer includes a number of proposals on how the Council could improve its engagement with the community.	The detailed answer includes a number of proposals on how the Council could improve its engagement with the community.	No. The detailed answer includes a number of proposals on how the Council could improve its engagement with the community.	No. The detailed answer includes a number of proposals on how the Council could improve its engagement with the community.	Answer states there is always room for improvement. See detailed answer for further information.	No. The detailed answer includes a number of proposals on how the Council could improve its engagement with the community.
Are you satisfied with the Council’s recent consultation process on the revised flood hazard maps?		Did not provide a "yes" or "no" answer, but the detailed answer supports the Council's current approach in this area.	Did not provide a "yes" or "no" answer, but detailed answer outlines some strengths in the process, and areas for improvement.	Did not provide a "yes" or "no" answer, but the detailed answer supports the Council's current approach in this area.	Did not provide a "yes" or "no" answer, but the detailed answer outlines how the process needs to be improved.	No.	No	Answer states that all consultations can be improved, but is not familiar with the specifics of this case.	Answer states that not fully satisfied with the approach to this consultation
If (re)elected, would you introduce new measures to increase Council transparency and public participation?		Yes. The detailed answer includes a number of proposals for improvement.	States the Council has improved but detailed answer outlines several areas for improvement	Yes. The detailed answer includes a number of proposals for improvement.	The detailed answer includes a number of proposals for improvement.	Yes. The detailed answer includes a number of proposals for improvement.	Yes. The detailed answer includes a number of proposals for improvement.	Answer did not provide a "yes" or "no" answer but stated would readily investigate opportunities, where required, to rebuild public trust.	Yes. The detailed answer includes a number of proposals for improvement.
Governance and Accountability									
Some non-elected individuals currently have voting rights on KCDC committees. In other councils, non-elected individuals attend in an advisory role only. Do you support continuing voting rights for non-elected committee members?		Did not provide a "yes" or "no" answer but detailed answer suggests non-elected attendees should act in an advisory role only.	Yes, but only for iwi partners.	The current arrangements will be reviewed in the next Council term. Has no fixed view at this stage on what the arrangements should be.		No. Non-elected attendees should act in an advisory role only.	No. Non-elected attendees should act in an advisory role only.	Answer states that he is comfortable with the current situation and have not seen issues arise from it.	No. Non-elected attendees should act in an advisory role only.
KCDC established a Māori ward without a referendum, which was later mandated by central government. The Government has since required Councils to hold a referendum on the establishment of Māori wards. Do you believe this decision should have been put to a local referendum regardless?		States the question is un-necessary as the Government has determined a referendum must be held.	Did not provide a "yes" or "no" answer. Detailed answer outlines support for the Māori ward itself.	No.	Did not provide a "yes" or "no" answer. However, should look at iwi representation on Council committees in light of the Māori ward.	Yes.	Yes.	Did not provide a "yes" or "no" answer. Instead, stated is happy for people to decide the outcome in the upcoming referendum.	Yes.
Past Council Voting Record - for Current Councillors Only									
Adoption of a Māori Ward (November 2023)	N/A	N/A	✓	✓	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A