

Summary of Candidate Responses to the Concerned Ratepayers Kapiti's Candidates Questionnaire: **Paekākāriki-Raumati Ward**

Current Councillor Voting Records on Key Issues: **Paekākāriki-Raumati Ward**

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.

Affiliation (if any)	Zelda Edwards	Bede Laracy	Richard Young
Current councillor?	No	Independent No	Independent No
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?		Did not provide a "yes" or "no" answer, or a percentage figure. States that the LTP was the best job the current Council could do, and hopes the new Council can do better to slow down rates increases.	Candidate Young has chosen to answer all of the questions this way: <i>"I note that Concerned Ratepayers is a group with no formal membership, supporting specific candidates, including one standing directly for the Raumati and Paekākāriki Ward. As such you are part of another group of candidate's electioneering. I therefore have little confidence that it is appropriate that your organisation runs 'Meet the Candidate Meetings' or ask other candidates to answer your questions. Many of your questions appear to be loaded, and I have chosen to provide responses that I consider are suitably appropriate for you to include in their entirety – including all of this text.</i>
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?		Did not provide a "yes" or "no" answer. Answer outlines a concern the spending as "being somewhat aimless" and should be an area that the next Council reviews. Should be wary of making major decisions in this area right now.	<i>Few enjoy paying Rates, but we have to leave Kāpiti in a better state than before. My commitment is to set rates with the same scrutiny we apply to our money. There are 'must haves', but also 'extras' that make Kāpiti the unique and beautiful place we love - our parks, libraries, pools and even some events and groups. Let's deliver what's important and not fund things that aren't.</i> <i>For more information on my position I will be posting on all the key issues so go to my website www.richardyoungforkapiti.org "</i>
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. States that a big supporter of the value of the arts, but it's a large increase and should be reviewed by the next Council to ensure appropriateness.	
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?		Answer outlines the pros and cons of the current KCDC plan, including impact on rates but creating a buffer in the event of a natural disaster. Suggests the next Council "digs deep" into whether to continue with debt reduction.	
The Government is exploring the possibility of capping local authority rate increases. Do you support the idea of capping rate increases?		No.	
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
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
Adoption of final Long Term Plan, with a 115% rates increase included (Council meeting vote, June 2024)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Average Rates increase of 6.9% for 2025/26	N/A	N/A	N/A

	Zelda Edwards	Bede Laracy	Richard Young
Transparency			
Do you believe KCDC currently engages well with the community on key plans like the LTP?		Believes the Council does the best it can according to its worldview, but states this doesn't quite "hit the mark" with people. Need to be more willing to engage openly and genuinely.	
Are you satisfied with the Council's recent consultation process on the revised flood hazard maps?		Believes the Council thought it had embarked on a good process, but state that a lot of people didn't feel that way about it.	
If (re)elected, would you introduce new measures to increase Council transparency and public participation?		The detailed answer includes a number of proposals on how the Council could improve its engagement with the community.	
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?			
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?		Yes.	
Past Council Voting Record - for Current Councillors Only			
Adoption of a Māori Ward (November 2023)	N/A	N/A	N/A