

10-year Budget 2021-2031 Consultation – summary of feedback received

Purpose

This report summarises feedback received during the 10-year Budget public consultation in February/March 2021. It aims to capture key themes regarding views and preferences rather than detail every point of feedback received. This report does not include any advice or recommendations for decision making.

Executive summary

Consultation items were agreed by Governing Body on 9 December 2020. The Consultation Document and Supporting Information were adopted by the Governing Body on 18 February 2021. Public consultation ran between 22 February and 22 March 2021.

Feedback to inform the 10-year Budget was received through written forms (including online and hard copy forms), emails, letters, in person events, social media and phone. Overall:

- A total of 19,965 pieces of feedback were received.
- Over 80 per cent of feedback was received digitally.
- 912 pieces of feedback were received at council led events (e.g. Have Your Say events)
- 78 pieces of feedback were received through social media.
- We heard from 417 organisations including 26 presentations at the regional stakeholders' event and 18 Mana Whenua organisations.
- A budget simulator tool was piloted as an interactive way to engage and understand some of the challenges and trade-offs involved in managing council's budget. 132 pieces of feedback were received by users of the tool who spent an average of 7 minutes and 55 seconds interacting with the simulator.
- 3,258 pro forma responses were received from four organisations

We consulted with the public on a number of key issues, including: a proposed package of capital investment, a proposal for responding to climate change, a proposal for responding to housing and growth, a proposal for investment in our community, and proposals for protecting and enhancing the environment. We also sought feedback on a number of changes to our rating policies, proposals relating to strategic assets, local board priorities (not covered in this report) as well as any other issues that are important to members of the public.

In addition, a separate, independent survey was commissioned to gather feedback from a representative sample that aligns to the demographic profile of the Auckland population. This quantitative survey was conducted by Colmar Brunton and peer reviewed by the University of Auckland. The survey asked Aucklanders for their views on Question one (proposed package of capital investment) and Question two (Climate change) from the consultation feedback form. A full report of this is provided under separate cover.

The following summary follows the order of questions appearing in the feedback form. Most submissions addressed only some proposals and therefore the quantity of feedback on each proposal differs. In the summary that follows, percentages are based on only submissions which responded to the relevant topic. Percentages on some proposals may not add to 100 due to rounding. Also important to note is that

organisations are treated as a single submission. In terms of feedback from organisations, each topic has a section, in the body of the report, that summarises overall views for organisations (at an aggregated level)

Analysis of the responses indicated the following:

1.0 Consultation items

1.1 The proposed package of investment for the next 10-years

Overall, with pro forma feedback included, 53 per cent of feedback did not support the proposal, 34 per cent supported the proposal, six per cent selected 'Other', and a further seven per cent selected 'Don't Know'.

When excluding pro forma feedback received on this topic, 43 per cent of feedback did not support the proposal, 42 per cent supported the proposal, six per cent selected 'Other', and a further eight per cent selected 'Don't Know'.

The most common themes from those who supported the proposal suggested a need to invest in Auckland's future and aging infrastructure, particularly water infrastructure. Key themes from those who did not support the proposal included a need to find revenue and savings from elsewhere (e.g. internal savings), and noting financial hardship in the current environment.

The independent survey, conducted by Colmar Brunton, showed 46 per cent supported the proposed 10-year Budget, whilst 37 per cent did not support. An additional 11 per cent selected 'Don't know' and six per cent selected that they supported some other option.

1.2 The proposal for responding to climate change

Overall, with pro forma feedback included, 61 per cent of feedback supported the proposed increased investment in climate change initiatives, whilst 27 per cent did not support increased investment. A further 8 per cent selected 'other' and 5 per cent selected 'Don't Know'.

When excluding pro forma feedback received on this topic, 61 per cent of feedback supported the proposed increased investment, whilst 27 per cent did not support increased investment. A further 7 per cent selected 'other' and 5 per cent selected 'Don't Know'.

Key themes from those who supported the proposal talked about protecting future generations as well as the urgency of climate change and the need to do more. Amongst those who did not support the proposal, key views included questioning whether we should wait until we could afford it. Others questioned whether this was the responsibility of Auckland Council.

The independent survey, conducted by Colmar Brunton, showed 60 per cent supported the proposed increased investment, whilst 26 per cent did not support. An additional nine per cent selected 'Don't know' and five per cent selected that they supported some other option.

1.3 The proposal to extend and increase the Water Quality Targeted Rate

Overall, 45 per cent of feedback supported both the extension and the increase, whilst 28 per cent supported the extension only and 18 per cent do not support either change. A further three per cent selected 'Other' and six per cent selected 'Don't Know'.

Those who supported both the extension and increase talked about the funding being critical to achieving environmental outcomes, as well as raising concerns about swimmability and ecosystems. Those who supported the extension only showed a general level of support but also noted financial hardships due to COVID-19. Many of those who did not support commented that either an alternative funding source or other internal savings should be used to fund this.

1.4 The proposal for community investment

Overall, 56 per cent of feedback supported the proposal, whilst 29 per cent did not support the proposal. A further seven per cent selected 'Other' and nine per cent selected 'Don't Know'.

Key themes from those who supported the proposal supported more multi-use facilities. Amongst those who did not support the proposal, key concerns were about service provision in less populated areas or about reduced service quality if assets are privatized.

1.5 The proposal for responding to housing and growth infrastructure

Feedback is categorised into themes as there was no specific question for this topic. Key themes from those who commented were around the need for more infrastructure, housing affordability, brownfield vs greenfield growth and feedback on who should pay for the infrastructure.

1.6 Extending the Natural Environment Targeted Rate

Overall, 60 per cent of feedback supported the proposal, whilst 27 per cent did not support the proposal. A further 10 per cent selected 'Other' and three per cent selected 'Don't Know'.

The most common theme in comments was a general level of support. Others sought more action on particular initiatives such as kauri dieback.

1.7 Changes to the Urban Rating Area

Overall, 57 per cent of feedback supported the proposal, whilst 28 per cent did not support the proposal. A further two per cent selected 'Other' and 13 per cent selected 'Don't Know' or provided a comment without a clear stance.

Most of those who supported provided no comment. Of those identified as living in affected areas, the vast majority did not support the proposal and highlighted a lack of services in their area.

1.8 Changes to the farm and lifestyle properties in the Urban Rating Area

Overall, 53 per cent of feedback supported the proposal, whilst 32 per cent did not support the proposal. A further two per cent selected 'Other' and 13 per cent selected 'Don't Know' or provided a comment without a clear stance.

Most of those who supported provided no comment. Of those identified as living in affected areas, the vast majority did not support the proposal and highlighted a lack of services in their area.

1.9 Extending the City Centre Targeted Rate

Overall, 51 per cent of feedback supported the proposal, whilst 34 per cent did not support the proposal. A further 12 per cent selected 'Other' and three per cent selected 'Don't Know' or provided a comment without a clear stance.

The key theme from those who supported the proposal was that the city centre needs more investment, whilst those who did not support suggested council should focus more on suburban areas rather than the city centre.

1.10 Introducing the Rodney Drainage Targeted Rate

Overall, 52 per cent of feedback supported the proposal, whilst 18 per cent did not support the proposal. A further two per cent selected 'Other' and 28 per cent selected 'Don't Know' or made another comment without a clear stance.

Most of those who supported provided no comments. The key theme from those who did not support the proposal was that it should be funded from general rates.

1.11 Introducing the Electricity Network Resilience Targeted Rate

Overall, 31 per cent of feedback supported the proposal, whilst 37 per cent did not support the proposal. A further 32 per cent provided a comment without a clear stance.

A key theme across supporters and opposers of this proposal was a concern that the targeted rate will ultimately get passed on to power bills.

1.12 Reinstatement of the Accommodation Provider Targeted Rate

Overall, four per cent of feedback supported Option one, whilst an additional four per cent supported Option 2, and Option 3 was supported by 17 per cent. Another 46 per cent did not support any of the three proposed options and 29 per cent provided a comment without a clear stance.

A key theme across the options addressed financial hardship due to COVID-19.

1.13 Potential Changes to Business Improvement District Targeted Rates

- 60 per cent of feedback on the Manurewa BID expansion supported the proposal whilst 24 per cent did not support.
- 29 per cent of feedback on the Glen Innes BID expansion supported the proposal whilst 20 per cent did not support.
- 31 per cent of feedback on the Dominion Road BID expansion supported the proposal whilst 22 per cent did not support.

1.14 Proposed changes to fees and charges

- Five pieces of feedback commented on animal management fees. Two did not support the proposed call out fee.
- 10 pieces of feedback commented on consenting fees. All did not support the new fee.
- Four pieces of feedback commented on the increase in venue hire fees. All did not support the proposal.
- 139 pieces of feedback were received on the proposed removal of library fines. Of these, 58 per cent supported the proposal, 37 per cent did not support the proposal and a further four per cent provided a comment with no clear stance on the proposal.

1.15 Waitakere sewerage pump out service proposal

Two pieces of feedback were received on this topic. Both did not support the proposal.

1.16 Clevedon wastewater and water connection proposal

Three pieces of feedback were received on this topic. Two supported the proposal.

1.17 Proposals related to strategic assets

Feedback on proposals relating to individual strategic assets:

- Bledisloe House: 10 supported the proposed long-term lease and 2 did not support.
- 2 The Strand in Takapuna: 12 supported the proposed sale and 4 did not support.
- 3 Victoria Road in Devonport: 6 supported the proposed sale and 5 did not support.
- Waterfront properties: 5 supported the proposed long-term leases and 2 did not support.

1.18 Maori outcomes

There were 74 pieces of feedback received from individuals on this topic. General feedback recognised our commitment to actively promoting Te Reo Māori and affirmed our work in delivering Māori outcomes. Other key themes discussed increasing Māori participation in decision making, and recognising the importance of Māori participation in climate change decisions.

1.19 Social investment

Eight pieces of feedback directly addressed the proposal, and all supported it. Another 162 provided comments relating to elements of the proposal, without providing a clear stance on the overall proposal.

1.20 Paremoro Public Transport Targeted Rate

Overall, 32 per cent of feedback did not support either option, whilst 22 per cent supported option two and 12 per cent supported option one. The other 34 per cent selected don't know.

Of those who said they live in the affected area, 53 per cent did not support either option, 19 per cent supported option two and 14 per cent supported option one. The other 14 per cent selected don't know.

1.21 CCO Accountability Policy

65 feedback points were received on the topic. Key themes included the need for CCO's to be more accountable and to operate efficiently.

1.22 Auckland Airport Shareholding Policy

We received 26 pieces of feedback relating to our shareholding in Auckland International Airport. Most did not reference the policy, instead commenting on whether council should sell its shares or not.

2.0 Other feedback

Feedback on topics outside of those directly consulted on can be found in Attachment Four in the appendix.

3.0 Local board priorities

Feedback received on local board priorities will be presented separately in local board meetings.
