

# Tuia te Taitonga tāpiringa Southlink Extra

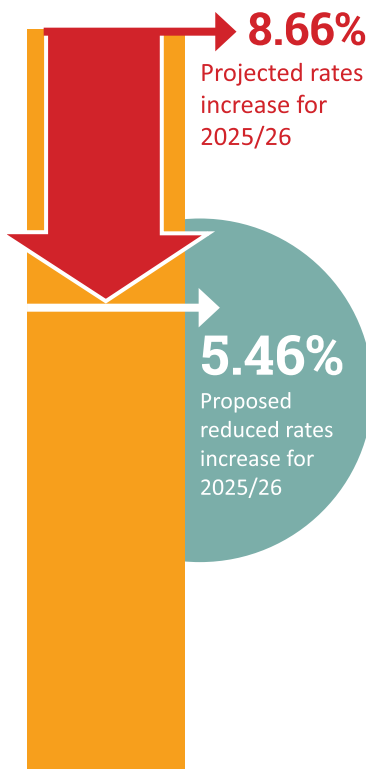
Autumn 2025



## Welcome to Southlink Extra

Welcome to the Autumn edition of *Southlink Extra* for 2025. This quarterly newsletter complements our Council *Southlink* publication, which appears weekly in the Taranaki Star and provides another way for us to keep you informed about what the Council is doing in our District.

## Council tightens belts to keep rates down



South Taranaki District councillors agreed to implement a range of cost cutting measures totalling almost \$1 million to reduce this year's average rate increase from 8.66% to 5.46%. Councillors signed off on the measures at their 24 March Policy and Strategy meeting, although this still needs to be formally ratified at Council's ordinary meeting on 14 April\*.

Rates had been projected to increase by 8.66% according to year two of the council's Long-Term Plan. However, to minimise the impact on ratepayers, councillors asked officers to find ways of getting it under 6%.

Measures approved included cutting some community funding, reducing roading and district plan reserves, re-allocating some budgets and removing budgets where government policy has changed.

South Taranaki District Mayor Phil Nixon says the savings identified are practical and realistic. "As a Council we have always been conscious about keeping costs down. It's our responsibility to be as prudent and careful as we possibly can be with every ratepayer dollar we spend," says Nixon. "I believe we now have a better balance between providing the funding needed to maintain our current services and infrastructure to a good standard while keeping rates more affordable for our community. We will continue to prioritise and focus on the areas our community have told us they want to see improvements such as better roads, our towns amenities looking good and an improved dog control service. However, affordability is a big issue for many in our community and with the cost of living being what it is, now is not the time to be burdening our ratepayers with high rate increases," he says. "With these savings I can confidently say to ratepayers that we have been rigorous in our efforts to identify and eliminate unnecessary expenditure, and demonstrate to them our commitment to being good, prudent governors of their money."

*\*Please note this newsletter was published before 14 April*



### Emailed Rates Invoices

If you want to get your rates invoice directly to your inbox - email [rates@stdc.govt.nz](mailto:rates@stdc.govt.nz)



### Download the Antenno App

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# Council to consult on a Taranaki Regional water entity

Council has agreed to consult with the community on a proposal to join a Taranaki regional water entity with New Plymouth and Stratford District Councils for delivering future water and wastewater services as part of the Local Water Done Well reforms.

Local Water Done Well (LWDW) is the Government's plan to address New Zealand's long-standing water infrastructure challenges which include the rising costs associated with replacing ageing infrastructure, meeting new environmental and health standards and higher consumer expectations.

The Local Water Done Well reform programme replaces the previous government's Three Waters reforms (called Affordable Waters) and aims to provide local councils with the choice of how they will provide reliable and safe water services to their communities over the next 30 plus years. Under LWDW councils can choose to deliver water services either by themselves or with other councils as long as they meet all relevant standards, can provide the infrastructure investment required and are financially sustainable.

South Taranaki District Mayor, Phil Nixon says the Council has been looking at several different delivery options for water services since March last year (2024), including delivering water independently, as well as working with Stratford and New Plymouth District Councils to investigate what a joint water services model could look like in Taranaki.

"In September we decided to undertake more in-depth investigations into three models of water services

delivery. A South Taranaki District Council (STDC) in-house water services business unit, an STDC council-controlled organisation and a regional (Taranaki) water services council-controlled organisation (WSCCO)," he says.

"Further investigation showed that a South Taranaki council-controlled organisation on its own was not financially sustainable, which left two remaining options, the STDC in-house business unit and a regional (Taranaki) water services council-controlled organisation."

"After really thorough debate, we agreed to consult with our community on both options, with our proposed model being a joint Taranaki Regional water entity with New Plymouth and Stratford District Councils."

Mayor Nixon said the discussion reflected how complex and important the decision in front of them was and continues to be, noting that both options have their advantages and disadvantages.

This is just for consultation, there is still a lot of water to go under the bridge before we make a decision, no pun intended, which is why it will be important to hear from our community on what they believe is the best long-term option for South Taranaki.

Consultation on the proposal will be available from 30 April on [www.southtaranaki.com](http://www.southtaranaki.com) and will run throughout May. New Plymouth and Stratford District Councils have also chosen a joint Taranaki model for delivering water services as their preferred option when consulting with their communities.

## Wherever you pay rates **you can vote**

**VOTE  
2025**

**LOCAL ELECTIONS**

There are two types of electors...

**Residential Electors** – If you are registered to vote on the electoral roll, you are automatically enrolled to vote in local authority elections. You will receive a voting document so that you can vote by post.

**Ratepayer Electors** – You may also

be eligible to enrol as a non-resident ratepayer elector if:

you are on the district valuation roll and pay rates in the council district

the address where you are registered as a Parliamentary elector is outside that council district.

Your eligibility to enrol or be nominated as a ratepayer elector may also depend on your individual circumstances (under the Local Electoral Act 2001 and its regulations).

An organisation can nominate one of its members or officers to vote on its behalf.

If a firm, company, trust, corporation, society partners, joint tenants and tenants in common collectively pay rates

on a property in a council district, one of the group may be nominated to be the ratepayer elector. The person nominating and the nominated person must be registered as Parliamentary electors at addresses outside the council district where the property is located.

**You can only enrol once** - You can only enrol, or be nominated to enrol, once in a council district, no matter how many properties you own in that council district. Council district includes: a city, district and regional council area; a community board area if established; the area of Auckland Council and the local boards.

**New Ratepayer Electors** - If you think you may be eligible to enrol or to nominate someone as a ratepayer elector, get an Enrolment Form for Ratepayer Electors from the local council where you pay your rates. The Electoral Officer will be able to help you with your application.

If you want further information,  
please scan the QR code.

