



## How can current Councillors bring leadership to Porirua City?

### Here are the key issues Councillors need to consider and address:-

- The excessive level of rates has arisen over many years but can be corrected over the next ten years.
- The current long term plan is going to further disadvantage the poor and those that are struggling. These are the very people we should be setting budgets to help. Many Maori and Pacifica have low incomes and are those that feel the excessive cost increases impact on their ability to provide food, clothing and childcare.
- I want to see a community where my grandchildren can live in harmony with the wonderful ethnic mix that makes up our city. This will not happen when we price those on “struggle street” and those that are “just about making it” out of home ownership. Our policies should aim at helping the most disadvantaged to live with dignity.
- Already benchmarking studies shows that we pay more in rates than other urban cities yet get nothing more than others. Under the current LTP, residential rates are likely to be 31% higher than those in Hutt city by 2022.
- There needs to be transparency about rating decisions. The rural rating decisions made early this year have not been justified through public/private benefit studies and tend to suggest that Councillors may be guilty of cronyism.
- The Grant Thornton report of six years ago outlined significant saving opportunities which were never made. Councillors need to follow up with a new report, which should be given direct to our elected representatives. Such a report could establish benchmarks and Porirua Economic Development Group could provide suitable professional terms of reference.
- Our current Long Term Plan is a triumph of low expectations. Councillors should step forward and say that Porirua can do much better and talk now about rejecting a direction that is such a disadvantage to the poor and less well off in our community.
- If Councillors do not believe Porirua rates are a problem for low income homeowners I am willing to arrange and carry out, at my cost, a survey of Porirua ratepayers. I just cannot believe that this is not obvious.

### How can we provide the best leadership for Porirua City?

- I believe that a mix of existing and new Councillors could, through benchmarking make our rating system competitive with other similar cities. Benchmarking will provide the opportunity for the PCC Executive to buckle down and show their ability to provide better value to ratepayers than other cities deliver.
- I believe that leadership for Porirua City could come from the northern suburbs where there are many residents with the leadership and business experience, along with the time to put into our community.
- We need those Councillors from Cannons Creek and Titahi Bay who can see the need to set rates that help those less well off, and who believe in having policies that treat all members of our community with dignity and respect.
- The Mayor suggests I am being negative about Porirua City but in supporting a better deal for those less well off I see great opportunity for our city. Changed policies on rates would lead to stronger investment, the creation of jobs and greater opportunity for our youth who are so important to the future of our city.
- The Mayor says our city is “different” as if this is an excuse for higher rates. Let’s publicly quantify (PEDG already has) the costs and opportunity that we have when compared with other urban cities and also with those within the Wellington region. Presently I believe we are squandering opportunity and humiliating the poor by adopting such a negative LTP and then defending it.
- Existing Councillors must see that economic stagnation arising from our LTP will create racial disharmony due to the negative impact on those that are struggling to get by.

Next year I will be back on this page again to discuss the direct policies that we should be looking for from those that will be standing for Council and leadership at our next elections. Please note that I am always happy to meet with and discuss issues with current Councillors.

**Chris Kirk-Burnnand**

