



## Where is the strategic leadership Porirua City so desperately needs?

I have been a Porirua resident for over 40 years, raised three children here and now am lucky to have four grandchildren. Helen and I love living so close to the water and this is our home. I love the Porirua community, take an active interest in several community organisations, identify with Ngati Toa (I share many of their values and they have been good friends to me) and wish to see our community develop in an inclusive and holistic manner that allows opportunity and success for all our people.

I have made submissions to the Porirua City Council for many years trying to change council policy with little result, chaired several local organisations, contribute to the wellbeing of our wonderful people, and my family continue to put funding into youth development within our city. I believe that as a community we need to focus on a rating policy that will work for all of Porirua especially those who struggle to get by financially and have limited funds for health, child care and housing.

### MY CURRENT CONCERNS

I do not believe that some councillors understand the core financial issues that face the residents of our city, or that they have presented a strong, sustainable, credible strategic plan to us. It takes courage to change poor performance, and much as I like individual councillors, the recently published Long-Term Plan is lacking in vision and direction. It will not help those in our community who really deserve the benefit of a robust and insightful decision making, as council rates continue to increase faster than any pay increases and further disadvantage those who are struggling. Our residential and commercial rates are some of the highest in New Zealand, yet we get no better services than other communities.

When John Burke, Jenny Brash and Nick Leggett were Mayor, we knew who was leading our community. Today, our Mayor is Mike Tana, but others too offer competition, being highly visible on social media and in community news pushing different items. There is no “whole of council” approach that I can see.

### Rates on a home with a \$600,000 Capital Value for 2018 year

|                          | Porirua City | Hutt City | Wellington City |
|--------------------------|--------------|-----------|-----------------|
| 2018 Rates including WRC | \$4283       | \$3571    | \$3548          |
| 2022 Rates including WRC | \$4955       | \$3778    |                 |



- When comparing with similar sized Urban Local Authorities such as Porirua city, Invercargill city, Upper Hutt city, and Napier city, **Porirua rates in 2017 were 20.4% higher than the average.**
- Commercial rates for North City Plaza on a Capital Value basis are 55% higher than those for Lynn Mall in Auckland.
- Rural ratepayers pay the full costs of rural roads although they make up less than 25% of the rural road traffic wear and tear. I believe such levy on rural ratepayers is illegal, but the council just ignore such submissions. This is an area where I have some knowledge as I chaired a challenge against Wellington city and forced them to apply fairness and equity to a rating community.
- Hongoeka community made a very good submission in Nov 2017. However, councillors chose to review rates when the issue is one of access to the coast and indeed access to their own land. Councillors need to front up and address the access issue as presently to get to the community or for the public to walk along the nearby coast only happens due to goodwill of individuals who own land they allow the public to pass over.

Next month I plan to comment about how better strategic planning would work to build peoples hopes and dreams and reduce the effects of inequality of wealth and income.

**Chris Kirk-Burnnand**  
Pauatahanui

