

**MINUTES OF CARTERTON DISTRICT COUNCIL
WORKSHOP
HELD AT THE CARTERTON EVENTS CENTRE, 50 HOLLOWAY ST, CARTERTON
ON WEDNESDAY, 22 APRIL 2026 AT 1:30 PM**

PRESENT: Mayor Steve Cretney, Cr Brian Deller, Cr Lou Newman, Cr Steve Laurence, Cr Steve Gallon, Cr Jane Burns, Cr Simon Casey

IN ATTENDANCE: Staff

Geoff Hamilton (Chief Executive), Solitaire Robertson (Group Manager Planning and Regulatory), Marc Ferguson (Chief Financial Officer), Lawrence Stephenson (Group Manager Infrastructure), Geri Brooking (Group Manager People and Corporate), Glenda Seville (Group Manager Community and Facilities), Serah Pettigrew (Democratic Services Officer)

1 REPORTS

4.1 COUNCIL WORKSHOP

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this workshop is to focus on the Strategic Direction, Growth Projects and Significant Forecast Assumptions, for the Long-Term Plan 2027-2037.

KEY TOPICS DISCUSSED

- **Vision and Community Feedback:** The group reaffirmed their vision for a "growing connected community fostering thriving families and businesses," discussed inclusivity, and reviewed recent community survey results. Key strengths included parks, outdoor spaces, library, and waste management, while concerns focused on town centre, land development, stormwater, and footpath maintenance.
- **Political and Economic Context:** The team discussed upcoming government reforms affecting local government, including potential rates capping, amalgamation, and reduced council involvement. They noted slow population growth, an aging demographic, and affordability challenges for ratepayers.
- **Technical Challenges:** Software costs are shifting from capital to ongoing expenses, impacting rates. AI and digital solutions are expensive and offer efficiency but not always cost savings.
- **Rating and Consultation:** The group debated the rural-urban rates split, high universal annual general charge (UAGC), and the need for consultation if introducing new rates or changing representation. They discussed fairness, potential impacts on fixed-income households, and the importance of modelling before decisions. Officers will provide further information on reducing Council's Universal Annual General Charge (UAGC), and introducing a Separately Used or Inhabited Part (SUIP) rate for additional dwellings, and a targeted rural roading rate.
- **Infrastructure and Service Priorities:** Footpaths, especially their condition and coverage, were highlighted as a priority for investment, with a focus on accessibility and safety. Town centre improvements, economic development in the industrial area (Waingawa), and car parking solutions were discussed as ways to support growth and business.
- **Events Centre and Community Hub:** The event centre's value, user-pay system, and potential for more community engagement were reviewed. Ideas included creating more parking and considering a new community hub, especially for youth and social services.

- **LTP Development:** Officers will provide further information and develop priority areas for consideration by elected members.