

Report from Council's auditor

AUDIT NEW ZEALAND
Mana Arotake Aotearoa

Independent auditor's report

**To the readers of
Taupo District Council's
Long-term Plan
for the ten years commencing 1 July 2012**

The Auditor-General is the auditor of Taupo District Council (the District Council). The Auditor-General has appointed me, B H Halford, using the staff and resources of Audit New Zealand, to report on the Long Term Plan (LTP), on her behalf. We have audited the District Council's LTP dated 26 June 2012 for the ten years commencing 1 July 2012.

The Auditor-General is required by section 94(1) of the Local Government Act 2002 (the Act) to report on:

- the extent to which the LTP complies with the requirements of the Act; and
- the quality of information and assumptions underlying the forecast information provided in the LTP.

Opinion

Overall opinion

In our opinion the District Council's LTP dated 26 June 2012 provides a reasonable basis for long term integrated decision-making by the District Council and for participation in decision-making by the public and subsequent accountability to the community about the activities of the District Council.

In forming our overall opinion, we considered the specific matters outlined in section 94(1) of the Act which we report on as follows.

Opinion on specific matters required by the Act

In our view:

- **the District Council has complied with the requirements of the Act in all material respects demonstrating good practice for a council of its size and scale within the context of its environment; and**
- **the underlying information and assumptions used to prepare the LTP provide a reasonable and supportable basis for the preparation of the forecast information.**

Actual results are likely to be different from the forecast information since anticipated events frequently do not occur as expected and the variation may be material. Accordingly, we express no opinion as to whether the forecasts will be achieved.

Our report was completed on 26 June 2012. This is the date at which our opinion is expressed.

The basis of the opinion is explained below. In addition, we outline the responsibilities of the Council and the Auditor, and explain our independence.

Basis of opinion

We carried out the audit in accordance with the International Standard on Assurance Engagements (New Zealand) 3000: Assurance Engagements Other Than Audits or Reviews of Historical Financial Information and the Auditor-General's Auditing Standards, which incorporate the International Standards on Auditing (New Zealand). We have examined the forecast financial information in accordance with the International Standard on Assurance Engagements 3400: The Examination of Prospective Financial Information.

Those standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and carry out our audit to obtain all the information and explanations we considered necessary to obtain reasonable assurance that the LTP does not contain material misstatements. If we had found material misstatements that were not corrected, we would have referred to them in our opinion.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the forecast information and disclosures in the LTP. The procedures selected depend on our judgement, including the assessment of risks of material misstatement of the information in the LTP. In making those risk assessments we consider internal control relevant to the preparation of the District Council's LTP. We consider internal control in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the District Council's internal control.

Our audit procedures also include assessing whether:

- the LTP provides the community with sufficient and balanced information about the strategic and other key issues, and implications it faces and provides for participation by the public in decision making processes;
- the District Council's financial strategy, supported by financial policies is financially prudent, and has been clearly communicated to the community in the LTP;
- the presentation of the LTP complies with the legislative requirements of the Act;
- the decision-making and consultation processes underlying the development of the LTP are compliant with the decision-making and consultation requirements of the Act;
- the information in the LTP is based on materially complete and reliable asset or activity information;
- the agreed levels of service are fairly reflected throughout the LTP;

- the District Council's key plans and policies have been consistently applied in the development of the forecast information;
- the assumptions set out within the LTP are based on best information currently available to the District Council and provide a reasonable and supportable basis for the preparation of the forecast information;
- the forecast information has been properly prepared on the basis of the underlying information and the assumptions adopted and the financial information complies with generally accepted accounting practice in New Zealand;
- the rationale for the activities is clearly presented;
- the levels of service and performance measures are reasonable estimates and reflect the key aspects of the District Council's service delivery and performance; and
- the relationship of the levels of service, performance measures and forecast financial information has been adequately explained within the LTP.

We do not guarantee complete accuracy of the information in the LTP. Our procedures included examining on a test basis, evidence supporting assumptions, amounts and other disclosures in the LTP and determining compliance with the requirements of the Act. We evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information. We obtained all the information and explanations we required to support our opinion above.

Responsibilities of the District Council

The District Council is responsible for preparing a LTP under the Act, by applying the District Council's assumptions and presenting the financial information in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice in New Zealand. The District Council is also responsible for such internal control as it determines is necessary to enable the preparation of an LTP that is free from material misstatement.

The District Council's responsibilities arise from Section 93 of the Act.

Responsibilities of the Auditor

We are responsible for expressing an independent opinion on the LTP and reporting that opinion to you based on our audit. This responsibility arises from section 15 of the Public Audit Act 2001 and section 94(1) of the Act.

It is not our responsibility to express an opinion on the merits of any policy content within the LTP.

Independence

When reporting on the LTP we followed the independence requirements of the Auditor-General, which incorporate the independence requirements of the External Reporting Board.

Other than this report and in conducting the audit of the LTP Statement of Proposal and the annual audit, we have no relationship with or interests in the District Council nor any of its subsidiaries.



B H Halford
Audit New Zealand
On behalf of the Auditor-General
Tauranga, New Zealand