



Media Release

Thursday 19 October 2023

Sustainable community the vision for future

A sustainable community is the primary vision for Selwyn residents over the next decade.

The Council asked residents for their priorities for the next 10 years, to support the development of the district's Long-Term Plan 2024-34, with almost 800 people giving their feedback.

Residents overwhelmingly highlighted the importance of a 'sustainable Selwyn', where the district is self-sufficient with services and facilities that cater to people at all stages of life and the environment is cared for.

A draft Long-Term Plan 2024–2034 will be released for public feedback in April next year, setting out the Council's proposed activities, services and budget over the next decade, based on that feedback, alongside practical considerations.

"The community has been clear in its ambitions, and they've shared an exciting vision for the future," Mayor Sam Broughton says. "Now we need to work together with our community on a plan for achieving those, including what the realistic costs are and what trade-offs may be required."

There was a strong desire to make Selwyn a 'one-stop-shop,'— where people can work and live, without needing to go anywhere else.

To make this possible people indicated a desire for the district to become more economically innovative, and a better spread of infrastructure and services across the district, Council Chief Executive Sharon Mason says.

"There's a strong feeling that people love what we have, with 86% of people saying they have a positive experience of living here. People love our rural character and affordability. There's also a strong desire for clear planning, to protect that, particularly around infrastructure and around access to services across Selwyn."

Social and Environmental wellbeing was also a strong focus for respondents, with protection of water sources (rated as a very high or high priority by 97% of respondents) and access to green spaces (rated high or very high by 94%), seen as the highest priorities.

To make this possible, people identified a desire for smart growth including proactive infrastructure planning and building up, not out in urban centres as well as more sustainable agriculture.

Residents also indicated an openness to necessary funding decisions including increasing rates if it was to achieve their priorities.

“We’ve got the direction for where people want to go, now the task is to nail down a plan to achieve what we can.

“To achieve the outcomes sought by the community will require extra funding. It’s good to see people are realistic about that. We are conscious of affordability and we’re looking at different ways to cover those costs, but as we have seen with other councils that could include significant rates increases. We’ll put those options out to community to consider.”

Residents gave feedback through a range of activities including focus groups and individual surveys, while 98 people took part in the digital scavenger hunt – a first of its kind trial for any council in New Zealand.

Of the respondents, 33% lived rurally and 7% of respondents were farmers, while 25% identified with ethnicities other than New Zealand European including 9% Māori, 7% Asian and 5% Middle Eastern, African or Latin American.

[Find out more.](#)

Next steps

The draft Long-Term Plan will be released in April 2024 for residents to provide further feedback and make submissions, with residents given the opportunity to provide submissions and attend hearings.

A final Long-Term Plan 2024-2034 must be adopted by the Council before the next financial year, beginning 1 July 2024.

ENDS

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