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Transcript

Webinar- Water Quality Targeted Rate Focus



Thursday, 11 March 2021

7pm – 8.30 pm

Greg Morgan

Greg Morgan talk going away. My name is Greg Morgan and I work for Auckland Council. It's my privilege to host tonight's webinar. Welcome and thank you for joining us. This is a webinar on the 10-year recovery budget. And our theme tonight is water quality. As we will hear shortly, the recovery budget is proposing to extend the water quality targeted rate to provide additional funding for a range of initiatives that will enable improvements to water across Tamaki Makaurau. We're joined by a panel of councillors and staff experts who will answer questions and share ideas for you to consider as you're shaping up your feedback on the budget consultation. And so welcome to the panelists this evening, Councillor Richard Hills, who is chair of the Environment and Climate Change Committee. Welcome. Councillor Pippa Coom, deputy chair of that committee. Welcome to you Councillor. Councillor Desley Simpson, who's chair of the Finance and Reporting Committee. Welcome. And Councillor Linda Cooper. Welcome to you. We have my colleague Andrew Chin with us. Andrew is the council's head of healthy water strategy, and Andrew Duncan will probably pop in later. He's the manager of financial policy. So, Tena koutou, welcome. Thank you for being here this evening. Now to get us underway, we'll show a short video on behalf of the mayor and then that will be followed by a scene setting presentation delivered by Andrew Chin. And Andrew will sketch out the options that are under consultation right now. That's going to be followed by our Q&A session. People watching. Please type your questions into the Q&A window. The session is going to be recorded and made available via our website, along with all the questions and answers and all up the session is going to take around 90 minutes. So here we go to get us underway, the video on behalf of the mayor. Thank you.

Video

This year is the year of recovery from covid-19, we stop the spread of the disease, but the economic impact and hit on council revenue was real, this 10 year budget is about how we get the best

outcomes for Auckland. It will provide for our city's future while keeping our rates and prices low compared to other growth cities in New Zealand will help Auckland's economy recover, support our communities, build water and housing infrastructure and improve our transport network. We will continue to make progress on cleaning up our beaches and streams and on our long term response to climate change. Auckland Council is forecast to take a one billion dollar revenue hit because of covid-19. This budget aims to find a balance between investing in our city and not overburdening our residents. We need your feedback on these issues and how we pay for them. To have your say, go to akhaveyoursay.nz/recoverybudget, and tell us what you think of our plans for the future of Auckland.

Greg Morgan

I just received a message from somebody that the sound quality is not very good, so I've tried another mic. So if somebody wouldn't mind dropping a message back saying it's better or worse or about the same, that would be really great. And so thank you for being on this webinar, which is on the subject of water quality and in terms of the 10 year recovery budget. Remember that you can type your questions into the Q&A window and that will be picked up and given to your panelists who will be answering them and using your questions as the basis for conversation. So I'm getting signals that the sound quality is better now. If something happens to it, please send me a message. I'm going to hand over now to Andrew, who is the head of Healthy Water Strategy, who's going to present to us on the options that are being consulted on right now regarding water quality and then we'll move into the Q&A. So thank you Andrew.

Andrew Chin

Thank you, Greg, and good evening, everyone. Marina, if you can click onto the next slide. So the discussion tonight is around the water quality targeted rate, the water quality targeted rate first got implemented in the last LCP about two and a half years ago. And we've got a number of programs that are currently in progress and underway. And this LCP, there's two questions that we're consulting on. One is the proposal to extend the water quality targeted rate through to 2031. And the other one is to increase the water quality targeted rate, and extend it so increasing the water quality targeted rate at the same level as general rates. And the table that you can see in this slide really shows you the differences in the level of investment that means. So the status quo is where we are currently. And if there's no change, that's the investment profile the council will undertake if the water quality target rate is extended. There's additional funding and investment that will be available, but it will be available from years 2029 through to 2031. So It would keep doing the same kind of work that we're doing now, but we'd only be able to start the new projects beyond 2029. Finally, the option where we increase the water quality targeted rate by the same proportion as general rates and extend it, that enables us to do more from day one so we can start new projects and new programs from next financial year. Marina, If you can click me onto the next slide, please. So what would those projects and programs be? So under the current water quality targeted rate. We've got a number of programs that are underway. The biggest of those is called the Isthmus Water Quality Improvement Program. That's not listed here because that's a fully funded program under the existing targeted rate. If we had additional funding, both in the extension and the increased plus extension, we would do more under all of the existing regional programs. So that's the rural stream rehabilitation program, onsite wastewater, safe networks program and the contaminant reduction programs. We would also introduce two additional new programs, the Southern Catchments Alignment Program, focused on catchments of the Manukau Harbor and the Tamaki estuary, and a new program called the Eastern Isthmus program. And I'm just going to go into a little bit more detail on what they look like and the following slides. Marina, if you can click it on please. So the southern catchments, like I said, focused on the Manukau and the Tamaki estuary catchments and the next slide, the type of projects that we would do under a Southern Catchments alignment program. It's all about looking at other major

infrastructure that's going in and investing at the same time so that we leverage major land use change or transportation projects so that we can do more than minimum when it comes to offsetting the effects of those projects. An example is the Puhinui stream catchment. This catchment is going through some pretty significant housing intensification driven by Kainga Ora and also the Manukau center is being upgraded and the Puhinui Stream, runs through all of these and is a wonderful opportunity to invest in improving and restoring the Puhinui stream as these housing developments are moving and going underway. On the next slide. There's some also some really significant transport projects forecasted in the next decade, many of you may have heard of the Mill Road corridor that starts from Manukau and Finishes and Drury. Waka Kotahi or the old New Zealand Transport Agency is building this road in the next decade. It crosses quite a number of stream catchments. The Puhinui, Papakura, Slippery Creek and streams on Ngakaroa. When they cross those streams, we have an opportunity to leverage the transport investment, building bigger wetlands, refurbishing longer lengths of the stream at the same time as the transport project is being delivered. So we get better outcomes, but we can deliver them very efficiently. Finally, another major transport program that is forecasted in the next decade is the Southern Gateway program. It's on the next slide, please, Marina. You may have heard of the airport to Botany project and a rapid transit system that has plan to go from the airport through Puhinui, the Manukau Center and all the way up to Ti Rakau Drive to the Botany Town Center. This is a major infrastructure investment. And once again, as these roads are made bigger, widened, building their own stormwater mitigations, we can complement that investment with additional funds to do more than minimum and provide a bigger catchment benefit. On the next slide. The Eastern Isthmus program, I spoke very early on about the Western Isthmus program and the image on the left hand side of your screen, the yellowy colored catchment area is the Western Isthmus. And this program is really based around the old areas of Auckland that had combined sewers. Combined sewers with a stormwater goes into the wastewater pipes and the problem is that the during heavy rain, when the stormwater and the wastewater are all on the same pipe, the wastewater pipes cannot take all of that flow and they overflow into the streams. So pretty much every time it rains at the moment, these wastewater pipes will overflow because of the stormwater. Watercare with separate funding is building the central interceptive project and this is really the cornerstone of both these programs, because when the central interceptor is being built, it enables us to replumb these catchments so that they don't overflow so often. So this investment is largely around separating the stormwater from the wastewater stream. We will be building new stormwater pipes and disconnecting private properties connections and to the wastewater network into these new stormwater pipes so that we do not undate the sewers and create the overflows. The image on the right hand side as the eastern isthmus and all of those red squares show you the locations of where those sewer overflows occur. This is the biggest portion. The Western and Eastern Isthmus is the biggest water quality problem in Auckland. And this is why we prioritise most of the investment here. So. Whenever it rains, it overflows, there's a lot of beaches around here and there's quite a high public health risk when people use these beaches after it rains. So just so everyone knows, this is the lion's share of the project. However, we're very conscious that the water quality issues and the risk to the region and one of the things we're excited about in this current proposal is our ability to increase the level of investment and the other regional programs. So if you click onto the next slide, Marina. So this just goes into a little bit more detail on the eastern isthmus, the pink lines there show the waste water pipes that would be built in the green line, sort of show the new stormwater pipes that would be built in the catchments in the areas they are. But as you can see, it stretches all the way from the CBD, Parnell, Hobson, Bay, St Heliers, all the way through down to Parnell and along the Tamaki estuary. So it's quite a significant program of works. And I should just qualify now while I remember this is going to take much longer than 10 years to do. The important thing is getting started early. The earlier we start, the sooner we receive the benefits of

these projects. So on the next slide, Marina. Yes, the other regional programs. So stream rehabilitation. This is both an urban and rural areas where we work with landowners to enable stock exclusion, riparian planting, really trying to address one of the major problems in our rural and urban catchments about stream erosion and stream erosion is one of the major sources of sedimentation in our harbours and estuaries. And it's sedimentation that drives the prolific mangrove growth and has impacts on our marinas and our ability to use those waterways for recreation and amenity. On the next slide. Now, this project, contaminant reduction, we're quite excited about being able to deliver quite a number of these pollutant traps around the region and many of the suburbs and the North Shore out down south, Papakura, Manurewa, these gross pollutant traps capture quite a large amount of the fine sediments and in particular a lot of the floating litter. So we target these kind of devices where we've got land users that generate a lot of litter and surface contamination, because we know that seeing all of those floating debris that come out of our stormwater drains is one of the real bugbears of the community when they walk along our beaches. On the next slide, we've got our onsite waste water program, while most of the region or most of the residents in Auckland are connected to workers wastewater system. We still got about 50000 residents that have their own septic tank systems. And we really haven't and historically haven't had a systematic way of making sure that people's private onsite wastewater systems, are regularly maintained and kept up to a good working standard. And there are a number of locations such as Waiheke Island, Piha, Bethels Beach, where you've got relatively high density communities on onsite wastewater. We were also getting problems with no swimming signs because of the runoff from poorly maintained onsite wastewater systems. On the next slide. Safe networks now this has been a very successful program that really focuses on those newer suburbs, such as the North Shore along the Takapuna up all the way up to the Hibiscus Bays. I mean, they already had separated systems, but over the years, there's been a lot of very poor plumbing, people have connected, even though these are separate systems available, they've connected the roof to the wastewater and quite a few cases where they've connected their wastewater directly to the stormwater. You can see in the bottom left picture there, one of the sites where you found a washing machine that was connected straight to a stormwater connection. Now that resulted in this foamy water pouring out over Takapuna Beach and also triggers beach closures. So the Safe Networks program is really about investigating, putting cameras up the pipes, taking samples and tracking down where these illegal connections have been made and working with the landowners to stop them. So all of these regional programs under option three, where we can increase the water quality targeted rate and extend it, we can increase our effort and speed at which we deliver these programs from year one. And I think that's my final slide, Marina, so happy to pass it back to you, Greg, for some more questions.

Greg Morgan

Thanks very much, Andrew. And the presentation as well is going to be made available on the website. Now, just a word to everybody watching. Please don't raise your hand to ask a question. Please type it into the Q&A function into the window, which you'll find at the bottom of the screen. This is Q&A and the capital speech bubble kind of things if you could type in place. We do need to get the questions that way. So just as you're doing that, I'd like to ask our panelists in turn to share briefly just the sense of kind of water related priorities that I would like people to think about as they are having their say on the 10 year budget. So just a couple of top of mind priorities to get us underway. So in Councillor Hills, could we start with you, please?

Councillor Hills

Kia ora everyone and thank you for being here tonight. It's good to see people signing on here after work. The water quality targeted rate, I guess we'll focus on that because that's what we're here for. But we want everyone to submit and get their friends and whanau to submit on the whole plan. And

it's important that we get a range of views from all people right across from Tamaki Makaurau and all ages and backgrounds too help us make our decisions. On the water quality targeted rate, I just will briefly say how successful it's been so far just on the North Shore, especially with the safe networks. I think one of the first projects, Takapuna Beach, they looked through all the pipes going house to house, Business-to-business found over four hundred and something houses had smoke testing done. I went out and watched some of it happening was extremely, you know, really close one by one. Some of the public infrastructure was fixed straight away. There was something like 40 quite serious issues that were found mostly due to private infrastructure that's where stormwater was plumbed into wastewater accidentally or wastewater was plumbed into the stormwater either accidentally on purpose. Those issues were fixed fairly fast. Some of the private residents actually had to pay to get their own networks upgraded pretty quickly. And we've seen a significant increase in water quality outcomes for Takapuna Beach and less beach closures. And that has happened up the coast as well. So Milford South has had all the outfalls and everything checked there and it's looking good. Castor Bay, I think it's eight hundred and fifty households have been gone through already and thirty five problems have been found, 19 have been fixed, and 12 abatement notices have gone to residents who need to get this fixed. So it is a long, long process and it takes a lot of really smart people to be doing that work. That has all been funded through the water quality targeted rate. So we want to see this type of exercise being spread across much of the city as possible. And that small increase, about three dollars a year for the average property this year will mean that we can ramp up some of that work. So that's probably all our focus for now. Thank you.

Greg Morgan

Thank you, Councillor. And we'll come to your council Simpson.

Councillor Simpson

Look, I don't think there's any doubt that my priority is just to increase water quality across the region. Full stop capital letter. But as a councillor from the Orakei ward and the councillor that has both the Orakei local board and the Waitemata local board within their ward area, my direct focus is the Eastern isthmus project. We have health warnings around Hobson Bay and around some of our northern beaches, which are joined by many, many people from throughout the region. I mean, people come to Mission Bay. They're not just locals there. They are regional people that people from outside, just our local board area. And they come to visit the beaches there. And we want those beaches swimmable. The other thing is we've invested in access to the water programs like kayak launching pads and things, only to find that people now cannot use them. In fact, the health warnings that even let the dogs go in the water, it's so bad within the Hobson Bay Area that it's millions above a target for Ecoli and faeces. And it's a real, real health risk. And if we want to be a fantastic city, we cannot afford to have this kind of water quality right in the middle of the city. So that's my focus. And I think the big question we have to ask Aucklanders, are you prepared to wait six years before anything starts on that project? Because that's the plan at the moment. I mean, the original mayoral proposal had nothing happening there for six more years. And, you know, I went to the mayor and asked if he would look at an amendment to his proposal that it was unanimously supported by every councillor and the mayor himself to actually give Aucklanders a bit of an option to start this extra work. And it's not just for the eastern isthmus, but as Andrew has alluded to, it's for the Manukau and in fact, every part of Auckland will benefit if that extension and increase occurs. But my absolute priority is Eastern isthmus, Hobson bay and the Northern Beaches. Thank you.

Greg Morgan

Thank you. Councillor Cooper, I should have introduced you as the chair of the regulatory committee, so my apologies for that. I failed to do that.

Councillor Cooper

Kia ora koutou everybody, welcome to everybody who's come onto this call. I think my Waitakere ward has both Manukau and Waitemata on it and we're not also that far from the Kaipara, so I see the priority. I hear people saying we want our streams and we want our water where our kids can swim, we can use. For example, we spent along with Te Pou Pathway Trust, over a million dollars on a pontoon on the river. So we're building infrastructure, but we want to be able to use these waterways. The other thing I've seen is that we've had a lot of people saying, are you just doing something on the Waitemata with the interceptor project. We have been doing work also on the Manukau and we've secured a huge amount of multi-million dollar investment from the government on the Kaipara along with council money. But with this, if you support a five per cent increase in the rates we can get on and do a lot more work on the Manukau. And if you look at the development that's going in the Manukau, I mean, in lots of ways the biodiversity has been destroyed over time in Manukau in terms of tree cover, this is a chance to clean up those waterways and for the new people going to live there. But also this contributes hugely for my people in my area to the Manukau and a big part of the southern part of the Waitakere ward is the Northern Manukau. And I know that people really love the beaches there French Bay, Huia and those places. And we've been able to lift with a couple of permanent bands swimming there. That is good. That's progress. But we need to invest more. And the original water quality targeted rate, meant that a 30 year project could be reduced to 10. But without this five per cent increase, because of our loss of revenue over covid, that mean that could be delayed. So I'm really asking everybody, I think, to support the five per cent so that we can do these things that all Aucklanders really want, and that is to have really beautiful waterways, good clean ocean, so we can all swim and use them and enjoy them. We're not called city of sails or the isthmus surrounded by water.

Councillor Coom

Kia ora, thank you and good evening, everybody. Thank you to the attendees for joining this evening on this webinar. And as the councillor for the central area of Auckland and the Gulf Islands, this water quality targeted rate, is the massive priority to get across the line. We've seen the benefits in the western isthmus and fortunately, the residents there really got behind the targeted rate when it was first introduced. And we're starting to see some of the well, a lot of that work program underway and looking forward to the benefits of that being brought forward. And so I very much joined with Councillor Simpson as well in terms of the Eastern Isthmus program and wanting to see that work program being brought forward, because there's a huge level of concern about the quality of our streams and beaches. But, of course, that extends across the whole region. And I just wanted to make a comment in terms of this being a priority is also as co-chair of the Hauraki Gulf Forum. We've had a lot of publicity in the last week, just about you know, we've had the the Amazing Race happening above the water was getting underway. But below the water, we've got species that are functionally extinct. The condition of the Gulf is really deteriorating and we have to do something about it. And we're really putting the pressure on the government around the marine protection. But the part that council can do is what we're putting into the Hauraki Gulf, whether it's sedimentation or pollution. So this investment is so important for us to be able to say that we are doing our part. We're doing as much as we can to ensure that all of our harbours are in the best spot as possible, that we're working towards the regeneration of our all of our harbours and for me, particularly for the Hauraki Gulf. Thank you.

Greg Morgan

Oh, thank you, Councillor. Thanks very much. OK, let's move to some questions and thanks for putting them into the Q&A window. Appreciate it. Keep them coming. Andrew, maybe you'd like to

pick up this question, please. Why is the discharge of wastewater into stormwater? The problem does not occur. And just heavy rain in the Western isthmus.

Andrew Chin

I typed in the answer there, so I think the big thing with the connections with is wastewater connected straight to stormwater. The big problem is that you can have a discharge and dry weather when there's a higher likelihood of people swimming and using the beach for recreation. So those so-called dry weather discharges are actually very high risk and in fact, our highest priority because of the higher likelihood of someone getting into contact with the pathogens. So that's the key thing. Now, at least where the overflow is, we don't like those either, but there's a lower likelihood of people recreating in the water at those times.

Greg Morgan

Sure, thanks Andrew. Anybody else want to comment on that or just move on to the next one? Not. Well, we're on a roll, and I'm going to ask you the second question, there may be Councillor Hills would like to come in after it. What investment is going to be done to improve the water quality in the northern region, especially high density of Auckland population using the north beaches, such as Milford, Browns Bay, Long Bay, Snells Beach, etc?

Andrew Chin

So probably that the key investment programs for the northern beaches will be the contaminant reduction program, where we're looking at the litter traps and particular in sediment traps in those existing areas, the northern catchments, the already separated. And so the most effective program that we're finding there is expanding and accelerating safe networks, finding the illegal connections and making sure that the separated system is as tight as we can get it.

Greg Morgan

Thank you very much, Councillor Hills, would you like to add anything?

Councillor Hills

For the note that was for the north shore, the northern areas, for the biggest things we're doing is the safe networks, which has had a measurable result in Takapuna. And we are pretty lucky that we do not have the combined sewer networks like other areas do, but we do have issues and that's why Safe Networks is doing such a good job at the moment. And that will continue and be ramped up with this ranks with those smaller issues we've found in the wider estuary, for instance. Eight hundred fifty one homes and pretty good hit rate, only thirty five had problems. Thirty five is still quite high. So that what we do is to work with those local residents to fix those issues or we put what unfortunately 12 people have had abatement notices, which means they have to address those issues really quickly, otherwise we can't find them. So that might be an illegal wastewater connection or broken pipes. Other issues that aren't necessarily related to the water quality targeted rate. Mairangi Bay which is slightly outside of my ward, there is a 15 million dollar pump station being done this year, which is all about the Mairangi Bay, Castor Bay and the bays around there making sure and reducing the overflows, etc.. And in that area of our coast, we also had a 30 million dollar pump station built about two years ago in Fred Thomas and Takapuna, which not only provides for about 100000 new dwellings and that the stormwater and wastewater for that, it also has reduced the overflows into shoal bay from 20 overflows a year to no overflows a year. Hurstmere Road, there is an upgrade there, which looks like a street upgrade. What we've also done there is remove all the stormwater and put it rain gardens there, which will help with Takapuna as well. So that's what's been done so far. But we're also building on all of that to continue that work. And that's what Safe Swim was all about, Safe Swim helps show us the issues, it can give people real time information. What people

don't really realize this before Safe Swim, is that we use to test water forty eight hours later, we will give the results and basically tell Aucklanders, oh, you shouldn't have swam in that beach two days ago. Now people can see it live often after heavy rain. That can be quite confronting to people but we're actually trying to give people good information and address the issues we can with this water quality targeted rate.

Greg Morgan

Kia ora, thank you. Does anybody else want to comment on it little before we move on to the next question? Sure. All right, let's go to the next one, what will be done to reduce the storm surge overflow into the Manukau Harbour? So, Andrew, would you like to take this then maybe one of the councillors would right to comment.

Andrew Chin

So I think that the key thing here is the long term benefits of both the Western isthmus program and the Eastern isthmus program is a massive reduction in stormwater entering the wastewater system that all eventually ends up in Mangere. So by delivering those separation projects in the western and eastern isthmus, we reduce the overall stormwater loads that find their way to Mangere. The network overall becomes more efficient and the overflow is reduced as a result.

Greg Morgan

Sure. Thank you. Councillor Cooper, would you like to talk about the pollution hotline maybe?

Councillor Cooper

Yes, so we've got a hotline and you just find the number here, lost it on our message. So basically there's a 24 hour hotline where if you see any pollution in our waterways, you can call 377 3107. So that's open 24 hours a day. And it means if there's anything really urgent, our compliance people can go out and check it. So that's useful. And we also have what we call a great educated approach to enforcement. So that's something that's something minor, we can actually educate people, give them a warning, and then it goes up to if it's really bad, we can get straight and ask them to stop any work and prosecute. So that's really what that is.

Greg Morgan

Thank you, councillor. And that question came from a member of the Franklin Local Board, by the way. All right, onto another question. So this is labelled Hi Andrew. But we're making our subject matter expert work this evening. But, of course, other people might wish to comment as well. Western isthmus program depends on the central interceptor and other Watercare work. On the 23 December, the Watercare board decided to postpone 400 million dollars of spending on Western isthmus by three years. What are the implications and what work won't be done? When will the Western isthmus program start again? And is the disconnected decision making? And can we be sure that the water quality targeted rate will be enough to complete the Western isthmus Program. Will the Eastern isthmus Program still be able to start in 2026?

Andrew Chin

Well, that's a very detailed, difficult question and look, in terms of the exact detail of what particular projects Watercare would prioritize or not and I don't have the information. However, we are aware of it and we are able to undertake works in the western isthmus that in areas that don't require major Watercare investment. So there are areas that we can accelerate and get on with and still stick to program such as Waterview. There's Herne Bay and we've already started St Marys Bay. So in the interim, so as I understand it from Watercare, they're not proposing cancelling projects. There's just a period of deferral so that they can fit in the rest of the other capital program. In that time we will make

sure that we keep the momentum going on in the Western isthmus on those projects that don't require Watercare enabling works and we can deliver independently. That's as bad as detailed as I can get. But like I say, we can probably take it offline if Elizabeth would like it straight to Watercare for a more detailed answer.

Greg Morgan

And thanks, Andrew. And just to let people know that if we skip over a question tonight, sometimes we just might miss a question. We certainly will get an answer to all questions and make sure that those answers go up on the website. So just be reassured on that. OK, thank you. Andrew, does anybody else wish to comment on to the next one?

Councillor Coom

I was just going to make a comment following on from Andrew just saying, I mean, it's important that we get a response from Watercare as well. But what's also important about this investment is that there's much closer alignment of the Watercare program and Healthy Waters, the council department, which I hope Andrew will agree that that is the case. And that wasn't always how it was in terms of Auckland council and Watercare. So this has really come together and the water quality targeted rate has been part of that because I think it's forced everyone to really get into sync in terms of what the priorities are and what we've got to focus on. So I just wanted to throw that in. That's another reason to kind of get behind this, because it helps everybody work together. But also, if there are questions that we can't answer, we've got to make sure that we follow up with Watercare.

Greg Morgan

Thank you councillor, that's valuable. I just had a message pop up on screen to say that a couple of participants had raised their hands. Remember please to type your questions into the Q&A window at the bottom of the screen, we're taking questions via typing into that function. Sometimes people wonder whether when you're making feedback into a budget proposal, they have to stick with the questions that have been asked or can they have other ideas. So I guess this question is along those lines. This may or may not be related to this consultation, but this council considering giving ratepayers incentives to help the water quality? For example, setting up a reporting line to report polluters of our waterways.

Councillor Cooper

So, yeah, well, I think we did have that hotline. If somebody can type in that number to the Q&A, that would be really good or does one of the moderators do that? But I think we do do that. So I think we just encourage people to report that because the sooner it's reported, the sooner we can get onto it and try to remedy whatever damage has been done, will stop it continuing.

Greg Morgan

I guess the difference in that question, Councillor, is the incentive part. Someone has an idea about incentivizing.

Councillor Cooper

I'm not sure whether that means people want to be paid to call that. I wasn't quite sure what that meant. Yeah, we would hope that you just use goodwill.

Greg Morgan

Thank you. Andrew, is anything you'd like to say?

Andrew Chin

I probably would mention in terms of incentives, there is grant programs, particularly in the rural waterway space. So the water quality targeted rate assists with a number of local boards and waterways protection grants. And this is where farmers with high risk catchments are able to apply for a grant. But they have to put 50 per cent of the costs of stock exclusion and riparian fencing up front. And that grant is there to pay the other 50 per cent. So that incentivizes that rural land use change.

Greg Morgan

Thanks, Andrew, thanks very much. OK, will the safe networks be increased to South and include the commercial areas?

Andrew Chin

That's an easy question. Yes, we do operate in the south already. There's been a pretty significant safety investigation in Clark's beach on the Manukau and the industrial pollution prevention in commercial areas is certainly something that we would love to extend that program into as well.

Greg Morgan

Thank you. And somebody has also asked that whether alongside safe networks, is there complimentary publicity and education with plumbers and building inspectors?

Andrew Chin

Yes, but we can do better. Look, I'd say it's in its early stages at the moment. The building inspector is absolutely well attuned to what's required. But we are working with the plumbing sector, really starting an onsite wastewater space. So accrediting people to do proper onsite wastewater system inspections is one of the first steps we've developed accreditation in a register, and it is also a database to show where the onsite wastewater systems being have been inspected and so forth. So that's really the kernel of where we wanted to take that sort of industry upskilling space.

Greg Morgan

Thanks Andrew. And just to let you know, you might have seen typed back to you that number for the pollution hotline, 09 377 3107 to report water pollution or a water quality issue. Councillor Hills, what's the plan for the Wairoa estuary for search to be removed from it soon?

Councillor Hills

Yeah, the Wairoa estuary is one of the priorities, it has been one of the priorities and it still is under the water quality targeted rate extension. So the safe networks is the biggest thing that we can do and the most important thing we can do in that fight, because we don't have those big infrastructure issues that say the city center isthmus does. So it's about testing all those pipes and all that infrastructure, private or public, and replacing it as soon as possible. That's happened. So, again, I think it was one hundred and fifty eight hundred and fifty sites over the last year or so have been smoke testing and CCTV testing and different ways of looking through the infrastructure up in the Castor Bay, Milford area. The Milford itself has been found it's fine. The estuary itself is very complex. It's degraded. There's a bug. There's a marina in the 210 boats for the false bottom that is fresh water, the fresh water area and the salt crossing each other doesn't have the flushing of other marinas around the city with salt water. So it does build up silt and the contaminants in that space. We're also going to continue that safe networks around the other side of the Millford and wider estuary part of the catchment, but it is one of the biggest catchments in Auckland. It's stretches right up to where I live in Glenfield, Northcote includes a lot of that coastline there. So all of that is draining down, including the wider industrial area. One of the big projects that Andrew and team are currently working on and we've been meeting quite often on it, is the gross pollutant traps progress. It is a

business case going forward on how we can get more of those big gross pollutant traps put in, especially in the industrial area, and to address issues there. There are also other things that aren't funded by the targeted rate, much like the greenway through Northcote there there's a big housing development. The government, Panuku, Healthy Waters and Mana Whenua are all working on that together to bring all that piped stream and piped river basically went back into wetlands and natural frames, and that will help filter a lot of the water in natural ways. The other issues are very complex in Wairoa because in the 70s and 80s, they built these extremely big concrete channels right up hard against people's houses. And that was all about getting flooding away from houses. It was never designed to help with the water quality. So unfortunately, when it rains, we have the most biggest rush of water to come straight through the estuary. And it will be complex over time to sort. But it's about that that constant intensive work through the catchment. I don't know if Andrew wants to talk anymore, but we are definitely on top of that. It's just not a magical fix or a big billion dollar project that is going to fix the issues in the Wairoa.

Andrew Chin

Richard, I totally agree, it's about making those incremental steps and maintaining the effort and definitely the best opportunity in the next three years is those gross pollutant traps from those high litter generating areas. We certainly see that there's a number of good potential places in the air, such as around the Glenfield Leisure Center that could really benefit from some of those traps.

Greg Morgan

Andrew, I was chatting to somebody who said that there seems to be a lot more focus for water quality investment on the isthmus than the rest of the region, and is it fair that all Aucklanders contribute to the targeted rate but most of the investment is on the isthmus? So I said I would ask the question.

Andrew Chin

Yeah, and look, it comes up a lot. So, like I said, this is the worst pollution spot in the region and really the premise of the water quality targeted rate is that we all benefit from that investment. I myself, I live in rural South Auckland. However, I love to go fishing in the Waitemata Harbour. I'd love to take my kids snorkeling in the Hauraki Gulf. I know that the improvement in water, you know, the worst sewer overflows that carry not just pathogens, but all the other nasty types of floaty things that don't degrade in our wastewater streams that get into our harbours. They permeate all throughout the Gulf and beyond. So really, it's about an investment that will benefit us all. And for me, it's making sure we maintain the momentum and effort with only two and a half years into the first stage of the water quality targeted rate. But we are in a marathon when it comes to water quality. We're not in a sprint. So we know we need to maintain public confidence that we are making progress. We are doing things visible in the neighborhoods, and we just hope that we can maintain that confidence in people's willingness to keep paying the rate so that we can get there in the long run.

Greg Morgan

Councillor Cooper, would you like to comment on that?

Councillor Cooper

Thank you. Greg, I wanted to comment because I feel that it's the politicians that make these decisions. We've got very clever staff that make recommendations. But we make the decisions on the priorities based on the information, the highest need and support. Yes, the central interceptor does take the bulk of the money at the moment, and it will do for about another three or four years. We know that. We understand it. But as you've seen of the Andrew's slides at the beginning about the projects that can be done through the South and will extend to our other harbours. And so we knew

that this would it does look like it's just in the center. But we all tend to use that. We you know, people go to Mission Bay or they'll go into the city. And the thing is, we all feel proud of all of our Moana around our region. And so we just need to chip away at all of them. And we wanted to start with the central interceptor project because it was one piece of infrastructure that had been left at amalgamation that was contributing to the worst pollution. So I hope, you know, that reassures you that we have got projects going out all over the region. But we just we do need and some of them are alongside the central interceptor. But we need to get this project done, it gobbles up a lot of money, but it'll be worth it in the ed.

Greg Morgan

Sure, it's an important topic. So let's just follow through to the other panelists council. Councillor Simpson, would you like to add something else?

Councillor Simpson

I want to make sure I want people to really understand that the increase to the water quality targeted rate. And I'll talk more about the finances a bit later. But the increase to the water quality targeted rate does not just benefit the isthmus. Every single local board area in Auckland will benefit from the increase to the water quality targeted rate. And what I want those people listening to do is to contact their local councillors and their local board members to find out the specifics of their investment in the area, because every local board has been sent the information on how they benefit from the increase in the extension. So I really, really want to make that really clear. Yes, we've got some mammoth big programs that can be funded earlier, and that's always a great thing to do. But I want to make it very clear that every single local board area will benefit from the increase in the extension to the water quality targeted rate. Thank you.

Greg Morgan

Thanks, councillor and councillor Coom?

Councillor Coom

I think it's it is a really good question and other councillors have made a great point. So I just wanted to add in a quick comment about how this is kind of one of the benefits of being a super city, that we can make regional investment and we can all contribute and we all get the benefits across the region. And we can see that in other kinds of investments, like you might see the city center rail link think, oh, well, that's just happening in the city center and I don't benefit because I live on the shore. Well, actually, it unlocks the whole region's network of transport and is going to provide a quicker connection for people coming from the shore, coming into town on the on the the Northern Express and being able to get to the airport quicker. So it's that regional view of how we do our investment. And it can be frustrating because I know that coming from the central city is that there was huge underinvestment for many decades and we're playing a lot of that catch up. So that's you know, that's just part of why we can't keep shifting the cost onto future generations. We really need to make that investment now. And we definitely don't want to be like Wellington, where they've got poo coming out of the street because they didn't do this kind of investment when they should have.

Greg Morgan

Councillor Hills, is there anything you want to add to the conversation?

Councillor Hills

it's a bit of a bit of the same thing. I guess it's the for me, it's the Maori way of treating water. The Wais want like you put contaminants and water down the road, it's going to end up in your backyard at some point. We know that, as Andrew was saying, things like, you know. Sanitary products and

condoms and all the other types of things from the central isthmus end up on our eastern or East Coast beaches on the North Shore. We know that little shoal bay, Birkenhead, Kennedy Bay who don't have water quality issues coming out, get affected by the poor water quality, stifling around in the Waitemata and up through the Upper Harbour. We know that there has really poor outcomes for not only human health, but for all the fish and animals that we have potential to see or not see in those areas as well. So it's kind of it's we're all in this together. But actually, when you think about it, the water is connected. It's not just my beach down there. We're actually pretty closely connected by our harbours and every bit of extra investment right across Auckland helps all of us. So it's easy, air quality is an easy one because we all breathe what people see is the same air but water quality is the same. And I don't think many people see a fence up between your local board boundaries and never go into the others. And and it's swings in roundabouts. I know in the North Shore we're getting quite a big part of the natural environment quality targeted, the quality. So the natural environment, target rate, not quality. Too many meetings today on the Kauri Dieback in the tracks and the pest free work in some other boards would be getting more in other areas. So it's always about that priorities. But everyone gets a piece of so many of the different pies that we all benefit in the end.

Greg Morgan

Thank you very much. All right, let me just catch up with the new question. What I might do is ask Andrew another Andrew, Andrew Duncan, whether he'd like to say anything at this point. Andrew, if there's anything you'd like to add to that important conversation.

Andrew Duncan

Good evening, I'm Andrew Duncan, the financial policy provide advice on rights and development contributions. Key thing with a targeted rate like the water quality targeted rate is the revenue we raise from the rate can only be spent on the activity for which it's been raised. So all this money will go to fund the investments that Andrew Andrew's been, the other Andrew has been talking about to deliver those broad benefits across the city. By putting this additional spending to ratepayer's in the form of a targeted rate gives them the strongest idea of where their additional funding would go. And for discussions like this already clear view of the benefits they can bring to the city.

Greg Morgan

Thanks, Andrew. OK, probably back to you, Andrew, to kick this one off the rural waterways protection grounds, accelerate and work on private farmland to stabilize streams, to improve water quality. Is there a role for a comparable ground for construction of stormwater reduction, e.g., rain gardens, green roofs, tanks on private land and combined sewers to reduce stormwater entering the sewers and therefore overflow frequency? These old combined sewer areas also have no modern stormwater detention and these houses are new or extended.

Andrew Chin

So a grant scheme for the existing urban areas is not on the cards at the moment. Now, we did look, we have looked at it and in particular in the space of rainwater tanks, one of the first stages in the space. So rainwater tanks are just such an easy way to mitigate that stormwater runoff. And it's something that we all at the council and the governing body really want to encourage. But our first step has to be changing our planning rules and regulations so that you can install a tank as a permitted activity and you do not need a resource consent. Because when we first looked at the idea of what could we give someone a grant if they had to spend a lot of that grant going back to council to get a resource consent to put in a rain tank, it is sort of taking from one hand and giving to the other. So you'll be pleased to know that the rain tank plan change is well underway. And I think that's the first stage. So we're looking at some of these enabling rules and regulations and standards first so

that we can then maybe raise the prospect of a grant. But it certainly hasn't been brought to the elected members at this stage and it's not on the table at the moment.

Greg Morgan

Councillor Cooper or Councillor Hills may be one of you. Would you like to just explain again to make it clear for a person such as myself that the five per cent increase is going to reduce the program overall the time taken? Is that right? We've got that right?

Councillor Hills

So the original premise for the water quality targeted rate was to move what was a 30 year plan of investments. So that's not fixing everything. That was the 30 year plan for investments across Tamaki Makaurau would be reduced because of there was about four hundred million could push that down to a 10 year window for those investments. There was never going to fix every issue. But what we had got planned over that time will reduce it down to 10. Between the five percent rise to the water quality targeted rate is about three dollars per house. That won't reduce the timing of the overall plan that will add to and and do a whole lot more that we thought we could have. That means that things do move forward for some, but it also means that we can do more of the safe networks program, which we probably thought that would take that would make maybe we didn't know that it would be as successful as it has been. And because it's been so successful, it's obvious that we would ramp up that kind of work. So it's not about pushing it down. And also, when we think of the original water quality targeted rate which I think I can't remember per household, what it worked out to be was at forty seven or sixty dollars for the average and adding three dollars is not doubling what we're doing is adding five per cent, and the idea was that that fixed rate over 10 years was effectively reducing in value because the cost of construction and everything was going up so that we'd banked in the original package, CPI adjustments, the actual worth of the water quality targeted rate was reducing. So we're left the same amount as the rates which will show up on the bottom of your rates bill won't go up more than five percent for the average homeowner and the average homeowner is someone who owns a house that's about one million and eighty thousand on their CV, not what it's worth but their CV.

Greg Morgan

Before we finished this evening, I will give some time to Councillor Simpson, perhaps just to give a bit of financial overview as well. I'm sure that she will have some things she wants to say. Does anybody else want to add to the comments that Councillor Hill just made?

Councillor Cooper

I wouldn't mind. I think Councillor Hills is right. There's a lot more work to do than just the 30 year plan we had to start with. But that's how long you plan for infrastructure plans. So we're required to plan for at least 30 years. But of course, a lot of our infrastructure lasts longer than we would like to think, probably out of the 50 at least a year timescale. So that 30 year plan was what we thought we could do in 30 years. Now with the extra money we hope to do that in 10, but it's always got to keep bringing in other things we think are really critical and I also remember that we might have five per cent increase on our rates, but the cost of construction is increasing at a way higher percentage every year at some point it's like 15 per cent a year. So even this won't make all the things we'd like to do, but it will help us kind of keep a bit more in pace with construction costs and the other things we really need to do.

Greg Morgan

Thanks councillor. Andrew, did you want to add anything to the conversation at this point?

Andrew Chin

I, I concur with Richard and Linda, you know, the big thing for us is this if the increase goes through this long term plan, we really get started within the next three years where we can accelerate our program and accelerate the delivery in the next three years. And it sort of locks on some of those big programs of work before, you know, there's a lot of change coming on the horizon, there is more LTPs, there's water reforms and things like that. So having that certainty of program in the next three years helps us get that momentum and keeping the delivery and action happening on the ground so that it's very important for us.

Greg Morgan

Thank you very much. OK, thank you. Anybody else want to comment on that? Councillor Hills, how does climate change and water quality work well together as a package?

Councillor Hills

Yes, so they're both connected, like most about, you know, if you think about transport budgets are connected, over half of our transport budget is public transport that helps reduce our emissions and the natural environment targeted rate, that's all about biodiversity protecting. Getting pest out of our native forest when the climate changes and was able to increase the infestation there, the water quality targeted rate is similar. It's about protecting our assets and planning for the future. When we see the changes from sea level rise or inundation, or we know that in the wider estuary, that how we can do some greener infrastructure potentially over time to to reduce the storm water outflows out through the estuary there. So the water quality infrastructure we're doing now is a lot different to what we used to. So on top of what we do. But the water quality target rate is only one piece of the wide ranging budgets we have for water and our climate package that is within the budget is another one hundred and fifty million dollars worth of initiatives on top of what we're already doing in that space. So that's everything from electric buses, those electric buses to help over time reduce the types of carcinogens and things that go into our waterways because they're not belching diesel will have the Urban Ngahere work ,which is eleven thousand mature trees that mostly go on our berms, as well as two hundred hectares of native bush and about two hundred thousand new seedlings a year. And that will go into planting around our waterways, around our streets to help reduce that stormwater overflows into our rivers and waterways and beaches. So it's all connected. But, you know, a lot of people will both we'll figure that out themselves. Others won't. But there's so much in the climate package that I could go on and on with our recycling centers that's going to over time, reduce that waste to landfills. Landfills do have an impact on our waterways. So it's all about those co benefits as well as the climate benefits that comes from it. So we are asking people to also support the other parts of the budget because they do all connect to improving and restoring our waterways and our beaches and coast.

Greg Morgan

So thank you, councillor. Councillor Coom, is there anything you'd like to add to that?

Councillor Coom

I think that's a very good summary from our chair of the Environment and Climate Change Committee, and particularly the point around here, this is everything is interrelated. And so we really want to get across the line the support for the overall package of the recovery budget that includes, for the very first time, dedicated funding for climate action, as well as the water quality target rate. So really important to give us feedback on on all of the priorities, not just the targeted rate.

Greg Morgan

Thank you, Councillor. Councillor Simpson, I'd like to come to you now. I'm sure that as the conversation has been going through, you've probably been building up some points that you want to make as chair of the Finance and Reporting Committee, perhaps.

Councillor Simpson

Thanks, Greg. Look, I think we've heard a lot of we know what the problem is and we've heard what we want to do. I think it's about how people can then have their say and help and really get an understanding of what it's going to cost them. You know, we've heard of what's in it for them now. How does it really work? So just to put the whole thing in context, obviously the LTP covers a lot of things, not just water. You know, we have five key issues around general investment, responding to climate change, responding to housing and growth, investment and community, protecting and enhancing the environment. And with all those priorities, there comes an associated rates package, and the proposal is five percent in the first year and then three and a half for the remaining years. Now that their initial five percent sort of equals a great big nine hundred million dollar investment in the first three years. So there's two ways of helping water that people can that people can respond to help water. The first is if they support the five percent general rates rise in year one and the three and a half year thereafter, it delivers a 62 percent increase in capital expenditure for water, both supply wastewater and stormwater. So it's up from seven point one billion in the last LTP to eleven point five billion. It's the biggest increase that of all the topics. OK, so about total capital investment in this LTP. We now go from twenty seven percent to thirty seven percent just for water. So what will we do? We've heard about the big projects, but we will also actively replace actively, replace our below the ground pipe network pipe network before it fails. We've seen it fail in Wellington, haven't we? But we want to be proactive around it. So what, the five percent that gives us the ability and in the next two years and the first three years to do 50 percent of that with a focus on central Auckland, why central Auckland? Because it is one of the oldest parts of Auckland and of course, you know, someone said before, why is so much in the in the central area? Well, that's where Auckland started. We got better as time went on about delivering the right sort of infrastructure below the ground than we did when Auckland was first started. We'll also increase our detection work because, you know, you need to know where to find them. And if we don't get that five per cent without that five per cent, almost all that planned local network pipe renewals would have to be deferred, we would not be able to keep our water infrastructure up fast enough to meet new residential growth areas. And the water supply resilience would be reduced. So there's a real big difference if we don't take on that five percent, that's out of the general rate. Then we move on to the water quality targeted rate. And we've talked a lot about the options around that. Now, this rate has been said earlier tonight has been going for, you know, three years. But it's based on the capital value. It's not a set fee. I actually think it should be set free. But that's another story. It's based on the capital value of your home. So every area plays a slightly different amount of money because, of course, the capital values and every broad area of Auckland is a slightly different. So we've heard about what we've already spent it on and we've heard what it can be spent on but the great thing about a targeted rate is that it's not spent on the chief executive of Auckland council salary and it's not spent on transport. It's only spent on improving water quality. All right, so there are two main options in the have your say form. There's a number of options I'll get to them all, but the two main options are continuant over the 10 years, which is what the mayor first suggested. And that is in other words, because we're taking a third LTP on top of the second LTP, we've already got seven years of the water quality targeted rate. So extending it out for the last three years of the 10 year program and people would just pay exactly what they're paying now. All right. So the average is sixty six dollars and it would go up to sixty nine for the average ratepayer. It does change. Now, we had a question from someone from Franklin earlier tonight and

then the urban part of Franklin they only pay forty two dollars for the water quality targets rate out there. And yet they'll get benefit and the same as someone who might pay a lot higher because the CV is different. So their water quality change is only two dollars, but the average change is actually 3.33 for people. So you could have no change and then you wouldn't get the extra stuff or you can go with the change, the extension and the increase. And it was that increase we saw that extra those big quality, those big ticket items Eastern isthmus, the Manukau. And as we've seen with the increase, every local boards benefits. So what's the increase? What will that cost you? As I've said, 3.30 for the average residential ratepayer in year one, and if you add that 3.30 onto the five percent average general rate. What's that total bill? How much will your rates go up from this year to next year? The answer to that question is one hundred and fifty dollars for the average ratepayer. And that means a five percent general rate increase, five percent water quality targeted rate increase. And there's a little bit extra in the old Auckland City Council area and the Manukau City Council area for rubbish. So if we if we look at the highest residential rate paying ward in the city and that's mine. What does it look like? In other words, what's almost the worst it could be with the five percent general rate and the five percent water quality targeted rate. That increase is two hundred and forty five dollars for the Orakei ward, my neighbouring ward, where councillor Coom comes from, is one hundred and forty seven. It's a little bit below. For Richard in Kaipatiki, that it's one hundred and thirty nine. That's from a hundred thirty nine dollars more than the rates on average for that board area from the rates they are paying this year to what we're proposing. So although tonight's been all about water and I'm not going to say only because, you know a hundred and fifty dollars is one hundred and fifty dollars, but we've talked about the huge benefits for water and there is no doubt that this LTP is heavily weighted towards improving water, its supply, its resilience, stormwater, waste water, separation of the whole work. And I think we're very lucky. We've got some fantastic people at local council, Andrew Chen and his team, fantastic people working this through. Something needs to be done urgently. We cannot have health risks on our waterways, and what we are doing is saying we agree with it. And here is our proposal. It's now up to you, Aucklanders, to have your say so either online or in hard copy. You will get you will see this form. The first question is, on the average rates increase and it might be Andrew Duncan can have can say a little bit more than the other things that we're doing in the LTP very shortly. But if you support that five percent, if you support it, increase that five percent, knowing that it will cost you one hundred and fifty with the water quality targeted rated added on as well. You would tick support. So the options here are support, do not support, or don't know. I'm going to leave climate change. We've had a webinar on climate change already and I'm going to jump down to the section on water quality. So the questions it asks, what is your opinion on this proposal? Do you support the extension and the increase? Do you support the extension only? Do you not support either change, other or don't know? Remember the extension and the increase is really the one that delivers the most benefits over the 10 years. The extension only means like the big projects that we've talked about, the Manukau, eastern isthmus don't start for six years. So if you happy to have health risk warnings in our waterways for another six years and for nothing to happen, you just support the extension. So my message to Aucklanders is, please have your say, it's important that we hear from you. We want to know whether you think water quality is important. We want you to understand what it will cost you and we want to know what you think about our proposals. Thank you.

Greg Morgan

Thank you, councillor. Thanks very much. Andrew Chin, anything that you just want to add in wrapping up?

Andrew Chin

Look, I think Desley summarised it beautifully. I would just add that we do read all your feedback. My team so that we so a lot of people think that when they provide feedback to council it goes into a black hole. But all of those comments, all of the feedback, we read it and summarise it and we do try and pick out the ideas and respond to it. So we welcome any type of feedback, even the critical feedback. We still read it.

Greg Morgan

Thank you. And Andrew Duncan, anything from you that you think you just want to emphasise?

Andrew Duncan

As Andrew pointed out, all the feedback is worked through very carefully, councillors pay close attention to that. But it's not just restricted to, as you said earlier, Greg, it's not just restricted to feedback on the specific questions, it's an opportunity. There are some other things in our consultation document beyond the five questions. We're looking for your feedback on that. That will be considered. And it's an opportunity for you and the community to let us know about the issues that are concerning you so the councillors can consider that and looking ahead for the next 10 years.

Greg Morgan

Thank you, Andrew. Councillor Cooper, anything that you'd like to add?

Councillor Cooper

Councillor Simpson summed up everything really well. But I guess one of the things I want to say is if people have got any doubts about the sharing around and the value they get, we just must remember that, as Councillor Simpson said, some of this big work that needed to be done like the central interceptor in Auckland city wasn't done. So there wasn't a lot of debt there, but a lot of the other councils including Waitakere took debt into the region. So everybody's been paying that off. We did a lot of that work, but the rest of the region has helped us pay off that debt. And also the central interceptor is really good for the Waitemata. But the people that pay the highest rates live on the Waitemata. So they are actually paying their fair share for that interceptor. So thank you very much people from Orakei. So I think we've got to think about it in that context, that though a lot of us didn't want to amalgamate, as councillor Coom said earlier, the one way the only reason we can take on this big debt, take on this huge project is we've joined together as everybody from the Auckland region. And without a doubt, if it came to it back against the wall all Aucklanders would unite. And so I think we all have to do that and look at it from a wider perspective. And I know as regional councillors, we have to do that. And that's tough when you come from your local area. But as we've said before, all every local board area will have projects that every local board knows what their projects are. So we'll benefit. Everybody will benefit. And the bottom line here is we all love our water that surrounds this beautiful city and region. Thank you.

Greg Morgan

Thank you very much. Councillor Hills, is there anything that you'd like to say in wrapping up?

Councillor Hills

I think everyone covered it already, and I guess the the hard thing. Well, I don't actually find it hard than more I did as a new councillor last term is that whole local focus. We are getting a lot done on the North Shore for as a local councillor. But I'm also that chair of a committee and we are working together and we actually have worked on this budget with consensus. I think 20 out of twenty one voted for this budget to go out in the way it is. An eighteen out of twenty one voted for our emergency budget last year, the most difficult budget we've ever had to do with over a billion dollar of loss in

revenue over the next couple of years. But I think looking at some councillors, councils around the country who are falling apart, who are getting commissioners, who are having to put up 17.23 in Canterbury, 14 per cent, nine percent in Hamilton, nine per cent in Dunedin. We've managed to do this budget on consensus and we know it's not easy for people with increasing costs, but we are one of the lowest rate rises while also increasing our spend a lot of water spend. We are spending way more than almost any other council and our increase is far greater than any other council based on a per capita amount in the water infrastructure and water quality space. So with a five per cent rate rise, which is lower than almost anywhere else in the country, we are still doing a whole lot more and there's a lot more to be done. And we can't keep blaming the past, but we actually have to look to the future and just do it. So we asking for as much feedback as possible. We know it's difficult for some, but we have to do this. Otherwise the cost will put onto the next generation, as we're finding out now with some of those big projects that that we're glad to be doing now. Thank you.

Greg Morgan

Thank you, Councillor and Councillor Coom has let me know that she has nothing to add at this point. It is time now to pass the baton to the people of Auckland. So the elected members this evening have really made the case for us all to consider the options. And he goes, Councillor Simpson, she's holding it up. We now have to do our job. We all have to read the options. We have to look at the 10 year budget plan, the recovery budget, and just look at the different topics and also just think about those interconnections between some of them and put our feedback in. Our feedback. So your online, everybody watching. So I guess if you found where you need to be, you go to akhaveyoursay.nz. All the information there are around how to engage. There are lots of ways to put in feedback. You can visit a library or a council service centre to see printed information as well. Feedback on the 10 year budget must be received by 12:00 noon on the 22nd of March, 12 noon on the 22nd of March, using one or more of the options that we have to have our say. Please remember that the recording from tonight, including Andrew's presentation, is going to be available online. And remember that if we've missed a question, because sometimes when they're coming in, we skip over and just accidentally the questions will all be answered and they will be sent to experts to be answered. And the answers will pop up online as well. Now I see the link has gone out to akhaveyoursay has been a messaged out to you so you can pick it up there. There's another webinar on Sunday, so if you want to be a good citizen on Sunday evening, you can tune into the webinar about rates. That's at 6:00 p.m. Same deal as tonight and the same thing, please remember to use that Q&A function to pop in your questions. I'd like to say thank you to the panelists this evening. It's been a really engaging conversation, lots of detail, lots of vision and heaps to think about. So thank you. And I'm sure that on behalf of the panelists, I can say thank you to everybody who's been sending in questions and who spent time this evening. This is a time for us all now to go and tell our friends that these are topics that they need to care about for all of us. And so thank you, everybody, *kia ora tatou*. Best wishes go well.