



Christchurch City Council
Chief Executive

Candidate Briefing Information

April 2026



About Ōtautahi Christchurch

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Christchurch has emerged as a resilient and forward-looking city, increasingly recognised on the world stage as a place of innovation, growth, and opportunity. Voted New Zealand's happiest city and ranked among the world's top 10 destinations people aspire to move to, Ōtautahi offers an exceptional lifestyle, a vibrant urban culture, and breathtaking natural surroundings.

Since the earthquakes, the city has undergone a remarkable transformation, and is now regarded as one of Aotearoa New Zealand's most dynamic and liveable urban centres. From its vibrant local communities to strategic infrastructure investments and a strong focus on protecting the natural environment, Christchurch is evolving into a global example of urban regeneration, sustainability, and resilience.

The regeneration has been driven not only by Christchurch City Council but also by the collective efforts of iwi, local communities, businesses, and creative minds. Revitalised landmarks such as the central city and Town Hall, Tūranga (central library), Taiora QEII and Te Pou Toetoe Linwood Pool, and Te Whare Tapere Performing Arts Precinct showcase the city's renewed energy and ambition. Major developments including Te Pae Christchurch Convention Centre, One New Zealand Stadium at Te Kaha, and Parakiore Recreation and Sport Centre further cement Christchurch's reputation as a destination for culture, connection, and world-class events. Together, these achievements reflect a shared vision to reimagine Christchurch as a city of innovation, creativity, and community.

Christchurch now stands at a pivotal moment in its journey. The rebuild and regeneration phases have delivered modern infrastructure, revitalised city spaces, and renewed confidence in the city's future. With these foundations in place, the next phase is focused on consolidating and strengthening the Council's operational performance, enhancing service delivery, and ensuring the city continues to thrive amidst evolving social, economic, and environmental pressures. This includes adapting to anticipated local government reforms, potential fiscal constraints, and emerging opportunities for innovation and efficiency. The city's success to date reflects the dedication of its people and institutions and the next stage will require steady, strategic leadership to maintain momentum and realise Christchurch's long-term vision.

For the Chief Executive, this is a unique opportunity to lead an organisation that is already performing strongly, while shaping its strategic direction for the future. The role requires balancing operational excellence with forward-looking leadership, aligning Council services, its group of Council Controlled Organisations, and wider community priorities. The right leader will build on existing cultural and performance gains, guide the organisation through reform, and ensure Christchurch remains resilient, innovative, and well-positioned to seize opportunities for growth, connection, and impact on both the regional and national stage.



About Christchurch City Council

As the second-largest council in New Zealand and one of the largest organisations in the South Island, Christchurch City Council has a significant impact on the regional and national social and economic landscape. It is governed by a Mayor and 16 elected Councillors. In addition to the governing Council, six community boards operate across the district. These boards are made up of elected community board members and the relevant ward councillors.

The Council delivers one of the broadest scopes of services among local authorities in New Zealand. Its core responsibilities include:

Christchurch City Council has a significant impact on the regional and national social and economic landscape.

- Three waters infrastructure – managing the city’s drinking water supply, wastewater systems, stormwater networks, and flood protection.
- Transport and mobility – maintaining roads, cycleways, and public transport infrastructure.
- Waste and Resource Recovery – providing recycling, rubbish collection, and waste minimisation services.
- Parks and open spaces – caring for more than 1300 parks and reserves covering more than 10,000 hectares, including iconic spaces like Hagley Park, the Botanic Gardens, the Port Hills, and coastal wetlands.
- Community facilities – operating 21 libraries as vibrant community hubs, 12 sport and recreation centres, and numerous sports fields that support active lifestyles and lifelong learning.
- Arts and culture – managing Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, and supporting a wide range of cultural events and creative initiatives.
- Regulatory services – overseeing building and construction standards, environmental hazard management, food and alcohol licensing, animal control, noise regulation, and parking enforcement.
- Climate resilience and innovation – leading efforts to address climate change and sea-level rise, including innovative approaches to coastal inundation and stormwater management through wetlands and swales.

Christchurch City Council’s **Long Term Plan 2024–2034**, **Annual Report 2024**, and **Annual Plan 2025/26** are available on the Christchurch City Council website at ccc.govt.nz/the-council/plans-strategies-policies-and-bylaws/plans/long-term-plan-and-annual-plans



About the role

Christchurch City Council is seeking an exceptional Chief Executive to lead a team of more than 3000 people in delivering on its vision: to make Ōtautahi Christchurch a city of opportunity for all – open to new ideas, new people, and new ways of doing things.

This is a high-impact, highly visible leadership role at the heart of a complex and dynamic organisation. The Chief Executive is appointed by the Council and serves as the principal advisor to the Mayor and Councillors, overseeing all Council operations and ensuring the delivery of services that matter to residents. The role offers a unique combination of operational responsibility, strategic influence, and public leadership — providing an opportunity to shape the city's future while guiding a high-performing organisation.

The incoming Chief Executive will be responsible for the following strategic priorities:

- Providing the Mayor, Council, and community boards with high-quality, impartial advice to support effective decision-making.
- Offering visible, accessible, and strategic leadership that strengthens organisational culture, builds trust, and drives high performance.
- Enhancing organisational capability, reputation, and readiness for the future.
- Leading the development and delivery of the Long-Term Plan, with a strong emphasis on financial sustainability and operational excellence.
- Advancing climate initiatives within Council operations and across the wider community.
- Overseeing the successful delivery of the capital programme and major city projects.
- Establishing and nurturing strong, respectful relationships with mana whenua, Christchurch City Holdings Limited (CCHL), the Crown, and key stakeholders at local, regional, and national levels.



We have made good progress, and Christchurch City Council is ready to embark on its next chapter: shaping a city that thrives for generations to come.

Skills and experience

As an organisation, Christchurch City Council is in a strong position. The Council has seen a notable rise in staff satisfaction and engagement, outperforming the average across New Zealand's local government sector. The organisation has a strong service delivery focus which is reflected in the fact that 88% of Council services met their annual targets, the highest percentage since pre-earthquake. These efforts are reflected in increasing resident satisfaction, demonstrating growing community confidence in the Council's ability to deliver effective and responsive services. Overall satisfaction with Christchurch City Council services has seen a notable increase, with a 7% rise in the past year.

We have made good progress, and Christchurch City Council is ready to embark on its next chapter: shaping a city that thrives for generations to come.

We're now looking for a visionary Chief Executive who brings strategic clarity, visible and inspiring leadership, and a proven ability to cultivate high performing, engaged teams.

You'll be committed to delivering value-for-money services and fostering a culture of excellence. Ideally, you're an experienced Chief Executive who has successfully led complex organisations, understands the unique dynamics of Local Government in Aotearoa New Zealand, and is recognised for building trusted relationships with diverse stakeholders.

With a strong connection to Ōtautahi Christchurch, you will also bring:

- Strong financial acumen, commercial insight, and a track record of leading complex capital projects.
- Outstanding emotional intelligence and communication skills, with the ability to engage effectively at all levels.
- A calm, diplomatic, and collaborative leadership style that builds trust and alignment.
- Political savvy and resilience in navigating challenging environments.
- A deep commitment to public service and community wellbeing.
- Proven experience partnering effectively with mana whenua.
- Confidence and capability in high-profile roles, including managing media and public scrutiny.

This role offers a rare opportunity to lead a nationally significant organisation at a pivotal time, guiding Christchurch City Council to deliver both operational excellence and strategic impact for its communities.

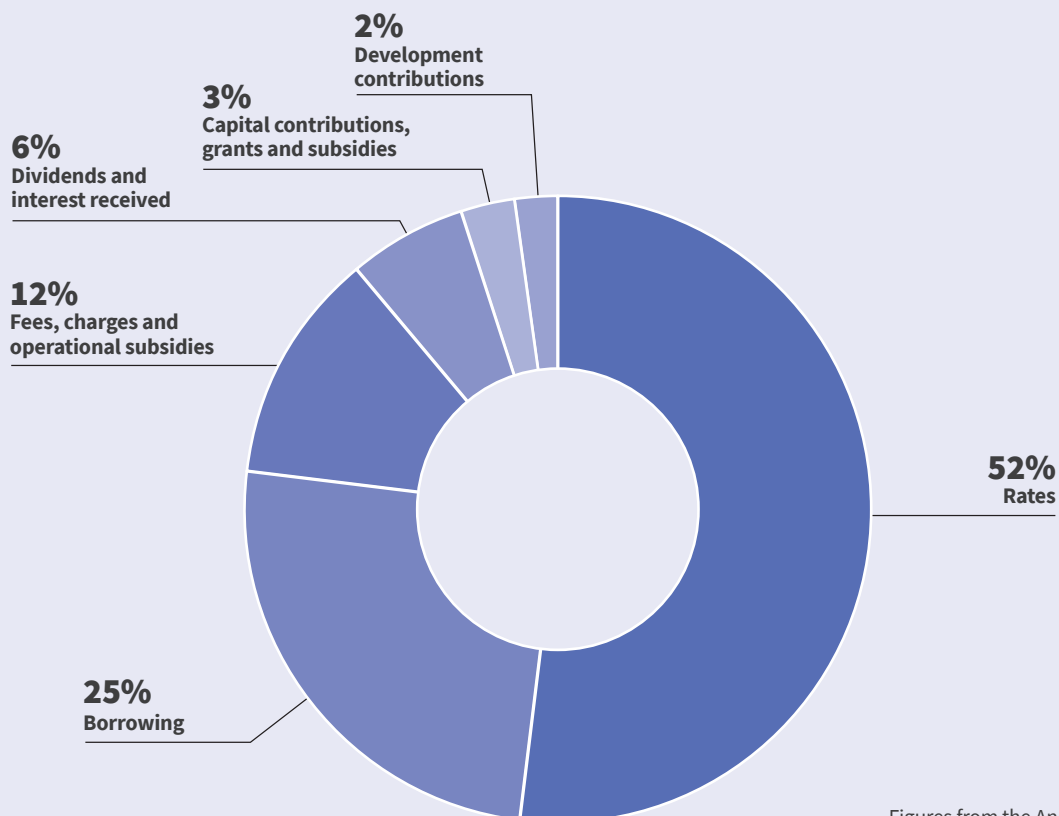
Financials

How the Council manages its money is set out in our Financial Strategy, which is developed and adopted during the Long Term Plan process. Our Financial Strategy considers the increasing costs of a growing city and how those costs should be shared between the Council, our partners, and developers. It outlines the implications for rates, fees and charges, debt, and investment, considering affordability and certainty for ratepayers.

Over the next 10 years, we are expecting the following factors to have an influence on Council finances:

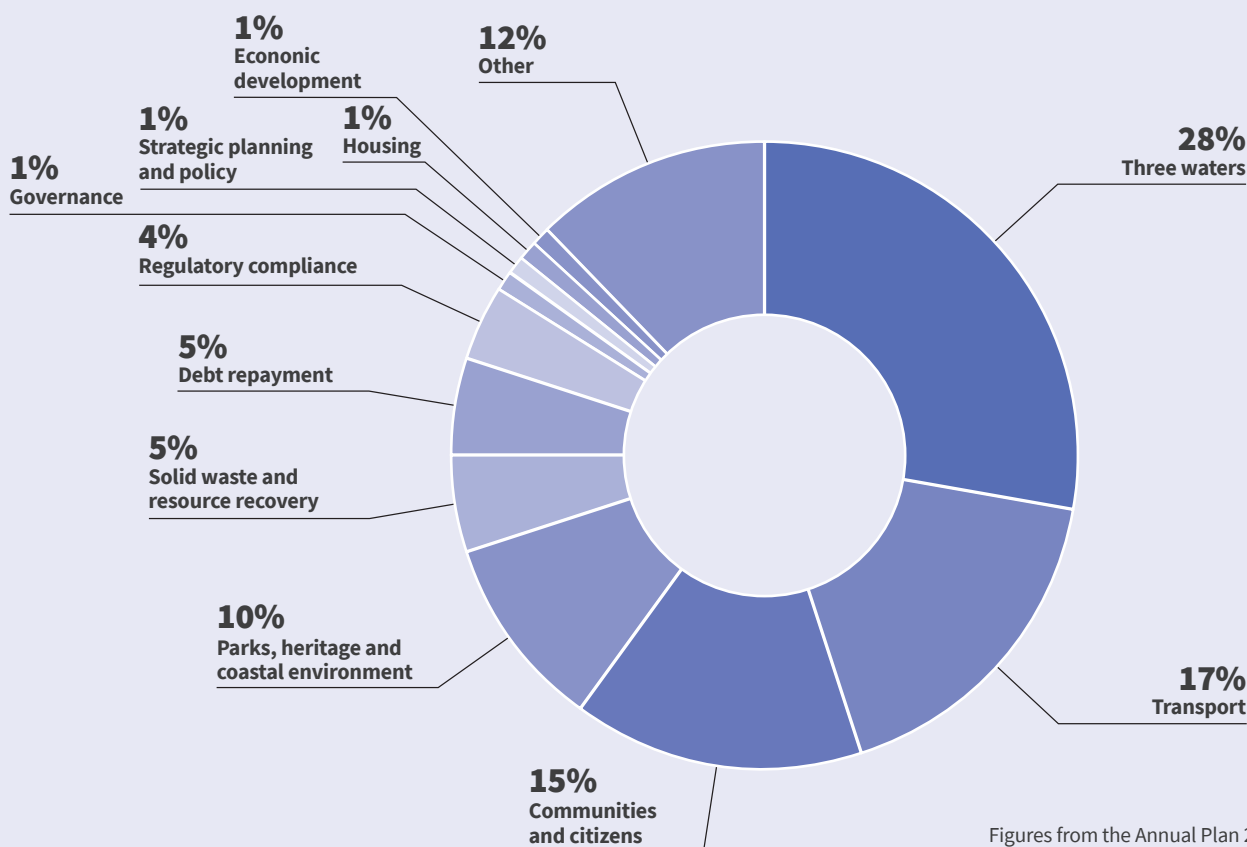
- Inflation and interest rates.
- Continued growth in both population and economic activity.
- Natural hazards, emergencies, and climate change.
- Need to renew and upgrade existing infrastructure.
- Changes in quality/environmental standards and consent requirements.
- Our operation of significant new community facilities.
- Local government reform.

Where the money comes from



Figures from the Annual Plan 2025/26

Where the money is spent



Figures from the Annual Plan 2025/26

Funding for the future

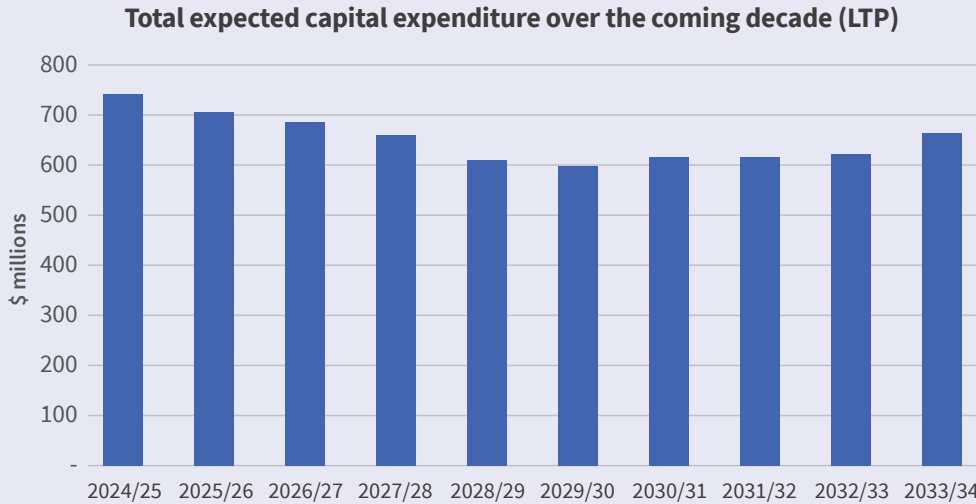
The table below outlines an overview of the Long Term Plan 2024–2034, capital programme, and planned rating and borrowing over the next decade to fund the Council’s operating.

	Rates to be levied as per LTP \$	Nominal rates increase on 1 July	Rate increase to existing ratepayers	New borrowing \$	Net change in borrowing (new borrowing less debt repayment) \$	Balance gross debt \$	Balance net debt (excludes onlending to subsidiaries) \$
2024/25	760,845,000	11.93%	9.90%	428,579,000	347,059,000	2,939,736,000	1,917,717,000
2025/26	833,617,000	9.56%	8.48%	376,437,000	279,577,000	3,219,313,000	2,203,478,000
2026/27	890,818,000	6.86%	5.80%	352,298,000	239,231,000	3,458,544,000	2,434,147,000
2027/28	952,585,000	6.93%	5.88%	304,507,000	177,453,000	3,635,997,000	2,619,754,000
2028/29	1,009,224,000	5.95%	4.90%	239,818,000	116,640,000	3,752,637,000	2,720,739,000
2029/30	1,067,525,000	5.78%	4.73%	195,199,000	61,442,000	3,814,079,000	2,772,871,000
2030/31	1,124,633,000	5.35%	4.31%	183,775,000	37,926,000	3,852,005,000	2,791,425,000
2031/32	1,160,615,000	3.20%	2.18%	163,955,000	20,948,000	3,872,953,000	2,791,015,000
2032/33	1,189,394,000	2.48%	1.46%	156,917,000	(2,397,000)	3,870,556,000	2,772,498,000
2033/34	1,215,546,000	2.20%	1.19%	191,504,000	36,148,000	3,906,704,000	2,779,554,000

Figures from the Long Term Plan 2024–2034

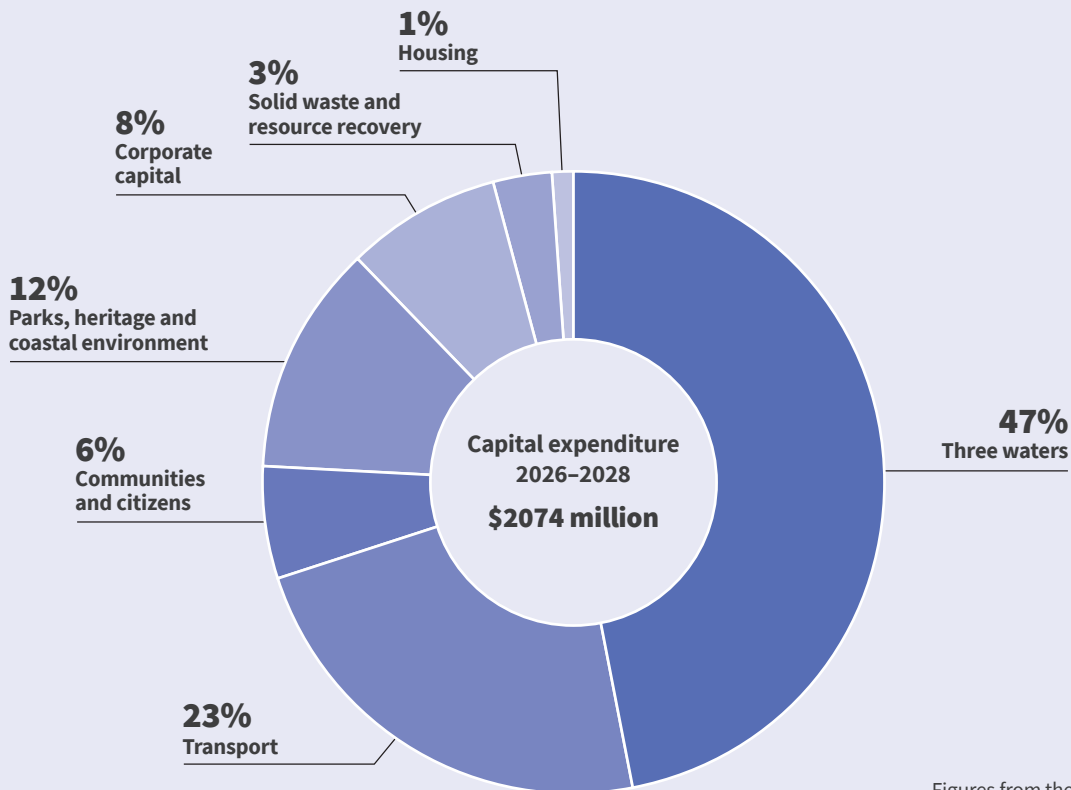
Capital programme

Christchurch has one of the largest capital investment programmes in local government. We are delivering the infrastructure and community facilities needed to support a vibrant, sustainable and resilient future



Figures from the Long Term Plan 2024–2034

Capital expenditure



Figures from the Annual Plan 2025/26

Council-Controlled Organisations

Christchurch City Council owns or has an equity investment in several organisations that help deliver services, support economic development, and manage key assets on behalf of the city. These are known as Council-Controlled Organisations (CCOs). Each CCO is accountable to the Council through a Statement of Intent, which sets out its strategic direction and performance expectations.

Christchurch City Councillors



Phil Mauger
Mayor



Victoria Henstock
Deputy Mayor
Councillor for Papanui Ward



Kelly Barber
Councillor for
Burwood Ward



David Cartwright
Councillor for
Fendalton Ward



Dr Melanie Coker
Councillor for
Spreydon Ward



Pauline Cotter
Councillor for
Innes Ward



Celeste Donovan
Councillor for
Coastal Ward



Tyrone Fields
Councillor for
Banks Peninsula Ward



Tyla Harrison-Hunt
Councillor for
Riccarton Ward



Nathaniel Herz Jardine
Councillor for
Heathcote Ward



Yani Johanson
Councillor for
Linwood Ward



Aaron Keown
Councillor for
Harewood Ward



Sam MacDonald
Councillor for
Waimairi Ward



Jake McLellan
Councillor for
Central Ward



Andrei Moore
Councillor for
Halswell Ward

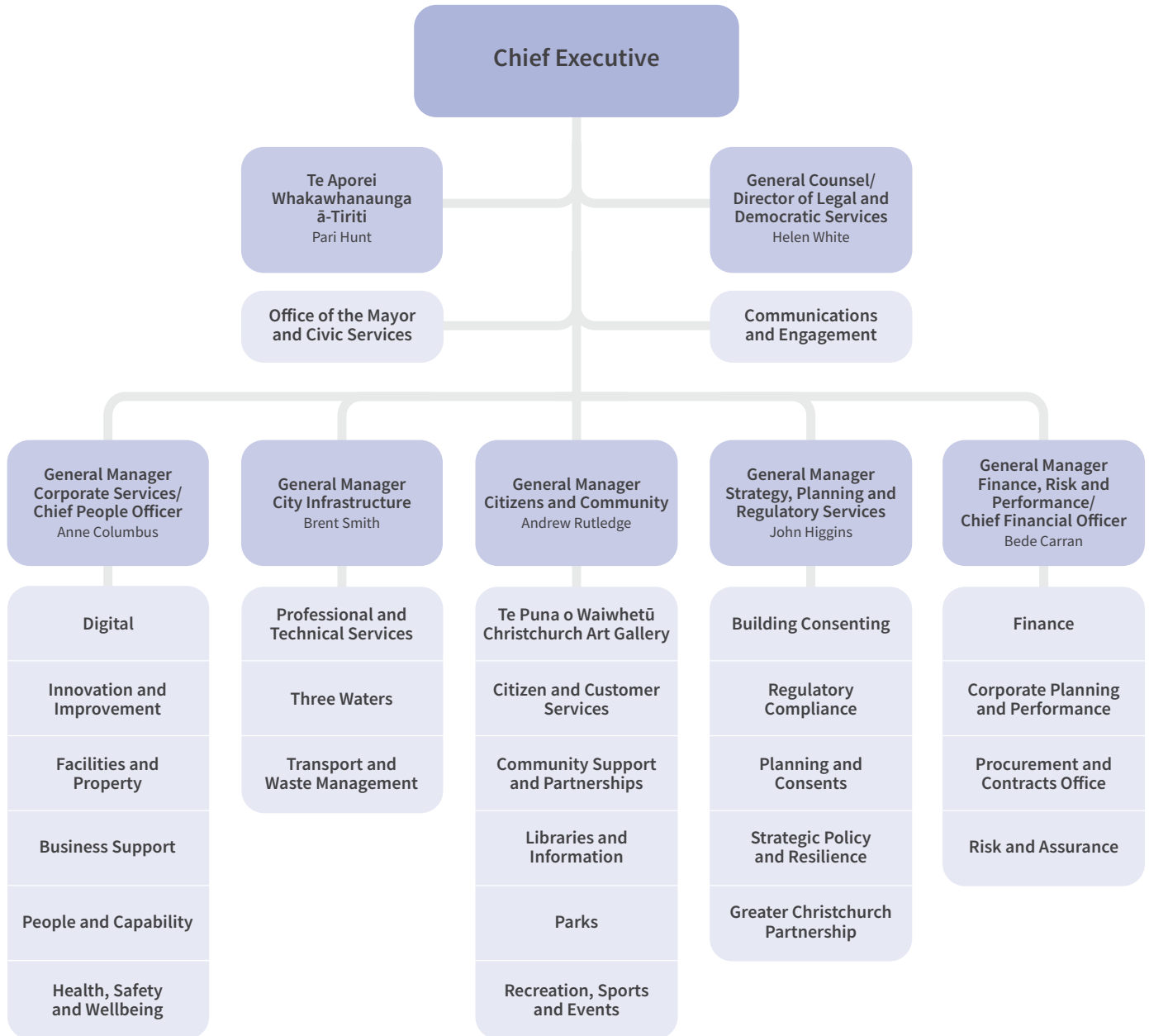


Mark Peters
Councillor for
Hornby Ward



Tim Scandrett
Councillor for
Cashmere Ward

Organisational chart



Position Description

TITLE: Chief Executive	TERM: 5 years
REPORTS TO: Council (Mayor and Councillors)	DIRECT REPORTS: 10
LOCATION: Christchurch, New Zealand	INDIRECT REPORTS: 3000 FTE

About Christchurch

Ōtautahi Christchurch is the largest city in the South Island, the second largest in the country. Christchurch is in the takiwā of Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga, Te Hapū o Ngāti Wheke, Te Rūnanga o Koukourārata, Ōnuku Rūnanga, Wairewa Rūnanga, and Te Taumutu Rūnanga within our district. It covers a land area of 141,550 hectares with around 70% of the city's zoned land is in Banks Peninsula.

Christchurch has an estimated population of 420,000. The population comprises 407,800 people in the Christchurch urban area, 3,200 people in the Lyttelton urban area, 1,700 people in the Diamond Harbour urban area, and 6,570 people in rural settlements and areas. Christchurch's GDP was approximately \$36.6 billion in the year to March 2025, which is the second largest in New Zealand after Auckland.

As one of New Zealand's largest and most progressive cities, Christchurch and Banks Peninsula is home to a vibrant community of galleries, museums, theatres, festivals, music venues, sports, recreation and events. It is the gateway to the Canterbury region with vast plains to snow-capped mountains, braided rivers, coastline to glacial lakes and a diversified regional economy including agriculture, industry, fishing, forestry, tourism, and energy resources.

About Christchurch City Council

Christchurch City Council comprises a mayor and 16 elected councillors. Additionally, Christchurch City Council has a strong community governance model with six community boards governed by 53 elected members (including councillors). The Council has one of the broadest range of functions of any New Zealand Council. In addition, there are a number of Council Controlled Organisation (CCOs), including a number of trading enterprises monitored by Christchurch City Holdings.

The draft Long-term Plan 2024-2034 plans for \$17 billion budget over 10 years, including capital expenditure of \$7 billion over the 10 year period. Like all other local authorities in New Zealand, the Council faces multiple financial challenges, including significantly increased debt servicing costs, significantly increased insurance costs, challenging asset renewal requirements, and the general increase in costs that a high rate of inflation brings.

Our vision is to make Christchurch a city of opportunity for all – open to new ideas, new people and new ways of doing things – where anything is possible.

Purpose of the Position

The Chief Executive of Christchurch City Council is a servant of and advocate for the Council and residents of Christchurch. The Chief Executive is accountable for ensuring the Council delivers its commitments to the communities it serves and enhances the well-being of Christchurch residents.

The Chief Executive will lead a large and complex organisation with a diverse team of people and is responsible for effective leadership and management of the Council's resources, services, and projects, and the provision of quality, timely advice to the Mayor, Council and community boards.

Christchurch City Council is seeking a Chief Executive who will provide visible and inspirational leadership and foster a culture of high-performing and engaged teams delivering high quality, value for money services. A core component of the role will be to strengthen the organisation and its reputation. You will be a leader who builds and maintains strong relationships with stakeholders, locally, regionally and nationally.

Key Responsibilities

The Local Government Act 2002 (LGA) prescribes the Chief Executive’s responsibilities ([Section 42, LGA](#))

The role of Chief Executive for Christchurch City Council will include responsibility for:

Leadership and Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Motivate and inspire staff to achieve the aims and objectives contained within the Council’s policies and plans. - Create and role model a culture of performance, accountability, and delivery of outcomes. - Develop and maintain a well-functioning and cohesive Executive Leadership. - Team that provides collective leadership to the organisation. - Ensure the Council’s internal ways of working are outcome-focused not process-focused, are adaptable and responsive to customer and community needs, and deliver value to residents. - Build trust and ensure that there are open channels for honest two-way feedback and ideas. - Lead and empower a diverse team (internally and externally) towards common goals to better the city. - Foster an inclusive workplace where diversity is valued.
Governance Advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure the Mayor, Council and community boards are provided with professional, accurate and timely advice to enable them to fulfil their governance function. - Provide quality advice to the Council on strategic policy, legal and statutory obligations, risk and financial matters. - Ensure strong and constructive relationships are in place with the Mayor's Office, councillors, local boards and CCOs. - Work closely with the Council to develop and implement the strategy, plans and policy. - Ensure strong governance relationships with mana whenua to deliver on the Council’s Te Tiriti o Waitangi obligations. - Manage the interface between Elected Members and Officers - promoting a positive and respectful relationship. - Communicate to the Mayor and councillors on a ‘no-surprises’ basis that focuses on strategic issues, risk and reputation.

Operational Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain a deep understanding of the Council’s vision and values, to guide decision making and implement Council’s decisions. - Lead the development of the Council’s Long-term Plan and Annual Plan. - Translate Plans and strategies into objectives for the executive team and senior management to align and mobilise people across the Council. - Maintain a citizen-centred culture that puts people at the centre of the Council’s delivery. - Ensure activities are effective and efficient. - Ensure the Council’s regulatory functions are managed in accordance with statutory requirements. - Ensure compliance with all legal and statutory obligations. - Ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of our people – at Council and in the community.
Stakeholder and Relationship Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure the Council develops effective partnerships with mana whenua to enable their aspirations and ensures Māori values are reflected and incorporated across the Council. - Build strong, effective and culturally appropriate relationships with key stakeholders. - Engage with industry and community bodies to build understanding and connection. - Enhance resident and stakeholder trust and confidence in the Council. - Ensure the Council’s and city’s interests are effectively represented at local, regional and national levels. - Represent and negotiate on behalf of the Council at local, regional and national levels, promoting inter-council working across the region. - Partner closely with central government agencies to enable the delivery of regional priorities for Christchurch.
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure communications are transparent, timely and relevant to the audience/s. - Promote, develop and maintain good relationships with the media and public. - Ensure an effective communication strategy both internal and external to the organisation.
Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Champion climate change mitigation and adaptation within the Council and the wider community. - Ensure the Council meets its carbon reduction target and its environmental performance requirements. - Maximise engagement with stakeholders on all aspects of sustainability, carbon reduction and climate change adaptation. - Actively balance the needs of today's residents with the needs of future generations, with the aim of leaving no one behind.

Financial and Risk Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure effective management of the Council’s financial position and performance. - Develop effective risk management policies, procedures and plans to ensure the highest standards and protect the reputation and assets of the Council. - Ensure the Council systems and controls are modern, flexible, fit for purpose and proportionate.
Brand and Reputation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain unquestionable integrity, a clear understanding of the Council’s brand and desired behaviours, and a focus on community outcomes to guide decision making. - Advocate for Christchurch and the Council to build and maintain trust and confidence. - Accept responsibility for fronting the Council on operational matters, including in times of crisis.

About You

Having proven Chief Executive experience, you are a collaborative and resilient leader who engages and enables, with undoubted integrity, strong accountability and a ‘can do’ attitude. You will be a strategic thinker with a visionary outlook and possess excellent people management skills that enables you to capture the heart and minds of diverse people and stakeholders, with energy and empathy.

You are self-aware with a strong track record of leadership and building effective partnerships. Emotional intelligence and communication skills are second to none, with a willingness to listen and effectively navigate diverse stakeholders to achieve common goals. Strong problem-solving and decision-making skills come naturally, a critical thinker you will be able to adapt and deliver to achieve.

You are comfortable being uncomfortable and you are motivated by a commitment to public service and community wellbeing. You have a sound understanding of Local Government in New Zealand.

Key Skills and Experience Required

	Essential	Desirable
Collaborative, decisive, diplomatic, resilient, composed, courageous and self-aware	Yes	
Innate community and service orientation	Yes	
Ability to build a high-performing and well-functioning team and culture - leading, engaging, motivating, and empowering other people	Yes	
Ability to work with, gain and maintain the trust of a wide range of internal and external stakeholders	Yes	
Self-leadership and initiative, and self-awareness	Yes	
Strategic thinking and focus – balancing the long-term view	Yes	
Ability and willingness to make decisions and take responsibility for outcomes	Yes	
Proven experience leading large, multi-disciplinary organisations.	Yes	
Ability to share credit for success, ‘own’ failures and take on board learnings	Yes	
Delegating effectively, holding others to account	Yes	

Knowledge and experience		
Demonstrated success as a Chief Executive	Yes	
Proven understanding of local government in New Zealand, including significant knowledge of the relevant legislation	Yes	
Understanding of the New Zealand public sector, the concept of public good and the democratic process	Yes	
Experience of working in a highly regulated governance environment	Yes	
Ability to work in a high-profile role (with media scrutiny) with strong public, community, and stakeholder interface	Yes	
Exposure to leading large complex capital projects, and proven experience in delivering these on time and on budget	Yes	
Experience guiding organisations through major reforms or large-scale transformation	Yes	
Demonstrated expertise in managing complex budgets, with the ability to lead complex financial analyses and model sophisticated financial scenarios.	Yes	
A connection to Christchurch and Banks Peninsula		Yes
Experience in effectively working with mana whenua and understanding their economic, environmental, cultural, and social aspirations	Yes	
Qualifications		
Tertiary qualifications in a relevant discipline or equivalent experience	Yes	
Postgraduate qualifications		Yes



How to apply

Christchurch City Council is working with Echelon Group to support the recruitment of its next Chief Executive. Echelon Group is assisting with a thorough and professional search process to identify a strong leader who can build on the Council's recent achievements and guide the organisation through its next phase.

Patrick Methven is Principal Consultant at Echelon Group with over 30 years' experience in recruitment and talent solutions across New Zealand. He specialises in senior leadership and specialist roles across both private and public sectors, including local government, leveraging deep local knowledge and international networks to deliver tailored executive search and advisory services.

Phone: +64 21 372 457

Email: patrick.methven@echelongroup.co.nz

Gerald van Looy is Principal Consultant at Echelon Group with extensive experience in recruitment and talent solutions since 1997. Drawing on senior management experience in manufacturing, building products, and public sector organisations, he specialises in mid-to-senior appointments across local government, public sector, manufacturing, supply chain, quality, and sales and marketing.

Phone: +64 21 302 888

Email: gerald.vanlooy@echelongroup.co.nz

Candidates can apply, in strict confidence, online at www.echelongroup.co.nz

To apply by email, please attach your cover letter and CV and send to patrick.methven@echelongroup.co.nz

Applications close on 6 May 2026.

Emails will be electronically acknowledged, and further correspondence may be by email.

For more information or to make confidential enquiries please phone Patrick Methven on 021 372 457.