



MANIFESTO

The Hamilton Residents and Ratepayers Association (HRRRA) was formed to represent all individuals and companies who either directly or indirectly pay rates or development contributions to the Hamilton City Council. The Hamilton Resident and Ratepayers Association Inc. is politically non-partisan and encourages diversity of expression with the aim of reaching consensus.

Over the years, we have observed the erosion of open dialogue between ratepayers and elected members, together with poor governance between the elected members and Council Management.

While individual policy is important to Hamilton Resident and Ratepayers, we are more concerned about good local government practices and processes. Our core focus is on ensuring elected representatives and their officials abide by processes that support 4 core values: Transparency, Integrity, Democracy, and Accountability. In support of these four values this working document sets out the criteria the association members have agreed upon as some simple bottom lines we would expect to be the basis for council decision-making.

Democracy

Council decisions reflect the will of the community.

- 1) *Consultation documents and decisions are written in language that all voters can understand. Any decision must meet the requirements of New Zealand legislation and take into account the majority opinion of submitters.*
- 2) *Plans and Proposals presented to Elected Members are measured against the following Indicators and processes.*
 - a) Limit *maximum* annual rates rise to match inflation (CPI), incl. GST.
 - b) Zero Based budgeting. (ie. All expenses must be justified and approved for each period)
 - c) Limit Debt to Revenue Ratio to 100% of collected Rate Revenue.
 - d) Ratepayer invoices to list the cost of each core service and non-core service.
 - e) Non-core activities limited to less than 20% of total rate revenue.

Transparency

Council decisions and the supporting rationale must be available and understandable to all voters.

- 1) *Tenders that are commercially sensitive can be kept confidential up to the time the tender closes, but are then open to community review **prior** to the final decision being made.*
- 2) *Major Projects (over \$1M) do not commence until prior approval has been given by the majority of elected members.*
- 3) *Elected members will develop best practice with University subject matter experts using international recognised Governance methodology, including the public recording of all decisions by Elected Members.*

Accountability

Elected representatives are accountable for the 10-year and annual plans and Council's financial performance and shall maintain governance criteria to hold council staff accountable for delivering agreed operational outcomes.

1) *Financial delegation authority levels approved by ALL elected members for all levels of Council Management.*

2) *Operating Expenditure is maintained within the following limits:*

Category	Activities Included	% of total OPEX Guideline
Core Infrastructure	Roading, transport, water supply, wastewater, solid waste/refuse	46% +/-3%
Core Services	Environmental protection, property, emergency management, planning & regulation, governance	18% +/- 3%
'NON-core'	Culture, recreation and sport, community development, economic development	17% +/- 3%
Other	Other activities	3% +/- 3%
Development	Development Contributions	actual

3) *The Hamilton City Council will work with Media Representatives, HRRA and the office of the Ombudsman to improve the efficiency and effective response to information requests; both official information requests and general ratepayer information requests.*

4) *The Chief Executive appointment initially contracted for a 3-year term with a maximum of 5 years, and renewed annually when it is demonstrated they are able to meet operational outcomes & efficiencies, set and measured against agreed KPI's. .*

Integrity

Council decisions must be made in the best interest of all citizens.

1) *A bi-annual fully transparent review of spending against agreed limits on PR & Communications, Lawyers and Consultants undertaken by independent University experts and representatives from HRRA.*

2) *Elected Members personal involvement, as a beneficiary of Trusts and their immediate family must declare Conflicts of Interest (as defined by Audit NZ) and their reason(s) and agree to publicly notifying these conflicts on the Council website prior to decisions being made.*

3) *All Supply agreements (including preferred agreements) will be set for a maximum of 3 years with an annual review clause that tests the conditions against the current market.*

We do not think these simple requests are too much to ask in light of the fact that it is a public entity, using your money. We also know that these simple requests represent a significant change in many current practices and will have a dramatic positive effect on Hamilton. **Join Us Now** and have your say on this Manifesto and on other HRRA decisions.