



Rates and revenue

Local councils provide a range of services and infrastructure, like swimming pools, parks, public transport, and drinking water. To pay for these services, councils can collect a range of fees and property taxes (often called 'rates'). Different candidates have different ideas about how much councils should charge for rates. In this activity we will explore and discuss different approaches to rates and council revenues..

→ Go to [policy.nz](https://www.policy.nz) and find the elections in your area

→ Choose an election and browse the candidates' profiles to learn about who is standing

1. Read [this](#) page about how councils raise revenues to pay for their activities and services.
 - What different forms of revenue do councils collect?
 - What are rates, and who has to pay them?
 - Are there any types of property you don't have to pay rates on? Why might a council decide not to tax certain types of property?
2. People have strong feelings about taxes and rates. Some people describe tax as 'love', while others describe tax as 'theft' or 'violence'.
 - Do you agree with either of these views? Read the following resources to help you:
 - [A crazy little thing called tax](#) and [Why are you so afraid of tax?](#) argue that tax is more similar to love.
 - [Tax is not love, it's violence](#) argues that tax is more similar to theft.

→ Browse candidates' policies in the *Rates and revenue* topic

→ Save the policies you agree with by clicking the heart icon

4. Consider the candidates' different policies on rates.
 - Which candidates want people to pay more in rates? What are their reasons?
 - Which candidates want people to pay less in rates? What are their reasons?
5. For one of the policies you have saved, and write a PMI (plus, minus, interesting).
 - How would the policy impact you?
 - How would it impact your family?
6. Think about how you would want the council to raise money if you were a councillor or the mayor. Come up with one or two policies of your own.
 - How would these affect you, your family and your friends?
 - How will you persuade others to agree with your policy? Write three arguments for your policy idea.