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Letter: Ballooning debt a systemic problem



Dave Stewart

I read with great interest the article in Wednesday's **Beacon** (Rates rises ranked across the country) about how Whakatāne's rates rises sit at 15th highest in New Zealand.

I researched and found the article on the Taxpayer's Union right wing Think Tank website and I simply couldn't believe what I was reading.

Whakatāne Action Group (WAG) has long blamed the Whakatāne District Council debt on what it refers to as a "core group" of four spendthrift councillors.

As recently as May 28 (Core Group Needs to Review Stance) and July 2nd (Council need to “live within our means”) a WAG stalwart, very closely echoed former WAG head sherrang and now would-be mayor Philip Jacobs, by repeatedly referring to this core group as responsible for our “ballooning debt”.

If the truth is that the reason our council debt has ballooned is caused by their unidentified and unnamed core group of councillors, can WAG now explain how this villainous core group has managed to also balloon the debt on 14 councils above us on the Taxpayer’s Union list, and I guess those below us.



It seems to me that the Taxpayers Union list proves beyond all doubt that there is a systematic problem at play here.

My research tells me that central Government’s ongoing multi-million demands on ratepayers is the real cause of the problem all councils are facing.

People who weaponise misinformation to advance their own personal political agendas need to be weeded out of our political system. I think we can all agree Whakatāne deserves better than that.

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