

## Council Briefing Agenda

**Date:** Wednesday, 1 July, 2020

**Time:** 9:00 am

**Location:** Council Chamber  
Forum North, Rust Avenue  
Whangarei

**Elected Members:** Her Worship the Mayor Sheryl Mai  
(Chairperson)

Cr Gavin Benney

Cr Vince Cocurullo

Cr Nicholas Connop

Cr Ken Couper

Cr Tricia Cutforth

Cr Shelley Deeming

Cr Jayne Golightly

Cr Phil Halse

Cr Greg Innes

Cr Greg Martin

Cr Anna Murphy

Cr Carol Peters

Cr Simon Reid

For any queries regarding this meeting please contact  
the Whangarei District Council on (09) 430-4200.

**1. Apologies**

**2. Reports**

2.1 Solid Waste Recycling and Public Toilets LTP AMP Briefing 1

2.2 Parks and Recreation LTP AMP Breifing 9

**3. Closure of Meeting**

## 2.1 LTP Activity Briefings: Solid Waste, Recycling and Public Toilets

**Meeting:** Council Briefing  
**Date of meeting:** 1 July 2020  
**Reporting officer:** David Lindsay (Solid Waste Engineer)

### 1 Purpose

To provide elected members an overview of the **Solid Waste, Recycling and Public Toilets** activity. This includes the following:

- what we do
- the key assets and levels of service
- the key issues facing this activity

### 2 Background

Elected members will receive briefings on the key activities of Council. Through these briefings, staff will provide an overview of the activity. Staff will also provide information on the key issues facing that activity over the next 3 and 10 years as well as into the long term. The intent is to give elected members clear visibility and knowledge of the activity.

These briefings will also help to identify common issues which may impact on multiple activities and set the scene for direction setting for the 2021 – 31 Long Term Plan.

### 3 Discussion

#### 3.1 What we do

##### **Solid Waste and Recycling**

Our aim is to provide Whangarei district with efficient, effective and safe solid waste and recycling services which reduce the quantity of waste generated and discarded, protect public health and protect the environment.

Council's responsibilities for solid waste and recycling management stem mainly from the Waste Minimisation Act 2008. The District's Waste Management and Minimisation Plan was adopted by Council in 2017. The vision statement in the plan is: *"To deliver community benefits and work towards zero waste to landfill. Whangarei businesses and households will be provided with efficient and effective waste minimisation and management services that recognise waste as a resource."*

Demand from the community for improvements in the way that solid waste and recycling is managed continue to grow.

## Public Toilets

Our aim is that public toilets are safe, accessible, pleasant to visit, are strategically located to meet the needs of visitors and the travelling public.

### 3.2 Our key assets and services

Solid waste, recycling and public toilets assets are valued at \$6.03m (Landfill and Re:Sort are private assets not included).

Services provided by Council include:

- **Kerbside rubbish and recycling collection (contractor - Northland Waste)**

Weekly kerbside collection of rubbish and recycling, or in some rural areas at the nearest intersection with a major road. Rubbish is collected in bags and crates are provided for recyclables. Commercial operators offer competing wheelie bin refuse services as well as greenwaste collection.

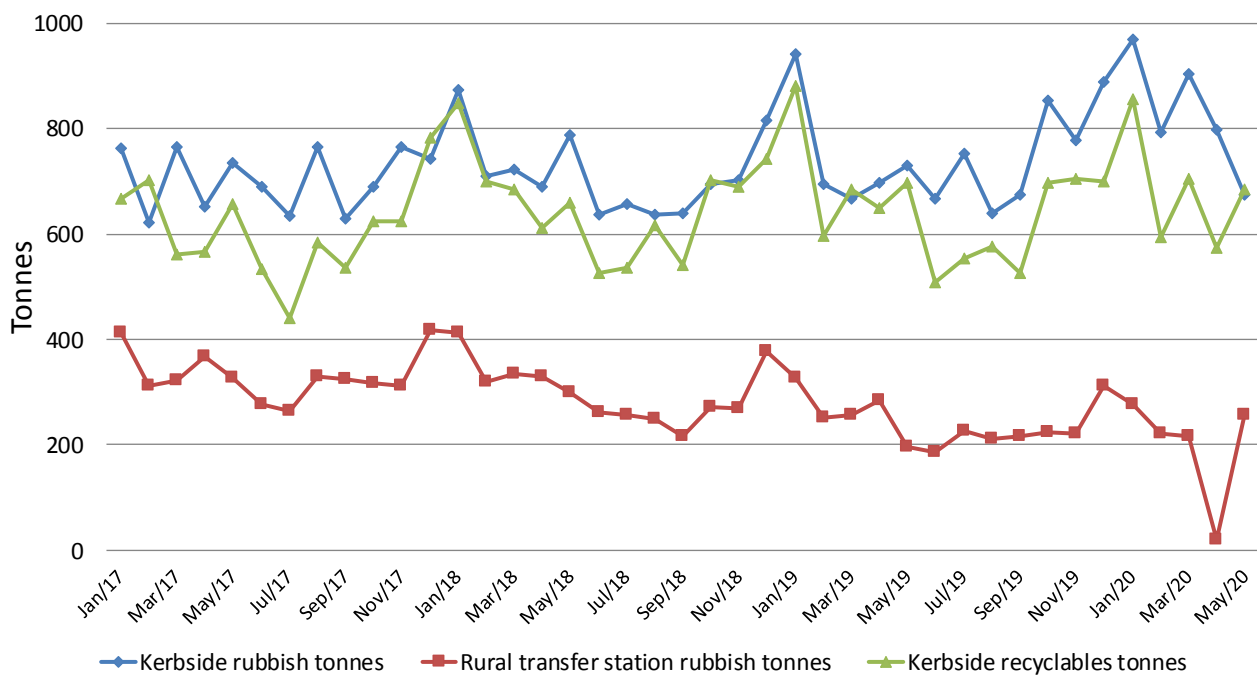
Premises in the Whangarei CBD are serviced three times a week for rubbish collection and once per week for cardboard. Coastal settlements are serviced twice per week for six weeks during the summer holidays.

- **Rural rubbish and recycling transfer stations (contractor - Northland Waste)**

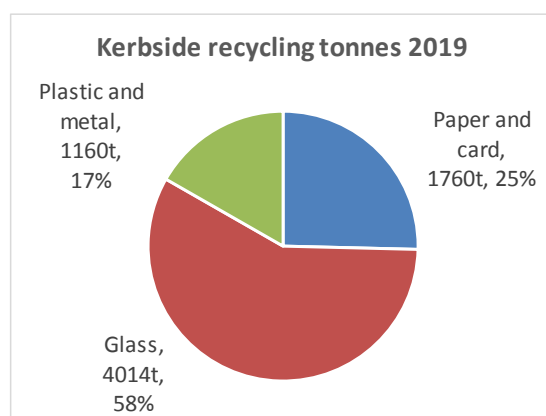
Transfer stations are provided at Hikurangi, Kokopu, Uretiti, Tauraroa, Ngunguru, Oakura and Ruatangata. Public can drop-off rubbish and recycling.

The graph below shows the tonnage of rubbish and recycling collected under the solid waste contract. Kerbside recycling and rubbish are increasing slowly whilst rural rubbish and recycling station tonnages are in decline.

**Solid Waste Tonnes Jan 2017 - Year to Date**



The composition of kerbside recyclables is shown in the diagram below:



- **Litter collection (contractor - Recreational Services)**

Approximately 450 litter bins are sited throughout the district at roadsides, shopping areas, parks, and reserves. Regular litter collections are undertaken in parks, road berms and public areas, as well as the removal of illegal dumping.

- **Closed landfills**

Council owns five closed landfills, the largest one at Pohe Island and four small sites in rural locations (Ruatangata, Hikurangi, Uretiti, and Tauraroa).

- **Waste Minimisation Education (contractor - EcoSolutions)**

EcoSolutions deliver waste minimisation lessons to school children and support schools' and events' waste minimisation programmes.

- **Pubic toilet cleaning (contractor - PPCS)**

There are 68 public toilets throughout the district. The cleaning frequency for each toilet varies throughout the year and depending on the location. During the summer additional portaloos are deployed in approximately 12 locations. There are also a number of toilets that are available for public use i.e. within libraries or privately-owned and operated within commercial developments.

The approximate cost of providing a public toilet is \$50 per day. The capital cost of building a new toilet is normally between \$100,000 and \$300,000.

### 3.3 Northland Regional Landfill Limited Partnership

Services provided by the Council Controlled Trading Organisation known as Northland Regional Landfill Limited Partnership (NRLLP), a 50:50 venture between Council and its private sector partner Northland Waste Limited include:

- **Re:Sort**

Re:Sort resource recovery park is located in Kioreroa Road. Rubbish is compacted into bins and transported to Puwera landfill for final disposal. There is an extensive recycling consolidation and compaction area and greenwaste is accepted in a dedicated area. There is a designated hazardous waste storage area, and the *Last Re:Sort* shop which sells items salvaged from the waste stream.

- **Puwera landfill**

Puwera Landfill is a municipal solid waste landfill located south of Whangarei. Construction was completed in October 2010. It accepts approximately 120,000 tonnes of waste per annum from the whole of Northland and north Auckland.

### 3.4 Our levels of service

Much of the activity's services are delivered externally. Correspondingly, WDC's service measures focus on overall community satisfaction and total waste reduction targets.

**Level of Service 1 - To reduce waste disposed of to landfill to below 500 kg per person per year by 2020.**

Currently approximately 560 kg per person is being landfilled including biosolids and industrial waste streams.

**Level of Service 2 - To recycle at least 35% of waste collected at the roadside from households**

Currently 35% collected has been recycled this year.

**Level of Service 3 - Council will recycle, compost or reuse at least 50% of materials at transfer stations by 2020.**

Currently 49% of material has been recycled, composted or reused this year.

## 4 Key issues for the next 3 Years

### 4.1 Legislative and Market Change

Over the last 2 years changes in the international recycling markets and campaigns against plastic pollution have resulted in a higher profile for the issue of recycling and waste management. At a national level the Ministry for Environment has begun a programme to reform New Zealand's waste management system to reduce waste, increase resource recovery and transition New Zealand towards a circular economy. The work programme focuses on the following initiatives:

- Expanding the waste disposal levy to more of New Zealand's landfills and improving data on waste.<sup>1</sup>
- Analysing where investment in innovation and resource recovery infrastructure is most needed to support New Zealand's transition to a circular economy approach. (a \$1.5 billion solid waste infrastructure deficit has been identified).
- Implementing product stewardship schemes for problematic waste streams including vehicle tyres, plastic packaging, e-waste (starting with lithium-ion batteries), agrichemicals and synthetic greenhouse gases.

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<sup>1</sup> Changes to Waste Levy are likely to increase the application of the levy to disposal sites other than just municipal waste landfill sites. This will include cleanfill sites and other industrial disposal sites. The rate of the landfill levy may increase from the current \$10 per tonne. If the revenue from the Waste Levy increases, then there will be more money available to invest in waste minimisation.

- Developing a national circular economy strategy, starting with priority sectors where the greatest benefits can be gained from transitioning to a circular economy approach.
- Standardisation of Council services across the country.

Depending on how these initiatives and policy changes are implemented will determine the impact they have on Council's services and the solid waste activity. What we can expect, are some significant changes to the market and the composition of the material we collect for disposal. For example, if producers are forced to take responsibility for funding the management of their packaging waste they could do that by funding Council services or by setting up parallel systems.

North of the Auckland harbour bridge there is very limited recycling sorting or reprocessing capacity. If the Waste Disposal Levy and Carbon Credit prices rise as anticipated, then there will be more economic justification for the investment required to divert waste streams from the landfill. The likely focus would be on large volume waste streams like sludge from the waste water treatment plant or construction and demolition waste. The Waste Minimisation Fund or the Provincial Growth Fund are two potential avenues for funding of infrastructure investment required to develop more capacity.

#### **4.2 2020/21 Budget**

The 2020/21 operating budget for Solid Waste, Recycling and Public Toilets has been tasked with finding a \$425k saving, as part of the Council wide cost saving initiative. This will need to be carefully managed throughout the year to ensure that levels of service are minimally impacted by the reduction and staff are currently working through this.

#### **4.3 Solid Waste Activity Funding**

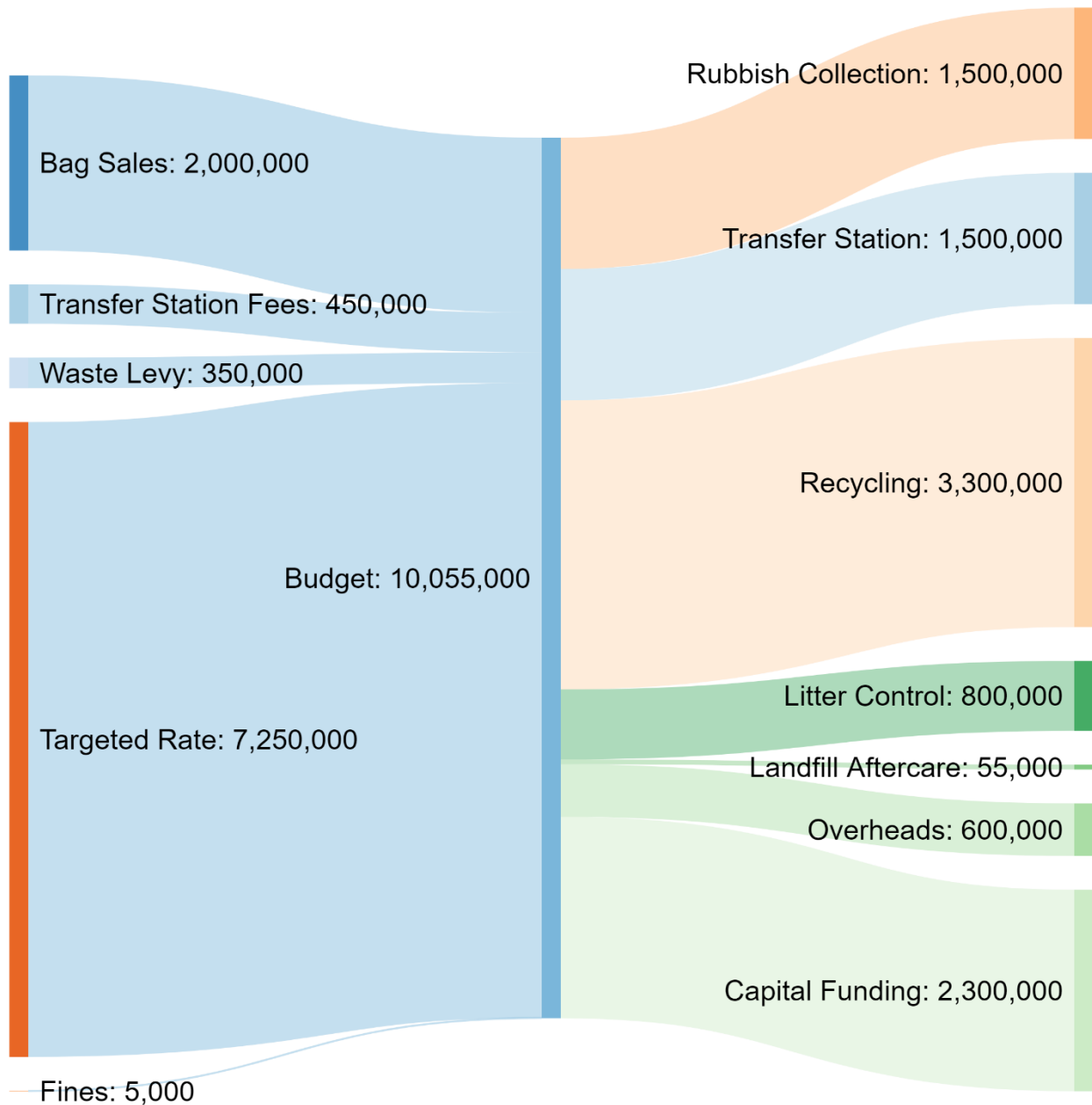
Currently the majority of funding for the activity comes from the Solid Waste Targeted Rate, the funding split is shown in the chart below. Our operational expenses are somewhat dictated by sales of rubbish bags and stickers, as rubbish disposal costs rise the charges for rubbish bags may need to increase. The value or cost of processing the recyclable materials which we collect also has an influence on the budget, at the moment the prices for materials are very low and haulage is often more than the material value.

A small portion of the Activity funding comes from Waste Levy payments from the Ministry for the Environment. The levy funding must be used for activities in line with the District's Waste Management and Minimisation Plan, the amount of money provided will increase if the rate of the landfill levy increases. The amount of income raised from the solid waste targeted rate will be more than required to fund the activity and therefore it may be appropriate to reduce the solid waste targeted rate.

#### **4.4 Asset renewals**

In the most recent LTP we expected the Solid Waste assets to depreciate by \$520k over the course of the 10 years, partially mitigated by \$250k of renewals expenditure planned over the same period. Prudent asset management strategies suggest that depreciation should approximately equal renewals expenditure (to prevent a deferral of renewals expenditure to future periods). This is potentially an area that will need to be reviewed during the next LTP process.

### Funding and expenses for the Solid Waste and Recycling activity annually



#### 4.5 Coastal Toilets

It is expected that domestic tourism will continue to result in a high demand for toilet facilities in coastal locations particularly at popular beaches. Restrictions on the availability of water supply and suitable land for disposal fields are two significant barriers to the development of improved facilities at many locations.

#### 4.6 Inconsistent Levels of Service

Coastal communities have a six-week period after New Year when the rubbish and recycling collections happen twice per week. This service was implemented to deal with the peak waste generation period when there was less recycling container capacity per property and fewer permanent residents at the coastal settlements. By the second week of January there is often little demand for the extra summer collections.



Other inconsistency exists in the collection of waste from the commercial shopping areas. While we collect rubbish and commercial cardboard for recycling from Whangarei CBD, we do not collect commercial recycling from other retail areas. This is due to the number, density and type of shops in the different areas as well as the layout of the roads making it difficult to effectively service the outlying retail areas.

The opening hours for the 7 rural transfer stations is also inconsistent across the different sites. We are now gathering more information about when the sites are used and the type of waste that is being dropped off and therefore it may be possible to refine the opening hours. For example, Oakura transfer station has an average of one customer per hour on Thursdays and Ruatangata less than 2 customers per hour on Thursdays. The weekends are much busier and extending the hours then may provide a better service.

## **5 Key issues for the next 10 years**

Depending on what happens with the issues listed above at a national level the solid waste and recycling activity could change significantly in the next ten years.

If other Councils are successful with separate collection of food waste (Auckland is planning to start in 2023), then there may be demand to start this service in Whangarei.

## **6 Key issues in the long term**

Globally and locally there is a widespread acknowledgement of the need to change our behaviour towards waste generation and resource consumption. there is an imperative to reduce waste to a minimum and extract maximum value from all resources. As individuals, communities, companies and governments develop new approaches to managing waste and resources, Council will need to continue to support and influence these developments and react to the changes.

Extension or replacement of the landfill may be required at some point in the 2030s. Waste Management NZ Ltd are currently in the process of resource consent application for a large landfill at Dome Valley which may impact on the available waste disposal options.



## 2.2 LTP Activity Briefing: Parks and Recreation

<b>Meeting:</b>	Council Briefing
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	1 July 2020
<b>Reporting officer:</b>	Sue Hodge (Manager Parks, Recreation and Solid Waste)

### 1 Purpose

To provide elected members an overview of the Parks and Recreation activity. This includes the following:

- what we do;
- the key assets and levels of service
- the key issues facing this activity

### 2 Background

Elected members will receive briefings on the key activities of Council. Through these briefings, staff will provide an overview of the activity. Staff will also provide information on the key issues facing that activity over the next 3 and 10 years as well as into the long term. The intent is to give elected members clear visibility and knowledge of the activity.

These briefings will also help to identify common issues which may impact on multiple activities and set the scene for direction setting for the 2021 – 31 Long Term Plan.

### 3 Discussion

#### 3.1 What we do

Parks and Recreation activity provides parks and reserves for play, sport and recreation, landscapes and green places and general amenity including:

- City parks, street trees, gardens and amenity
- Areas for sport and recreation, tracks and walkways, skateparks and playgrounds
- Weed and pest management and planting programs.
- Cemetery services to facilitate burials, cremation, memorials, and eco-burials.
- Botanica dedicated to the collection, cultivation, preservation and display of a wide range of plants available for visitors and education purposes
- Management of former quarries, landfills, forest remnants, pine forests and regenerating bush
- Coastal structures and seawalls.

Parks is a source for operating grants and subsidies to:

- McKay Stadium and Whangarei Aquatic Centre (via Sport Northland)
- Community mowing and general maintenance grants
- Community groups e.g. Friends of Matakohē Limestone Island, Pukenui Forest Trust.

As well as providing occasional 'one-off' grants/seed funding to facilitate development with other partners of district recreation facilities e.g. Northland Athletics and Gymnastics Stadium Trust (NAGST).

The quality of these spaces and activities that take place on them contribute to the attractiveness and vibrancy of our District. Our parks and associated facilities are significant assets which are used and appreciated by residents and visitors contributing to the health and wellbeing of our community.

### 3.2 Our key assets

#### Land:

Land is our main asset enabling access and enjoyment of the District for all, promoting health and wellbeing. Our linkages, tracks and walkways compliment Roding's shared pathway program, forming key links around the district, reducing carbon footprints and promoting health.

Our land is maintained and managed according to its type and purpose. Level of provision of Neighbourhood and Sport & Recreation areas are based on national Yardstick standards.

Type	Example
Nature	Parihaka (includes tracks, carparks, toilets, structures)
Neighbourhood Parks	Potter Park (playground, public toilet, amenity planting)
Adventure	Abbey Caves Road (mountain bike tracks, walking tracks, bridle trail)
Public Gardens	Laurie Hall Park, Cafler Park (annual flower displays, seating, lighting and paths)
Recreation linkages	Matapouri beachfront (grassed areas, car parking seating and accessways)
Sports & Recreation	Kensington Park (home of junior sport, District netball centre, Stadium, carparking, hockey, athletics).
Civic space	Town Basin and Hatea Loop (High maintenance and amenity areas with garden displays, playground, toilets, art, seating, paths, car parking, and lighting)
Heritage sites	Cemeteries open and closed including the main Maunu Cemetery (in-house maintenance)

Due to location and growth patterns within the District there is localised undersupply of Neighbourhood Parks e.g. Kamo, Tikipunga and coastal villages.

As well as Sports and Recreation reserves e.g. in Kamo, Tikipunga, Parua Bay, Maungatapere and coastal villages. There is an expectation that people will need to travel to use centralised sport and recreation parks or develop shared use agreements with other providers of facilities such as the Ministry of Education.

### Other Key Assets:

Our asset base was worth \$8 million total replacement cost as of the 2019 made up of land and:

- 312ha sports field land currently providing 81 full sized sports fields, and 16 fields with modern training lights
- 43 playgrounds and 5 skateparks
- 55km maintained tracks and walkways
- 8.7km of seawalls provide protection to infrastructure, 31 formed beach accesses, 16 wharves and jetties.
- 19,000 maintained street trees
- 8 maintained cemeteries with Maunu the largest at 36ha

Land is also leased to other organisations e.g. Quarry Gardens however Council does not maintain these assets.

### 3.3 Our levels of service

Much of the activity's services are delivered externally. Correspondingly, WDC's service measures focus largely on overall community satisfaction targets with some technical measures. Current levels of service (LOS) and performance measures are:

Level of Service 1 – Council will provide and maintain outdoor sporting facilities to support and promote active recreation of the community through participation in both organised and informal sporting activities.

- Sports parks will be provided to meet the community's needs\*
  - Target 2018-19 >187 hours
  - Actual 2018-19 >180 hours

\*metric is the number of hours available at sports parks per 1000 members of our District population during the winter season

Based on the playground renewal programme and projects such as the destination playground it is recommended this LOS statement is changed to "both organised and informal ~~sporting~~ play activities" and a second performance measure is added from the Residents Satisfaction Survey such as:

- Overall Resident user satisfaction with playgrounds
  - Current 2018-19 - 89%
  - Target – 90%

Level of Service 2 - Council will provide and maintain a range of reserves, including built facilities, to meet the needs of the community as well as protecting and enhancing the natural environment

- Average satisfaction rating of sports codes with sports parks
  - Target 2018-19 >84%
  - Actual 2018-19 - 92%
- Residents' satisfaction with neighbourhood, civic space, cultural heritage, public gardens and recreational and ecological linkages to parks.
  - Target 2018-19 >90%
  - Actual 2018-19 - 92% (average of 7 questions)

Level of Service 3 – Council will convert, or up-grade identified existing open spaces to provide a wider range of high quality recreational and leisure opportunities within our District for our community and visitors.

- Hectares of open space land transformed does not drop below\*\*
  - Target 2018-2019 - 0.5ha
  - Actual 2018-2019 – 1.8ha
- Residents' perception that Council is making sufficient investment in developing a strong sense of place for our District and its communities.
  - Target 2018-19 >70%
  - Actual 2018-19 - 93%

\*\* This measure relates parks and reserve lands that have been developed with amenities that promote increased public use.

Level of Service 4 – Council will provide and/or maintain cemeteries and crematorium in a satisfactory manner

- Residents' satisfaction with cemeteries
  - Target 2018-19 >90%
  - Actual 2018-19 - 97%

## 4 Key issues for the next 3 Years

### 4.1 Climate change

The Parks and Recreation activity will be impacted by climate change as many assets such as walkways, esplanades, public toilets, jetties and boat ramps are on the coast and subject to damage from storm surge or sea level rise. Over the next 3 years further information will be collected to determine the impact of this predicted change. However, the short-term impact on delays to consenting and re-consenting of structures in the marine area is already being felt.

There is increasing pressure to plant and re-shape coastal dunes/foreshore to protect public access and facilities.

The 2020 drought water restrictions required re-sowing of sports fields, loss of annual gardens and plantings. Irrigating sports fields over the summer is required to retain suitable grass surface in autumn for the winter codes. For this reason, future water restrictions may impact on LoS standards e.g. hours of field use.

With increase summer temperatures there has been an increasing demand for shade at various locations where we stay for long periods such as beaches and playgrounds. Short term this can be met with expensive shade structures and longer term will need to be addressed with a significant increase in amenity tree plantings with consequential operational cost increases.

### 4.2 Youth facilities

Council have generally provided well for 5-10 years old in terms of playgrounds. The age 10-19 years requires more challenging playscapes or facilities such as skateparks and basketball courts. This demand was expressed during the development of the Active Recreation and Sport strategy.

Developing new basketball courts and skateparks is challenging on current sites as it is difficult to meet District Plan rules particularly noise. Despite funding for new assets finding

suitable sites is difficult causing delays in delivery. A large strategic land purchase in the City may help as factors such as noise, parking, accessibility could be mitigated.

Concerns for personal safety in public places such as pedestrian visibility (CPTED) and lighting must be considered.

There is a public expectation renewals or new sites will include additional amenity such as sun protection, seating, pathways and drinking fountains.

### **4.3 Active Recreation & Sports Strategy**

Active recreation and sporting needs of our aging and growing population are changing. Older active adults are requesting facilities such as cycleways and walkways or facilities to enjoy with their grandchildren. While families are wanting affordable opportunities such as access to sports fields, playgrounds with amenities like good parking and shade. Our youth want facilities where they can hang out safely.

The District faces a number of challenges that impact on the current and future provision of facilities. These are:

- A lack of consistency in locally accessible and inclusive base level provision for active recreation and sport
- A lack of sports code and network planning
- An ageing and growing resident population
- Increasing pressure on key active recreation locations from tourism
- Changing participation patterns and an ageing stock of facilities
- Moving from single purpose facilities to shared multi-purpose hubs

A number of projects, including information gathering reports, included in the next LTP will address some of these challenges.

### **4.4 Pest control**

Northland has the perfect climate for pests (both plants and animals); pests reproduce quickly, spread and rapidly get out of control. Council is a significant land owner and must manage its own problems and be a good neighbour. Although we work in partnership with the regional council, community and our neighbours there are increasing expectations that Council will make a larger contribution towards managing pests on its own land as communities become more engaged in biosecurity and biodiversity.

There are also opportunities to use central government money from programmes such as Predator Free 2050, Wilding Conifer and the Matariki Tu Rākau. Having internal resources to access the benefit of these programmes can be challenging.

## **5 Key issues for the next 10 years**

### **5.1 District growth/Social changes**

An increasing population will create more demand on parks assets, and increased demand for additional open space. Development occurring outside of urban centres, particularly in coastal areas and growth nodes, puts pressure on the need for facilities where there were few or inadequate facilities previously or improved standards.

William Fraser Memorial Park on Pohe Island will be fully developed over the next 10 years.

Council provided funding for a new “Kensington type” sports hub in the outer years of the LTP. The current site is over utilised, has parking issues and is surrounded by residential property making further expansion uneconomic. Economies of scale for cost effectiveness

requires a large non-central site, providing a hub for diverse sporting, play and leisure activities for many years.

Based on our growth model, the Open Space Review 2018 estimated a shortfall of 22ha of Neighbourhood Parks by 2038. Purchasing additional land is not currently provided for in the LTP and therefore we are not collecting development contributions from developers to meet this future demand. Current District Plan rules do not require developers to provide land as of right.

The Maunu Cemetery will be extended with roadways required to access new areas currently undeveloped.

## **5.2 Climate change**

Over the next 10 years the impact of climate change will be more defined and decisions such as managed retreat or construction of rock revetment walls along our coastline will be discussion to be had with the community. Sports field grasses and street garden plantings will need to be drought resistant or rely on some form of recycled water.

## **5.3 Renewal budgets**

Increasing 30-year LTP renewals budget profiles. These profiles are only for existing assets as no accurate allowance for long-term new or vested assets can be made. Parks total asset replacement values for the last three LTPs have significantly increased.

## **5.4 Capital Programme**

Proportionally the Parks capital programme is traditionally the most underspent. There are a variety of reasons for this which largely revolve around community interest and involvement. Put simple, the community wishes to have a significant say in many parks projects which takes time. The community also wants a high level of amenity, particularly in coastal areas, which can be expensive.

Council may need to consider either a smaller capital programme for new facilities and major up-upgrades or be prepared to receive community opposition if we push ahead to deliver the programme on time.

# **6 Key issues in the long term**

Public pressure to protect private and non-lifeline assets will increase.

Longer term climate change will impact on recreation with consideration given to synthetic surfaces, higher use of recycled water, more shade structures, more indoor spaces and drought resistant plantings.

The definition of what is sport will change along with the District's demographics. Higher levels of active and passive recreation will need to be met by multi-use reserves and facilities.

The development of a new sports hub at Bell Block, Riverside Drive will be completed in the next 15 plus years. What sport or activity will be based at this hub is unknown.