

Community Development Committee Agenda

Date: Thursday, 19 June, 2025

Time: 10:00 am

Location: Civic Centre, Te Iwitihi, 9 Rust Avenue

Elected Members: Cr Gavin Benney (Chairperson)
Cr Carol Peters (Deputy Chairperson)
His Worship the Mayor Vince Cocurullo
Cr Nicholas Connop
Cr Ken Couper
Cr Jayne Golightly
Cr Phil Halse
Cr Deborah Harding
Cr Patrick Holmes
Cr Scott McKenzie
Cr Marie Olsen
Cr Simon Reid
Cr Phoenix Ruka
Cr Paul Yovich

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

1. Declarations of Interest / Take Whaipānga	
2. Apologies / Kore Tae Mai	
3. Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Community Development Committee Meeting / Whakatau Meneti	
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5. Information Reports / Ngā Pūrongo Kōrero	
5.1 Community Services Group Operational Report June 2025	142
6. Public Excluded Business / Rāhui Tangata	
7. Closure of Meeting / Te katinga o te Hui	

Recommendations contained in the agenda are not the decisions of the meeting.

Please refer to minutes for resolutions.

Community Development Committee – Terms of Reference

Membership

Chairperson	Councillor Gavin Benney
Deputy Chairperson	Councillor Carol Peters
Members	His Worship the Mayor Vince Cocurullo Councillors Nicholas Connop, Ken Couper, Jayne Golightly, Phil Halse, Deborah Harding, Patrick Holmes, Marie Olsen, Scott McKenzie, Simon Reid, Phoenix Ruka and Paul Yovich
Meetings	Monthly
Quorum	7

Purpose

To oversee functions of Council that interact, support and provide services for the community, including to disburse funds as determined by the Whangarei District Council Grants, Concessions and Loans Policy.

Key responsibilities

- Policy and planning for the provision of community development, culture, arts and heritage and events
- District venues and community events
- Libraries services (Central Library, Branch Libraries, Mobile Library services)
- Customer Services
 - Customer Services Civic Centre and Ruakaka Service Centre
 - Contact Centre Services
 - Isite services
 - National Claphams Clock Museum
 - Request system
- Community services
 - Community sector liaison and support (Advisory Groups)
 - Community safety (City Safe, CCTV)
- Pensioner housing
- Property asset management
 - Pensioner housing

- Forum North
- Community halls
- Civil Defence Emergency Management
- Heritage, culture, arts and creative industries sector liaison
- Community development led programmes
- Operational accountability of performance including:
 - Health and Safety
 - Regular reporting on service delivery
 - Compliance
 - Sustainability
 - Finance
- Reporting on capital projects
- Procurement – general procurement relating to the areas of business of this committee, within delegations
- Shared services – investigate opportunities for shared services for recommendation to council
- To carry out the funding process in accordance with the Whangarei District Council Grants, Concessions and Loans Policy in an objective, fair and transparent way.
- Council Controlled Organisations (CCOs) – monitoring the financial and non-financial performance of CCOs whose functions would otherwise fall under the scope of this committee. Includes trading CCOs (CCTOs) and those CCOs exempted under the LGA. Responsibilities include:
 - advising on the content of annual Statement of Expectations to CCOs
 - agreement of the Statement of Intent
 - monitoring against the Statement of Intent
 - for exempted CCOs, monitoring and reporting as agreed between Council and the organisation
 - quarterly reporting on performance

CCO accountable to this committee:

- Hatea Art Trust (HAT)
- Hundertwasser Art Centre (HAC)
- Whangarei Art Museum (WAM)
- Northland Events Centre Trust 2021 (NECT2021)

Delegations

- (i) All powers necessary to perform the committee's responsibilities, including, but not limited to:
- a) approval of a submission to an external body.
 - b) establishment of working parties or steering groups.
 - c) adoption of strategies and policies relating to the key responsibilities of this committee (except for those that cannot be delegated by Council under Clause 32(1)(f) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government Act (LGA).
 - d) the approval of expenditure of less than \$5 million plus GST.
 - e) the power to adopt the Special Consultative Procedure provided for in Section 83 to 88 of the LGA in respect of matters under its jurisdiction (this allows for setting of fees and bylaw making processes up to but not including adoption).
 - f) the power to delegate any of its powers to any joint committee established for any relevant purpose under clause 32, Schedule 7 of the Local Government Act 2002.

The Committee does not have:

- I. The power to establish sub-committees.
- II. The powers Council is expressly prohibited from delegating as outlined in Clause 32(1)(a)-(h) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government Act 2002; being:
 - the power to make a rate
 - the power to make a bylaw
 - the power to borrow money, or purchase or dispose of assets, other than in accordance with the long-term plan
 - the power to adopt a long-term plan, annual plan or annual report
 - the power to appoint a chief executive the power to adopt policies required to be adopted and consulted on under the Local Government 2002 in association with the long-term plan or developed for the purpose of the local governance statement
 - the power to adopt a remuneration and employment policy.

Community Development Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, 15 May, 2025
Time: 10:00 a.m.
Location: Civic Centre, Te Iwitahi, 9 Rust Avenue

In Attendance	Cr Gavin Benney (Chairperson) Cr Carol Peters (Deputy Chairperson) His Worship the Mayor Vince Cocurullo Cr Nicholas Connop Cr Ken Couper Cr Jayne Golightly Cr Phil Halse Cr Deborah Harding Cr Scott McKenzie Cr Simon Reid
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Not in Attendance	Cr Patrick Holmes Cr Marie Olsen Cr Phoenix Ruka Cr Paul Yovich
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Scribe	D. Garner (Democracy Adviser)
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1. **Declarations of Interest / Take Whaipānga**

No interests were declared.

2. **Apologies / Kore Tae Mai**

Cr's Patrick Holmes, Marie Olsen, Phoenix Ruka and Paul Yovich.

Moved By Cr Simon Reid

Seconded By Cr Carol Peters

That the apologies be sustained.

Carried

3. Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Community Development Committee Meeting / Whakatau Meneti

3.1 Minutes Community Development Committee held on 17 April 2025

Moved By His Worship the Mayor

Seconded By Cr Phil Halse

That the minutes of the Community Development Committee meeting held on Thursday, 17 April 2025, having been circulated, be taken as read and now confirmed and adopted as a true and correct record of proceedings of that meeting.

Carried

4. Decision Reports / Whakatau Ripoata

4.1 Community Funding - May 2025

Moved By Cr Gavin Benney

Seconded By Cr Carol Peters

That the Community Development Committee approves Whangārei Communities Fund grant allocations as follows:

1. Athletics Whangarei – National School Cross Country event 2025 \$13,259
2. Bream Bay Combined Arts Group – Replacement kiln \$5,620
3. Children with Disability NZ – Sensory Sensations five book series \$6,000
4. English Language Partners NZ – Operating costs \$6,000
5. Mangapai Hall Incorporated – Tennis court toilet block repair \$9,222
6. Matapouri Hall Incorporated – Exterior repaint \$10,520
7. Tangihua Lions Lodge – Ablution block upgrade \$64,731
8. The Black Ball Maritime Society – Whangarei Maritime Festival 2025 \$15,000
9. The Brain Injury Association (Northland) – Telecommunications upgrade \$1,817
10. Waipu Business and Community Inc – Winter in Waipu festival 2025 \$5,000
11. Whangarei Tennis and Squash Club – National Junior Squash Tournament 2025 \$2,000
12. Whangarei Youth Space Charitable Trust – Raising Daughters to Lead \$2,010

Carried**5. Information Reports / Ngā Pūrongo Kōrero****5.1 2025 Vantage National Masters Hockey Tournament Post Event Report****Moved By** His Worship the Mayor**Seconded By** Cr Deborah Harding

That the Community Development Committee:

1. Receives and notes the 2025 Vantage National Masters Hockey Tournament Post Event Report

Carried**5.2 Endless Summer Festival 2025 Report****Moved By** Cr Simon Reid**Seconded By** Cr Carol Peters

That the Community Development Committee:

1. Receives and notes the Endless Summer Festival 2025 Post Event Report

Carried**5.3 Community Services Group Operational Report - May 2025****Moved By** Cr Gavin Benney**Seconded By** Cr Jayne Golightly

That the Community Development Committee receives the Community Services Group Operational Report for April 2025 at the May 2025 meeting.

Carried**6. Public Excluded Business / Rāhui Tangata**

There was no business conducted in public excluded.

7. Closure of Meeting / Te katinga o te Hui

The meeting concluded at 10:42am.

Confirmed this 19th day of June 2025

Item 3.1

Cr Gavin Benney (Chairperson)

4.1 Advisory Group Review 2025

Meeting: Community Development Committee
Date of meeting: 19 June 2025
Reporting officer: Jacki Cooper – Manager Community Development
 Victoria Harwood – GM Community Services

1 Purpose / Te Kaupapa

To determine the structure and budget of Advisory Groups going forward.

2 Recommendation/s / Whakataunga

That the Community Development Committee:

1. Receives the agenda report Advisory Group Review 2025
2. Notes the three options for advisory groups.
3. Endorses Option 2 - Establish an Accessibility Advisory Group by merging the Disability and Positive Ageing Advisory Groups. Retain the Youth Advisory Group.
4. Authorises officers to implement the Option 2 and all operational requirements as appropriate.

3 Background / Horopaki

Council has operated an Advisory Group model for almost two decades. It is common practice among councils to engage with these sectors in this way. Each council operates differently for largely similar outcomes and purposes.

Advisory Groups play a vital role by providing advice and feedback that represents the needs and experiences of demographic sectors in their communities, their insights support decision making and project planning.

The review was commissioned for a range of reasons including:

- Poor corporate performance measure results overall
- Dissatisfaction from both liaison staff and members about how the groups function and whether they are making any difference
- Workload and capacity for liaison officers
- Terms of reference review is now overdue

- Repeated requests for increased remuneration from Disability Advisory group members to
- match other councils and to show the value of their expertise.
- Levels of elected member engagement with and awareness of advisory groups vary.

Identified concerns

The review was conducted by DecisionWorks in late 2024 and early 2025, and uncovered a range of issues and concerns including:

- Clarity of purpose and role ambiguity
- Inadequate feedback mechanisms
- Inconsistent reporting to council
- Disconnect with council priorities
- Resource constraints
- Advisory group members feeling undervalued

Attachment A – Whangarei District Council Advisory Group – Comprehensive Review March 2025

4 Discussion / Whakawhiti kōrero

Why have advisory groups?

Many councils have similar groups, whether it be a reference group, an advisory group or a panel. These groups help both staff and elected members by providing advice and information from the perspective of their sectors. This advice both informs staff in their project planning and helps guide the decision-making process for elected members. The groups are also an engagement mechanism for broader topics such as the Annual and Long-term plans.

IAP2 Spectrum

The IAP2 (International Association for Public Participation) Spectrum is a tool that helps organisations to determine the public's role and influence within a project or process. The spectrum ranges from simply informing the public, to collaborating and empowering them in decision-making.

Currently our advisory groups sit on the *inform* and *consult* end of the spectrum. To empower and enable more effective advisory groups, it is desirable to move towards the stages of *involve*, *collaborate* and possibly *empower* in specific circumstances.

IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation



IAP2's Spectrum of Public Participation was designed to assist with the selection of the level of participation that defines the public's role in any public participation process. The Spectrum is used internationally, and it is found in public participation plans around the world.

INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION					
	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

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Council workshop

A workshop was held with elected members in May to get clarity on elected members understanding of advisory groups, the proposed options and in indication of Council's preferences. Four questions were posed around the purpose, elected members involvement, structure and budget/remuneration.

Feedback was varied but there was clear indication that retaining all three groups with bi-monthly meetings was most preferred by elected members. There was also an indication that most elected members supported an increase in budget from \$23,000 to \$30,000 to improve support for advisory groups.

Note that bi-monthly meetings were not listed as an option but was a suggestion made by one elected member that many supported. Staff have since reflected upon the feedback and adjusted the options and budget accordingly to include bi-monthly meetings.

Initially, a fourth option was considered; to retain all three groups and current budget but to move to quarterly meetings. Given the adjustment to bi-monthly meetings, this option is no longer considered valid as the difference from the status quo would be minimal and could be addressed through the Terms of Reference process.

Enhanced model

There are three structural options outlined in the options section below.

Two of the three options require enhancements and wider changes. These enhancements are critical to addressing the current issues and to ensure a more workable model going forward. Depending on budget, there will be varying levels of enhancements for each option.

Enhancements include:

- investment in training and better induction of members and chairs
- increased remuneration for members and chairs
- developing a work programme aligning to council's programme of works
- drafting and tailoring the Terms of Reference to specific groups as required
- wider council education about advisory groups
- engaging Māori/diversity sector(s)
- developing better feedback mechanisms e.g. advice log and tracking, information flow into chambers.
- keeping up with best practice of advisory group operations (see flow chart under Policy and planning implications)
- more involvement of other departments to support the work programme and liaison officers' capacity in managing these groups.

Indicative next steps

- Update Advisory Groups of decision and impacts
- Draft new Terms of Reference for each group
- Engage with Te Karearea and Te Huinga members
- Internal and external communications
- Recruitment planning
- Implementation of enhancements
- Inductions and training
- Operating by March 2026

Depending on the option selected, the above may change or vary.

4.1 Financial/budget considerations

Currently the Advisory Groups budget is \$23,000 which covers member attendance fees, interpreter fees, and catering (biscuits) costs. To enhance the model and do it well but with fewer meetings of a longer duration, and more training support, it would require an increased budget.

Option 1 and 2 have no budget impact. Option 3 would require an increase of \$8,000 per annum.

4.2 Policy and planning implications

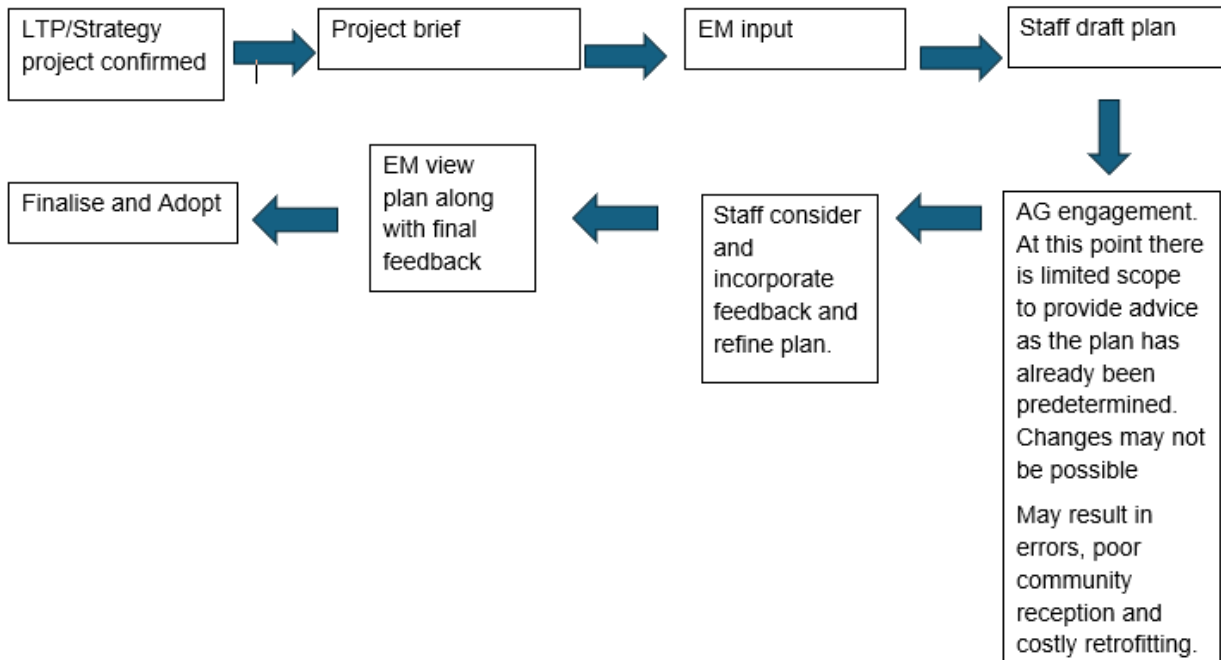
Effective advisory groups result in better policy, project, and planning outcomes. Being able to understand the needs of different demographics is critical to developing and future proofing policy and planning works.

However, early engagement with advisory groups is required to prevent inadequate policies and planning, which may result in budget overruns, and retrofitting costs.

The flow charts below show the current practice and best practice when engaging with advisory groups.

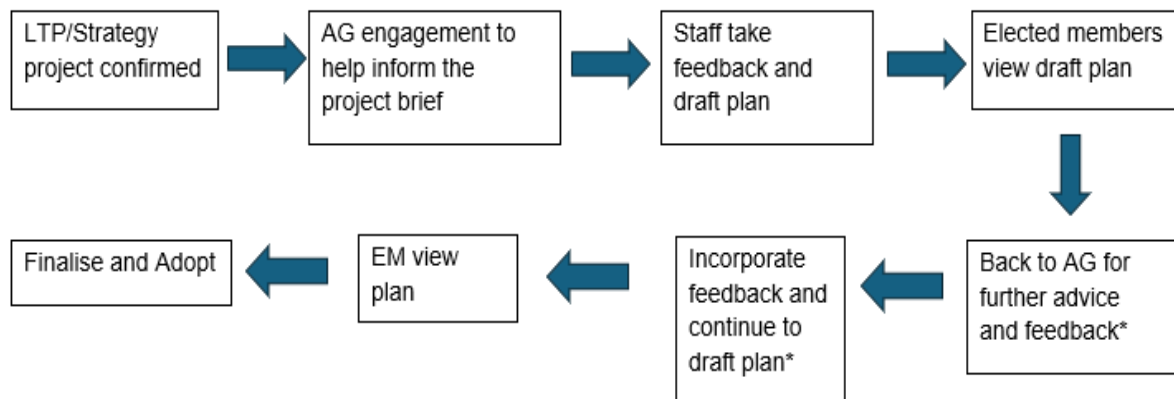
Current practice

(crude summary of process)



Best practice

(rough summary of process)



*Note that these steps may need to be repeated depending on complexity of project. Providing a feedback loop where it is explained how feedback was considered and incorporated into project. And if not incorporated, explain why not.

Note: over time, with liaison officer encouragement, some staff are now working towards the best practice process.

4.3 Options

Option	Key Details	Advantages	Disadvantages
1. Status Quo/Do nothing	<p>Three Advisory Groups with 10-12 two-hour meetings a year with the current budget of \$23k</p> <p>May move to bi-monthly meetings to slightly increase staff capacity.</p>	<p>Advisory groups will continue as usual with minimal enhancements as appropriate.</p>	<p>The same frustrations will remain and having gone through the review process, current members may feel unheard.</p> <p>The minimal enhancements able to be made may be viewed as tokenistic.</p> <p>Liaison staff will continue to be stretched to the detriment of other work programmes.</p>
Option 2. Establish an Accessibility Advisory Group by merging the Disability and Positive Ageing Advisory Groups. Retain the Youth Advisory Group. (Staff recommended)	<p>Youth Advisory Group remains</p> <p>Positive Ageing and Disability Advisory Groups merge into one group – Accessibility Advisory Group.</p> <p>Membership will include both older adults and disabled people.</p> <p>Reduces sector advisory groups from three to two.</p> <p>Bi-monthly meetings.</p> <p>Allows for an enhanced model to be implemented within the current budget.</p>	<p>Increases staff capacity</p> <p>Reducing group numbers will free up budget for increased remuneration, training and induction.</p> <p>Having an Accessibility Advisory Group will sharpen focus and better align with various work plans, projects, and strategies.</p> <p>The two groups currently overlap significantly and by merging means no doubling up of staff presentations, resulting in a more streamlined, efficient, and cost-effective process.</p> <p>Retains a pathway for youth to engage with Council.</p>	<p>The older adult community may feel excluded and devalued.</p>
3. Enhanced model and retain all three groups and increase budget	<p>Bi-monthly meetings</p> <p>Allows Council to implement an enhanced model for all advisory groups.</p>	<p>Increased remuneration will demonstrate members are valued</p> <p>Members are better supported to function effectively and strategically as a group.</p>	<p>Minimal increase in staff capacity.</p> <p>Minimal risks but a small increase in budget required.</p>

4.4 Staff recommendation

Staff recommend **Option 2** for the following reasons:

- Strengthened alignment to the Regional Accessibility Strategy
- Increased focus on aligning groups to sectors that are often underrepresented in Council engagement
- Supports increased staff capacity across a range of roles
- The option can be implemented within the current budget
- Council can move into the future with a fit for purpose model.

4.5 Risks

The review articulates the clear risks of not enhancing nor resourcing advisory groups well. Not having structured methods of engagement with Older Adults, Disability and Youth; can lead to uninformed decision-making by council, affecting a large portion of our population.

Without advisory groups supporting council to identify and respond to emerging issues early, we risk remaining reactive to issues, rather than having a strategic and prepared approach to our future work and plans.

Options 1 and 2 both carry a level of risk as outlined in the section 4.3 of this agenda report.

5 Significance and engagement / Te Hira me te Arawhiti

The decisions or matters of this Agenda do not trigger the significance criteria outlined in Council's Significance and Engagement Policy, and the public will be informed via agenda publication on the website.

6 Attachments / Ngā Tāpiritanga

Attachment A – Whangarei District Council Advisory Group – Comprehensive Review March 2025

Whangarei District Council Advisory Group - Comprehensive Review

March 2025

Prepared by:

Anna Curnow
Director and Lead Facilitator
Decision Works Ltd

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Executive Summary

Whangarei District Council (WDC) has operated an Advisory Group model for almost two decades. While there have been smaller reviews undertaken from time to time, this is the first time a comprehensive review has been undertaken to consider the appropriateness of the model for Councils current needs. WDC has four Advisory Groups:

1. Disability
2. Multi-Ethnic
3. Positive Aging
4. Youth

This review is focused on the Disability, Positive Aging and Youth Advisory Groups. The Multi-Ethnic group has only recently been established and was therefore excluded.

The review was undertaken by Decision Works Limited in the last quarter of 2024 and the first quarter 2025 with recommendations being presented to Council in March or April 2025.

Data analysis included a survey of all councils in New Zealand / Aotearoa followed up by in depth interviews with key Councils; a survey of Advisory Group members and interviews with representatives from the Advisory Groups, Council and Council officers. A desktop review of selected international models was also undertaken.

Evaluation of the data was initially conducted by Decision Works Ltd with two follow up sessions with Senior Leadership Team and two Advisory Group workshops to produce a set of recommendations/advice from the Groups themselves.

This review found that the effectiveness of Advisory Groups has been hindered by a lack of consistent clarity of purpose with different groups and stakeholders having different views as to purpose and effectiveness. There is also a lack of coherent planning that connects their work to the overall Council work programme. Finally feedback on outcomes of the recommendations and “advise” that the Groups provide is not extensive, leading to dissatisfaction amongst members and adversely affecting trust in the model.

The lack of clear direction and purpose leaves the model open for distraction by more operational issues and for the Groups to take on different priorities to those planned by Council.

While there is a clear Terms of Reference, Advisory Group members are not offered much in the way of training and development and as such can founder when things are more challenging.

Advisory Groups do their best work when properly resourced, supported, given clear direction and feel valued by the Council and community. This is not currently the case with the Whangarei District Council Advisory Groups.

The Review presents a significant opportunity to consider whether this is the right model for today's needs and how Council can ensure that the community voice is well-represented in the decisions they make.

Decision Works wants to offer thanks to the many members of the AGs (past and present), officers and elected members who took the time to share their insights for this review.

Introduction

This review was commissioned to explore the structure and effectiveness of the current Advisory Group model and to evaluate other models and approaches taken to the job of gathering a trusted community voice of topics of importance to Council.

According to the Terms of Reference for the current Advisory Groups, the purpose of the Advisory Groups is:

“to support Council’s vision of Whangarei being a vibrant, attractive and thriving District for all the people living here. Advisory Groups contribute to this vision by providing advice to Whangarei District Council on the following areas:

- *Council policies, plans, strategies, design and capital works projects*
- *Matters of particular interest or concern to the communities they represent.”*

Advisory Group members are charged with contributing to the outcomes of the communities they represent, building effective relationships between their respective communities and Council, connecting WDC into the youth, disability and positive aging communities and any other groups deemed to have a positive role to play and finally to develop key priorities for the year/term.

This is a tall order and an important role to be played. Many members of Advisory Groups may not have had experience of this type of work. As such a significant level of support is needed.

Without this support, Advisory Groups will likely struggle. If Advisory Groups is to continue to be the model for WDC, then it appears that additional focus, and resourcing may be needed. If that is not an option, then Council may need to consider a different approach to building that community voice into their decision making.

To support this, the Review considers other structural options for collecting community voice to inform Council projects.

The total budget for the Advisory Group function including payments to members, refreshments at meetings and interpreters to support members is \$22,000. There will likely be a call for some additional budget if Advisory Groups are to be continued.

Methodology

The methodology of this review was designed by Decision Works in collaboration with the Community Advisory Team and included the following steps:

1) Broad Data Collection via:

Councils of New Zealand/Aotearoa survey	To identify local trends in focused sector group engagement in local government.
Targeted interviews with councils who were particularly active in this space or had indicated innovative approaches in the survey.	To delve into more detail about innovation or particularly effective advisory group models.
Desktop research on overseas approach to focussed sector group engagement by local government.	To explore different models used by councils in other western democracy countries use (US, UK, Australia). Research was also undertaken to broadly understand the approach in Pacific Island nations.
Survey of some past and all present members of Advisory Groups	To understand the current effectiveness, successes and challenges from an Advisory Group member point of view.
Targeted interviews of past and present members suggested by the Community Development Advisors team.	To delve into more detail of their experiences of what has worked and what could be improved.
Targeted interviews with elected members who were currently involved in the Advisory Groups and some who were not involved.	To understand the current effectiveness, successes and challenges from a councillor point of view.
Targeted interviews with council staff members who have contact with Advisory Groups.	To understand the value of the model, the experience of engagement with the groups, where the value lies and challenges faced by officers.

Data collection for the review took place from October to December 2024. (with two further interviews undertaken in January and engagement with the Senior Leadership Team conducted on 21 January and 25 February 2025 to consider the purpose of the Advisory Groups (or the function) and the appropriate structural option and resourcing to achieve that purpose.

2) Data Analysis

This was undertaken by Decision Works with a sense-checking workshop with Advisory Group members in a workshop held on 28 January 2025.

3) Options Review

Decision Works has also undertaken an initial options review and again this was explored further with an Advisory Group in a workshop held on 03 February, along with two sessions with the WDC Senior Leadership Team on 21 January and on the 25 February.

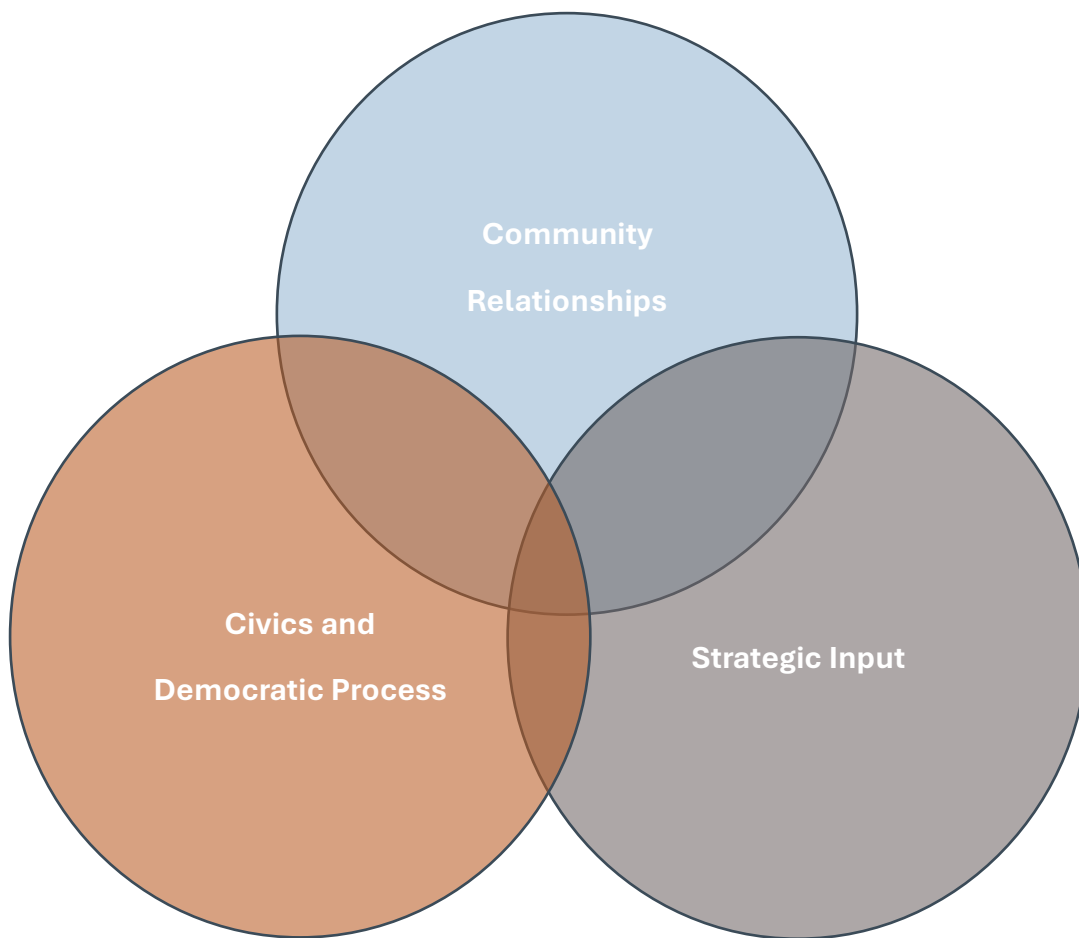
4) Recommendations

Recommendations are presented in a comprehensive report which sits alongside recommendations from the Advisory Groups generated at the second Advisory Group workshop. Both of these will be presented to Council with a supporting Council report that may highlight issues that are specific to the organisational ability to respond to the recommendations in both the report and from the Advisory Groups.

5) Decision Making

Decision making rests with Council, given the strategic nature of the topic. It is suggested that any changes are scheduled to be actioned in time with the start of the next Council term towards the end of 2025.

Advisory Group – Spheres of Influence



The review found that most Advisory Groups operate in three realms of influence:

- 1) **Community Relationships** – Groups have a role to play in building connections between Council and key community sectors that might not ordinarily have a clear voice in Council. Group members can also become advocates for Council and the work programme, sharing their insights out into their communities as well as bringing the community voice in.

However, if those relationships are not well managed to be purposeful and produce meaningful engagement, trust can be eroded with members feeling dissatisfied with their experiences.

- 2) **Strategic Input** – A key function for Groups is to test out strategies, plans, policies concepts, designs and ideas from a place of understanding Council's

priorities. They can bring a community lens to evaluating Council work.

The risk is that without the education and time to absorb the issues, the advice provided by Groups may not be appropriate. Additionally, each Group brings a specific community perspective which can result in different groups providing conflicting advice. This creates confusion for staff as they then need to map out a way of balancing these strongly held perspectives.

- 3) **Civics and Democratic Process** – Hosting Advisory Groups is often seen as a way to inspire and develop future community leaders, by giving them a taste of Council’s activities. Research undertaken in the deliberative practise area suggests members of citizen assembly panels are significantly more likely to stand for election following participation. Members of this Council’s Advisory Groups did refer to the development of leadership skills as one of the more positive experiences. They also reported enjoying building a clearer understanding of the complexity of Council’s work.

Having Advisory Groups is also a way for Council to demonstrate the importance of community voice and a commitment to listening. However, if the mechanisms for responding to the advice provided by the Groups is not strong, then that perception of being a Council that listens to its community can be eroded. Members can feel like their effort is wasted.

Building a Group membership that broadly represents the community they come from can be difficult in a small group. Whangarei’s Advisory Group membership is recruited from those who respond to an advertisement. This can lead to the membership becoming skewed towards one demographic over another.

Some Councils have also experienced the role and scope of the Group ‘creeping’ creating unforeseen conflicts of interest.

Key Findings

1. **Role and Functionality:** In principle, Advisory Groups contribute to the decision-making processes of Council by providing a trusted community voice. They do this by reinforcing relationships with the communities they represent and bringing their lived experience lens to the discussion.

Currently, in Whangarei District Council this is primarily done through formal monthly meetings with occasional ad hoc activities such as site visits.

The Review highlights that there are varying views as to the exact scope of the work of the Advisory Groups within the various stakeholders. This can lead to scope creep where members feel their influence might be higher than it actually is, or that Council is responsible for things that it does not in fact have legal responsibility for, or the Group might slide into a very operational focus with much of the discussion centred around minor matters.

While there is a work plan for some of the Groups, this is sometimes not well-aligned with the overall Council priorities and can also lack clear focus on specific high priority projects.

2. **Effectiveness:** The Advisory Group members have mixed views about their effectiveness. They feel that there is little structured feedback as to what happens with the input they provide. Where they are aware of the outcomes, they generally feel there was value in what they did. However, there is a strong sense that additional feedback and evaluation of effectiveness would be helpful.

There are also some questions about the efficiency of the model with officers sometimes having to present to each group, obtaining different advice from each with no mechanism to reconcile the differences.

Input from officers and senior leadership indicated that the work of the Advisory Groups, while in principle valued, did not always provide significant additional insight and could sometimes create tension when it conflicted with Council's statutory obligations and limitations.

3. **Engagement Levels:** There is a sense amongst members of uneven effort with some members attending regularly and providing significant input and others having much more patchy attendance and poor participation. There can be many reasons why members might not attend a meeting or why they feel uncomfortable about attending. Further work would be beneficial to help the Groups craft methodologies that improve participation and engagement.

In terms of engagement by council officers with the Groups, there is a lack of consistency in the approach with some departments using the Advisory Groups

regularly (eg infrastructure) and others potentially missing the opportunity. There appears to be an uneven level of understanding across the organisation about what the Groups can provide.

4. **Challenges and Barriers:** The Advisory Groups at WDC are facing a range of barriers and obstacles to success. These include a lack of clear purpose, inadequate feedback from the organisation about the effectiveness of their work, inefficiencies created by siloed groups, a lack of connection with the wider work and policy programme of Council, capability gaps around governance and strategy and difficulties in attracting diverse members.
5. **Resourcing Constraints:** The Review found a significant administrative burden on Community Development officers (taking up to 50%) of their time. This has impacts on the organisation:
 - Insufficient time to provide training and capability building;
 - Reduced ability to service other aspects of the community development role;
 - Inadequate levels of feedback reporting to Groups.
6. **Support for the Model:** Given the limitations established in these findings, it is clear that there is still a level of support for the model across the organisation. Officers see that there is value in obtaining specific community voice on particular projects. Members feel they bring a valuable “community lens” to the work. However, most agree that the model is currently not operating optimally and would benefit from enhancement to deliver greater productivity, focus and relevance.

The Need for Change

Feedback from the Advisory Groups, Elected Members, Officers and the Senior Leadership Team and the opportunities identified through looking at other instances of sector engagement suggests that there are challenges with Whangarei District Council's current approach to sector engagement. However, there are opportunities for change that could facilitate a more productive model.

The need for change can be summarised here:

Current Approach	Impact	Opportunity
Transactional Relationships	Success is only seen in evidence of action taken by Council based on advice. When this doesn't happen, trust and relationships are damaged	Create an environment that supports building skills and capability (people), that recognises contribution even when it can't be given effect.
Operational Focus	Advice is short term focussed, can be disjointed and misaligned to Council's overall needs.	Higher quality advice that is strategically aligned to the overall direction of Council
Low Organisational Uptake	Much of the work of the AGs is around Infrastructure projects. This creates missed opportunities with other departments not benefiting from the input.	All key Council strategies including input from AGs and being sense checked with a community view.
Meeting Driven	The operations of the group are focussed on the meetings rather than the work programme.	A more strategic view of the work of the group will lead to more efficient use of their time and effort and could open up opportunities for engagement beyond the meetings.
Siloed Groups	Groups work in isolation from each other and from wider council. This creates inefficiencies in effort and competing demands.	More efficient use of council resources and co-ordinated work programmes. Additionally, members can learn from each other.
Unclear purpose	Members feel unclear about the rationale for their work, are unclear about what happens to the input they provide.	A clearly understood role with a strategically focussed work programme would provide purpose and a sense of achievement as well as enable more focussed work.

Resourcing challenges	<p>Community Development work outside the Advisory Groups work is being negatively impacted due to the amount of resource needed to service the Groups.</p> <p>In addition, CD officers are not able to provide the level of training needed to support building capability. Finally, the budget does not allow payments that allow the members to feel valued.</p>	<p>Change to the function of the Groups (eg frequency, level of focus, or using other structural models) could produce higher quality, more targeted input from Groups. Officers could direct more attention to other aspects of their CD work.</p> <p>Group members could feel more valued if they were paid more and felt they were having more valued input. Including departmental managers in the discussions around resourcing the final solutions will increase the chances of the Advisory Groups being the best fit for organisational needs and capacity.</p>
Strained Relationships	<p>At times there are strained relationships between Group members and elected members. Given elected member liaison members are a key communication channel between the Groups and Council, this is an area of risk.</p> <p>In addition many staff reported feeling uncomfortable about how the feedback was delivered, making them less keen to present to Groups.</p>	<p>A higher level of trust and clear understanding of roles and responsibilities would lead to more focus on the issues being discussed and clearer communication between the Groups, Council and officers.</p>

Structural Options

The input from the Council survey, in-depth interviews with key Councils and the review of international approaches brings to light a range of options for sector group engagement:

Model	Description	Pros	Cons	Evaluation
Advisory Groups (with a possible collaborative forum)	The current WDC model with suggested enhancements to generate improved outcomes. Enhancements include a collaborative Advisory Group Panel that meetings regularly with Council and reduced frequency with additional focus..	AGs are generally supported by the organisation. Members are enthusiastic about the Groups. The AG model builds strong relationships and loyalties with Council. With a clear focus on priority project, can provide thoughtful insight.	Is labour intensive. Can be costly. Requires focus from the top of the organisation too. Requires good relationships with Council. Is very dependent on the capability of members. Roles can get confused/blurred.	Overall, this model is well-supported by the organisation. It generates a clear community voice. Investment in capability building and strong chairs reaps rewards. Works best when work programme is highly focussed and well aligned with Council's priorities.
Expert Advisory Panels	An appointed panel of experts on a particular topic.	The input provided by EA Panels, is well qualified and generally deeply considered. Council is likely to trust the input from EA Panels. Can be convened for a specific purpose and timeframe.	Can be costly. Information provided may need to be more extensive. Does not constitute broad community engagement.	May not meet the 'trusted community voice' test, albeit that their advice may have strong value. Consider use for specific technical projects eg significant developments

		Less administration effort on staff.		
Community Forums	Regular facilitated community workshops with an open invitation approach, externally facilitated. Could include contracting with sector service provider organisations to administer and facilitate.	Includes a broad range of community voices. Builds relationships with a wider range of community members and also with service provider organisations (if partnered with). Can be work programme driven. Lower cost option.	Open to capture by lobby group. Very dependent on skilled facilitation. Relationships are less strong with attendance being optional and ad hoc. Dependent on the facilitator to translate feedback for Council.	Relationships are less strong as attendance is optional and can be ad hoc and issue based. Can be work programme driven.
Community Connectors / Portfolio Model	Officers who hold specific portfolios form strong connections with specific communities and facilitate specific engagement on topics of interest.	Creates a direct relationship between council officers and community sector groups. Can reach a broad and representative audience. Flexible and agile to address issues as they arise. Can be lower cost.	Highly dependent on the relationships between officers and community groups. This can fail if a staff member leaves. Can still require organised large scale events for engagement. Dependent on the officer to translate the feedback to Council.	Can be a way of building relationships with a broad and representative range of community members. Perhaps more suited to smaller councils?.
Targeted Engagement	Engagement is undertaken as issues arise by Council engagement officers. Can include a range of tactics.	Highly customisable and responsive to the needs of the issue and community sector.	Open to capture by lobby groups. Highly dependent on the skill of the engagement	Council already uses this and is likely to continue.

		Can generate a broad range of views from a large number of participants. Not relationship based which creates an independence.	officer to design the appropriate approach. More complex engagement can be resource intensive and costly.	
Deliberative Practice	A more structured form of engagement with more depth. A representative panel of community members is educated over a period of time on a topic and then supported to deliberate and come to an agreed set of recommendations	Highly suitable for more complex and contentious topics where a representative view is needed. Much more resource intensive but usually generates a positive response from participants.	A costly approach. Not suitable to more “business as usual” projects. Creates a significant requirement on Council to deliver on the input provided.	Could be considered for highly contentious issues that justify the higher spend and resource requirements.
Community Boards	Community Boards are closer to their communities and are useful in higher population or more geographically spread-out councils. These Boards can be used to represent their community voices.	They to have a good knowledge of their areas, the communities they represent and are useful where they are already in place.	Council does not currently have Community Boards. Members are elected and are therefore not necessarily representative of the broader community. Open to political influence.	Council could reconsider this should it become an option following a representation review.

Recommendations

Analysis of the feedback produced by the review identifies a number of key points and actions. (A full Issues Analysis is shown in Appendix 3). These have been outlined here.

1) Support for Formal Structure

- Generally, there is support for retaining and enhancing the formal Advisory Group structure.
- Consider the (careful) inclusion of members representing support groups.

2) Establish Community Forum for the Youth Sector

- Suggest twice a year events
- Facilitation and administration to be delivered by a sector group provider.
- Ensure agenda is strongly connected to Council priorities
- Ensure connections to YAG
- Evaluate after 2 years to consider relative effectiveness.

3) Suggested Changes to the Operation of the Groups

- Consider less frequent formal meetings with the opportunity for more informal activities eg site visits, community meetings etc between formal meetings
- The number of members was supported
- Consider the inclusion of permanent seats on the AGs for sector service provider groups.

4) Elected Member Role

- Retain elected member involvement but ensure each has an alternate to ensure attendance.
- Refocus the Elected Member role to be bringing a Council view and insight to the AG table with the sharing of AG feedback to Council being done via other channels.

5) Sectors Represented by Advisory Groups

- There was general support for the existing sectors being represented
- Consider the possible inclusion of rural and business (although these could be addressed by supporting more formally existing non-council groups).

6) Resourcing the Groups

- Evaluate the resources needed to manage the AGs (with consideration for less frequent meetings).

- Allocate tasks to or obtain support from the appropriate teams eg Democracy to manage/support the meeting administration, Strategy and Infrastructure to support the Work Programme development and Engagement to support engagement events.
- Evaluate how to administer additional less formal engagements eg site visits and community meetings
- Identify if additional administration resourcing is needed and secure budget (eg refreshments, training, etc).
- Retain Community Development as the best fit for programme ownership.
- Review the remuneration for AGs and develop a policy position eg attendance fees, transport costs, childcare or carer costs etc) and to reflect a fair compensation for the contribution.
- Consider funding for additional work eg networking events, conferences, attendance of events outside of meetings, writing reports etc

7) Role Clarity and Purpose

- Ensure new members understand their role as being the lived experience lens.
- Review the existing Terms of Reference to ensure clarity about purpose.

8) Relationships with Council and Inter-Group

- Set up regular/annual engagement with whole of council for reporting back eg a Collaborative Forum (including all AG members and full Council) to share their work programme and opportunities for information and resource sharing to be identified.
- Consider the value in inter-group collaboration perhaps twice a year.

9) Group Diversity and Representation

- Implement a skills/representation matrix to guide targeted recruitment.

10) Capability Building

- Review Induction Training to identify opportunities for improvement.
- Establish governance training for AG members
- Establish more extensive training on the role of Council
- Provide facilitation training for meeting facilitators
- Identify new technology approaches to broaden the scope of the training
- Establish chair and deputy chair training
- Consider a formal mentoring programme for chairs and perhaps wider membership (with EMs or with external mentors)

11) Group Effectiveness

- Change the term of AG members to be three years and aligned with the electoral cycle to assist with strategic alignment.
- Work with the Strategy and Infrastructure (and when appropriate the Engagement) teams to develop a work programme for each AG that is aligned with the council work programme.
- Establish metrics and data collection process to evaluate the work programme effectiveness.
- Include a mechanism for progress reporting to Council
- Ensure the AGs are focussed on work that is associated with Council priorities.
- Clarify where the role of facilitation sits and ensure that is clear in the Terms of Reference (currently sits with Chair).
- Explore methods of reinforcing the Terms of Reference through regular reflection
- Consider changing the term to be three years and bring into line with the electoral term.
- Review and strengthen conflict resolution clause in Terms of Reference.
- Encourage a range of meeting formats including workshops, brainstorming sessions, site visits and break out groups to encourage participation.
- Consider creating Member only time sessions at the start of each meeting.

12) Feedback and Recognition

- Identify opportunities for reporting back to council in person
- Improve feedback loop reporting to the groups to demonstrate value provided.
- Identify a clear and accountable feedback tracking process eg Actions Register
- Develop a recognition programme for Council to acknowledge the work of the AGs
- Report on successful AG activities in wider Council communications
- Consider a formal recognition of service when a member leaves eg letter with certificate from the Mayor.

13) Reality Check with Departmental Managers

- Involve DMs in the final discussions about options for improvement to ensure the 'doability' of recommended improvements and realistic transition planning.

Proposed Timeline:

While the Review is recommending that the Advisory Group model is retained, there are some significant steps that are indicated in order to bring the model up to full functionality. These are now set out in a proposed timeframe with a focus on bringing the Advisory Groups in line with the electoral cycle. This is intended to create closer links between the Council and the Groups.

Proposed time	Task	Details
March / April 2025	Review and agree Advisory Group Structure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Discuss 'doability' with Departmental Managers 2) Confirm whether AGs will be linked to electoral term eg 3 years established after the election. 3) Confirm membership numbers 4) Confirm whether any seats will be allocated for service provider representatives 5) Confirm whether any new groups are needed 6) Confirm frequency of AG meetings (monthly or six weekly), Chair/GM meetings (quarterly), all AGs and Council full (2 yearly)
April 2025	Review Elected Member role	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Suggest it is simplified to providing Council input 2) Confirm 1 member per group with 1 alternate 3) Consider whether EMs need voting rights or if this creates a conflict of interest at the Council table.
April 2025	Resourcing Review	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Undertake a compensation review and establish clear policy on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings attendance • Ad hoc attendances eg on site meetings • Additional duties eg report writing (but not submissions) • Transport costs • Carer/childcare costs • Conference attendance • Networking meetings <p>Identify any additional budget required.</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2) Confirm Officer Resourcing eg 3) Including Democracy Services, Engagement and Strategy, confirming the roles and expectations. Identify any resourcing issues and how to respond.
May 2025	Capability Building	<p>Review Induction Process to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Training on role of Council and different legislation (consider online tutorial package – can LGNZ help?) 2) Consider group dynamics and deliberation training 3) Establish Chair training to include leadership and facilitation. 4) Consider establishing mentor programme for chairs and possibly other members? 5) Consider a guest speaker programme (quarterly) for AG members to build capability 6) Establish online Teams group for information sharing in between meetings.
May 2025	Recruitment Process Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Confirm the term (recommend 3 years in line with electoral cycle) 2) Plan for recruitment at the start of the electoral term. 3) Consider using a skills matrix to build a broad range of skills and competencies in the new groups. 4) Establish process for support group representative recruitment if appropriate.
June	Feedback and Reporting Mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Review and enhance the Actions Register for each group (to be attached to agendas as an information item. 2) Confirm a twice yearly meeting between Council and all AGM members to report on progress. 3) Consider quarterly meetings between Chairs and GMs.

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4) Add AG input into Council report template (optional where relevant). 5) Establish quarterly internal comms to share AG impact with the organisation. 6) Create a recognition tool for leavers (eg certificate and letter of thanks from the Mayor).
September 2025	Meeting Processes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Consider member only time at the start of meetings (10 minutes?) 2) Review Agenda Structure to ensure strategic items are at the front.
September 2025	Work Programme Process	Establish the process for building the work programme for each AG.
November 2025	Recruitment of new groups	May include reappointment of some existing members if appropriate
December 2025	Agree new Terms of Reference	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Consider a specific set of ToR for each group. 2) Update to reflect new Groups structure 3) Strengthen the managing conflict section. 4) Confirm 'reflection points' so the Groups are reminded of the ToR from time to time.
January 2026	Establish Work Programme for each Group	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Officers to present on Council priorities for the Groups to consider explaining the link to Councils work programme. 2) Agree KPIs to demonstrate the Group's effectiveness (what the Groups will do, not what Council does with their advice). 3) Identify the reporting framework for the work programme.

Resource Implications

Council is currently developing a Non-Elected Member Fee Framework. It is recommended that this process be expanded to include Advisory Groups. This will ensure that the review of compensation for Group members is aligned with the overall Council approach.

Resourcing the different options being put forward as options are considered here including compensation, community development team (EDA), administration, strategic and democracy costs).

Option	Estimated Cost	Considerations
Status Quo	\$22,000 approx. in fees and food 50% of CDA time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members feel undervalued. Compensation does not cover actual costs of attendance in some cases (eg travel, childcare, lost income etc) Compensation levels is not aligned with any Council policy position
Enhanced Advisory Groups	\$22,000 approx. (no change) This would cover somewhat elevated fees (following review), food and some training. Estimated 25% of CDA time (half as many meetings) Additional input from Strategy and Democracy team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This option allows for more intensive support including strategically aligned work programme development, training, travel and childcare costs. Members feel more valued. Work programme is more focussed. Reduced pressure on staff
Community Forums for Youth Sector - Trial	\$2,400 contract cost with a youth service provider to administer the meetings (say 2 x year at \$1200 per meeting). Estimated 10% of CDA time plus some Strategy time to align the Forum work programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> YAG members involved in the Forums. Opportunity to trial a model. Forums focussed on strategic priorities. Brings in a wider community voice.
Replace Advisory Groups with Expert Panels	Costs unknown (see Non-EM Fee Framework policy development). 0% of CDA time required Increase in other department time (Strategy, Infrastructure, Democracy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unknown frequency of meetings, number of topics and intensity of work.

Stakeholder Feedback

A key component of this Review was extensive data gathering from a range of sources with the goal of establishing:

- The rate of take up of the Advisory Group model
- Key themes and methods used in Advisory Groups
- Key challenges that are common
- The rate at which Advisory Groups are reviewed
- Other options for engaging with specific sector groups

Data was gathered in the following way:

Councils in NZ/Aotearoa	International Councils	Advisory Group Members	Elected Members	Officers	Senior Leadership Team
Survey of 78 Councils (30 responses)	Desktop Analysis -Greater Manchester Combined Authority	Member Survey (Current and former members)	Interviews with AG members and non-members	Interviews with officers who are connected with AGs (work with or present to regularly)	Presentation and feedback workshop
Interviews: -Auckland -Hastings -Waitomo -Wellington -Tauranga	-City of Portland, Oregon -City of Melbourne -City of Sydney -Pacific Islands	Interviews with current and former members			
Key Themes					

Councils in New Zealand/Aotearoa Survey

All 78 councils were sent a survey via email, with a follow up email and an attempt to contact each by phone. 30 councils responded either via the survey or through a telephone conversation (Auckland, Waitomo, Wellington, Tauranga, Hastings). The detailed survey results are shown in Appendix 1.

Key themes arising from the council survey include:

- 1) 40% of respondents do use some form of formal structure for engagement with specific sector groups.
- 2) Maori liaison groups are not seen as part of this sector group engagement, perhaps because of the legislative requirements around inclusion of Maori in local government decision making.
- 3) Outside of the use of formal structures councils use a wide variety of engagement tactics to obtain input from different sectors in the community. These include:
 - Innovative ongoing partnerships eg partnering with schools (Waitomo)
 - The main subject areas that triggered the use of a formal approach include; youth, aging, disability (or mobility and access), environment and biodiversity, water quality, community safety, road safety, health, walking and cycle ways, migrant support, rainbow community, pacific communities and economic development.
 - Some deliberative practice particularly for more significant or complex topics eg spatial planning
- 4) Established groups had generally been in place for some time with the majority in the 10 to 20 years.
- 5) Membership numbers tend to be in the 10-15 members range. However, there is a broad spread.
- 6) Most advisory groups meet monthly or quarterly.
- 7) For councils who do have a formal structure for sector group engagement, the management of these groups falls mostly with the community development advisors or dedicated advisory panel advisors. Others had a dedicated community partnerships role or allocated the task to the democracy or council secretary roles.
- 8) Most councils do include elected members in the formal membership of the advisory groups.
- 9) 40% of respondents had undertaken a review in the last 5 years and two more were currently undertaking a review.

Detailed Feedback from NZ/Aotearoa Councils

Detailed interviews were undertaken with 5 Councils;

- 1) Auckland
- 2) Hastings
- 3) Waitomo
- 4) Wellington
- 5) Tauranga.

This section outlines the detailed feedback provided by each and seeks to identify key themes, challenges and opportunities.

Auckland Council

Interview with Victoria Wicks Brown, Principal Advisor, Advisory Panels

Structure

The Auckland Council Advisory Panel structure is seen as part of the governance structure. Under the Auckland Council legislation, the Mayor has responsibility to ensure adequate engagement with Aucklanders and how this is to be done must be clearly set out. There should also be clear engagement with a broad range of sectors eg youth and ethnic groups.

Auckland Council currently has nine Advisory Panels:

1. Youth
2. Seniors
3. Ethnic
4. Pacific
5. Rainbow
6. Disability
7. City Centre
8. Rural
9. Small Business

These are established by the Mayor in line with the political term. The new Mayor must decide on the actual structure with staff making recommendations. Following the establishment of the structure, officers recruit from the community, using a process described as “robust”. While the Mayor does the appointments, these must be endorsed by the governing body.

Membership is restricted to two terms with no automatic renewals. The Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct is provided during the recruitment process. Officers

are very clear with new recruits that their role is neither representative nor elected; they are appointed to provide advice to the Mayor, councillors, staff and CCOs through a lens of lived experience.

Focus

The Advisory Panels provide input and insight into regional plans and policies.

They are also able to raise other matters of interest or concern to the communities they represent. They can also choose to do some community engagement on topics where it aligns with Council priorities. Officers will also support members to bring issues they are passionate about into the group although it is not technically a core part of the role.

While Council does not have to have Advisory Panels (other than for Pacifica), Council values the input and members have a high level of satisfaction with their involvement. They are seen as a vehicle for drawing in engagement on topics faster than if Council was to go direct (eg input into the outdoor swimming facility at the waterfront).

Council sees the advice provided by the Advisory Panels as “candid, trusted advice”. Generally Council is keen to hear the input from the Panels and have an appetite for authentic engagement and an appreciation of the calibre of the Panel members.

Panel members see membership as an opportunity to have an impact, to raise awareness especially around longer term issues that are of concern to their communities. Opportunities can include leading engagement activities eg CDEM workshops for the disability community.

Work Programme and Roles

Generally, there are more requests from the organisation for Advisory Panel involvement than can be accommodated in the time available. The Principal Advisor is responsible for co-ordinating the work programme across all groups.

The political link between the groups and Council is the Chief Liaison Officer. There are also elected members who are Liaison Members and whose role is to act as a go-between between the Panels and Council. These elected members are generally selected for their adjacent interests and characteristics eg youth, Pacifica, seniors.

Some officers volunteer (in addition to their full-time role elsewhere in the organisation) to act as Lead Officers for specific Advisory Panels, helping to guide the strategic focus of the Panels and seeking out opportunities for a Panel to add value. These officers are close to their specific Panel and understand well the areas of interest of that Panel.

Function

There is an expectation by Council that officers are regularly talking to the Panels.

The Panels are seen as a key way to engage more with these communities. Having the planned work programme for the Panels means the communities affected can be set up in advance ready for engagement.

There is a challenge in managing the expectations of the Panel from the community. Officers work to protect the Panel when the community feels they are more accountable than their level of influence allows.

Panels are also seen as a way to hold the organisation to account on delivery of action plans.

Operations

Meetings are held every six weeks and are generally in public with occasional closed workshops when justified.

Panels prepare a term-end report to report to Council on the progress they have made on their strategic priorities.

Panel members are remunerated on the following basis:

- Panel Member: \$270 per meeting (5.5 hours of work)
- Chairs: \$454 per meeting (7.5 to 8 hours of work)
- Additional duties are paid at an hourly rate eg writing reports on engagement activity outcomes.

Members from paid roles with other groups are not paid eg Federated Farmers members of the rural Panel.

The budget is described as tight given the large number of people involved and the significant workload.

Conflicts of Interest are carefully managed and set out in the Code of Conduct.

Contractors and employees of council are not eligible to be members.

Extensive training for Chairs and members is provided for all aspects of the Panel functions.

Minutes are taken but because Advisory Panels are part of the governance structure these are restricted to decisions and actions rather than documenting discussions. This has created some challenges in the past.

Panels tend to operate in three seasons; researching the topics, implementation of the programme, building up to election time. The end of term report is a big focus of the third season with a mid-term check in to ensure the priorities agreed at the start of the term are still appropriate.

Council officers must use a template to engage with Panels. These help them to clarify what they want to ask and why. Organising the engagement is a constant challenge as staff are always busy.

Cross-Panel Integration

Cross-panel workshops are curated to build a culture of cross-over. Panel members enjoy these opportunities to share and cross over. These larger hui are used especially for the bigger topics eg the LTP, when a cross-panel hui 'looks more like Auckland'.

Annual budgets are set by each Panel, depending on the type of work planned, but are confirmed at a cross-panel review session.

There is a Co-Chairs Panel hui every eight weeks. These are looking for opportunities to work collectively and are attended by the Chief Executive, key Directors and the relevant General Managers. The focus is to understand where the Panels might have the most impact.

Influence

Panel members have influence at a high level, both operationally and politically. However, this influence is limited to providing advice, with no decision making authority.

Panel engagement with their communities can include any of the usual engagement tools depending on the topics and timeframes. However, Panels are not authorised to make a central government submission but can provide advice to Council on a Council submission.

Hastings District Council

Louise Stettner – Manager Governance and Democracy

Structure

- Hastings District Council has a number of formal sector groups that cover a range of sectors:
- Hastings/Havelock North Business Association (Council is a member)
- Primary Producers Round Table – regular meetings
- Citizens' Panel – provides input on project concepts prior to formal consultation – a litmus test. Also used as part of the consultation process.
- Youth Council – This is a very active group that advises on projects that are of significance to young people eg skate park in Hastings. Council consults with them on specific projects to incorporate their views before design or scope is finalised. The Youth Council were very proactive when consulting on the representation review and wanted to be more formally involved in council discussions around policy formulation. Council has responded by including representation from the Youth Council on sub-committees. This measure had unanimous support. Subsequently, the Youth Council requested voting rights and for representation on full Council committees. This had a split response in Council but the Mayor used her casting vote to pass the motion. This has created an interesting conundrum; the Youth Council was in the past very active with their submissions, but now they are represented on full Council, they have a conflict of interest and can't do submissions to Council.
- Multi-cultural Advisory Group – Implementing action to support multi-cultural communities.
- Older People - nothing formal but the Mayor meetings regularly with the strong local grey power group.
- Landmarks Advisory Group – this had been in place since the 1980s to promote and protect built heritage. It was folded at the last election because it wasn't really achieving the goal. This was identified through a review. There is now a direct relationship between a local community trust and the Council rather than having to go through the Advisory Group.
- Flaxmere Futures Group – This came in with the last representation review and consists of one Flaxmere Councillor, one Maori Ward Councillor, an officer in charge, the Chair of the Flaxmere Planning Committee. The group provides input and advice to Council. It has recently morphed into a subcommittee on wellbeing. It is currently being considered for its relevance.
- Disability Reference Group – This group is a number of years old and is made up of people who work in the sector and in similar roles at the other councils in the

region. Meetings are held regionally, 4 to 6 times a year with the agenda being put together by the hosting Council. It is regarded as a good opportunity for information sharing eg community grants and empowering the community at election time.

Focus

Hastings District Council has not taken a single approach to sector group representation with a bespoke approach for each sector. There is no record of any review of the structure with some changes being made following representation reviews.

For the Group members there is value in the networking that happens, being more informed about Council services, building relationships with Council officers and other group members.

An unexpected benefit the groups was that during Cyclone Gabrielle, Council was able to lean into those relationships to assist with response and recovery work.

Influence

Council values the groups for the sense-checking that they provide. Officers do take on board the input from the groups who are seen to have mana at Council. The Youth Council for example is regarded as higher up than general public feedback.

Groups are seen as bringing expertise, community connections and adding value to the Council.

Emerging Trends

1. Financial constraints are very front and centre and may impact on Council's willingness to continue with certain activities.
2. The Maori wards referendum may have an impact, meaning that Council may have to bolster the existing Maori Committee to Council.
3. The Youth Council is likely to remain ambitious and want to have a stronger voice and to be more representative.

Waitomo District Council

Sarah McElroy – Community Engagement Manager

New Approach to Youth Engagement

Waitomo District Council did have an Advisory Group model, with a particular focus on their Youth constituency but they were finding it hard work with little interest in attendance and the formal structure. Recently they undertook a review, noting that many other councils had moved away from the formal model. For the review, they engaged through the schools in an informal way that included food and listening to the views of the students and community.

The feedback was that young people were very keen to be involved but did not want to attend drop in sessions or attend council meetings. Different young people wanted to engage at different levels and on different topics.

The schools were identified as a good conduit to engagement with youth. Council funds a Rangatahi Pathway Programme that includes career planning, worksite visits and the goal of having no child leaving school without employment or training to go to. Waitomo is also involved with the Mayors Taskforce for Jobs which is well aligned with the new approach. Council is also working with the schools to bring back ‘service academies’. Council is also engaging with alternative education providers to identify natural leaders.

The feedback indicated that youth were most interested in events and guest speakers. Waitomo now works with the schools and youth to develop a programme of youth-led events.

Council also goes into every school for consultation programmes and is developing partnerships with schools for curriculum programmes eg connecting the science departments with the waters teams. There are also other youth focussed events that partner with local pools and community barbecues. This new approach to working with youth is definitely getting lots more interest than the formal Advisory Group.

Elected members are invited to be part of youth engagement events and will continue to be included as the new model evolves.

Maori Engagement

Council meets with the main local iwi each month through a Trustees meeting.

They also have a broader iwi and happy engagement meeting “Te Nihinui” with representatives from each marae monthly.

Regional Collaboration

Council is part of a regional coalition across all sectors which meets monthly and is guided by the Vibrant Maniopoto strategy.

Community Action Plans

Waitomo also has community connectors who work with communities to develop Community Action Plans.

Wellington City Council

Alisi Folaumoetu'i – Senior Democracy Advisory

A Refreshed Approach

Wellington City Council recently undertook a review of their Advisory Groups. This included spending time with Auckland Council's Advisory Group team. The findings were presented to the November 2024 Council meeting and change will be enacted following the next election.

Key issues identified in the review were:

- Lack of clarity of purpose
- Inconsistent engagement from officers
- Limited resourcing

These are issues that have also been identified in the Whangarei review.

Wellington had six Advisory Groups prior to the review. It will now have five:

- **Disability** (now known as Accessibility)
- **Pacific communities**
- **Youth Council**
- **Rainbow Communities** – this is a new group that had its first meeting in February 2024
- **Ethnic Communities** – this is also a new group and will have its first meeting in February of this year.
- **Environmental Reference Group** - following the review this is being changed to be a Mayoral Forum and will no longer be considered as an Advisory Group.

The new groups have been set up with the existing Terms of Reference but these may change as the full change rolls out. There will also be a combined panel made up of all the groups that will meet quarterly.

The Advisory Group function currently sits with the Democracy Services team but under the new model, will move to the Engagement Team as the review identified that it was a better fit there.

Each Advisory Group has one councillor (and an alternate) currently. Under the new model, elected members will not be formally part of the Groups but will be invited to a quarterly combined panel made up of all forum members, elected members and the executive leadership group.

Wellington's review emphasized the importance of recruitment and the need to ensure that candidates understand the strategic focus of the groups, rather than a more open

focus group approach. It is felt that maximum effectiveness will be achieved through a clear focus on the work plan which is based on Council's work plan (from the LTP and AP). The Strategy team will be brought in to support Groups to build a work programme that is fully aligned with the Council programme.

Training should also include significant governance training to help Group members understand the nature of their role.

The review also identified the feedback loop as being critical and it is hoped that the implementation of the clear work programme will enable better feedback on the value the Groups add. Wellington are also considering including a section in reports to Council that sets out what the feedback from the relevant Groups might be. This may assist elected members to identify the value of the Advisory Group feedback.

Currently Groups (other than Youth Council) meet monthly but this may change as the rollover to the newer model takes place following the next election.

The role of the Advisory Group members will also be clarified to ensure new members understand that they are there as members of the community with lived experience in their area but not as representatives of the community.

Group membership numbers are currently around 12 (with slightly higher numbers for Pacific and for Youth) but these are likely to be reduced as the new model rolls out. Current plans are to look at around 8 members for each group with 2 seats reserved for Maori. Terms will be extended to three years to align with the electoral cycle. Automatic rollovers will be removed.

The new model will also encourage information sharing and engagement outside of formal meetings although work has not been completed about how to compensate members for additional time. The current per meeting rate is \$110 for members, \$130 for co-chairs and \$150 for chairs. Youth Council members are currently paid \$45 but meet fortnightly but for 90 minutes (in recognition of the importance of the stronger social drivers for youth).

Resourcing was identified as a key area. Wellington have identified that they need to wrap additional resourcing around the Groups to ensure the best outcomes.

Tauranga City Council

Dani Jurgeleit – Community Development Team Leader: Inclusive Cities

A Community Driven Response

Tauranga City Council has recently undertaken two reviews of their established Advisory Group model (which included Disability, Youth and an Elders Forum. The first review was a desktop review with a focus on understanding the other models in use in New Zealand/Aotearoa. This provided a range of models for Tauranga to consider.

A second review undertook a community survey and series of forums with the public to establish what might work best for Tauranga. The findings of this review included:

Closed groups are not popular with the community. People prefer open forums where everyone can participate if they want to (noting that participation should be based on what is on an agenda).

- People are reluctant to be ‘pigeon-holed’ into one or other group eg disability or aged, when often their interests span a range of topics.
- Meetings should not be too frequent. In Tauranga’s case, meetings were held every 6 weeks. This was perceived to be too frequent.
- The community should have more freedom to inform the themes, topics and intent of the forum/group.

Following on from these two reviews Tauranga have now established groups that operate in a forum model and are facilitated by outside sector groups. These are:

- **Rainbow Community Special Interest Group** – a newly established group. The first forum was attended by 27 people from the rainbow community. The forums are facilitated by Rainbow Youth.
- **Accessible Tauranga Interest Group** – this is facilitated by CCS. Attendance is usually around 30 people.
- **Ethnic Leaders Forum** – this can have around 100 people attending.
- **Migrant Support Network**
- **Age Friendly Special Interest Group** - This uses a focus on positive aging and brings together 15 agencies who work in this sector. The focus is on celebrating aging, food insecurity and housing. Meetings are ad hoc as dictated by the group itself.
- **Welcoming Communities Governance Group**
- **Homeless Provider Network** – this has 65 members from the homeless sector. Tauranga has recently also joined a regional homeless lived experience group. This group takes a regional approach with direct links to central government.

- **Youth** – Tauranga is currently reviewing this sector specifically. The plan is to establish three separate groups. Elected members would like to consider a youth council or a strategic youth advisory group. Council is also involved with and supporting an external strategic youth working group with a focus on development of a youth hub. Council is also supporting and involved with Instep Young Leaders which consists of around 35 young people to meeting for a breakfast meeting regularly. Council has provided a Mayoral breakfast and facilitated a specific discussion. Council is considering whether to create its own Youth Forum or to focus on supporting and engaging with existing ones.

The biggest challenge that the previous Youth Advisory Group had was churn. The entire membership was turning over every 12 to 18 months. There was also a skew towards driven and ambitious young people who were there to improve their CV. This led to a diversity deficit. While the groups are not intended to be representative they do need to have a diversity of views. The previous group had 14 members with terms of two time three years. Tauranga is finding the open forum to have a much wider range of participation with higher numbers. Staff feel they are getting more diverse feedback that is more representative of the youth voice.

There can be a challenge with getting different people attending each time the forum is run but overall Tauranga is happy that they are getting improved input.

Key differences between the old Advisory Group model and the new forum based model are:

- External facilitation – Council has contracted external groups to facilitate the forums. These groups come from the sector so have strong knowledge and networks. The community appear to prefer this facilitation approach, seeing it as community led.
- No Formal Group Structure – the forums are open to anyone to participate. However promotion of the meetings tends to be through the mailing lists that relevant organisations hold so is targeted at those who have an interest.
- Building Database - Participants are invited to join a specific mailing list for the forums, building a substantial targeted database over time.
- Reduced cost and complexity - The facilitation agencies are paid \$5000 per year, including doing the minutes, agendas and preparing submissions when required. No other members are paid (although there are honorariums for chairs and deputy chairs of \$250 per annum).

- More Open Agenda – The forum is invited to discuss anything of interest with the ability to draw in other agencies who might be able to answer specific queries beyond Council.
- No Elected Member Formal Involvement – Tauranga found that the elected member involvement could be inconsistent and was not adding much value. The new arrangement has the groups making presentations to Council directly when necessary. This is felt to be providing more value.
- Reporting – the Chairs of the forums present to Council each year (and more often if needed) to outline the work completed and what the opportunities are for future work. The groups also submit on key planning documents such as the Long Term Plan and the Annual Plan.

Tauranga's learnings include that the right facilitator is critical to the function of any group whether it is an open forum or a closed Advisory Group. They also found that transparency is key. The community want to feel that their efforts lead to real and visible change. They also found that groups became frustrated when they were asked to give time on topics that weren't going to lead to anything meaningful.

Prioritisation is seen as key. Tauranga involves the strategy team from Council to assist with the prioritisation of work. Emphasis is also given to ensuring that when a topic has been addressed, the learnings are embedded back into Council eg feedback from the Disability Advisory Group led to the development of a Universal Design Manual.

Under their previous model, induction training was given a high priority covering roles and responsibilities and governance training and culminating in the development of a work programme.

Tauranga have developed a Priority Community Engagement Toolkit focussing on nine key communities. They see this as an important outcome of their work to date.

Key Themes from In-Depth Interviews

1. Youth is the most complex area	This is one of the more challenging areas as rangatahi are less comfortable with a formal approach but once engaged they expect a high degree of influence and agency.
2. Cross-integration/collaboration works	Groups and the host Council benefit from collaboration with each other, allowing for work programmes to be aligned and resources to be shared.
3. Financial constraints put the groups at risk.	All councils are experiencing financial constraints. Without clear purpose and elected member buy-in, advisory groups can be seen as optional. Conversely, they can be seen as a more cost-effective way of engagement, which is challenging given they are not necessarily representative of the community.
4. High level of support needed to be effective	To get the most from advisory groups, a high degree of support is required in terms of administration, training, induction, support with strategic planning etc. This helps the groups to stay on task and provide the most value to the host council.
5. Clarity around representation helps to keep everyone on track	As mentioned above, these groups are not generally truly representative of the community they are sourced from. They have knowledge of their communities but there is not usually any mechanism to check the representation of the group (eg demographics, ethnicities etc). With the smaller number in these groups, this would be challenging to achieve. As such it is important that the members, councillors, staff members and the public, understand their role, and they are supported to remain within their parameters.
6. Managing expectations – clarity on the expectations and purpose is vital	Without clearly articulated purpose group members can experience a 'scope creep' that distracts them from where they can add the most

	<p>value. Host councils need to set a clear direction for the group.</p> <p>This goes for managing expectations in the community too. Advisory group members can be seen as ‘quasi’ councillors by community members. This can undermine the established council protocols for managing service requests etc.</p>
7. Agility and flexibility helps to keep group members engaged	<p>While it is important to have structure and a clear work plan, there also needs to be space for the group to address issues that arise from their communities in a way that does not impact on the planned work programme.</p>
8. Structure and planning matters	<p>Groups are most successful when they take a strategic planning approach to their work with clear alignment with the host council priorities. Given the nature of the group make up, there will likely be varying degrees of understanding of strategic priorities and so support is likely to be needed to develop the group strategic plan and to monitor and evaluate progress.</p>
9. Elected member buy in is vital	<p>Ensuring a close connection between the groups and the host council members is also an important indicator of likely success. This could be by having elected members present at meetings, or by having regular pan-group hui that involve council members.</p>
10. Top-down support gives credibility	<p>The most successful groups are supported from the top of the council organisation with the chief executive and general managers being involved in the activities of the groups from time to time.</p>
11. Accountability maintains focus on value	<p>The most effective groups have mechanisms for measuring their effectiveness through the term and reporting to council on their outputs.</p>

12. Induction really matters	Many group members may not have any experience of dealing with strategic matters. The induction training should have a strong focus on governance and the importance of strategic focus that is aligned with the council's own workplan. Innovation in the training and induction space is needed to help new members really understand and stay focused on their role.
13. Opportunities to Partner	There are often sector support groups who can be valuable partners when engaging. They can have wider and deeper networks than Council has. Tauranga's (albeit early) experience is that partnering with sector groups is providing a broader voice and building a database of interested community members, at a lower cost.

International Examples

This section provides an overview of some key international examples of successful advisory groups within councils. This was collected through desktop research.

Examples were taken from the UK, US and Australia given our western democratic roots in New Zealand / Aotearoa. For completeness, additional research was done on the role of advisory groups in Pacific Island nations.

A more detailed review of the international examples is included as Appendix 4.

Greater Manchester Combined Authority (UK)

Equalities - Greater Manchester Combined Authority

Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) is a large local authority in the UK, made up of several local councils that have come together in the combined structure for the more regionalised functions. It has a number of advisory/sector groups that facilitate the connection between the council organisation and community sectors.

In general, these panels are charged by GMCA to provide insight into their sector, to support key messages to those communities, to co-design policies, programmes and strategies and to support an asset based approach (ensuring the right assets and infrastructure are in place).

These are collected under the “Equalities” heading and include Youth, Disabled Persons, LGBTQ+, Race, Women and Girls, Faith and Belief and Older Persons.

Summary of GMCA Equality Panels

Each panel appears to have a clear Terms of Reference which sets out its own specific purpose that aligns with the overarching GMCA statement of purpose for the groups. Each panel submits regular reports to GMCA annually but can be more frequent if needed. The ToRs are fine-tuned by each group to reflect the purpose defined by the panel and the agreed panel expectations within their own group.

Support provided by GMCA includes travel expenses, fair notice of meetings and opportunities (and funding) to attend outside events. There is no mention of a per-meeting fee (which does not rule it out).

City of Portland Council, US

[Advisory Groups | Portland.gov](#)

City of Portland is well-regarded for its inclusive and innovative approach to engaging with communities.

They have an extensive network of advisory bodies (covering topics as diverse as budget making to cannabis) that cover a wide range of area of interest to the people of Portland. They are considered to be an important tool for community members and City officers and elected members to work together on projects, providing insight on Portlanders' diverse needs and interests.

The Advisory Bodies Program provides training and resources to advisory body members, ensuring advisory bodies follow their rules and bylaws, and handles recruitment for open member positions. It appears that the positions are, in general, considered to be voluntary and unpaid.

Advisory Bodies can:

- Host public meetings,
- Provide policy advise and participate in the development of policies,
- Oversee grant applications,
- Advise staff on community engagement plans for specific projects and reviewing the community engagement manual,
- Manage specific leases and concessions, and
- Provide general advice and lived experience input on relevant topics.

Summary of City of Portland Advisory Bodies programme

City of Portland's Advisory Bodies have a wide range of powers and activities that they are involved with, including to set their own rules (subject to approval by the Bureau Director). They do appear to be unpaid, although information on the website was inconsistent and at times not easy to find.

City of Melbourne, Australia

[Committees and advisory groups | City of Melbourne](#)

City of Melbourne hosts a number of key advisory bodies whose work facilitates development and implementation of “a range of programs and initiatives that contribute to the cultural, social and economic vitality of Melbourne”.

Key advisory committees, bodies and groups include Audit and Risk, Invest Melbourne, Disability, First Nations, City Art Collections, City Design, Homelessness, Parks and Gardens and Safe City Cameras amongst others. Members are paid around \$300 per meeting and are appointed for a three year term.

Summary of City of Melbourne Advisory Bodies programme

City of Melbourne's use of Advisory Bodies appears to be more restricted to more operational matters that are directly related to delivery of services. However, they do appear to pay significantly more for members participation.

City of Sydney – Australia

Sydney has a range of Advisory Panels to facilitate input from key sector groups. They also use a Citizen Jury with a single focus on the development of the Sydney 2050 vision.

Groups include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, Public Art, Inclusion and Disability, Business and Economic, Multicultural, City Design, Development and Housing. Terms are three years and capped at two terms with payments being \$300 per meeting. Membership varies between members of the public and experts on the topic depending on Council needs.

Terms are three years and capped at two.

Pacific Island Communities

Information about the more detailed governance structures of Pacific Island nations local governments is limited. However, these countries draw on their more traditional tribal/village and chiefship model with representatives from formal groups of chiefs having influence on local and indeed central government. Chiefs are strongly connected to their local communities which tend to be smaller. This local connection and high level of influence by local chiefs could arguably bring a stronger focus on local issues to political governance.

Advisory Group Feedback

Member Survey Outcomes: Former Members

10 former members responded to the survey. Of those six had only been on their advisory group for two years, two had done three years, one had done four years and one had done 5 years. Appendix 1 provides the detailed results.

Key Findings:

1) Reasons for Leaving

Reasons include relocation (both moving away and moving for university), dissatisfaction with the perceived value or enjoyment, and completion of tenure. Two of the ten respondents reported dissatisfaction as being their reason for leaving.

2) Group Purpose & Understanding

Members generally understand the purpose of the Advisory Group, but there is a notable lack of faith in its effectiveness and impact.

Concerns include tokenism, language barriers, insufficient leverage in council processes, inconsistent attendance from Elected Members, and lack of feedback on impact.

3) Role of Elected Members

Elected Members are expected to act as a link between the Advisory Group and the Council, advocate for the group and provide advice (as per the Terms of Reference Appendix B). There is also the suggestion that they should assist with submissions, which may create conflicts of interest for the Elected Member.

Suggestions for improvement include more engagement, respect, and feedback from Elected Members.

4) Role of Council Officers

Council Officers are seen as record keepers and group supporters but there were comments about them sometimes being ignored by the Council.

Suggested improvements include providing the officer providing more practical support to the Group and potentially a pay rise (unclear whether this was for the group member or the officer).

5) Group Management & Impact

There is a mixed perception of how well the group is run and its ability to meet its priorities.

While some felt the group provided insights into Council priorities, others felt it lacked impact and integration with Council processes.

There were suggestions that more tangible feedback on outcomes could help understanding around achieving priorities.

6) Personal Value and Development

Members found personal value in the leadership opportunities inherent in the role, felt they had built understanding of civic processes, and formed strong relationships.

However, some felt disillusioned over time due to limited impact and systemic issues.

7) Understanding of Council Operations

Participation in the Advisory Groups had increased respondents understanding of Council operations. However this understanding included a reinforcement of the perception that barriers like red tape can limit action.

Key Recommendations for Improvement (Former Members):

1. Engagement & Communication: Increase engagement and clear communication channels between the Advisory Group, Elected Members, and Council Officers to ensure feedback from the Groups is acknowledged.
2. Impact Evaluation: Establish clear metrics and follow-up processes to evaluate the impact and value of Advisory Group feedback and communicate this to members regularly.
3. Structural Support: Address systemic barriers that are inherent in bureaucratic organisations.

Member Survey Outcomes – Current Members

14 current Advisory Group members completed the survey. Of these eight were from the Positive Aging Advisory Group, and three each were from the Disability and Youth Advisory Groups. Most respondents were shorter term members with 11 being in the 1 to 2 year band and the three others spread evenly over the 3, 4 and 5 year bands.

What follows is a summary of the findings. Appendix 2 contains the detailed results.

1) Purpose of the Advisory Group

- Many respondents understand the purpose to be mostly in the space of advocacy and representation for specific communities (e.g., older people, youth and those living with disability).
- The Advisory Groups are seen as being there to provide feedback on council policies and strategies.

There is a possible misalignment between these two themes. Members are not really representative of their communities. Instead they bring lived experience to inform feedback on Council policies and strategies.

2) Perceived Role and Improvements

- Respondents generally feel the Advisory Groups are fit for purpose, though some suggest improvements like more serious consideration by the council and better feedback mechanisms.
- There's a desire for more direct communication with council members and a stronger presence in decision-making processes.

3) Elected Member Role

- Elected members are viewed as conduits between the Advisory Group and the council.
- Suggestions for improvement include having more contact with council members.

4) Council Officer Role

- Respondents felt that officers can be expected to facilitate meetings and act as liaisons, ensuring communication between the Advisory Group and the council.
- Feedback suggests Advisory Group members rely on officers to represent their views council meetings and that they hope for a proactive and strong voice in that forum.

5) Operation and Priorities

- There's a mixed perception of how well the Advisory Group operates and meets its priorities.
- Respondents value the group's work but express a need for more evidence of their impact and consideration by the council.

6) Personal and Group Value

Personal value is derived from being a voice for peers and contributing to community improvements.

Respondents felt that they provide valuable and educated input, although there is a strong desire for evidence of this input being valued and acted upon by the council.

Suggestions for Enhancements:

Increase Involvement and Feedback

- Earlier engagement on projects to allow for feedback to have real value
- Richer participation with council as a whole and with relevant subcommittees
- Respondents seek acknowledgment and evidence that their contributions are heard and valued.
- There is an openness to more and richer involvement eg site visits

Diversity and Accessibility

There were several references to the need for more ethnic representation within the Advisory Groups, reflecting the growing diversity of the community. It is unclear whether this is in addition to the Multi-ethnic group that has been recently established or whether it that group actually meets those needs.

Respondents were also clear that they expect more in the accessibility and disability area.

Improved Communication

Suggestions include better communication tools (e.g. notepads for meetings), and more direct feedback from the council.

Role Clarity

While respondents didn't directly mention this, responses indicate that there may be a lack of clarity on the purpose of the groups with the advocacy aspect of the role taking a higher precedence than the Terms of Reference might indicate. There is a tension between representation and the provision of strategic advice.

Conclusion

Overall, the survey indicates that while respondents recognize the importance and potential impact of the Advisory Group, there is a strong desire for more effective communication, acknowledgment, and integration into the council's decision-making processes. Enhancements in feedback mechanisms, integration, recognition and role clarity are seen as key areas for improvement to increase the group's value both to its members and to the council.

Member Interviews

Face to face interviews were held with a range of Advisory Group members:

Advisory Group	Number of Interviews
Positive Aging	Current (3)
	Past (2)
DAG	Current (3)
	Past (1)
YAG	Current (2)
	Past (2)

In general interviews were around an hour each using a structured conversation approach which allowed for the subject to introduce their own perspectives. Members of the PAAG group were invited to be interviewed as pairs (two groups of two).

Analysis of the feedback from the Advisory Group (AG) Member interviews highlights several key themes and insights:

1) Uncertainty about Roles and Responsibilities

Many members expressed uncertainty about their roles within the AGs. While some are familiar with the Terms of Reference, there is a general need for clearer role descriptions and expectations and many found it difficult to recall or explain how they were applied in practice.

Some members noted that their understanding of their roles had evolved over time, often through informal learning and interaction with others, rather than through structured guidance.

This indicates a need for a more comprehensive induction process that clearly outlines expectations, responsibilities, and the impact of their roles. There may also be a need for a more structured work programme to help groups remain focused on their priorities.

2) Deficiencies in Feedback and Communication

A recurring theme is the lack of feedback from the Council regarding the input provided by AGs. Members feel that their contributions often go into a "void," with little information on whether their advice is acted upon or valued. Members expressed a strong desire for updates on how their advice is being used and what outcomes it has led to

Implementing a transparent, consistent and structured feedback loop could help members see how their input influences council decisions.

3) Uncertainty about Value and Impact

Members have mixed views on the value and impact of AGs. While some believe they provide valuable insights and have influenced decisions (eg influencing special projects like the new building design), others feel their contributions are undervalued, not fully utilised or appreciated. The perceived performative nature of engagement, (some felt that this was especially prominent during election periods), suggests a need for consistent and meaningful follow through and feedback.

It may also be helpful for Council to clarify exactly what they expect from Advisory Groups and ensure that groups are clear and have a structure work programme for that work.

4) Some Meeting Structure and Dynamics Frustrations

The effectiveness of meetings varies, with some members highlighting the need for effective meeting facilitation and more structured agendas. The ability to focus on strategic issues rather than operational ones was also a point of concern. Some members felt that meetings can sometimes lack focus, leading to discussions that deviate from strategic issues.

The current meeting schedule was felt to be about right for many of the interviewees. However, some members suggest more frequent meetings could help maintain momentum and engagement.

The importance of a well-defined agenda was also mentioned. Interviewees noted when the agenda was not adhered to, this could lead to frustration and lower levels of participation.

5) Good Levels of Cohesion and Respect

Many members reported positive interpersonal relationships within their AGs. There is generally a sense of camaraderie, with members respecting each other's opinions and contributions.

6) Some Issues with Leadership and Facilitation

The effectiveness of the chairperson was noted as playing a significant role in group dynamics, facilitating balanced discussions and ensuring all voices are heard. A lack of strong leadership can lead to meetings becoming unproductive or dominated by a few voices, which was frustrating to some respondents.

At times council staff can be drawn into facilitation at the meetings. Interviewees found that this could help with guiding discussions and providing necessary context. Their ability to manage discussions and deal with conflicts was felt to be important for maintaining a positive atmosphere.

7) Variable Levels of Inclusivity and Participation

Icebreakers and collaborative activities are noted as being effective in building rapport and encourage participation, especially among new members.

Factors such as unclear roles, lack of preparation, or personal conflicts can were seen as barriers to participation. Some members noted that meetings could sometimes feel like a "therapy group" when discussions drifted from the agenda.

However, there were suggestions that some groups faced challenges with certain members not participating actively or dominating discussions. It was felt that this can disrupt the balance of contributions and hinder effective dialogue.

8) More Equitable Compensation and Recognition

While some members feel the compensation is fair, others believe it doesn't adequately reflect the time and effort involved, especially when compared to other committees.

Some comments suggested that more equitable compensation could recognize the importance of their contributions and encourage more diverse and perhaps higher calibre participation.

9) Consider Greater Diversity and Representation

There is a call for greater diversity within AGs, both in terms of demographics and perspectives to better reflect the communities being represented. Some felt that the inclusion of various community groups, including youth, aged, and multicultural communities, could enhance the richness of feedback and advice provided.

10) More Comprehensive Training and Development

Members expressed a need for more training and professional development opportunities, including governance training, understanding council processes, and effective communication skills. This could empower AG members to contribute more effectively.

11) Improve Integration with Council Processes

There is a perceived disconnect between AGs and the broader council processes. Members suggest more integration, such as involving AGs earlier in the decision-making process and ensuring their input is considered in strategic planning.

12) Member Engagement and Churn

High turnover and engagement issues among members affect the continuity and effectiveness of AGs. Strategies to retain members and ensure active participation, such as mentorship programs could be beneficial. Additionally more overt recognition and connection with Council could also help to address some of the frustrations that former members leave with.

Options for Enhancement of Advisory Groups:

Based on the analysis of these key themes, member inters identified several options that Council could consider to enhance the effectiveness and experience of the existing Advisory Groups (AGs):

1) Improve Induction and Training

- Develop a comprehensive induction program that clearly outlines the roles, responsibilities, and expectations for AG members.
- Include training sessions on council processes, governance, and effective communication strategies to empower members to contribute meaningfully.
- This could include the use of online tutorials to allow for members to undertake training outside the meeting environment.

2) Establish a Robust Feedback Loop

- Create a structured process for providing feedback to AG members about how their input is used in council decisions.
- Provide regular updates and reports on the impact of AG advice to help members understand the value of their work.

3) Enhance Meeting Facilitation

- Provide training for chairs and deputy chairs and facilitators to ensure effective meeting management, focusing on maintaining agenda focus and encouraging balanced participation.
- Consider sharing leadership roles (eg when workshopping) to bring diverse perspectives to meeting facilitation.

4) **Optimize Meeting Structure and Frequency**

- Evaluate the current meeting schedule and structure to determine if changes could enhance engagement and productivity.
- Consider more frequent meetings or additional workshops for specific topics to maintain momentum and focus.
- Consider three year term

5) **Foster Inclusivity and Diverse Representation**

- Consider a more targeted recruitment approach to ensure AG better represent the diverse demographics and perspectives of the community.
- Encourage participation from underrepresented groups and provide support to help them engage effectively.
- Consider including sector service provider groups in the AGs (noting that this should not lead to domination of the AG by the service providers).

6) **Address Compensation and Recognition**

- Review compensation policies to ensure they fairly reflect the time, effort, and value that AG members bring.
- Recognize members' contributions through formal acknowledgment from Council.

7) **Improve Communication and Integration with Council**

- Facilitate regular joint discussions sessions or feedback meetings between AGs and council members to build understanding and collaboration.

8) **Develop Clear Strategic Plans for AGs**

- Support AGs to develop strategic plans that align with council priorities and outline clear goals and objectives.
- Provide support for AGs to track progress, evaluate their impact and report to Council regularly.

Officer Feedback

Interviews were conducted with 12 Council officers including representatives from the Community Development, Engagement, Communications, Transport, Infrastructure, Events and Landscape Design teams.

In general interviews were around an hour each using a structured conversation approach which allowed for the subject to introduce their own perspectives.

Commentary from Officers has been analysed and what follows are the key themes:

1. Purpose and Functionality of AGs

Role Ambiguity: AGs are intended to provide feedback and advice on council strategies, plans, and policies, offering perspectives from lived experiences. However, there is ambiguity about how well they adhere to the purpose as set out in the Terms of Reference. Some officers view them as more of a feedback mechanism than a more formal advisory body.

Need for Defined Scope: The lack of a clear, strategic vision and scope for AGs is highlighted, suggesting a need for more structured objectives to guide their activities and ensure they align with council goals.

2. Engagement and Representation

Representation Concerns: There was a recurring concern about whether AGs adequately represent the communities they are meant to serve, with discussions on whether they adequately capture diverse voices, especially the more marginalised sectors.

Improving Diversity: Suggestions included enhancing the recruitment process to be more structured and representative, ensuring diverse community input, and potentially merging groups to provide more cohesive input on broader issues.

3. Value and Effectiveness

Mixed Perceptions of Value: While AGs are acknowledged for providing valuable perspectives, particularly in specialized areas like accessibility and youth engagement, there are mixed opinions about their overall effectiveness. Some see them as influential, while others view their impact as limited.

Influence on Council Decisions: The feedback emphasized the need for a better understanding of how AG input is integrated into council decisions, with calls for improved mechanisms to measure and communicate the AGs' contributions.

4. Challenges and Limitations

Purpose Ambiguity: A key challenge identified by officers was the perceived ambiguity of purpose, and the need for more strategic planning to guide their work.

Administrative Burden: There was significant feedback on the administrative challenges faced by staff in managing AGs, including the time and resources required. This was perceived as being compounded by limited budgets, which restrict the implementation of AG recommendations.

Internal Group Challenges: Issues such as lack of continuity, leadership weaknesses, and the need for strategic planning within AGs were highlighted as barriers to their effectiveness.

5. Communication and Feedback

Better Feedback Processes: All acknowledged the importance of closing the feedback loop, ensuring AG members are informed about the impact of their input on council decisions. This included managing expectations regarding the level of influence held by the AGs and providing regular updates on the progress of projects that the AG has engaged on.

Transparency and Communication: There is a call for more transparent communication with AGs about how their advice is utilized, which could help enhance their perceived value and effectiveness.

6. Potential for Improvement

Suggestions for improving the AG model included:

- Restructuring the groups for better representation,
- Clearer definition of roles,
- Transparency about the level of influence,
- Possible merging some groups for more cohesive input on broader issues like accessibility
- Creating a more focused and strategic approach to AG activities.

7. Alternative Models and Ideas

Public Forums or Workshops: Alternative and/or additional methods of collecting community input were discussed and mainly covered broader public forums or workshops that engage a wider audience and provide more actionable feedback.

Elected Member Feedback

Interviews were conducted face to face, over Teams and on the phone with six of the 14 elected members (3 of whom are not currently Liaison Members of an AG, including the Mayor).

Interviews were around an hour each using a structured conversation approach which allowed for the subject to introduce their own perspectives.

Commentary from Elected Members has been analysed and what follows are the key themes:

1) Role and Responsibilities

Elected Members generally consider they are liaisons between AGs and the council, tasked with listening, providing guidance, and ensuring that AG feedback is communicated back to the council.

There were varying views on the effectiveness of officer roles with some frustration expressed around risk aversion and the slowness of implementation of recommendations from AGs. Elected Members tended to see officers as being responsible for facilitation of discussions.

Some Elected Members feel undervalued or unclear about their roles, particularly when they perceive overlap with staff responsibilities eg around facilitating discussions or reporting back to Council. There was an appetite for Elected Members to be more involved in setting the agenda and facilitation of meetings.

There have been instances of Elected Members facing a dilemma when the views of the AG they represent differ from their personal views.

2) Effectiveness of the AG Model

Ratings for the effectiveness of the AG model vary, with feedback suggesting moderate effectiveness. There was a general consensus that improvements are needed.

Key areas suggested for improvement include better feedback loops, ensuring AG input is acted upon, and better integration of AG feedback into council decision-making processes. Additional areas of improvement suggested included more extensive training and induction for Elected Members (and other Advisory Group members).

There was also a suggestion that AG input should be required to be included in reports to Council, where appropriate. This would elevate the profile of the work of the AGs.

There was some discussion about the fact that each of three groups has a different characteristic and perhaps the one model might not fit well with each.

3) Value of AGs

Despite challenges, Elected Members recognise the value of AGs in providing community insights and helping to shape council policies according to diverse perspectives.

4) Challenges and Barriers

Several Elected Members note issues with the existing structure, such as unclear role definitions, inadequate induction processes, and the need for better collaboration between Elected Members, officers, and AG members.

There is a perception that the feedback from AGs is not always considered or integrated into council actions, leading to frustration among AG members.

Some feedback suggested that broader training on the importance of engagement with communities (rural and urban) and how to do this, could be helpful.

In some instances AG members have gone directly to the Mayor to assist with resolving an issue. This would suggest that the current conflict resolution (Chair, officer and liaison Elected Member) methods are not necessarily working well.

There was some feedback that meetings might be too frequent with a suggestion that once every two months with additional informal activities and engagement in between meetings might be more effective.

Many AGs experience significant churn in membership which the Elected Members felt could be affecting the performance of the AG body. This could perhaps be linked to the shorter term (two years) that is not connected to the electoral cycle and the absence of a well-managed work programme.

5) Compensation and Recognition

There is a feeling that AG members are not fairly compensated for their contributions, which could affect engagement and retention. AG members are paid significantly less than the Te Karearea Committee members (noting that most councils reported treating their Maori liaison bodies differently from Advisory Groups).

6) Suggestions for Improvement

Elected Members suggest that the council should consider the following actions:

- Give more weight and recognition to AG reports. Establish robust systems to ensure AG feedback is acknowledged, considered, and communicated back effectively to both AG members and the council.
- Consider changes to meeting frequency and format to enhance engagement.
- Consider merging certain AGs
- Ensure member representation is broad and diverse to better capture community needs
- Consider more extensive induction training for Elected Members in community engagement and in the role of the Liaison Member and AGs
- Consider providing training for Chairs and Deputy Chairs
- Consider whether there are additional AGs that might be needed eg Rural and Business
- Provide opportunities for AG members to host events for their communities
- Encourage closer collaboration between Elected Members, Council, officers, and AG members through joint initiatives and regular communication channels.
- Clarify role and responsibilities of Elected Members through reviewing the Terms of Reference description of Elected Member roles within AGs to ensure all parties understand their responsibilities and contributions.
- Evaluate the compensation and recognition methods for AG members to ensure fairness and encourage active participation.

Senior Leadership Team Feedback

In principle the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) expressed support (at the workshop on 21 January and 25 February) for the continued place of the Advisory Groups in Council's structure with some adjustments to improve productivity, focus and relevance.

Purpose (in order of priority):

SLT felt that there needed to be clear purpose and suggested that the various functions should be prioritised as follows:

1. Strategic input to Council on identified priorities (this is the lead function)
2. Strategic/operational focus input to Officers on identified priorities
3. User experience testing on identified priorities
4. Building community networks
5. Encouraging democratic involvement
6. Developing civics knowledge and understanding of Council

SLT were keen to see AGs being able to focus more on projects that were identified priorities for Council, giving more depth on these rather than being spread widely across multiple projects in an ad hoc way.

Elected Members role:

This needs clarity. SLT feel the Elected member role could perhaps deliver more value providing Council insight into the group.

They suggested that the function of reporting back to Council was not necessarily appropriate as it opened up the possibility of conflicts between Elected Members own personal views, the views of Council and the views of the AG. They suggested that this might be better addressed through AG members presenting to Council directly or including feedback in officer reports, clearly identified as AG feedback.

There was support for the model of having one member per group with an alternate to ensure that Council was always represented on each AG.

There was also recognition of a possible need for additional training for Elected Members on AGs to reflect the specificities of the role.

Structural Feedback Mechanisms

SLT agreed that the process for providing feedback to the AGs needs to be strengthened and should include more direct contact between Council and the AGs.

They agreed this may include some form of regular Collaborative Forum (all AG members and Council).

Representation

SLT support consideration of the idea of some membership seats being set aside for representatives of groups operating in the sector – to bring a broader professional view in line with Council's strategic priorities.

SLT supported the idea of a three year term agreeing that it may assist with strategic alignment.

Accountability

SLT felt it was important that there were performance measures in place to be able to demonstrate the effectiveness of the AGs on a regular basis. Ideas included:

- Presenting feedback directly to Council on priority topics
- Reporting in writing mid-term and at term end on structured work programme
- Collaborative Forum – each group reports on progress against work programme

Organisational Uptake

SLT supports the AGs being used by a wider range of Council departments eg Comms Strategy and other non-infrastructure areas. However, they felt it was important consideration was given to managing the expectations and understanding of what Council has agency over so that the input is focused and usable.

They also encouraged seeking opportunities to collaborate across AGs when a topic spans all areas to bring more efficiency.

Recognition

SLT noted the importance of AGs receiving appropriate recognition for their work. They felt the following measures may help with this:

- Undertake a formal review of remuneration and expenses to more adequately reflect the value expected and received.
- Formalise the feedback process
- Consider including AG input in officer reports to Council when appropriate to demonstrate the value.
- Encourage AG members to present directly to Council on priority topics

Resourcing

SLT acknowledged that the changes being suggested could increase the resourcing needed to operate the AGs. However, they were felt that some of the resourcing challenges could be addressed through better utilisation of existing resourcing eg:

- Democracy Services to support the meeting administration through training and possible involvement.
- Strategy and Infrastructure to support the development of a structured work programme
- Improved training for AG Members, EM Members and Chairs
- The Community Development Manager was encouraged to discuss 'doability' with Departmental Managers.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the comprehensive review of the Whangarei District Council's Advisory Group model highlights several key areas for improvement and enhancement. The analysis of feedback from various stakeholders, including Advisory Group members, elected officials, and council officers, as well as insights from other councils and international examples, underscores the need for a more structured, strategic, and integrated approach to sector engagement.

The review reveals that while the current Advisory Group model is valued for its potential to provide diverse community insights to inform council decisions, challenges such as role ambiguity, inadequate feedback mechanisms, and resource constraints have hindered its effectiveness.

To address these issues, the report recommends retaining the formal structure with enhancements (including aligning the AG member term with the electoral cycle being three years), including the establishment of a collaborative forum for regular engagement with the full Council, clearer role definitions, and a more strategic focus aligned with Council priorities.

Key recommendations also emphasize the importance of improving induction and training processes, developing a structured work programme for each Advisory Group, enhancing feedback loops, and ensuring adequate resources and recognition for members' contributions.

This report also notes that there may be resourcing implications in implementing the recommendations and that departmental managers should be consulted about the impacts on their departments before confirming the final recommended actions.

By implementing these changes, Whangarei District Council will strengthen and focus the Advisory Groups, fostering more meaningful engagement and ensuring that diverse voices are effectively reflected in Council's decision-making processes. This approach will support Council's broader goals of building a "vibrant, attractive and thriving" District for all the people who live here.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Council Survey Results

<p>Do you use a formal structure for sector group input into council decision making?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 councils use a formal structure • 1 used a system of less formal forums that focus more on LTP issues but also address non-LTP issues, through less formal meetings in cafes and online. • 1 council reported that while it did not have formal structures, it did have specific community advisors who look after portfolios eg disability, youth etc and who design specific engagement activities for each project, as appropriate. • Several councils referred to having specific Maori groups and treated them as different from other sector groups.
<p>If not, how do you obtain input from sector groups eg disability, youth, aging?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A variety of options were used including” • Public/community meetings • Submissions • Reaching out to specific interest groups • A Citizen’s Panel (can tend towards the older community members) • Deputations and presentations to Council meetings • Reaching out through councillor portfolio holders • Reaching out through community boards • Specific engagement activities • Public notices • Posters • Social Media • Radio • Emails • Peoples Panel • Customer Surveys • Antenna app • Ward updates • Direct engagement with community organisations • Portfolio facilitators / Community advisors / Partnerships Team / Community Connectors • Deliberative approach (esp for Spatial Planning)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaching out through schools - detailed approach using partnership with local schools eg involving science departments and building a youth led programme of events, Mayors Taskforce for Jobs, service academy • Regional coalition (Vibrant Maniopoto) to bring all agencies together.
If yes, what are they called	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity Advisory Group • Road Safety Advisory Group • Safer Ashburton • Clutha District Youth Council • Freshwater and Forestry Advisory Groups • MSD, MBIE, Iwi, Business Chamber, Great South, Health Localities • Dark Sky • Water Zone Committee • Youth Council • Older People • Youth • People with Disabilities • Health Advisory • Cycleways/bridleways/walkways • Economic Development • Iwi • Youth • Access and Mobility • Older Adults • Priority Communities • Migrant Support Network • Disability • Rainbow • Youth • Pacific • Ethnic • Environmental Reference Group • City Centre • Rural • Small Business
When were they established?	10 years + 12 years + Community Plan groups < 20 years Advisory Groups <10 years 1 years

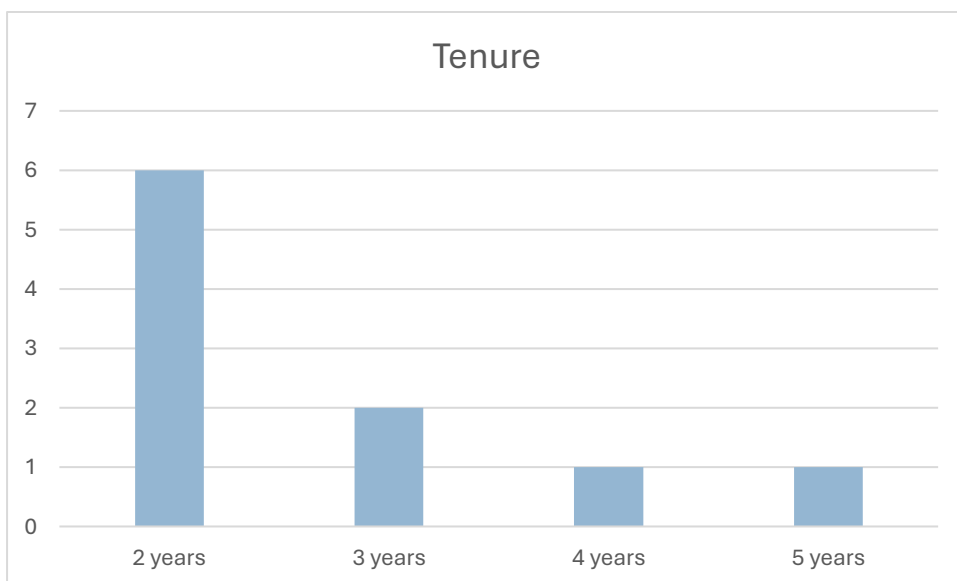
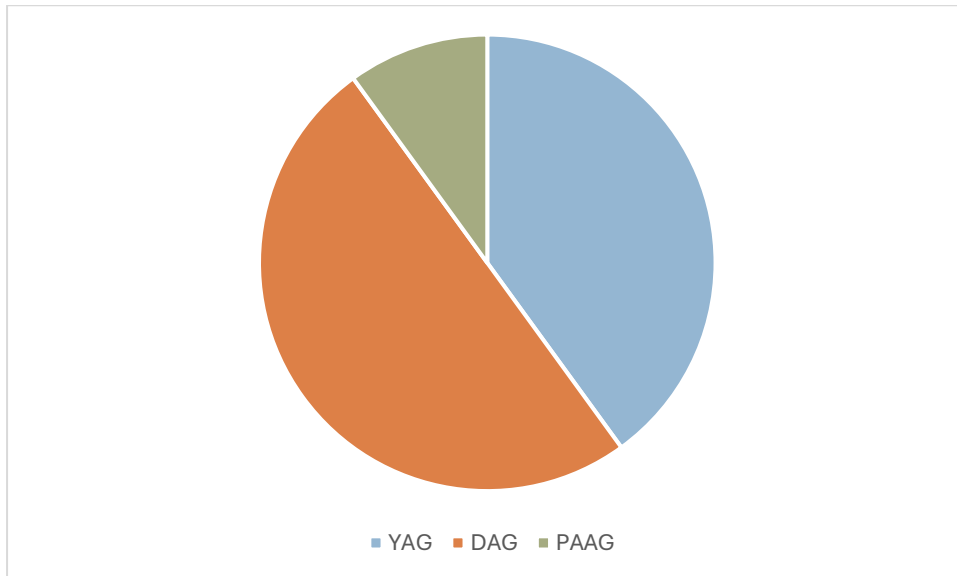
	<p>4 years Between 4 and 20 years Some newer, people based ones long term 5 years or longer in some cases Some up to 9 years Most for over 10 years Rainbow one is in its first term Ethnic one is just starting up Auckland Council was required to establish Advisory Group for Pacifica in legislation that established Auckland Council</p>
Number of members in each group	<p>5-10 – (2) 10-15 – (6) 15-20 – (2) 20+ - (1) Some answers gave several options, some did not respond.</p>
Meeting frequency	<p>Fortnightly – (1) Monthly- (6) 6 weekly – (2) Quarterly – (4) 6 monthly – (1) Twice a year – (1) As required – (3) Answers depended on the nature of the group.</p>
Are Elected Members involved?	<p>Yes – (7) No – (1) Sometimes – (2) Can attend but not formally involved – (1)</p>
Has the model been reviewed in the last 5 years?	<p>Yes – (12) No – (18)</p>
If yes, what were the key issues?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal contacts worked better than formal groups • Keeping the groups inspired • Refreshing membership • Model varies with a new council – this term it is a very small structure • Efficiencies • It is important to align the groups with the issues • Can be difficult to get participation that broadly reflects the population • Communication is the key – need simplified language • Face to face meetings work best

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plenty of notice of the topic under discussion • Underrepresentation • Better opportunities to go to our community and build a better bridge between council and the community • How to ensure a consistent approach to all communities (2) • Changes in wards and numbers of councillors • Lack of up to date data • Lack of training for community advisors • Community (youth) didn't like the formal structure but were keen to be involved. Arose from a careers day when teachers were surprised by how much councils do. Now have science departments working water teams and partnering with the local pool and other community groups for events. • Looking for lower cost initiatives • Lack of clarity on the purpose for advisory groups • Inconsistent engagement from the organisation • Limited and siloed resourcing • In a review currently (Kapiti Coast DC)
Is there a review planned in the next 3 years?	<p>Yes – (8)</p> <p>No – (7)</p> <p>Ongoing/current review – (3)</p>

Appendix 2 – Former Members Survey Results

Advisory Group Member Survey

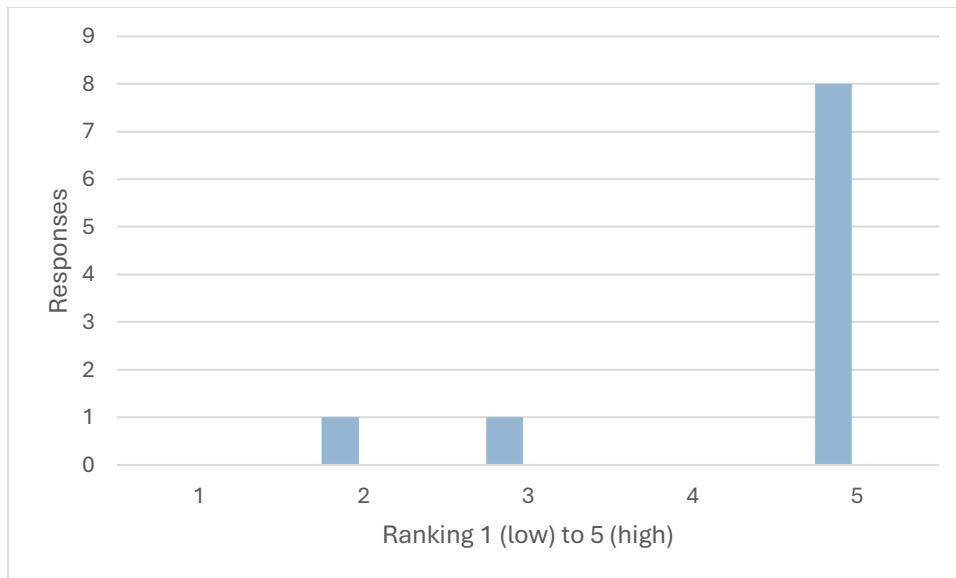
Former Members



Reasons for leaving:

- Moved away (4)
- Some other reason (1)
- Didn't believe it was worth it (1)
- Didn't enjoy (1)
- Moved away to uni (3)
- Term Ended (2)

Question: How well do you understand the purpose of the Advisory Group you were involved with?



NB: Comments indicated clear understanding but some suggest a lack of faith in the delivery.

Expanding comments included:

- Concern about tokenism
- Challenges with language barrier
- Need for more leverage in council process
- Inconsistent attendance by Elected Members
- Lack of feedback on impact
- Wanting the Advisory Group to have more impact with central government.

Question: Please describe what you understand to be the role of the Elected Member appointee to the Advisory Group.

Responses included:

- To be a link to Council (providing feedback from council and taking the AG voice to chambers)
- To listen
- To advocate for the group
- To help with submissions
- To provide advice on how council works. Unclear on what the role is or even that there is an EM on an AG.

Question: Are there any improvements that could be made to the Elected Member role that you would suggest?

- Run a bylaws workshop (DAG)
- Show respect for the group by turning up and being engaged
- Helping the AG to understand the role of CG
- Actually listening and providing feedback and advice.

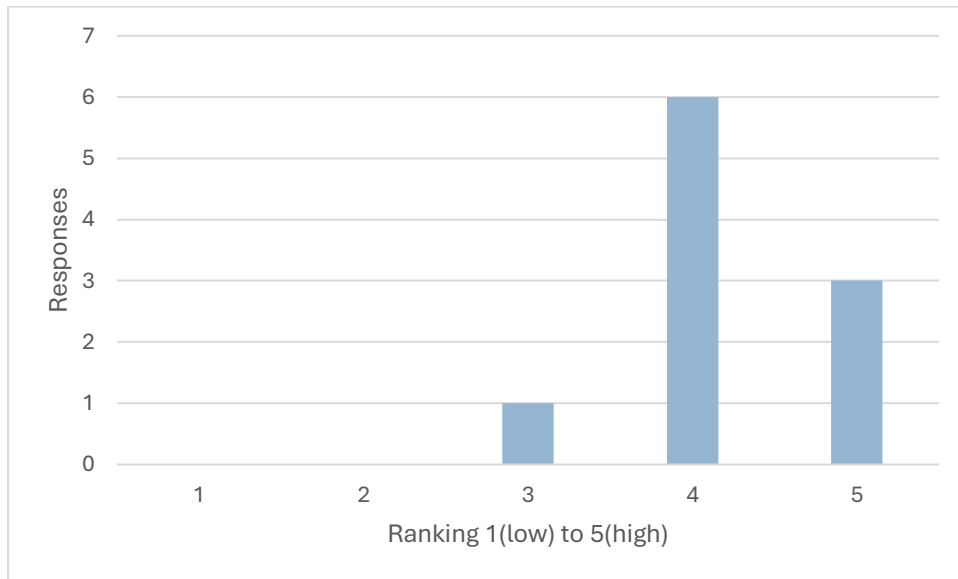
Question: Please describe what you understand to be the role of the Council officer to the Advisory Group.

- Don't know
- Taking feedback to Council and report back
- Be a record keeper
- Support the Chair
- Support the meeting (agendas, minutes and actions)
- Keep the group updated
- Be ignored by Council

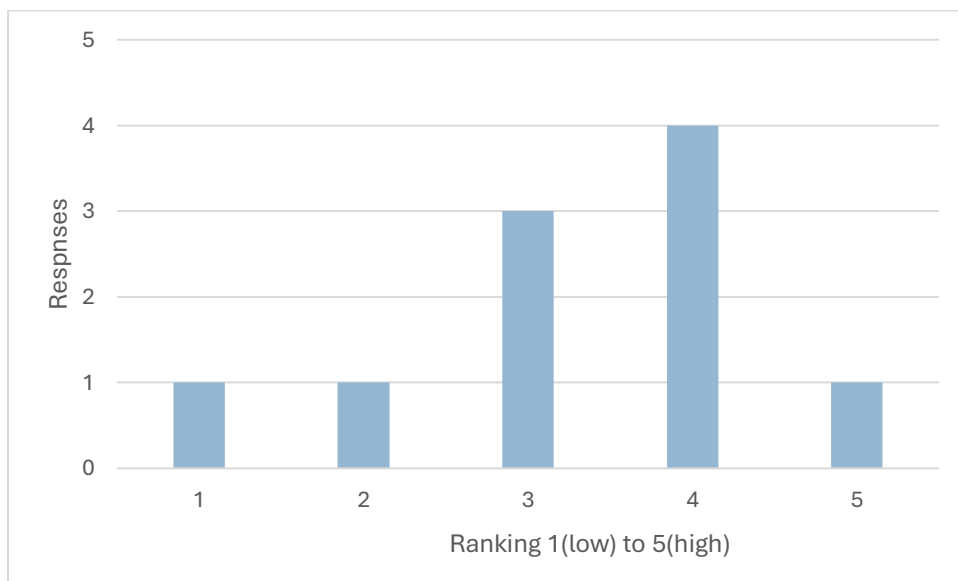
Question: Are there any improvements that could be made to the Council officer role that you would suggest?

- Provide advice
- Pay rise would help
- More practical support for members to enable full participation and preparation for meetings and support with actions.

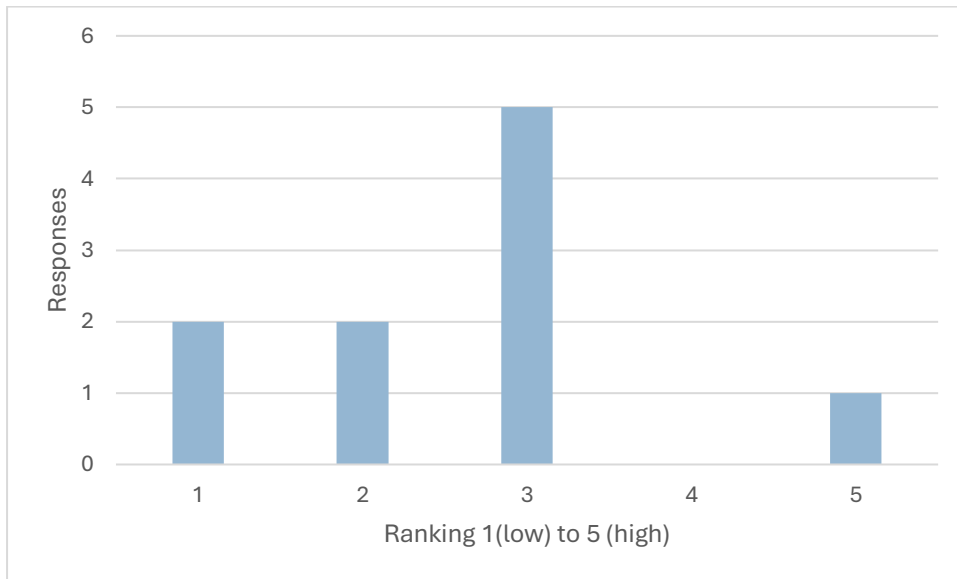
Question: How well do you believe the Advisory Group you were involved with was run?



Question: Do you think the Advisory Group you were involved with met its priorities?



Question: How much value do you believe the Advisory Group you were involved with delivered to Council?



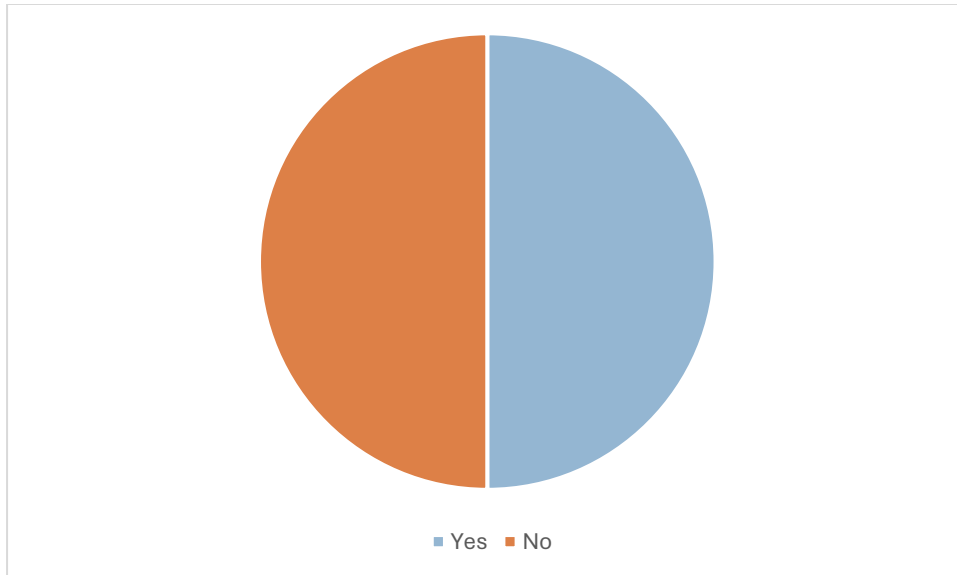
Question: Please provide reasons for your response.

- Gave Council insight into youth priorities
- Didn't feel like we made much impact
- Needed more effort from members
- Very little interaction from Council
- Felt tokenistic - weren't advised of things in time to make a difference
- Didn't seem like there was any integration
- The group was actively trying to make seniors lives better
- We did promote some changes especially around universal design
- Nothing materially changed or was acknowledged
- Some group members didn't understand the purpose - just brought personal gripes and wasted a lot of time.

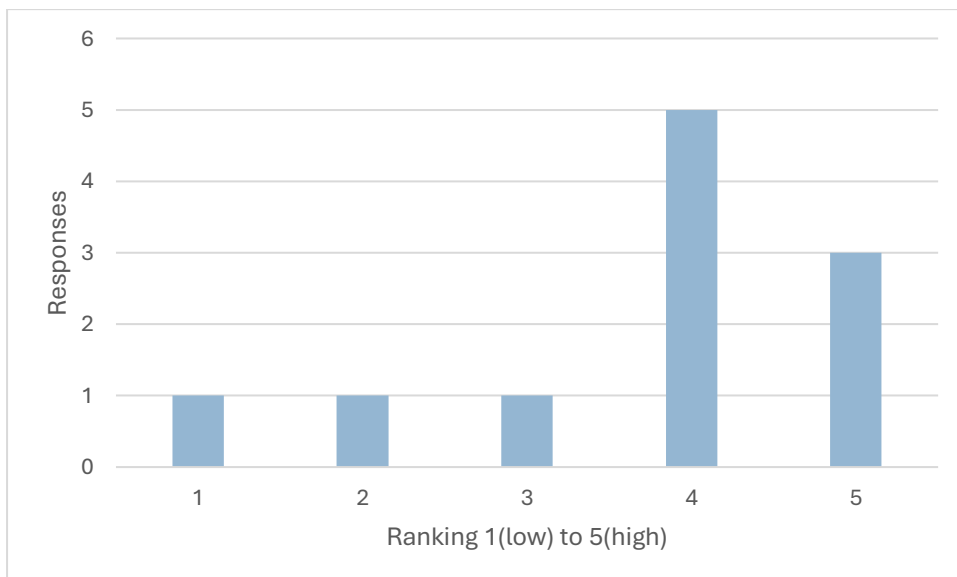
Question: Can you think of any changes that might help the Advisory Group you were involved with to deliver more value to Council?

- Can't think what
- Institutional issue that needs the input from planners and sociologists
- Better communications between advisory groups and council
- Clear definitions of expectations and good follow-up
- More cash from central government and powers over non-compliance to disability access in the private sector
- Council to be more prescriptive about what it wants and what will be done with the information provided
- Having more impact.

Question: Did you get information in enough time to be able to make a meaningful contribution?



Question: What value did you personally get from being involved with the Advisory Group?



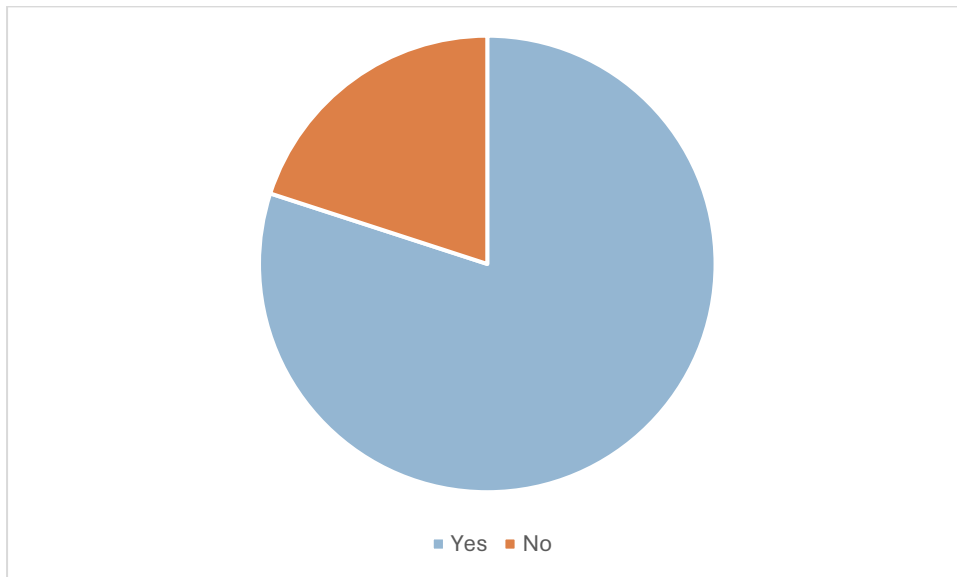
Please describe what that value was.

- Leadership and the feeling of being involved and maybe even just slightly being able to change little by little
- By joining the YAG I gained insight into how things are run in the council and felt like I had a chance to raise my concerns to be heard
- Experience of running meetings, meeting councillors, grew an understanding of civics
- How members of the public can take initiative and interact with Council to change things in their region
- Found it valuable to make relationships with Council staff and group members
- Enjoyed learning about projects and speaking up regardless of if that feedback went anywhere
- Potential (but not actual) ability to influence change
- 1st year I felt valued but 2nd year that dissipated and I felt disillusioned
- Always felt valued by the staff member
- Always felt valued by the group
- Excellent
- Learned a lot about how Council works and was able to help some 100 people to have input and make submissions
- Realised central government has choked the life out of councils financially/ LTPs lock out disabled people by pushing back projects for disabled.

Question: Can you think of any changes that might have helped you get more value from your involvement with the Advisory Group?

- The group wasn't the problem but an institutional/systemic look into processes and values would be wise
- Better consultation between the DAG and council
- Each member must represent their sector group and not just their own ideas
- Money from central government
- More structure, detail and tangible outcomes
- Seek more qualified members and pay them according to their experience and knowledge
- The remuneration is less than minimum wage. People with disabilities already face wage discrimination
- Chairs have been awesome - props to them.

Question: Did being part of the Advisory Group change your understanding of how Council worked?

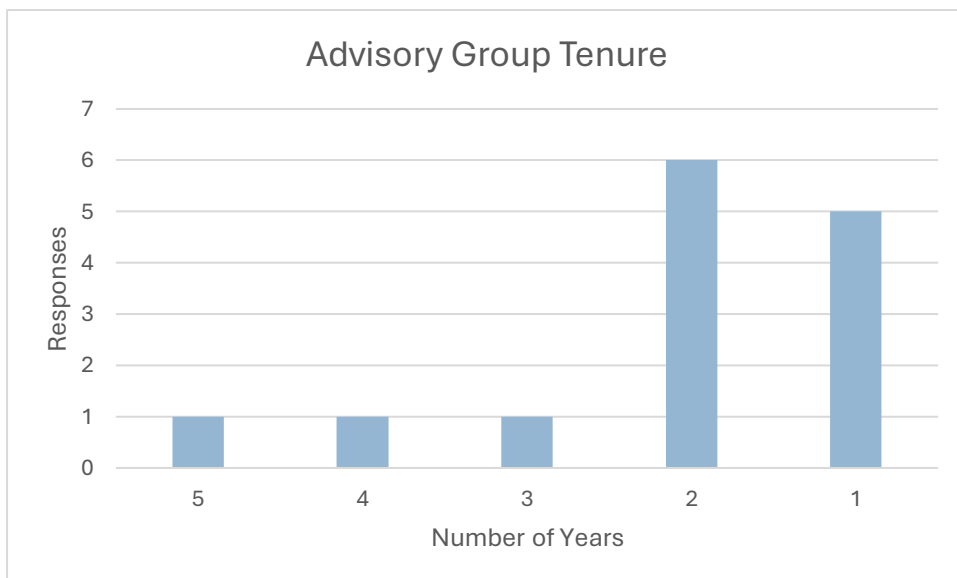
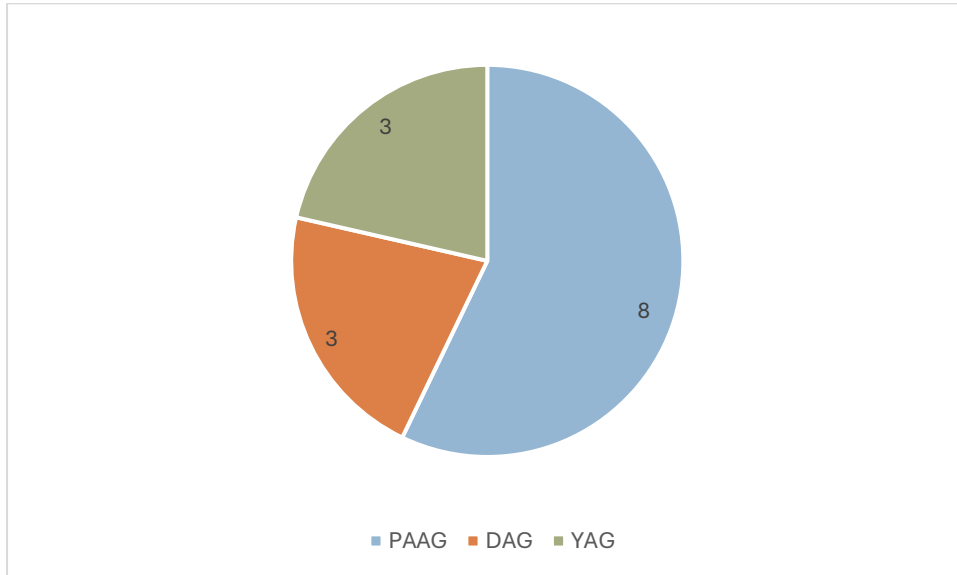


If yes, what changed for you?

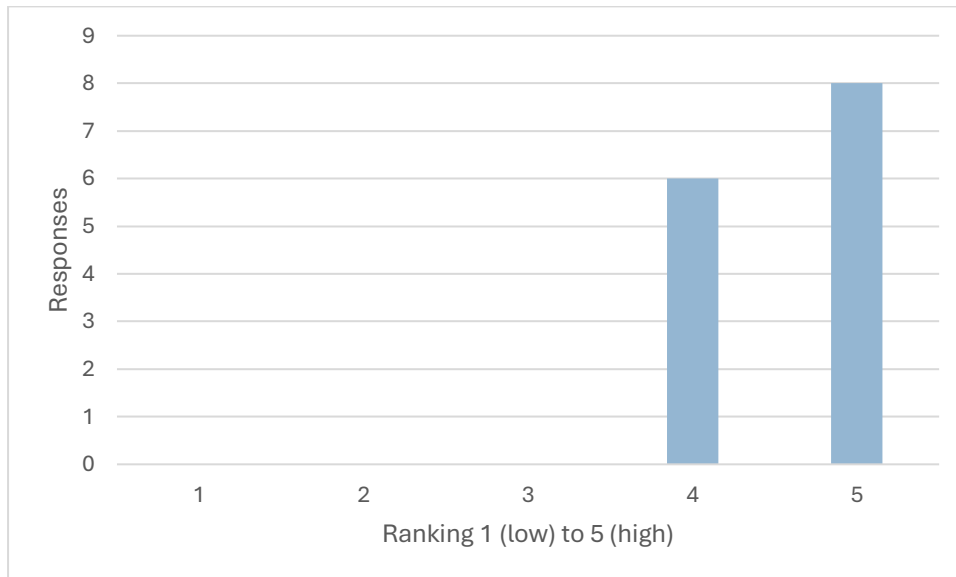
- They have a lot going on and it's a much bigger organisation than I expected
- Too much red tape - not listening to the disabled community
- Having a clear idea of how to make submissions; I'm still encouraging others to take an active part in Council
- Complex system, vague links and limited action
- Listening to people working in Council helped me to see that everyone really is just trying their best
- I still believe there is potential for more to happen in a shorter time
- Just grew understanding - very bureaucratic though
- How public priorities influence the work of Council.

Appendix 3 – Advisory Group Member Survey - Current Members Survey Results

Respondents



Question: How well do you understand the purpose of the Advisory Group you are involved with?



Question: Please describe what you understand that purpose to be.

- Represent and advise Council on relevant issues of older people in our community
- Understand the needs of older people and advocate for and represent them
- Providing council with advice regarding policies, plans, strategies, projects etc to assist them when making decisions and to advise Council on matters of concern or interest to the communities we represent
- To be a voice of the community and advise on specific topics
- To review Council's activities and what impact they may have
- Give Council guidance around what they are doing and how it impacts the disabled community
- Gather, discuss and advise the Council and provide feedback to the community
- Provide a voice for youth regarding issues in the community
- To offer a youth perspective.

Question: Can you think of any changes that you would like to see in the purpose of the Advisory Group you are involved with?

- It is fit for purpose.
- No (7 respondents)
- Although there are crossovers with DAG I think it's important we remain focussed on the elderly

- The Advisory Groups should be taken more seriously and given more credit
- Improved feedback from council (5 respondents mentioned this)
- Would like feedback on the quality of the group and what's helpful or even if they considered our input
- Set up a Facebook community so we can get educated on what Council covers and what aren't Council owned or responsibility
- Talk to more councillors and have more direct conversations.

Question: Please describe what you understand to be the role of the Elected Member appointee to the Advisory Group.

- To understand the needs of our older community, advocate and empower through representation (3)
- To be a conduit between the Advisory Group and Council (5 respondents)
- Providing relevant information to the Advisory Group arising from Council meetings and in turn to be the spokesperson for the group
- To provide input on our behalf
- Engaging with other councillors to attempt to resolve matters of concern raised at Advisory Group
- To help co-ordinate the group correspondence between members and the council documents for meetings
- To advise on council policy and requirements
- The EM is the only governance link the Advisory Group has
- To hear our advice straight from the horse's mouth
- So councillors are more connected to the communities
- To sort out misunderstandings and get the facts
- To supervise and connect youth to council.

Question: Are there any improvements that could be made to the Elected Member role that you would suggest?

- Have a second Elected Member on the Advisory Group to ensure attendance (5 respondents)
- Have a member of the Advisory Group present to council on relevant topics
- Have subcommittees of the Advisory Groups to focus on specific areas and to attend council meetings when relevant
- They were really great and kept us connected
- Councillors have expressed frustration at the role and may find it overly time consuming. But it increases the groups effectiveness

- The Elected Member needs to do some fact finding to be sure whatever information they come up with is appropriate.
- Rotate through different Elected Members regularly.
- No change (2 respondents).

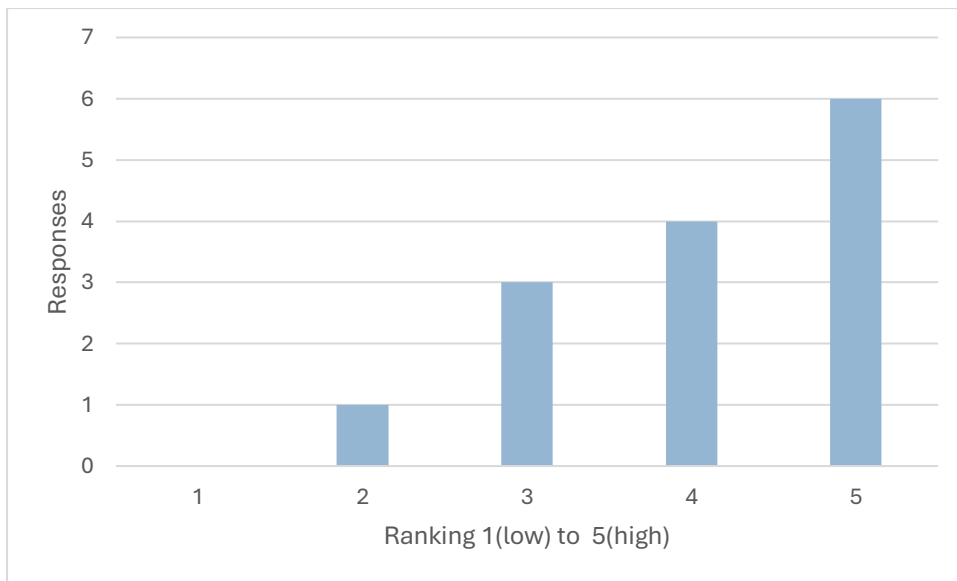
Question: Please describe what you understand to be the role of the Council officer to the Advisory Group.

- To facilitate meetings (2 respondents)
- Liaise between Advisory Groups and Council keeping both parties informed
- Representing Advisory Groups at Council meetings (be our voice).
- Obtain information requested by Advisory Groups
- Try to attend all Advisory Group meetings
- Liaise with other council staff for areas of expertise
- To bring to Advisory Group attention when Council needs input or submissions
- To co-ordinate Council staff or external organisations to present to us
- To provide background information when Advisory Groups views are requested
- To help bring the group together and assist when issues arise
- To provide feedback on outcomes from the advice provided
- Administration, communications, co-ordination and facilitation.

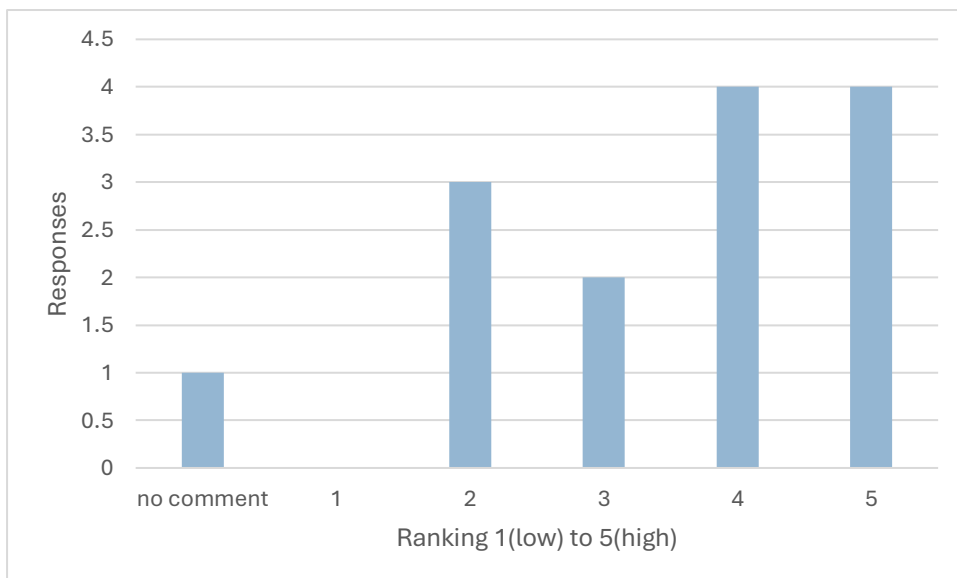
Question: Are there any improvements that could be made to the Council officer role that you would suggest?

- Regular attendance (3 respondents)
- Officer should be passionate about the constituency of the group and be able to be forceful and vocal when representing their Advisory Group at Council meetings
- Be part of the group
- Does a great job (4 respondents)
- Depends on what Council is using the Advisory Group for now and in the future
- Continue interactive feedback (2 respondents)
- Improve response speed with more clarity and detail
- Allow Advisory Group member only time.

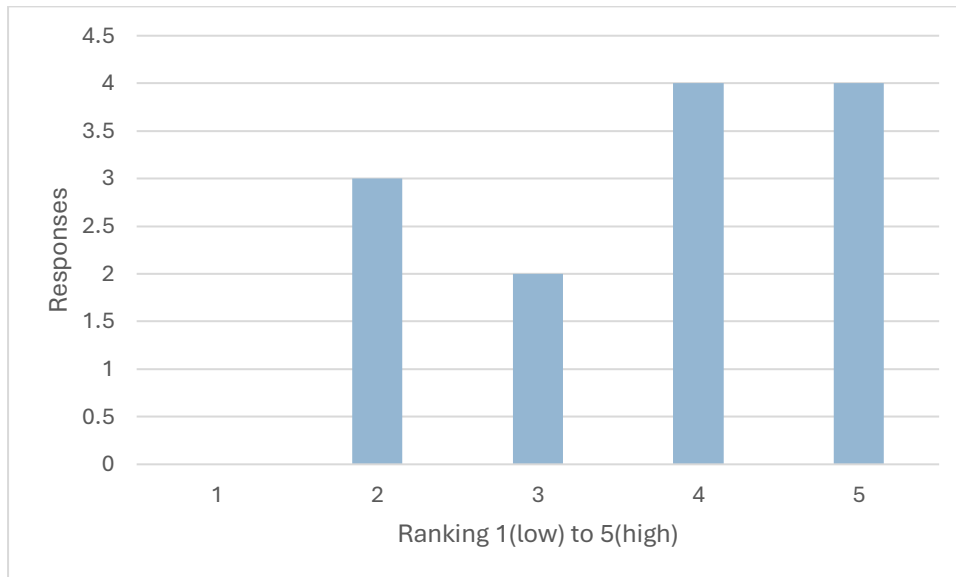
Question: How well do you believe the Advisory Group you are involved with is run?



Question: Do you think the Advisory Group you are involved with is meeting its priorities?



Question: How much value do you believe the Advisory Group you are involved with delivers to Council?



Question: Please provide reasons for why you think the Advisory Group you were involved with provides value to Council.

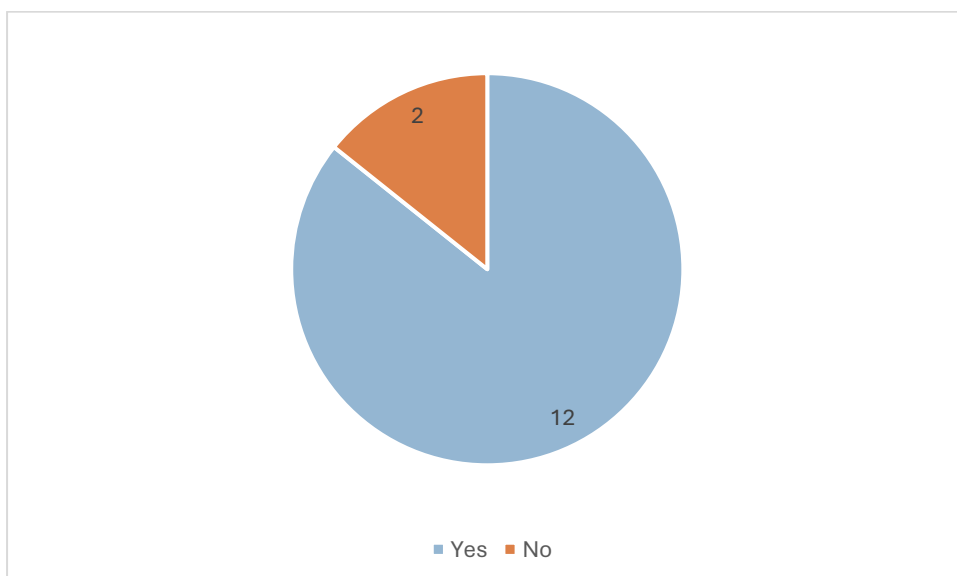
- Advisory Groups provide educated, informed and researched submissions; members are passionate and well-informed for their cohort (3 respondents)
- A great deal of work is done behind the scenes
- We hoped that our advice was noted (even when it can't be taken into account at that time) and is taken into account at a later stage
- I feel like we were heard and acknowledged
- We have consistently put forward ideas and submissions to ensure older people are not invisible
- We provided good community feedback and had projects that we took to Council for consideration
- Checking that footpaths and buildings are fit for purpose
- Hard to know your impact when you never hear anything more from a submission, meeting etc
- There were some significant changes that have improved the city and areas
- There were some events that have disability access sorted early on so no issues later
- Input into the LTP, consultations etc that showed some improved results
- We give a source of reference for council decisions
- Why should it left to older people to design a future that we are going to live in.

- It's very important that council always has youth feedback, should they choose to use it.

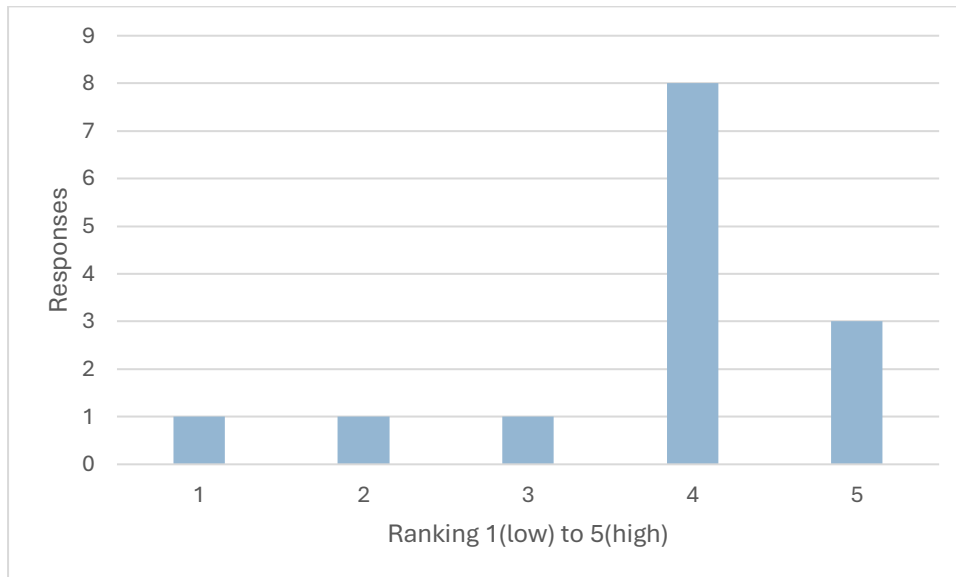
Question: Can you think of any changes that might help the Advisory Group you are involved with to deliver more value to Council?

- Provide evidence of Council considering our ideas as often we feel unheard (5 respondents)
- Having an Advisory Group representative seconded onto working committees that are relevant to us eg pensioner housing (2 respondents)
- Advisory Group subcommittees that appoint a representative to present to Council (committees) (2 respondents)
- No (2 respondents)
- Increase the term of members
- Give Advisory Groups more credit for the input they provide
- Better remuneration would improve attendance and likely attract higher calibre members
- Members to join Elected Members to do site visits
- Earlier inclusion in scoping and design discussions
- More opportunities to have input
- Presenting our ideas directly to Council.

Question: Do you get information in enough time to be able to make a meaningful contribution?



Question: What value do you personally get from being involved with the Advisory Group?



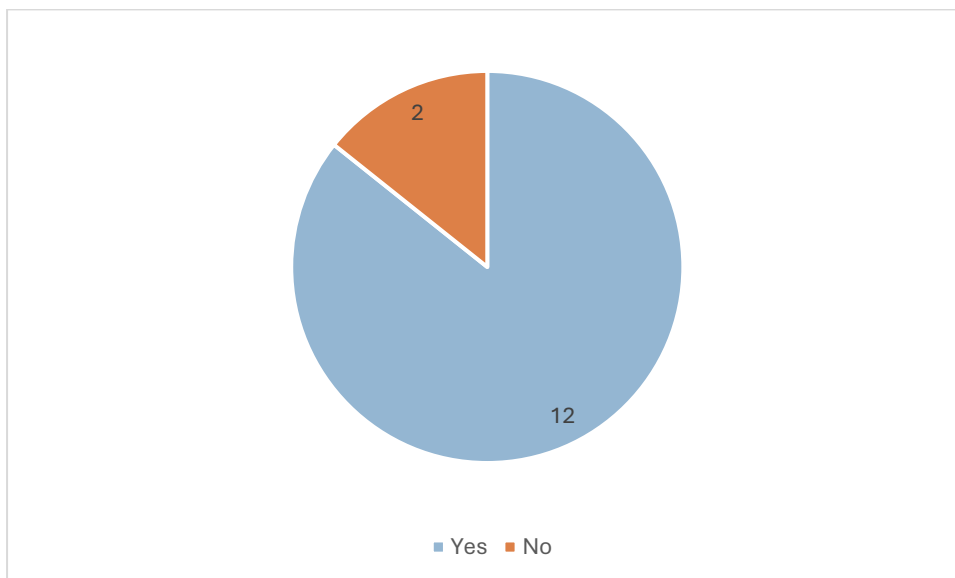
Question: Please describe what that value is.

- Enjoy the honour of being a voice for my peers
- Doing my part to make a change in Whangarei
- Contributing to improve outcomes for older people in our community, who often don't have a voice and are not heard (4 respondents)
- Contributing to improved outcomes with my knowledge and experience
- Learning how processes work in a council (2 respondents)
- Understanding and sharing the Council vision with people in the communities I represent
- Good to see the passion as we all try to 'drive home' the aged person's opinion to Council
- Enjoy delivering the Silver Festival information to everyone I know
- Good to understand how we can represent the community
- Meeting with like-minded people in the wider community (2 respondents)
- To live good and fulfilled lives the people that control council need to be aware of our needs
- Satisfaction when asked by the community that council is listening
- Wanted to give back
- Knowing what is going on; trying to reduce possible issues before they occur
- Get to be involved with meaningful decisions and see inside council operations (2 respondents).

Question: Can you think of any changes that might help you get more value from your involvement with the Advisory Group?

- Representation on council working groups and sub-committees (2 respondents)
- Evidence from council that our input is being heard (3 respondents)
- No (5 respondents)
- Get an ethnic view on the Advisory Groups; ethnic community is growing
- Getting Advisory Groups involved in projects earlier
- Council is often patronising to DAG members; don't appreciate the tone; many of us are high functioning members of the community
- Invitations to more site visits, to observe council and to organise events
- Providing notepads to write questions and comments on, some feel anxious about voicing their thoughts.

Question: Has being part of the Advisory Group changed your understanding of how Council worked?



Question: If yes, what has changed for you?

- It's a long and complicated process to get some issues resolved and over the line (3 respondents)
- More insight into the forward planning done
- I feel there should be an ethnic Advisory Group
- They do actually listen

- A lot; I know what areas of Council is responsible for and what is central government responsibility; and that we need to educate the community to redirect their complaints to the right people
- I didn't know much about it before and now I do.

Appendix 4 – International Examples

Greater Manchester Combined Authority (UK)

Equalities - Greater Manchester Combined Authority

Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) is a large local authority in the UK, made up of several local councils that have come together in the combined structure for the more regionalised functions. It is widely regarded as one of the more progressive and influential local government structures both in the UK and with global influence.

GMCA has a number of advisory/sector groups that facilitate the connection between the council organisation and community sectors. In general, these panels are charged by GMCA to provide insight into their sector, to support key messages to those communities, to co-design policies, programmes and strategies and to support an asset based approach (ensuring the right assets and infrastructure are in place).

These are generally collected under the “Equalities” heading (although others exist eg Armed Forces Hub, Social Enterprise Action Group and a Digital Inclusion Taskforce) and include:

1. **Youth Combined Authority** – Made up of 29 members who represent the local council youth councils. They advise the Mayor and GMCA on key issues and concerns to young people and provide suggestions for solutions. They also “provide a critical voice and scrutinise the work of the Mayor and GMCA” and undertake specific pieces of work (eg a bus travel card for young people. Their work includes specific working groups on environment, health and curriculum for life.
2. **Disabled Peoples Panel** – Established to ensure that disabled peoples involvement in is better represented in all aspects of the running and planning for the future of the city region. Membership is made up of representatives from disabled peoples groups across the region. Members should reflect the skills, knowledge and experience of a diverse range of impairment specific groups.
3. **LGBTQ + Equality Panel** – Consisting of 12 members this group tackles inequality, injustice and discrimination. They advise the Mayor and GMCA of those challenges and potential solutions. They “hold to account political leaders” and support the GMCA to develop effective solutions.
4. **Race Equality Panel** - Works to promote racial equality, tackle racial discrimination and foster positive relationships between ethnically diverse communities, and embed the Public Sector Equality Duty in policies, processes, procedures, practices and people development. Membership is based on individual rather than sector group representation (although individual members

might also be members of sector groups). There is no indication of the number of members.

5. **Women and Girls Equity Panel** – Made up of 25030 members who can represent sector groups (including business and industry), be individuals, experts in a relevant topic, local government representatives and community leaders and activists. The panel purpose is to challenge and make recommendations to the GMCA on policies and initiatives, to build understanding of the key issues, advocate for the perspective of women and girls to be reflected in policy making, to draw in network of alliances and to monitor and evaluate the progress and impact of GMCA activities on this group.
6. **Faith and Belief Advisory Panel** – Made up of representatives of 33 organisations that reflect all the boroughs and the city's diverse faiths and beliefs. It also intends to be inclusive and open to new networks. Its purpose is to optimise the faith and belief contribution to the Greater Manchester Strategy, to ensure the role of faith and belief in society is recognised and valued, to foster good relations and dialogue between people of faith and belief and with people who do not share any belief or faith, and to advance equality of opportunity and eliminate unlawful discrimination.
7. **Older Peoples Equality Panel** – Purpose is to advise the Mayor and GMCA on key issues and concerns affecting older people and to help provide and influence solutions, providing a critical voice and scrutinising the work of the Mayor and GMCA and to undertake specific pieces of work focussing on particular issues or projects. Membership is currently at 19 but the intention is to ensure a member from every borough. No Terms of Reference are available for this Panel.

Summary of GMCA Equality Panels

Each panel appears to have a clear Terms of Reference which sets out its own specific purpose that aligns with the overarching GMCA statement of purpose for the groups. Each panel submits regular reports to GMCA that annual but can be more frequent if needed. The Terms of Reference (ToR) set out clearly what the expectations and accountability are and what level of support will be provided by GMCA. The ToRs also show evidence that each group fine-tunes its own ToR to reflect the purpose defined by the panel and the agreed panel expectations within their own group.

Support provided by GMCA includes travel expenses, fair notice of meetings and opportunities (and funding) to attend outside events. There is no mention of a per-meeting fee (which does not rule it out).

City of Portland Council, US

[Advisory Groups | Portland.gov](https://www.portland.gov/advisorygroups)

City of Portland is another council that is well-regarded for its inclusive and innovative approach to engaging with communities.

They have an extensive network of advisory bodies that cover a wide range of area of interest to the people of Portland. These include any City of Portland board, committee, or commission that advises City bureaus and special projects. They are considered to be an important tool for community members and City officers and elected members to work together on projects, providing insight on Portlanders' diverse needs and interests.

These bodies provide opportunities for City officials and communities to come together to hear appeals and concerns, provide expertise and advocate, develop and implement policy, review current practices, and plan future services.

City of Portland's advisory body network covers such things as:

- Budget making and investment guidance
- Community involvement
- Input from specific communities eg River communities and urban areas
- Specific infrastructure
- Development planning
- Equal opportunities
- Equitable mobility
- Fair housing
- Street design
- Gun violence intervention
- Local government transitions (eg from one term to the next)
- Special interest groups eg migrants, ethnic groups, youth
- New arrivals welcoming
- Noise management
- Transport, parking, freight, pedestrian safety, walking and cyline
- Climate adaptation investment
- Police oversight
- Clean energy
- Cannabis policy
- Golf
- Historic landmarks

The Advisory Bodies Program provides training and resources to advisory body members, ensuring advisory bodies follow their rules and bylaws, and handles

recruitment for open member positions. It appears that the positions are, in general, considered to be voluntary and unpaid.

Each Advisory Body operates under a specific bylaw. These can be changed on the recommendation of the Advisory Body but changes must be endorsed by the Bureau Director. The Advisory Body Bureau may also recommend changes to the Bureau Director. The Bureau Director must sign off on original bylaws and any amendments to the bylaws. Members have no authority to amend bylaws without approval.

Advisory Bodies can:

- Host public meetings,
- Provide policy advise and participate in the development of policies,
- Oversee grant applications,
- Advise staff on community engagement plans for specific projects and reviewing the community engagement manual,
- Manage specific leases and concessions, and p
- Provide general advice and lived experience input on relevant topics.

Summary of City of Portland Advisory Bodies programme

City of Portland's Advisory Bodies have a wide range of powers and activities that they are involved with, including to set their own rules (subject to approval by the Bureau Director). They also are involved in a very broad range of topics of interest to the council.

However, they do appear to be unpaid, although information on the website was inconsistent and at times not easy to find.

City of Melbourne, Australia

Committees and advisory groups | City of Melbourne

City of Melbourne hosts a number of key advisory bodies whose work facilitates development and implementation of “a range of programs and initiatives that contribute to the cultural, social and economic vitality of Melbourne”.

Key advisory committees, bodies and groups include the following:

Audit and Risk Committee – This is a mix of elected members and professional people with relevant expertise eg accountants. They meet five times each year to oversee the activities of council particularly its risk management and internal control processes in addition to the activities of the Council's external and internal auditors. The Committee provides independent advice to Council on:

- appropriate accounting
- auditing
- internal control
- business risk management
- compliance and reporting systems
- processes and practices.

They recommendations to the Council and its management on many issues and internal audits.

It should be noted that most council bodies will have some form of audit and risk committee. Of note for this one, is that the membership is evenly balanced between elected members and external members.

Invest Melbourne Advisory Board – This board was established to provide strategic advice to the City of Melbourne on the potential opportunities for growth of investment in the city and to offer feedback on proposed City of Melbourne initiatives that support investment in the city. The Board works with state and federal governments to enable and reinforce Melbourne as a key investment destination.

The board's purpose is to:

- Provide strategic advice and independent thinking to inform policy and productive investment in the municipality.
- Proactively advocate for Invest Melbourne to Australian and international business communities, as well as key government departments, industry associations and other prominent stakeholders.

- Provide critical understanding of business, market and industry trends while also providing insights and options for improving the delivery of strategic business development initiatives in Melbourne.
- Provide advice on ways to streamline business processes making it easier for the business community to operate in and with the city.

Members are all community members who have significant professional expertise that can inform their work.

Disability Advisory Committee – This Committee is a consultative forum that provides strategic advice on policy and practice issues to the administration and Council.

The Committee is charged with:

- Representing issues that impact on the life opportunities of people of all abilities
- Advising on ‘best practice’ in universal access planning and co-design engagement
- Participating in the development of Council’s Disability Action Plan

The Committee is made up of twelve community members. Of these, nine members will have direct personal experience of disability, including parents or carers of disabled children. Three members will be persons without disability from fields such as academia, disability rights, tourism and the business sector. These members should have a commitment to universal access and the rights of disabled people.

Members are paid \$300 per meeting and are appointed for a three year term by the Chief Executive and the Chair of the Committee.

First Nations Committee – Established in March 2024, the First Nations Committee
The First Nations Committee aims to:

- Provide guidance on initiatives to embed self-determination of First Nations peoples in the work of City of Melbourne.
- Reduce disadvantages and increase social justice opportunities for First Nations peoples and communities.
- Support the establishment of partnerships with relevant agencies to strengthen outcomes for First Nations community within the municipality.

The committee is co-chaired by a First Nations Elder alongside the Council’s Aboriginal Melbourne Portfolio Lead. Members include nine First Nations representatives with a broad range of skills, knowledge and lived experiences. The committee also includes two City of Melbourne elected members and the Director of Aboriginal Melbourne.

Members are appointed for a three year term and are paid \$300 per meeting.

City Collection Advisory Panel – This panel is made up of one councillor officer (in charge of Visitor experience) and two external industry professionals.

Design Excellence Advisory Committee and the Melbourne Design Review Panel – Both of these groups are involved with the delivery of the Design Excellence Programme. Each includes a mix of council elected members, technical experts and community members.

Homelessness Advisory Committee – This committee includes two elected members (as the Chair and Deputy Chair). The remaining eleven members bring a mix of lived experience, service sector experience, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, youth (18 to 25) and representatives from the health and homelessness sector. Members are appointed for a three year term and are paid \$200 per meeting.

Parks and Gardens Advisory Committee – There are twelve members of this committee but little further information about its structure or activities. Members look to be primarily external and would likely include some technical expertise.

Public Art Advisory Committee – This committee has four members who are all external and come from the public art sector.

Safe City Camera's Programme Audit Committee – This committee was established to:

- provide an independent review and checking mechanism for the camera program that ensures that it meets the requirements of its Protocols and Operating Procedures
- promote public confidence in the camera program by ensuring its operations are transparent to the public and under ongoing independent scrutiny and review
- recommend action that will safeguard the camera program against abuse.

The Committee provides a written audit report to Council on an annual basis evaluating the operations of the camera program and compliance with the Protocols and Operating Procedures. It appears that there are three members of the committee who are all external governance professionals.

Summary of City of Melbourne Advisory Bodies programme

City of Melbourne's use of Advisory Bodies appears to be more restricted to more operational matters that are directly related to delivery of services. However, they do appear to pay significantly more for members participation.

City of Sydney – Australia

Sydney has a range of Advisory Panels to facilitate input from key sector groups. They also use a Citizen Jury with a single focus on the development of the Sydney 2050 vision.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Panel - The primary role of this Panel is to inform the policies of the City of Sydney in relation to matters of importance to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, including;

- Advising Council on the development and implementation of the Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050, the City of Sydney's Reconciliation Action Plan and other relevant plans as they are adopted by Council;
- Promoting an increased knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and society in the wider community and representing the interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the local area;
- Advising Council on programming of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander events;
- Providing input to policy development, planning and advice to Council across all areas where there is likely to be an impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including economic development, Indigenous employment and Aboriginal business development;
- Actively promoting and facilitating reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders peoples and Council;

This panel consists of up to 16 community members who have a three- year term. The Mayor and one other councillor are also members. There are 6 meetings per year. Members are paid \$300 per meeting.

Public Art Advisory Panel – This panel comprises seven professional artists, curators and architects who provide advice to the City of Sydney on matters relating to public art.

- Cultural and Creative Sector Advisory Panel – This panel provides strategic advice on making space for culture and focus on addressing the loss of creative employment floor space in Sydney. The Panel will help provide direction for the City's to cultural infrastructure programs including:
- Providing advice on the implementation of Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision and the City of Sydney Creative City Cultural Policy;
- Advising the City on the communication, consultation and collaboration with creative sector and property sector stakeholders;
- Providing strategic advice pertaining to the retention and development of new creative employment space in Sydney;
- Advising the City on its own creative infrastructure programs including defining optimal spatial needs and determining what is affordable;

- Providing input as to how we value the creative sector in relation to the property sector and how we embed creative space in the planning process; and
- Advocating on behalf of the cultural sector for increased visibility and strategic importance of creative employment lands and creative floorspace.

The Terms of Reference emphasize that the Panel's advice must be in alignment with the City's policies, strategies and operational plans.

There are 18 members and the Mayor and one councillor. Members are appointed for a 3 year term. Meetings are four times a year and members are paid \$300 for each meeting.

Inclusion (Disability) Advisory Panel - The panel provides strategic, expert and impartial advice to the Council on the development, implementation, monitoring and review of the City's policies, strategies and plans to advance the inclusion of people with a disability, including by.

- Providing input to policy development and review, planning and advice to Council across all areas relevant to people with disability;
- Providing input to enhance inclusion and accessibility of City's infrastructure, facilities, events, services, programs, systems and information for people with disability
- Advising the City on submissions the City may make relating to State and Federal Government policy and legislation; and
- Providing advice to Council on how to identify issues that are relevant to people with disability.

The Inclusion (Disability) Advisory Panel consists of a maximum of 12 members.

Members are appointed in an individual capacity and not as a representative or an organisation, advocacy body or stakeholder group. At least 50% of the Inclusion (Disability) Advisory Panel membership will be constituted by members who have a direct experience of disability whether personally or through a caring and support role.

Terms are up to three years and capped at two.

Business and Economic Development and Covid Recovery Advisory Panel - This panel provides strategic advice to the Council to ensure sustained recovery of the economy.

The advisory panel includes members from relevant professional fields who have demonstrated experience, seniority and knowledge of economic areas.

The panel also advocates to other government agencies, the private sector and relevant peak bodies on key priority economic issues.

The panel consists of up to 18 membership including:

- Up to eight senior (CEO or equivalent) representatives from the local business sector, including First Nations businesses and small business;
- Up to eight senior (CEO or equivalent) representatives from research, academic or peak body organisations with relevant knowledge and expertise
- Up to two State Agency representatives relevant to the economic development of Sydney;
- Two elected representatives, comprising the Mayor (or delegate) and one Councillor.
- Members may be individuals or appointed as a representative of an organisation, body or agency.

Terms are three years and capped at two.

Housing for All Working Group – The primary role of this working group is to bring together industry leaders and experts to share knowledge and provide strategic, expert advice and guidance to the Council on the development of agreed strategies and initiatives to increase the supply of affordable and diverse housing (including social housing) within the City of Sydney Local Government Area.

Membership consists of up to thirteen members including:

- Up to four representatives from the Community Housing Provider (CHP) sector (currently or previously) or housing peak bodies;
- Up to two community representatives who live in and/or access affordable and diverse housing;
- Up to two representatives from research (or similar) organisations and industry. Including those (currently or previously) with relevant knowledge and expertise on affordable and diverse housing issues, including culturally appropriate housing and universal housing design;
- Up to one representative from the not-for-profit or philanthropic sector.
- Up to two State Agency representatives relevant to affordable and diverse housing, including funding bodies.
- Two elected representatives, comprising the Mayor and one Councillor.

Terms are three years and capped at two.

Multicultural Advisory Panel - The primary role of this panel is to provide advice on policies and operations of Council in relation to matters of importance to culturally diverse communities, including:

Advising Council on the makeup of diverse cultural groups and populations living in the City of Sydney's Local Government Area and the needs and desires of people within those groups;

- Advising Council on the implementation of Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision and other relevant plans as they are adopted by Council, including supporting the communication, delivery and review of the City's community engagement plan and strategy;
- Promoting an increased knowledge and understanding of diverse cultures and society in the wider community and facilitating partnerships that nurture cultural diversity, capacity building, and increased community connections;
- Advising Council on appropriate methods of communication to diverse cultural groups and populations, including regarding City of Sydney strategies and policies, and of events and programs produced and delivered by the City of Sydney;
- Providing input to policy development, planning and advice to Council across all areas where there is likely to be an impact on multicultural communities, including multicultural businesses and economic development; and
- Advocating on behalf of culturally diverse communities, including strategies to combat racism and discrimination, and promoting greater understanding and appreciation of multiculturalism.

The Panel's advice must be in alignment with the City's policies, strategies and operational plans.

Membership consists of up to thirteen members including:

- Two NSW Government organisation representatives;
- Four multicultural organisation representatives;
- Two representatives (one each) of universities in the local government area;
- Three community members; and
- Two elected representatives, comprising the Mayor and one Councillor.

Terms are three years and capped at two.

Sydney Design Advisory Panel – This panel provides officers with high level independent expert advice and expertise on urban design, architecture, landscape architecture, heritage, art, and sustainability. The advice is to inform the assessment by Council officers of development applications with a view to promoting the delivery of high-quality urban design, architecture and sustainable and inclusive design in Sydney's buildings and public spaces. The advice is to inform the assessment process. It is not the purpose of the Advisory Panel to have a role in the process of determining development applications.

Panel members should be highly recognised in their profession and who:

- (a) have demonstrated experience and knowledge of urban design, architecture, landscape architecture, sustainable design and the arts;
- (b) possess the relevant skills and experience to provide judicious and independent expert advice.

Membership consist of at least three and not more than eleven permanent members.

Terms will be reviewed every three years following the engagement of members or re-engagement of existing permanent members.

Pacific Island Communities

Information about the more detailed governance structures of Pacific Island nations local governments is limited. However, these countries draw on their more traditional tribal/village and chiefship model with representatives from formal groups of chiefs having influence on local and indeed central government. Chiefs are strongly connected to their local communities which tend to be smaller. This local connection and high level of influence by local chiefs could arguably bring a stronger focus on local issues to political governance.

Appendix 5 - WDC Advisory Group Review - Issues Analysis

Issue	Other Councils	Elected Members	Officers	WDC Advisory Groups	Summary and Actions
Formal Structures	40% of responding councils used some form of permanent formal structure. It was noted that youth are less keen on the formal structure and prefer a more dynamic fluid approach eg community forums. Some councils had a mixed membership approach with some members being individuals and others being drawn from	Support with the suggestion of maybe combining some	Support with the suggestion of maybe combining some. Officers had some concerns about including representatives from support groups as in the past these have tended to dominate the groups.	Support – do not combine. Some AG members were supportive (if cautiously) of the inclusion of members from community groups, feeling they could add a richness to the feedback and advice that could be provided.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Generally there is support for formal structures. 2. Consider the (careful) inclusion of members representing support groups.

	sector support groups.				
Appropriate Sectors	Wide range. Maori engagement not seen as part of this model.	Disability, Youth, Aging, Rural and Business	Accessibility (combined Disability and Aging) and Youth	No change to existing.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There was general support for the existing sectors being represented 2. Consider the possible inclusion of rural and business (although these could be addressed by supporting more formally existing non-council groups)
Member numbers	10-15	Perhaps reduce?	No comment	No comment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No change recommended to existing numbers.
Elected Members involvement	60-70% replied yes – mostly in a formal capacity	Yes	No comment	Yes with more interaction between AG and Council	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Retain elected member involvement but ensure each has an alternate to ensure attendance.
Meeting frequency	Most councils with AGs had them meeting monthly or quarterly.	Some Elected Members felt that monthly meetings were too frequent and that it might be better to look to a two-monthly meeting with	Officers were interested in the idea of less frequent meetings with specific engagement	AG members were generally happy with the frequency of meetings being monthly. There was some interest in the idea of less	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider less frequent meetings 2. Evaluate how to administer additional less formal engagements eg site visits and

		targeted activities/engagement in between meetings when needed.	activities as needed. They felt this could address some of the resourcing challenges. However it may bring forward other challenges in terms of how to pay for ad hoc activities.	frequency with more targeted activities in between meetings.	community meetings
Clear purpose	Was reported as a significant issue by some respondents. Overall the purpose was seen as providing input and insight into plans and policies through “candid, trusted advice”.	Purpose is clear but understanding of that purpose needs training	Lack of clear understanding whether AGs are to provide feedback or to provide formal advice. Structured objectives needed	Purpose is somewhat unclear with a distinct lack of confidence in the effectiveness. Some confusion over representation and bringing lived experience to inform policies and strategies.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the existing Terms of Reference to ensure clarity about purpose 2. Identify opportunities for reporting back to council 3. Improve feedback loops to identify value provided by the groups.
Relationship to Council	Advisory Groups are seen as part of the governance structure at the	Valued for providing insights and helping to shape policies. Bringing diverse perspectives.	More structured objectives needed along with better integration into	Want more integration with council processes and clearer feedback loops.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Set up regular engagement with whole of council for reporting back

	higher end and a key and enduring part of engagement at the lower end. Having a formally appointed elected member (with alternate) can be helpful.	Want advice from AGs to be more prominent and integrated more fully.	council decisions.	Feel the relationship should be more collaborative with council	
Level of representation	AG members are not expected to be 'representative' but are expected to provide advice through a lived experience lens.	Membership should be broad and cover diversity of views.	Officers felt that the AG composition should be able to capture the diverse voices.	AG members feel that they represent their communities even if they are not representative. AG composition has become skewed at times meaning the voice provided may not be adequately representing the wider voice.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement a skills/representation matrix to guide targeted recruitment. 2. Ensure new members understand their role as being the lived experience lens.
Feedback and response	Formal processes are built in to ensure feedback is passed back to the groups. It is seen as an	Elected members felt that there was a need to improve the feedback loops and ensuring AG advice is acted on. There was also a suggestion to	Officers felt that there was a need for more transparency about how the advice is used. This was seen as	An absence of formal reporting back mechanisms has lead to dissatisfaction and lower engagement levels. Members	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify a clear and accountable feedback loop process eg Actions Register

	important part of ensuring continued engagement and support for the AG. This can be reinforced by regular meetings between the AG members and the whole of Council with reporting back on a clear work programme.	include AG input in council reports where appropriate.	an important way to understand the value and effectiveness.	expressed a strong desire for updates on how their advice is being used and the outcomes.	
Group consistency	Some councils have different models for different groups eg youth councils, forums etc	Different characteristics of the different groups was noted and the idea of customising models was noted.	There were real concerns about inadequate resourcing of existing groups. However, alternate methods of engagement eg forums and workshops were accepted	AGs are aware of the other groups. Differences in how each is handled could lead to dissatisfaction.	1. Establish “pan group” hui to allow each group to share their work programme and opportunities for information sharing to be identified.
Training and induction	Induction training is important and	Training for Elected Members was mentioned to build	Limitations on resourcing was of concern to	AG members can feel like being part of an AG is training	1. Review Induction Training to identify

	<p>chair/co-chair training should be extensive. Training should emphasize the strategic focus aspect of the AG work. Induction can also include the development of a work programme and governance training.</p>	<p>capability in community engagement. Induction training for Elected Members (as well as AG members) was seen as needing to be enhanced. Chair and deputy chair training was also suggested.</p>	<p>officers when considering training. However, leadership and strategic planning training were seen as being helpful. Officers also acknowledged the need for more comprehensive induction training to help with role clarification.</p>	<p>in itself (esp around civics and how councils work). The induction process could be more comprehensive and clearly outline expectations, responsibilities and the impact of the role. Governance training would also be appreciated. Online training modules could work well for some.</p>	<p>opportunities for improvement.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Establish governance training for AG members. 3. Identify new technology approaches to broaden the scope of the training. 4. Establish chair and deputy chair training.
Resourcing and funding	<p>For all councils that responded with AGs in place, adequate resourcing was seen as both a necessity and a challenge. This is only likely to get worse as financial conditions</p>	<p>Elected members where not asked about funding and resourcing. However they did make comments that would suggest they felt more rigour was needed in the system to ensure better outcomes.</p>	<p>Officers felt strongly that the model (with the inherent role ambiguity and lack of strategic focus) was taking more resource than had been allocated. Community</p>	<p>AGs were very generally very supportive of the officers who administer their groups. They did question the efficiency of officers presenting to them when nothing was done</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evaluate the resources needed to manage the AGs 2. Allocate tasks to the appropriate teams eg Democracy to manage the meeting administration and Strategy to support the Work Programme development.

	continue to be hard for local government.		development officers reported spending about half their working time on the AGs leading to compromise on other aspects of their work. There was a sense that support from other departments might be appropriate eg from Democracy for meeting administration and from Strategy for the development of strategic work programme.	with the feedback they provided.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Ensure feedback loop is established to demonstrate the value of work. 4. Ensure the AGs are focussed on priority tasks. 5. Identify if additional resourcing is needed. 6. Consider whether outside agencies (eg support groups) could be involved eg chairing
Programme ownership	While the community development team was the most common owner of this	Elected members did not make any comments about where the programme ownership should sit.	Community Development officers were passionate about their AGs. However, there	AG members seemed comfortable to remain with the community development team	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider the best fit for programme ownership 2. Resource that team appropriately

	activity, both democracy and engagement teams were also seen as owners. There was a sense the function sitting across all three departments. Many councils see it is part of the governance function.		was a sense of being somewhat overwhelmed by the work involved. Some of this came from the scope creep that ambiguity of purpose has allowed into the system. Other departments were adamant that the programme should continue but that it should remain with community development.	although there was an acknowledgement that there was a fit with engagement.	
Attendance Fees	Fees per meeting ranged from no compensation through to \$35 per and up to \$270 per meeting	Some Elected Members recommended a formal review of remuneration as they felt the rates may be low.	Officers provided a schedule of fees paid by councils that was collected a couple of years ago. It suggests	AG members from Youth and Positive Aging were reasonably comfortable with the \$40 per meeting fee. Disability AG were less	1. Review the remuneration for AGs and develop a policy position eg attendance fees, transport costs, childcare or carer costs etc)

	<p>(Auckland) for AG members with more for chairs. Other models included a \$5000 per annum payment to a facilitating sector group, rather than paying forum attendees. Some councils provided funding for conference and network group meetings.</p> <p>Some councils provide an hourly rate for AG members who undertaken additional duties eg writing a report.</p>		<p>that the WDC fees are not unusual. Officers noted that there is little opportunity to pay more and that budget does not cover meals at meetings and that there was no allowances for the costs of attending conferences or network meetings.</p>	<p>comfortable with it and felt it should at a minimum cover the costs of attending (transport, childcare, support etc). AG members are aware that the fees paid to Te Karearea are significantly higher than those to AGs.</p>	<p>2. Consider funding for additional work eg attendance of events outside of meetings, writing reports etc</p>
Facilitation	<p>Generally AGs are facilitated by the Chair. However some</p>	<p>Some Elected Members felt there was a lack of clarity around their role and</p>	<p>Officers felt they were sometimes drawn into discussions in a</p>	<p>AG members noted that the chair should be the facilitator but that</p>	<p>1. Clarify where the role of facilitation sits and ensure that is clear in the Terms</p>

	have officers facilitating discussions or bring in external facilitators (generally from a relevant sector group).	whether they should be taking a more 'facilitative' role.	facilitation role especially where conflict might arise. Generally they did not feel comfortable with being drawn into facilitating discussions, preferring the chair to do that.	sometimes a lack of capability in the chair made that impossible. They noted that when that happened, group focus was lost and discussions were more operational.	of Reference (currently sits with Chair). 2. Provide facilitation training for meeting facilitator 3. Review conflict resolution clause in Terms of Reference and strengthen.
Terms of Reference	Some councils had a unique terms of reference for each of their AG and supported the AGs to review them at that beginning of each term and the make amendments if needed during the term.	Elected Members felt the existing terms of reference were appropriate (noting that some were less familiar with them).	Officers (where they were aware of the Terms of Reference as presenting officers would not be), felt that the Terms of Reference were about right. They did note that AGs seemed to drift away from them over time.	AG members did not make strong reference to the Terms of Reference but did acknowledge a lowering level of familiarity as time went on.	1. Review Terms of Reference in line with agreed outcomes from this Review. 2. Explore methods of reinforcing the Terms of Reference through regular reflection
Term	Most councils have AG terms that are aligned with the electoral cycle.	Elected Members made no reference to changing the term but did support the idea of closer collaboration	Officers were generally in support of aligning the AGs and council and	AG Members were concerned about the level of churn feeling that it affected the	1. Consider changing the term to be three years and bring into line with the electoral term.

	<p>This allows the new Mayor and council to appoint the new groups and members. This also made it easier to set a work plan that was aligned with the council one. They reported lower levels of churn in most cases.</p>	<p>between the AGs and the council.</p>	<p>extending the term. They felt that the existing two year term may be contributing to a lower level of commitment, leading to higher churn.</p>	<p>continuity and effectiveness of the AG. They did not specifically mention longer terms but were interested in considering strategies to improve retention.</p>	
Recruitment and retention	<p>Councils mentioned that it can be challenging to get the groups to broadly reflect their communities but that this was important. Its made easier by aligning the council and AG terms so that recruitment is</p>	<p>Elected Members noted that recruitment should focus on broad and diverse membership to capture the community needs.</p>	<p>Officers reported that recruitment was an ongoing and sometimes onerous task. They noted that it can be challenging to achieve a diverse group as the applicant pool was sometimes small. They also noted that the higher churn</p>	<p>AG members suggested that strategies to retain members and ensure activity participation such as mentorship programmes could be beneficial. They also suggested higher levels of recognition by council may encourage membership. A</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider a formal mentoring programme for chairs and perhaps wider membership. 2. Develop a recognition programme for Council to publicly acknowledge the work of the AGs 3. Consider the use of a skills and capabilities matrix

	largely being done in one go.		created a lack of continuity and sometimes leadership issues.	more targeted approach to recruitment was also suggested, directly encouraging participation from under-represented groups.	for targeted recruitment. 4. Align the AG and Council terms
Work Planning	Most councils had some sort of formal work programme for the AGs. This was aligned to the council's work programme (from the LTP and AP). It was felt that this was an important way to keep the AG on track and built cohesion based on understood common purpose. This structured work programme	While Elected Members did not directly mention work programming they were keen to identify ways to encourage closer collaboration between Elected Members and AG members through joint initiatives and regular communication.	Officers were very supportive of a clear work programme for the AGs and saw it as a way to build cohesion and better understanding in the wider organisation about the value of including the AGs.	AG members were also in support of a more structured work plan that aligned with council priorities and set out clear goals and objectives. They were also keen to have support to track progress against these plans and to evaluate impact with regular reporting to Council.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with the Strategy team to develop a work programme for each AG that is aligned with the council work programme. 2. Establish metrics to evaluate the work programme effectiveness. 3. Include a mechanism for progress reporting to Council

	approach is usually accompanied by regular reporting to council.				
AG Collaboration	Some councils have cross-panel workshops that are curated to build a culture of cross-over and resource sharing. Panel members report enjoying these sessions which are usually focussed around a bigger topic eg the LTP.	While Elected Members did not directly address the possibility of AG collaboration they did make suggestions about possible merging of groups.	Officers could see the benefit in collaborative workshops but did have some concern about the resourcing needed for these.	Some AG members were interested in the opportunity to understand what other groups were focussing on and about the possibility of collaborative projects.	1. As part of the work programme development, identify opportunities for collaborative hui across the groups.

4.2 Community Funding – June 2025

Meeting: Community Development Committee
Date of meeting: 19 June 2025
Reporting officer: Cindy Fields (Community Funding Coordinator)

1 Purpose / Te Kaupapa

To determine Whangārei Communities Fund grant allocations for June 2025.

2 Recommendations / Whakataunga

That the Community Development Committee approves Whangārei Communities Fund grant allocations as follows:

1. Hikurangi Historical Museum – Operating costs 2025	\$10,083
2. Hikurangi Mountain Lions Club Charitable Trust – Christmas Parade 2025	\$6,405
3. Interchurch Northland Urban Rural Mission – Community sector support	\$5,250
4. Ngunguru Golf Club Inc – Estuary bridge rebuild	\$52,500
5. Northland Astronomical Society Inc – Air conditioning at Planetarium	\$7,623
6. Opuawhanga Community Hall Trust – Insurance costs 2025	\$2,000
7. Parua Bay Cemetery Trust – Cemetery mowing costs 2025	\$2,400
8. Pehiaweri B1B Ahu Whenua Trust – Pehiaweri Oranga Whenua	\$13,580
9. Questionable Research Labs – Sandbox Fandom Festival 2025	\$9,158
10. Table Tennis Northland – Office and entrance upgrade	\$35,000
11. Waiotira Pony Club – Domain mowing costs 2025	\$1,800
12. Wandering Angels Animal Sanctuary – Maternity suite flooring	\$3,000
13. WithIN Nature – Whakapakari Whenua Project	\$10,000
14. Women's International Newcomers Group Social (WINGS) – Operating costs 2025	\$2,000

3 Discussion / Whakawhiti kōrero

In this period, 14 applications are presented for the Committee's consideration. Applications and recommendations are outlined in the attached document.

3.1 Financial/budget considerations

	Amount	Comment
Recommended this month	\$160,799.00	Fully utilises available budget + returned grants + minor underspend from Community Associations Fund
Allocated YTD	\$813,238.00	88% of \$930,000 total budget
Year End total , if approved	\$974,037.00	Fully utilises available budget + returned grants + minor underspend from Community Associations Fund

3.2 Year End summary

This completes the 2024-25 financial year and the first year of the new Whangārei Communities Fund. An annual report will be provided to the committee by October.

3.3 Assessment of applications

Grant applications are provided a score to help guide decision-making.

Scores range from 0 (completely fails to address measure) to 5 (meets measure at a high level). The totals are weighted as shown for the following measures:

Project planning (25%)

- The project idea is clear and well-developed.
- The application demonstrates a clear and strong community need or benefit.

Alignment (25%)

- The application demonstrates clear alignment with our Funding Priorities and objectives.
- The application demonstrates support for a target sector of the community (under-represented communities or people, place, or attribute).

Budget (25%)

- The budget is clear and realistic.

Supporting information (25%)

- Supporting information provided is appropriate for the requested level of investment.

3.4 Policy and planning implications

The Community Funding Policy, revised in June 2024, was applied in the consideration of all applications, and is reflected in the recommendations made.

3.5 Risks

No risks were identified for the recommendations proposed.

4 Significance and engagement / Te Hira me te Arawhiti

The decisions or matters of this Agenda do not trigger the significance criteria outlined in Council's Significance and Engagement Policy, and the public will be informed via agenda publication on the website.

5 Attachments / Ngā Tāpiritanga

Attachment 1 – Whangārei Communities Fund recommendations report for June 2025

Whangarei Communities Fund recommendations report

Month:

June 2025

Applicant	Hikurangi Historical Museum
Project	Operational costs (WCF-156)
Requested	\$10,083.00
Funding criteria	Arts, Culture, and Heritage
Total score	80%
Conflicts of Interest	Our Treasurer is related to Councillor Carol Peters
Assessment	<p>For the general operating costs of the museum, budgeted at \$18k total. The museum continues to operate well with steady visitor numbers and engagement. The team is dedicated to improving the facility, working on a strategic plan, collecting local stories, and moving towards a collection and practice more reflective of Hikurangi's Māori heritage.</p> <p>The Society operates very lean (accounting for every cent) with a strong reliance on the continued goodwill of their dedicated volunteers. It would be good to see them achieve a more sustainable budget in future.</p>
Recommend	\$10,083.00
Applicant's rationale for support	<p><i>Funding from WDC to cover parts of the running costs of the Hikurangi Museum will enable us to keep our doors open in the coming year for the public to visit us and to do our important voluntary work within/ for the community.</i></p> <p><i>Our museum members are all volunteers and they give a lot of their time and effort to keep the museum running. We get a lot of good feedback from our visitors, people from New Zealand and international tourists alike. They all seem to enjoy our museum and they leave with a lot of new information about Hikurangi, Northland and New Zealand history in general. We engage with our visitors and give them a tour if they want one. Learning about our history is an eye-opener for many people. It makes them feel more connected to our region and our country. We promote Hikurangi in a positive way, we help creating an identity for our local population and we attract people to visit our village. Our museum uplifts the profile of Hikurangi and is actively engaged in creating a vision for our future.</i></p>

Applicant	Hikurangi Mountain Lions Club Charitable Trust
Project	Hikurangi Community Xmas Parade (WCF-160)
Requested	\$6,405.00
Funding criteria	Community Well-being
Total score	87.5%
Conflicts of Interest	No interests to declare

Assessment	<p>A strong application to support the Hikurangi Christmas parade and festival, which attracts approximately 3500 public attendees and 400 parade participants.</p> <p>The total event cost is \$11k of which they are seeking just over half, for sound and stage, St Johns, people and vehicle control, photographer, and brass band. The request is on par with last year's allocation. Recommended for full support.</p>
Recommend	\$6,405.00
Applicant's rationale for support	<p><i>We struggled last year with funding, if it wasn't for the WDC support and sponsorship for prizes, this event would not have happened. We are a very small Charitable Trust who works hard at servicing the vulnerable in our and Whangarei District communities. We are the largest sustainable Xmas parade in our district with the expertise and the local Community Groups support. Due to lack of funding last year we didn't have any equipment for the children or many entertainers, we had to cut right back to the basics. The tamariki got restless, parents were a bit stressed due to large crowds and nothing for the kids to preoccupy them left earlier than the previous year. It didn't decrease the overall participation which was great.</i></p> <p><i>This event is inclusive, provides entertainment that is free that families can not afford at other event such as the AMP show, improves every ones well-being and an economic boost to a small town.</i></p>

Applicant	Interchurch Northland Urban Rural Mission Inc
Project	Community Sector Support (WCF-144)
Requested	\$5,250.00
Funding criteria	Community Well-being
Total score	60%
Conflicts of Interest	Councillor Carol Peters is a member of the NURM Board, and is the wife of NURM's Community Development Worker (a contribution for whose wages is being sought in this application).
Assessment	<p>This request is to support a funding shortfall for the year, and for the community development worker's wages. The shortfall is due to some usual funding sources becoming more difficult to secure, and one funder dropping out in recent years. This applicant has not applied to us before.</p> <p>The budget provided is consistent with financial statements, confirming the need and impact. Letters of support from Whakatika Hoe, Cancer Society, and Tlc4u2 Limited.</p> <p>NURM provides support and advocacy for the community sector in Northland, including community development, housing, welfare, poverty reduction, Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and social justice.</p> <p>This funding is targeted towards continuing to run the Whangarei Community Networkers Forum, for disseminating relevant information to the sector, and for supporting individual groups as requested.</p>
Recommend	\$5,250.00

Applicant's rationale for support	<p><i>This in-service training and networking project contributes valuably to the effectiveness of the work of the local Tangata Whenua Community Voluntary Sector. It upskills these groups and their workers in relatively informal but appropriate ways. It also provides synergies between sectoral participants to strengthen their relationships and facilitate their shared responses to community issues. And it acts as a simple way of sharing information that is relevant to these groups.</i></p> <p><i>That NURM holds this kanohe-ki-te-kanohe and online process together is essential for its continuance. Networkers and related activities would not have continued cohesively beyond early days without NURM's Community Development Worker's work. We respectfully suggest this work should be funded to meet a shortfall in NURM's funding, and to ensure that NURM can continue this community development work (alongside our other work in housing, welfare, poverty reduction, Te Tiriti o Waitangi, social justice, etc). The local community sector would be the less effective without these contributions.</i></p>
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Applicant	Ngunguru Golf Club Incorporated
Project	Estuary Bridge Rebuild (WCF-163)
Requested	\$57,383.00
Funding criteria	Recreation and Sport
Total score	67.5%
Conflicts of Interest	Nil
Assessment	<p>This request is for the design and build of two new timber and steel bridges at the golf club, suitable for pedestrians and lightweight traffic. One of the existing bridges built in 1989 has collapsed and the other is showing signs of deterioration. The work will be done by qualified engineers and contractors with building consent exemption.</p> <p>The Club has 150 members and hosts 1500 casual green fee players annually. The total project cost is \$75k, and their request does not quite meet the 30% co-funding requirement. The Club has funds in the bank, but this is reserved for replacement tractor and other renewals/maintenance needs.</p> <p>It is recommended to support this request, adjusting for the 30% contribution requirement.</p>
Recommend	\$52,500.00
Applicant's rationale for support	<p><i>Stronger and wider bridges are required to provide cart and machinery access across the estuary to maintain the course and flow of the game.</i></p> <p><i>Ngunguru Golf Club should be funded as our facility is accessed and available to all of the community including, business development groups, sports teams, school groups and local walkers.</i></p> <p><i>We promote our club as a major Tutukaka coast asset of the Whangarei district.</i></p> <p><i>Welcome to Ngunguru Golf Course – Nau mai, haere mai!</i></p> <p><i>Nestled in the heart of the scenic Tutukaka Coast, our quality 9-hole course offers a warm, welcoming atmosphere for players of all abilities. Whether you're a seasoned golfer or a</i></p>

	<p><i>beginner, our time-friendly layout provides an enjoyable and rewarding challenge year-round.</i></p> <p><i>Join us for regular 9-hole and 18-hole competitions, where camaraderie meets competition, creating memorable experiences for members and visitors alike.</i></p> <p><i>Experience the beauty, community spirit, and fun of golfing at its best – we can't wait to welcome you!</i></p>
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Applicant	Northland Astronomical Society Incorporated
Project	Air conditioning in the Planetarium (WCF-165)
Requested	\$7,623.00
Funding criteria	Arts, Culture, and Heritage
Total score	90%
Conflicts of Interest	None
Assessment	<p>The Planetarium currently has no ventilation so is hot in summer and cold in winter. This project is to install ventilation ducting and a heatpump for the 30-seat venue. The Planetarium received over 900 visitors in the last year, which is expected to grow with the growing interest in Puanga Matariki.</p> <p>A strong application scoring very well and demonstrating a clear case for support.</p>
Recommend	\$7,623.00
Applicant's rationale for support	<p><i>An air conditioning system will improve the health and safety of everyone who attends the Planetarium.</i></p> <p><i>We also see the value in decreasing respiratory/airborne infections through continuous fresh air exchange. Air conditioning will make fundamental improvements in air quality and mitigation of mould.</i></p>

Applicant	Opuawhanga Community Hall Trust
Project	Support for Insurance Costs (WCF-136)
Requested	\$2,000.00
Funding criteria	Community Well-being
Total score	67.5%
Conflicts of Interest	None.
Assessment	<p>This request is for a contribution towards the hall's insurance costs. Our policy states that facilities that have earned less than \$5k in income qualify for up to \$2k for insurance and power costs. The hall meets this criterion and therefore this is recommended for support.</p>

Recommend	\$2,000.00
Applicant's rationale for support	<i>The hall is a vital resource in our community. In the case of a natural disaster or civil defence emergency the hall is where the community would come. We don't have any other public buildings/churches/schools in Opuawhanga. And the nearest other hall is in Whananaki North which is low lying and on the foreshore, so Opuawhanga Hall would be where that community would come in the event of a natural disaster like a tsunami etc. The insurance costs are expected to be nearly \$5,000 this year and the community is unable to fundraise that amount. Our community events are low cost to meet the needs of the community, and proceeds from pop up cafes, raffles, market table hires, occasional hall hires, and cups of coffee and teas does not come anywhere near what we need to make in order to pay the hall expenses. We are asking Whangarei District Council for support to pay the largest bill we have - the insurance bill - to ensure the hall continues to be a resource to the community.</i>

Applicant	Parua Bay Cemetery Trust
Project	Cemetery mowing grant 2025 (WCF-100)
Requested	\$2,400.00
Funding criteria	Arts, Culture, and Heritage
Total score	75%
Conflicts of Interest	None
Assessment	<p>For annual mowing charges at this heritage cemetery. The Parua Bay Cemetery is a historic cemetery and has burials dating back to 1886. There are Maori, European and Nova Scotian early residents of this area interred here. Many of their descendants are still living here and are regular visitors to the cemetery.</p> <p>The group have done well to formally establish themselves as a charitable trust, reinstate regular AGMs, and appropriately manage the Trust's administration and legal obligations.</p>
Recommend	\$2,400.00
Applicant's rationale for support	<p><i>The cemetery land is not flat and when the grass is long it can be very difficult for visitors, especially elderly ones, to make their way around.</i></p> <p><i>Keeping the cemetery in a neat condition is our way of honoring the place and those who have gone before us.</i></p>

Applicant	Pehiaweri B1B Ahu Whenua Trust
Project	Pehiaweri Oranga Whenua (WCF-166)
Requested	\$13,580.00
Funding criteria	Community Well-being

Total score	80%
Conflicts of Interest	None
Assessment	<p>This request is for additional geotechnical reports to meet resource consent requirements for their papakainga project. The Trust was successful with a Papakainga Fund application to cover their RC costs, but it does not extend to this additional, unforeseen requirement.</p> <p>A good application that scored well and supports outcomes for Māori - recommended for support.</p>
Recommend	\$13,580.00
Applicant's rationale for support	<i>The funding requested is the bridging component required to continue to progress our kaupapa and to achieve the critical milestone of resource consent. This milestone is necessary to proceed to the next round of funding with MHUD for infrastructure and vertical build (construction of whare).</i>

Applicant	Questionable Research Labs
Project	Sandbox Fandom Festival 2025 (WCF-168)
Requested	\$9,158.00
Funding criteria	Arts, Culture, and Heritage
Total score	67.5%
Conflicts of Interest	<p>Part of our team (minimal financial gain, outlined in the budget):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Anna Terwiel, Major Events Lead for WDC Events & Venues - Hayley Clark, Cultural Events Coordinator for WDC Events & Venues%
Assessment	<p>This request is to support the annual Sandbox Fandom Festival, specifically for venue hire costs. The festival, now in its third year, is quickly outgrowing Forum North and needs to hire additional spaces nearby for further festival activities.</p> <p>Sandbox is the largest pop-culture event in the north, featuring workshops, competitions, artist panels, stage performances, over 50 market stalls, cosplay events, around 15 free interactive activities, over 20 community groups and local businesses and more.</p> <p>It's a space for Te Tai Tokerau's community to meet and share their love for everything geek: A celebration of art, games, cosplay, animation, comics, music, tech and more. Almost 1,000 visitors and 200 artists/stallholders/volunteers participated last year.</p> <p>The total event cost is approximately \$18k, but this doesn't include the many volunteer hours to put this festival together. A popular mid-winter event for all ages, it is recommended for full support. However, the group will need to consider sustainability going forward.</p>
Recommend	\$9,158.00

Applicant's rationale for support	<p>1. We have established the Sandbox Fandom Festival as an annual event that brings together the community of Te Tai Tokerau, fostering growth and engagement among individuals who share a passion for geek culture, including art, games, cosplay, animation, comics, music, and technology.</p> <p>2. We have created a family-oriented and youth-focused festival that serves to strengthen the tech, gaming, and pop culture scene in Te Tai Tokerau, with the ultimate aim of retaining local talent and attracting tech and entertainment companies to the region.</p> <p>3. We promote Whangarei as a compelling tourist destination by drawing new visitors to the city through the Sandbox Fandom Festival, while also facilitating connections and collaboration between the local scene and the wider Aotearoa community.</p> <p>4. We provide a supportive and inclusive space for previously isolated groups, individuals, hobbyists, and game enthusiasts to come together, fostering meaningful connections and building a sense of community within the region.</p> <p>5. We nurture and promote local talent by providing a platform for artists and makers to gain recognition, engage with the festival audience, and potentially generate income from their artistic endeavors. This is achieved by the main expo space as a designated space for artists and businesses to display and sell their handmade creations. Sandbox features competitions in Art, Cosplay, Comic, and diorama making, judged on the day for additional ways for artists to participate and gain recognition.</p> <p>6. Sandbox serves as a vehicle for skill sharing, as Sandbox will run workshops and host demonstrations throughout the day on costuming and prop making techniques. This highlights the talent within our community of makers and acknowledge the skill and artistry present in Northland.</p>
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Applicant	Table Tennis Northland
Project	Office and Entrance Upgrade (WCF-154)
Requested	\$47,989.00
Funding criteria	Recreation and Sport
Total score	47.5%
Conflicts of Interest	None
Assessment	<p>This request is for two parts - firstly to install an electronic access system (\$24k) and secondly to renovate the reception and office space (\$53k) at their Kensington site. They have received \$28k from Table Tennis NZ towards the \$76k total.</p> <p>The application is limited in detail, not clearly demonstrating a case for support for the access system. However, the supporting information includes a plan outlining the renovation and photos of the current premises showing a clear need for an upgrade. The club has 150 active members and continues to grow. Recently they have hired two paid staff to grow the support in Northland, and they require suitable office space.</p>

	These projects do not appear to support the player experience or increase club membership, however there is a reasonable case for support for the staff. As such, it is recommended to fund to \$35,000.
Recommend	\$35,000.00
Applicant's rationale for support	<p><i>As above in WHO.</i></p> <p><i>Plus -</i></p> <p><i>By updating the office, it's possible to boost employee morale and increase their productivity as a result. Space utilisation is important. Our current office uses its space poorly, does not maximise productivity and is not visually appealing.</i></p> <p><i>A renovated office space will reflect the identity of Table Tennis Northland. Clients visiting a modern, neat, organised office will associate it with us.</i></p> <p><i>First impressions matter, so making a strong impression with a well-thought-out office space and entrance will be an asset.</i></p> <p><i>We promote and grow Table Tennis in the Northland area. With the proposed changes there will be increased community capacity and growing access for the community.</i></p> <p><i>The stadium is currently used on six days of the week, but the Hello Club access system will mean access 24/7 with a lot more people being able to play the game.</i></p> <p><i>Table Tennis Northland will be able to boost participation and monitor facility usage.</i></p>

Applicant	Waiotira Pony Club
Project	Waiotira Mowing (WCF-162)
Requested	\$1,800.00
Funding criteria	Recreation and Sport
Total score	80%
Conflicts of Interest	None
Assessment	A straightforward and modest request for mowing of the Waiotira Domain used by the Pony Club and the wider local community. The Club is small but active, and this request supports a rural community asset.
Recommend	\$1,800.00
Applicant's rationale for support	<p><i>Maintaining the Waiotira Domain through regular mowing makes a significant difference to our club and wider community. It provides a safe, tidy, and functional space for young riders aged 4 to 15 to develop their skills, confidence, and love of horse riding. A well-kept domain is essential for the safety of both riders and horses and allows us to run successful rallies and events throughout the season.</i></p> <p><i>This project also benefits the wider equestrian community, as we welcome visiting riders for competitions and allow others to use the grounds for extra training. Supporting this application means investing in a rural community space that brings people together, encourages outdoor activity, and gives young people the opportunity to learn and grow in a supportive environment. Without this funding, it becomes difficult for our small club to meet the ongoing costs of maintaining the grounds to the standard required.</i></p>

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Applicant	Wandering Angels Animal Sanctuary
Project	Flooring for maternity suite (WCF-172)
Requested	\$3,263.00
Funding criteria	Community Well-being
Total score	45%
Conflicts of Interest	None
Assessment	<p>This request is to install vinyl flooring in the sanctuary's new birthing suite. The application was light in detail and didn't provide a lot of context, so it scored low. However, they state that they currently look after 30 dogs and 11 puppies and work closely with Whangarei Animal Control. Their previous grant report was adequate.</p> <p>The trust had a good surplus last year but is still building up cash in bank to become sustainable. Recommended for support if funds allow.</p>
Recommend	\$3,000.00
Applicant's rationale for support	<p><i>We believe with your support we can keep dogs off the streets and reduce the number of animals requiring shelter in our homes. We will also be able to assist with pregnant mothers who end up in the Whangarei Pound.</i></p> <p><i>Currently, all our donations and fundraising are being exhausted with vet bills, food and every day running expenses.</i></p>

Applicant	Within Nature
Project	The Whakapakari Whenua Project (WCF-170)
Requested	\$16,850.00
Funding criteria	Community Well-being
Total score	77.5%
Conflicts of Interest	None
Assessment	<p>This request is to support this mentorship programme for rangatahi aged 12-24 who are disengaged from mainstream education. The programme includes nature-based mentoring, ecological restoration, and hands-on learning experiences to build confidence, life skills, and a strong sense of identity and belonging.</p> <p>Approximately 240 young people were supported in the last year at their Maunu Gardens base, and they cite that demand has increased (although this is not evidenced). Their total operating budget had increased from \$100k last year to \$180k this year due to this demand, and this is the shortfall they are aiming to meet with this and other funding requests.</p>

	Overall, a good application but difficult to evidence/determine actual outputs and impacts. It is recommended to fund to the same level as last year's grant - \$10,000.
Recommend	\$10,000.00
Applicant's rationale for support	<p><i>Our project will make a significant and lasting difference in the lives of Rangatahi (predominantly Māori) by providing a culturally grounded, hands-on learning environment where they can reconnect with education, discover their strengths, and build meaningful pathways toward confident futures.</i></p> <p><i>Many of the young people we work with have experienced traditional education settings as places where they did not feel seen, supported, or successful. This often leads to disengagement, low self-esteem, and limited future aspirations. WithIN NATURE breaks this cycle by offering an alternative educational experience that meets them where they are, honouring their unique learning styles, cultural identity, and real-world talents.</i></p> <p><i>Through experiential learning in gardening, outdoor cheffing, environmental care, and cultural practices, our Rangatahi gain more than just practical skills. They experience a vital shift in mindset—from disconnection and doubt to empowerment, pride, and self-belief. They develop leadership, resilience, and teamwork skills that ripple out to positively influence their whānau and communities.</i></p> <p><i>By embedding basic literacy and numeracy into everyday activities like recipe reading, cooking measurements, garden planning, and maramataka (Māori lunar calendar) practices, we are closing the educational gaps that often stand in the way of future employment and study options. Learning becomes natural, accessible, and deeply connected to their lives. Funding our mentors is critical because demand for our programme is growing, and the need for culturally relevant, supportive learning spaces has never been greater. Your support will allow us to continue expanding our mentoring team and project coordination, ensuring we can meet the needs of more Rangatahi across Whangārei. We are already seeing measurable impacts—youth who once felt disconnected now aspire to careers in horticulture, hospitality, and environmental stewardship.</i></p>

Applicant	Women's International Newcomers Group Social (WINGS)
Project	Operating Costs (WCF-140)
Requested	\$4,100.00
Funding criteria	Community Well-being
Total score	45%
Conflicts of Interest	None
Assessment	<p>This request is to meet an operating budget shortfall which they attribute to removing the need for membership fees. However, the membership fees contributed \$2,280 in the YE March 2024 (and \$0 in YE March 2025). Their proposed operating budget for 25/26 is \$55k, a significant increase on \$37k and \$24k in the previous two years which is not explained (despite staff requests).</p> <p>The application is limited in detail but the audit report states 1,675 total attendees</p>

	over the year to their different events. Recommend partial funding for event expenses only.
Recommend	\$2,000.00
Applicant's rationale for support	<p><i>Through WINGS, the women in our community are empowered to experience meaningful connection and growth in numerous ways:</i></p> <p><i>WINGS serves as a vital hub, intentionally bringing together women from diverse backgrounds, experiences, and walks of life within our Northland community. This provides a antidote to isolation and creates an environment of understanding and mutual support. By actively facilitating these connections, WINGS helps to weave a stronger social fabric for women in Whangārei.</i></p> <p><i>Forge new friendships through events and programs designed to spark conversation: WINGS goes beyond simply gathering women; it actively cultivates genuine relationships. Our events and workshops encourage dialogue, shared experiences, and the discovery of common interests. Whether it's a workshop, a social gathering, or a skill-building session, each activity breaks the ice, foster open communication, and naturally lead to the formation of new and meaningful friendships. These connections can provide invaluable emotional support and a sense of belonging.</i></p> <p><i>Build a lasting network; Find support and connection that extends beyond WINGS and into the wider community: The connections formed through WINGS are not intended to be confined within the organisation's activities. We aim to empower women to build a robust and enduring network of support. The friendships cultivated within WINGS serve as a springboard for broader community engagement and support systems. This network can provide invaluable resources, mentorship opportunities, and a sense of solidarity that extends far beyond WINGS' organised events.</i></p> <p><i>Our workshops, programs and events are available free of charge for the women in our community: This commitment to accessibility is fundamental to WINGS' mission of inclusivity. By removing financial barriers, WINGS ensures that all women in our community, regardless of their economic circumstances, have the opportunity to participate, connect, and grow. This free access underscores our dedication to empowering every woman in Whangārei and fostering a truly equitable and supportive environment.</i></p>

5.1 Community Services Group Operational Report – June 2025

Meeting: Community Development Committee
Date of meeting: 19 June 2025
Reporting officer: Victoria Harwood (General Manager, Community Services)

1 Purpose / Te Kaupapa

To provide an overview of operational activities occurring in the month of May 2025 across the Community Services Group that the Community Development Committee govern under their Terms of Reference.

2 Recommendation/s / Whakataunga

That the Community Development Committee receives the Community Services Group Operational Report for May 2025 at the June 2025 meeting.

3 Background / Horopaki

This report provides an overview of operational activities and highlights for May 2025 including the five Community Services Group Departments and two Council Controlled Organisations (CCO's) and provides commentary on future activities planned.

3.1 Financial/budget considerations

Any significant financial risks are raised in the individual agenda items. Financial and budget activities within the Operations Report are business as usual activities.

4 Significance and engagement / Te Hira me te Arawhiti

The decisions or matters of this Agenda do not trigger the significance criteria outlined in Council's Significance and Engagement Policy, and the public will be informed via agenda publication on the website.

5 Attachments / Ngā Tāpiritanga

Attachment 1: Community Services Group Operations Report for June 2025

Operations Report Community Services Group

June 2025

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1. Community Services Group Overview

1.1 Health and Safety

- Health, Safety and Wellbeing for front facing staff in the Community Services Group.
- Ensuring the Community Services Group public facilities are maintained and meet health and safety requirements
- Ensuring H&S issues are logged through the Assura system and addressed promptly by staff.
- Debriefing with staff from health and safety incidents experienced during May

1.2 Current Priorities

General Manager Community Services Group current focus areas:

- Delivery of Key Priority Projects as per list within Operations report Section 3.
- Supporting the Annual Plan 2025- 2026 process
- Northland Events Centre 2021 Trust relationship management.
- Whangarei Art Trust relationship management.
- Appointment of Whangarei Art Trust Board Trustee – hapu representative.
- Five council departments staffing and operations.
- Long-term plan 2024-2034 – work programme delivery 2024-2025.
- Pensioner housing, new and contract renewals.
- Infrastructure Projects –
 - Old Municipal Building restoration
 - Stadium Roof replacement
 - New tsunami siren network
 - CDEM Multi-agency Coordination Centre (MACC)
- Multi-Agency Coordination Centre (MACC) Design Team
- Review of Signage for Hundertwasser Art Centre
- Northland Events Centre Roof Working Group

Agenda items outside the Community Development Committee

- None currently

Other Operations

- Supporting ICT projects to enhance staff and customer experience (DXP system)
- Council Advisory Group Review and Workshops
- Welcoming Communities Plan
- Future major sporting events planning
- Recarpeting, air con and security upgrades to Central Library
- Customer Request improvements and training delivery
- Knowledge Precinct Project and Knowledge Education Arts Hub
- Redevelopment Forum North and support of new Theatre project
- Long-term staff leaving and recruitment into key roles

1.3 Current challenges/issues

- Ongoing anti-social behaviour towards staff in public buildings.
- Ongoing antisocial behaviour in the city both day and night.

1.4 Future focus areas

- Department Strategy implementation and work programmes
- Annual Plan 2025-2026 delivery
- Council Controlled Organisation financial situations and future planning.

Hundertwasser Art Centre Brown Tourist Signage

General Manager Transport and Community Infrastructure plans for council transport staff to work with the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA), Northland Inc. and staff from council's District Development department regarding the brown tourist signage south of the city on SH1. The proposed plan is to review current signage and develop a renewed signage approach into the city for visitors. This is a work in progress and updates will be provided as they develop.

2. Council Controlled Organisations – Monthly reporting

2.1 Whangarei Art Trust

2.1.1 Hundertwasser Art Centre (HAC) with Wairau Māori Art Gallery

Health and Safety

No Health and Safety issues this month.

Current Priorities

Following the Whangārei District Council Community Development Committee meeting in May, where the declined application tourist signs for the Hundertwasser Art Centre by NZTA was discussed, Whangārei District Council staff were asked to prepare a proposal for the next meeting in June. Brown tourist signs are urgently needed for the Hundertwasser Art Centre, especially during months without a marketing campaign.

Overview of Operational Activities

Temperature and Humidity Readings

A project with WDC IT Department is currently underway to implement a new BMS server, with full operation expected by July. In the meantime, temperature and humidity readings sent to the Hundertwasser Non-Profit Foundation were all were within the target range (temperature: 20-22°C; humidity: 45-55%).

Admission and shop sales May

Admission and shop sales for May 2025 were at 99% and 69% of budget (to be confirmed in next month's report). Visitor numbers increased compared to last year: May 2025 had 1,905 visitors versus 1,412 in May 2024. The drop in visitor numbers from April to May highlights the seasonality of tourism in Whangārei.

In May, 25% of visitors were international, 29% from Auckland, 20% from Northland, and 26% from other regions.

MuseumShop

The drop in visitor numbers from April to May has impacted May's shop sales. The online shop has lost traction and requires continuous marketing to maintain sales, which will be a priority in the next financial year. Slow-moving stock has only slightly decreased from last month to \$62,455

Tour Bookings

Visitor tour groups were slightly up compared with last year. At TRENZ in Rotorua, 22 appointments were held with various tourism operators, and the Tourism and Sales Coordinator is following up to secure future business. Tour companies continue to cite the lack of quality accommodation as a barrier to spending more time in Whangārei.

The tour season has now finished and will resume around September, with some larger companies closing for a couple of months. Great media coverage was received in the Motorhomes, Caravans and Destinations magazine in March, featuring [10 reasons to head North - Motorhomes, Caravans & Destinations NZ](#) resulting from a famil organized by Northland Inc.

Grant applications

Funding Body	Amount Applied For	Awarded	Date Submitted	Current Status
Foundation North	\$99,999	\$0.00	Oct 2024	Declined due to CCO status
Lotteries	\$100,000	\$20,000	Nov 2024	\$20,000 awarded
Rano Trust	\$21,466	\$0.00	Jan 2025	Declined due to insufficient funds
Oxford Sports Trust	\$26,840	\$0.00	Jan 2025	Declined due to insufficient funds
Pub Charity	\$31,952	\$0.00	Jan 2025	Declined, area funds exceeded
Rano Trust	\$21,466	\$0.00	Feb 2025	Declined due to insufficient funds
Oxford Sports Trust	\$26,840	\$0.00	Feb 2025	Declined due to insufficient funds
Grassroots Trust	\$21,466	\$0.00	Mar 2025	Declined due to insufficient funds
Rano Trust	\$21,466	\$0.00	Apr 2025	Awaiting outcome
Pub Charity	\$21,466	\$5,000	Apr 2025	\$5,000 awarded
Oxford Sports Trust	\$26,840	\$0.00	Apr 2025	Declined due to insufficient funds
Te Papa Travel Grant	\$500	\$500.00	Apr 2025	\$500 awarded
Regional Events Promo Fund	\$5,000	\$0.00	Apr 2025	Declined
Lion Foundation	\$40,260	\$0.00	May 2025	Declined due to no machines in area
Total Applied	\$490,061	\$25,500		

Public programme

A successful information evening on death and dying was held, after an introduction to Hundertwasser's ideas on ecological burials, six panellists discussing their work and experiences. Forty people attended. Additionally, two 30-minute guided tours were given to the Compassionate Communities Hui held in Whangārei this year on Hundertwasser's approach to death and ecological burials.

A new series of artworks titled "Beyond What Meets the Eye" by Robert Peper was unveiled as part of the Hundertwasser Art Centre Outdoor Sculpture exhibition. The nine photographs are displayed in the alleyway between The Bach and the Hundertwasser Art Centre with Wairau Māori Art Gallery.

Schools programme

Hundertwasser School programme had 515 students booked in for Term 2 (102% of target), but a large cancellation may result in falling just below target. A marketing campaign has been launched to boost community engagement and drive numbers.

A feedback survey for the home schooler programme, run since the start of the year, was sent out at the end of Term 1. The programme received positive feedback and gratitude, with the community hopeful for its continuation.

Feedback received:

"My tamariki have really enjoyed the sessions. The content has been super engaging and, through mahi toi, has really inspired them to think about how their actions impact or enhance Te Taiao".

"[The] learnings have been huge. They've been inspired to make earth paints at home, tried their hand at creating dye from putiput. Our son has started a compost at our mahinga kai with his friend after being inspired by the soil workshop. There's also been a bit of returning home from Nanna's with fabric scraps for sewing / saving scraps from the bin.

"My son, who is a 'reluctant learner' and can be shy has been engaged by facilitators in a really appropriate, kind way - he hasn't been pressured at all but has been offered opportunities and when engaged has been encouraged. This approach is so appreciated by our whānau."

2.1.2 Whangārei Art Museum

Health and Safety

No Health and Safety issues this month.

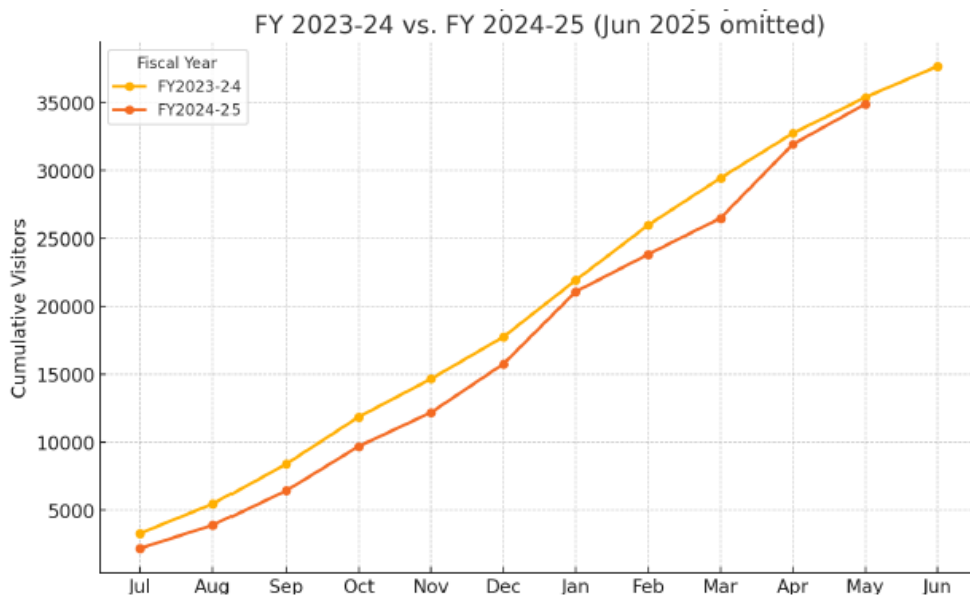
Overview of Operational Activities

Visitor Numbers

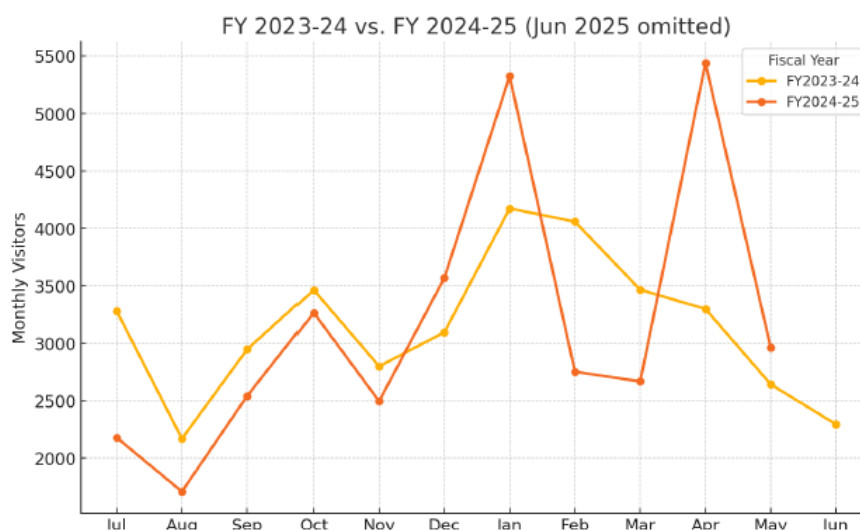
Visitor numbers remain strong and broadly in line with last year. By 31 May, cumulative attendance reached 34,907

	May 2024	May 2025
Average per day	85	96
Min day	40	37
Max day	247	287
Total Visitors	2,643	2,962

Cumulative Visitors



Monthly Visitors



Retail

A major update to the WAM website is set to go live next week, including donation functionality for a future fundraising campaign. Final te reo Māori translations are being completed for a comprehensive bilingual delivery. The Shopify POS system is ready, and the online store will launch after the website update. Integration with Xero is progressing well, reducing the workload for retail sales reconciliation. An automated system for book listings, and an AI-powered recommendation engine have been implemented to improve catalogue speed, accuracy and sales. A Shopify based ticketing system will be developed after the bookstore launch, initially for Whangārei Art Museum public programmes, with potential future use for Hundertwasser Art Centre ticketing.

Property

<i>Foyer</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lease for the foyer and associated rent concession is expected to be received shortly. The foyer windows have been decorated with elements of WAM's new branding, helping to activate the space and improve visual identity at the entrance.
<i>Roof Leaks</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple roof leaks have occurred recently in various parts of the facility due to area of the roof requiring repair and remedial work underway.
<i>Pop-Up WDC Space</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waiting for confirmation whether the proposed Council pop-up information centre in the foyer is proceeding.
<i>Collections</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The HVAC system in the collection storage area remains non-functional, and repair is not feasible. A meeting is being sought with Council to address the climate needs of the Collections space.

Future Planning / What's coming next?

Current Exhibitions:

Broken World, an exhibition by Whangārei born, Rome-based artist Alex Chalmers, remains on display until Sunday, 15 June. The exhibition continues to generate strong engagement, particularly among younger audiences.

Upcoming Exhibitions

The Net by Ngahuia Harrison (Ngatiwai) opens Friday, 20 June, coinciding with the Matariki public holiday. The exhibition brings together new photographic and moving-image works with archival material from Whangārei Art Museum's collection, deepening Harrison's investigation into coastal ecologies, whakapapa and tino rangatiratanga.

Exhibitions in Development:

- Ronnie van Hout – Major retrospective scheduled for October 2025
- Rea Burton (Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Pākehā) – Solo exhibition scheduled for October 2025
- Sonya Lacey – Solo exhibition scheduled for early February 2026
- Peter Robinson (Ngāi Tahu) – Touring exhibition scheduled to open at Christchurch Art Gallery in August, supported by WAM's texts and documentation featured in Bulletin magazine.

2.2 Northland Events Centre (2021) Trust

Health and Safety

- Progressing the updating of the Stadium Fire Evacuation Scheme. This process is ready to get underway in collaboration with the Council.
- Drafts of the Emergency Management Plan and the Hirers Health & Safety Guide have been completed and will be further refined in the coming weeks. NECT2021 looks forward to working with the Council to review and finalise the requirements outlined in these documents.
- The full Health & Safety Induction process is now in progress and is expected to be completed in the coming weeks.

Current Priorities

- Māori All Blacks Planning – 5 July

Performance measures and compliance

- Alignment of Statement of Intent with new Strategic Plan

Current challenges/issues

- Trying to secure and keep events due to costs/ current economic environment.
- Extreme weather conditions contributing to damage in both the Level 3 and level 2 East side stairwell entrances



Overview of Operational Activities for May

- Internal (lounges) bookings – May 2025 = 16 total spaces hired. 972 attendees. 45 upcoming internal events. 100% of hirers surveyed would use the venue again.
- Tickets for Māori All Blacks went on sale and started strong, corporate suites sold out straight away. Level 2 Lounge Hospitality and Grandstand also selling fast. A collaborative, region-wide marketing approach is in currently underway between NZ Rugby, Council, Northland Rugby Union and the Trust.
- Comedy Night – 13 June NECT event, tickets selling well.
- First DJ event Low Down Deep Tour – Golden Hour held on 17 May in Level 2 Lounge
- Car park line remark completed
- Roof cleaned

Future Planning / What's coming next?

- Māori All Blacks planning
- NPC/ FPC season planning
- Comedy night – 13 June
- Repairs and maintenance including new grandstand seat numbering and changing room shower floor upgrade
- Fireworks Spectacular 30th anniversary planning
- Securing summer events
- Exploring new event types and underutilised spaces i.e. concerts in the Festival Zone and new sporting codes



3. Community Projects

Community Services Projects Timeline 2024-25

	2024						2025											
Project	Jul	Aug	Se p	Oc t	No v	De c	Ja n	Fe b	Ma r	Ap r	Ma y	Ju n	Ju l	Au g	Se p	Oc t	No v	De c
General Manager Community Services																		
Draft Annual Plan Delivery																		
WAT Trustee Recruitment (Hapū & Finance)																		
Forum North - renovation & future																		
Community Centricity																		
Justice of the Peace Services to Te Iwitahi	COMPLETED																	
Community Group Internal Strategies	COMPLETED																	
Libraries																		
Re-carpet procurement Central Library																		
Library Pou Restoration																		
Security Upgrades																		
New Wrap for the mobile library																		
Makerspace in Central																		
Take Te Kakanao to other locations																		
Increase Heritage resources																		
Any time libraries																		
Review public computer spaces																		
Book Supplier Contract Renewal	COMPLETED																	

Community Services Projects Timeline 2024-25

	2024						2025												
Project	Jul	Aug	Se p	Oc t	No v	De c	Ja n	Fe b	Ma r	Ap r	Ma y	Ju n	Ju l	Au g	Se p	Oc t	No v	De c	
Central Library Roof Repairs	COMPLETED																		
Customer Services																			
Digital Experience Platform (DXP) Project																			
Disability Strategy Implementation - Hapai card																			
Security Glass for Ruakaka Service Centre																			
Customer Request System Remedial Plan	COMPLETED																		
Cruise Ship Season Planning	COMPLETED																		
Establish new Request Team				COMPLETED															
iSite Café Operator	COMPLETED																		
Procurement of CCTV for all sites																			
Venues and Events																			
Events Strategy (External)																			
Forum North Garden Area Phase 2																			
Review Event Development Fund and Kaupapa																			
Filming on Council Land policy and framework																			
Permit for events on Council Land framework																			
Security Upgrades																			
Revenue Space - cleared and painted																			
CCTV Project																			

Community Services Projects Timeline 2024-25

	2024						2025											
Project	Jul	Aug	Se p	Oc t	No v	De c	Ja n	Fe b	Ma r	Ap r	Ma y	Ju n	Ju l	Au g	Se p	Oc t	No v	De c
Multi-Cultural Arts Festival																		
Stadium Roof Replacement																		
Arts Culture and Heritage Strategy 2024-29	COMPLETED																	
Canopy Bridge lighting project	COMPLETED																	
Stadium Asset Management Plan	COMPLETED																	
Art on Boxes	COMPLETED																	
Forum North Roof			COMPLETED															
Forum North Fire Safety Improvements					COMPLETED													
Forum North Elevator Repair					COMPLETED													
Painting Forum North Foyer						COMPLETED												
Forum North Garden Refit - replace old furniture					COMPLETED													
Crowded Spaces Strategy					COMPLETED													
Stadium Flooring in changing rooms					COMPLETED													
Cameron Street Canopy Lights Refit					COMPLETED													
Integration of CCTV to Te Iwitahi security cameras																		
Stadium Field Strategy																		
Community Development																		
Old Municipal Building Confirm Tenancy																		
Pensioner Housing new builds																		
Pensioner Housing Future Delivery Report & Review																		

Community Services Projects Timeline 2024-25

	2024						2025											
Project	Jul	Aug	Se p	Oc t	No v	De c	Ja n	Fe b	Ma r	Ap r	Ma y	Ju n	Ju l	Au g	Se p	Oc t	No v	De c
Old Municipal Building Restoration																		
Welcoming Communities Plan																		
Advisory Group Review																		
Age Friendly City Plan																		
Draft Welcoming Communities Stock Take	COMPLETE D																	
Regional Accessibility Strategy	COMPLETED																	
Community Led Projects List Review	COMPLETED																	
Comms Guidelines for Representing Diverse communities																		
Review of Pensioner Housing Policy																		
Civil Defence Emergency Management																		
New Tsunami siren network installation																		
Tsunami Boards new inundation modelling signage																		
Multi-agency coordination Centre (MACC) Development Phase																		
Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) Equipment Renewal				COMPLETED														

4. Community Development

4.1 Health and Safety

Community Safety

CitySafe Community Officers reported only one Health and Safety incident for April, being and is a substantial decrease on the previous month, occurring at night, as reported below:

Laurie Hall Carpark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CitySafe officers separating two females who were fighting, after their respective boyfriends had a minor altercation.
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At the time of reporting, there have been no serious Health and Safety incidents reported for May, and routine monthly health and safety reporting will be received in due course.

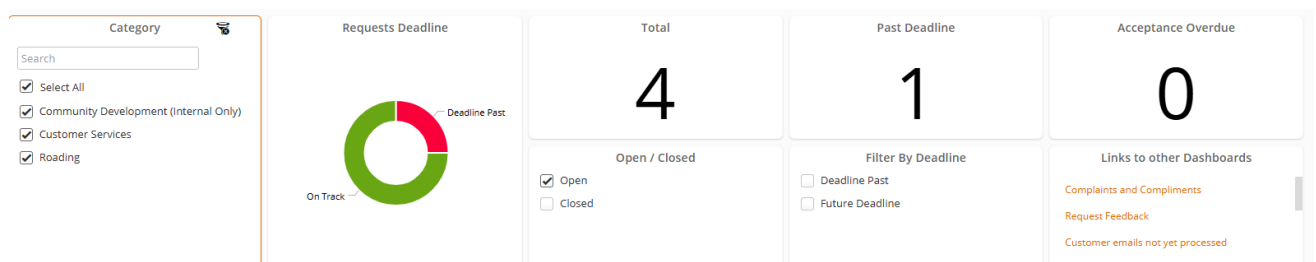
4.2 Current Priorities

<i>Advisory Groups</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council Advisory Groups Review
<i>Community Development</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progressing future growth and delivery options for Pensioner Housing Welcoming Plan Consultation – Welcoming Communities Implementation of Community Impact Partnership
<i>Community Funding</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Processing Whangarei Community Fund outcomes from May Committee meeting Triage/recommendations for WCF June Committee meeting Updating funding guides Preparing for capability development workshops
<i>Community Safety</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuing to work through the implementation of structure changes that affect the Community Safety CCTV Network and Community Property

4.3 Performance measures and compliance

Measured annually at the end of the financial year.

4.4 Request system dashboard update



4.5 Current challenges/issues

<i>Community Safety</i>	<p>Homelessness and graffiti vandalism in the city and district continues to negatively impact the city as being safe and welcoming, with staff continuing to engage with social and health agencies to support the homeless communities.</p> <p>The transition from Open Arms social services in Robert Street to the services available Whare Awhina in Cameron Street.</p>
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4.6 Overview of Operational Activities for May

Advisory Groups

External review of Council Advisory Groups	Staff have drafted a decision paper for the June Community Development Committee meeting to determine the final structure of advisory groups going forward.
Positive Ageing Advisory Group (PAAG) and Disability Advisory Group (DAG)	In May, PAAG and DAG held a joint meeting featuring presentations on seating for the Kamo Shared Path and an accessible pedestrian ramp for the Ngunguru seawall restoration. Members received updates on local election dates, changes to the Single Transferable Voting process, and services to support older adults and disabilities communities in voting.
Youth Advisory Group	The Youth Advisory Group received a presentation from Council's Elections Team on the upcoming electoral contest. They discussed voter enrolment options and explained the Single Transferable Voting system and local government electoral processes. The group received an update on the Welcoming Communities programme were asked for their suggestions about how to connect newcomers with local people in the Whangārei District. One suggestion was to create a "Multicultural Week" similar to Youth Week. Another suggestion was to create a directory of social groups belonging to specific ethnicities that could help newcomers connect with others from their own culture.

Community Led Projects (CLP)

Onerahi Community Led Project	Minor plan change – will now install seating with planter boxes at either end of the Onerahi shopping strip.
Maungatapere Village Inc (MVI)	Maungatapere Village Inc (MVI) have received support from the local lions group to support community CCTV in the area. The public toilets are now installed and open behind the community hall and the committee will work with the hall committee to activate this community space. The committee is searching for new committee members for future proofing and succession planning.
Raumanga Community Roopu	<p>The Raumanga Roopu continue to activate the Raumanga Valley Reserve Park on Thursdays alongside Raumanga Community Connect and residents to build community connections for youth and families.</p> <p>Members of the Roopu presented at the Te Huinga Māori Wellbeing Fund Celebration Event for the grant given to complete their half basketball court at the Raumanga Valley Reserve. This strengthened the relationship and was an opportunity to celebrate success with their funder.</p> <p>The Roopu submitted a detailed submission to Council on the Placemaking plan for the area detailing priorities from their communities. This will be further worked through at an upcoming Placemaking workshop.</p> <p>Community Members gathered at a community hui focused on improving road safety and the pedestrian crossing at Otaika Shops. Waka Kotahi and Council staff attended to listen to the community their safety concerns, respond and collaboratively look at solutions –</p>

	ongoing work is being done to mitigate safety risks here and engage the community.
Waipu River Walk	A survey has been sent to members of the Waipu River Walk committee. The purpose of the survey is to gain insights into their experience being part of a Community Led Project. These insights will help in the development of the Community Impact Partnership program which has just been launched.
TikiPride	No new updates at time of writing.

Community Development

As part of our community capability development offerings, we have engaged Strategic Grants to deliver two grant workshops in June (postponed from May):

- 24 June - *Best Practice Strategies to Build a Successful Grants Programme*
- 25 June - *Grant Writing: Preparing High Quality Applications*

The workshops are being offered to not-for-profit community groups at a subsidised price of \$30 per person, and these are almost sold out.

Kai Ora Fund

Fifteen community groups from around the Whangarei District each obtained a \$5000 grant from the Kai Ora Fund to start or develop food growing or gathering initiatives in their communities.

Welcoming Communities

Welcoming Plan

- The Welcome Plan external working group hui happened on 13th May 2025. An update of the Welcome Plan workshop was provided to the Welcome Plan engagement group. More feedback on Pou - Tuhono was received.
- The bi-monthly Welcome Plan internal working group hui happened on 19th May 2025. The structure of the Welcome Plan was discussed in the meetings and a document has been compiled focussing on Pou - Hapori and Pou - Tuhono.
- The Multi-Ethnic Collective Whangārei partners meeting is scheduled for 16th June 2025.

Upcoming Events:

- The Welcoming Communities Coordinator is collaborating with Te Huinga to organise a Powhiri for newcomers and migrants on 26th June 2025. This event is open for all. The attendees are to bring a plate to share if possible.
- The next Engagement Hui is scheduled for the 10th of June 2025. The details are: [Welcoming Plan Community Engagement Hui: Pou Wātea – Access - Whangarei District Council](#)
- The archway is the first of three installations designed for the Welcoming Plan at the Central Library with the support of Council's Play Advocate.

Age Friendly Whangārei Plan

Council received funding to develop an Age Friendly Whangārei Plan from the Office for Seniors via their Age Friendly Aotearoa programme. Part of the process is to run a survey to gather data to help inform the drafting of the plan.

The final survey tally was 843 responses, including partially completed responses. This is a record number of responses when compared with other councils in New Zealand that have run the survey. The data has been sent away for analysis by academic researchers, and we expect to receive data analysis results in early June. Staff have completed and sent an interim report as requested by the funders.

Community Funding -Youth Week

Fifteen applications were received for the Youth Week Fund. Of those six applicants were successful in obtaining funding for their chosen event.

The six successful Youth Week Fund applicants ran a range of events during Youth Week May 19th to 25th. These included theatre performances, a script writing workshop and a “Build Whangarei” Minecraft event. A highlight was the Youth Creators Market held in The Strand which was attended by over 30 young entrepreneurs showcasing an incredible range of amazing products.

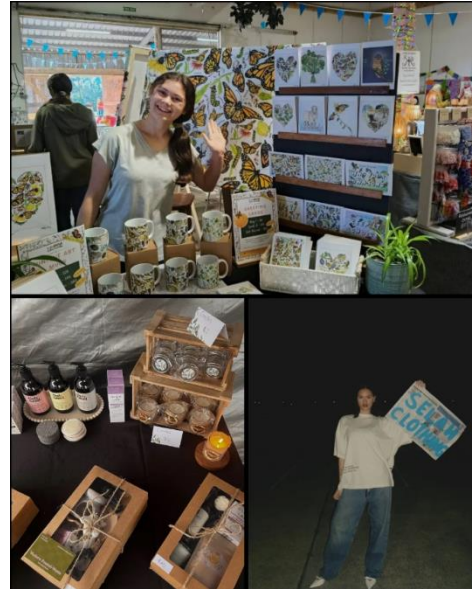


Photo credits: Whangarei Youth Action Group Instagram

Community Property

<i>Pensioner Housing occupancy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 99% of the units are occupied. Four units are being refurbished to be completed in June and available for occupancy. 55 applications are on the waiting list
<i>Procurement</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procurement for Pensioner Housing Tenancy Management and Pensioner Housing Grounds Maintenance contracts are respectively underway, and new contracts are being negotiated to be implemented by July.
<i>Asbestos testing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asbestos testing continues to be rolled out for Community buildings and halls, and residential housing. A Asbestos testing for pensioner housing villages has been completed. From this point on interior testing will be undertaken as units become available, prior to refurbishment.

Pensioner Housing Review – Stage 3

Stage 3 of the Pensioner Housing review is underway, focussing on the future delivery of Pensioner Housing. This piece of work follows on from the previous reports on the performance of the portfolio (Pensioner Housing Business Case Report) and future growth opportunities for pensioner housing (Pensioner Housing: Future Growth Opportunities Report).

Since the delivery of previous reports, there have been some significant changes to central government policy settings that may have an impact on some delivery options.

Community buildings and halls

Leases for The Men's Shed, Ngunguru Hall, Old Library, Old BNZ Building and Civic Arcade (former OMB tenants) are in the process to be reviewed for renewals.

Old Municipal Building Tenancy

Staff are working through the tenancy process for the OMB. Multicultural Whangārei, Volunteering Northland, WINGS, Dyslexia Plus, Multiple Sclerosis Society and Literacy Whangareia submitted a shared application that demonstrated how the organisations would work together to maximise their use of the ground floor. Staff are currently working towards confirming the lease structure.

General Housing

Routine inspections were conducted at Ewing Road and Pipiwai Road properties. All properties were well presented, clean and gardens well maintained.

Community Safety

Trends for April/May

CitySafe Trends Reporting

Trend Key:

Trend Key	
Significant increase over previous month's reporting	↑
Slight increase over previous month's reporting	↗
Similar to the previous month's reporting	→
Slight decrease under previous month's reporting	↘
Significant decrease under previous month's reporting	↓

• CitySafe Monthly Totals

32% decrease in overall reporting for the month	↓
16% decrease in anti-social behaviour (ASB) reporting	↘
27% decrease in bylaw reporting	↓
43% decrease in other reporting	↓
May provisional overall reporting is moderately up on the reporting month	↗

• CitySafe – Day ASB

23% decrease in daytime ASB that comprises 62% of total reported ASB	↘
Vomit	↑
Assault and damage	↗
Nil	→
Breach of liquor ban, dishonesty, disorder and drunks	↘
Drugs, fighting and gangs	↓
May provisional daytime ASB reporting shows a decrease for the month to date, seeing decreases in all reported activities, apart from fighting, gangs and public urination	↘

• CitySafe – Night ASB

14% increase in nighttime ASB that comprises 38% of total reported ASB	↗
Damage, drugs, fighting, public urination and vomit	↑
Breach of liquor ban and drunks	↗
Assault	→
Nil	↘
Dishonesty and disorder	↓
CitySafe nighttime General Vibe: 48 - average 6 per night (5 is good - 15 is bad)	↘
CitySafe nighttime Bottle Count: 236 - average 29 per night	↘
May provisional nighttime ASB reporting shows a significant increase for the month to date, with increases in all reporting, apart from drugs, with a vibe of 56 (7 average) and a similar number of liquor vessels being picked up, at 227 (28 per night)	↑

- *CitySafe Bylaw and Other Reporting*

41% decrease in general bylaw and other reporting this month	↓
Bylaw Reporting: 27% decrease in total bylaw reporting apart from scooters and skateboards	↘
Other Reporting: 43% decrease in other reporting, with a significant increase in truancy reporting	↓
CitySafe Maintenance Requests: 23 - predominantly for graffiti and rubbish, being 4.5% of the total CitySafe reporting	↗
May provisional bylaw and other reporting is significantly up on April. Maintenance requests are slightly up at 21, being 3.2% of the total CitySafe reporting.	↑

Overview

<i>Societal Issues</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nighttime antisocial behaviours have predominantly been located at Laurie Hall Carpark. Incidents have been exacerbated by drugs and alcohol, alongside an apparent gang culture. • Daytime antisocial behaviours continue to be exacerbated by people likely to be experiencing mental health and addiction, coupled with homelessness, and remains the biggest challenge for CitySafe Community Officers. • Homelessness in the inner city has seen an 56% decrease in total reported activities to 141, of which 57 were coded as Homeless, and 53 were antisocial behaviours associated with homelessness. • May, to date, has seen an increase to 158 reported activities, of which 75 were coded Homeless and 43 were antisocial behaviours. • There are still people living in tents and vehicles, as well as rough sleeping behind buildings, under bridges, in car parks and in parks and reserves. Council continues to receive complaints from members of the public throughout the district about public safety concerns and people living in unsanitary conditions. • Social agencies continue to be critical agencies in supporting the homeless and permanent vehicle dweller population, particularly, in housing several of our long-term homeless community. • Youth reporting has seen an 36% decrease in total reported activities to 103 for the month, of which 27 were coded youth, 24 for truancy and 16 antisocial behaviours were associated with youths. • May to date, has seen an increase to 167 reported activities, of which, 44 were coded youth, 62 for truancy and 15 antisocial behaviours reported. • Youth riding push bikes in the Mall and unregistered dirt bikes continue to cause safety concerns in the community, particularly those being ridden at speed and in a reckless manner on roads, parks and shared pathways.
<i>CCTV Network</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kamo Shared Pathway Stage 5 cameras and safety cameras behind Whangarei Primary School installed last year are yet to be connected to the Community Safety CCTV Network by Transport. • Northland Events Centre cameras: planning ongoing for installation of cameras in Okara Drive. • Rose Street Bus Terminus: awaiting construction of the terminus for camera reinstatement. • Police Proceeds of Crime Funded CCTV: installation of licence plate recognition cameras on Rewa Rewa Road has been completed and further cameras are programmed for Te Kamo and Hikurangi business communities. • Planning is underway for an upgrade for the fibre managed switches on the network to provide faster connection and remote access for ICT performance checks, as well as, updating the firewall at the Whangarei Police Station to ensure network security.
<i>Graffiti</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During this period, 101 tags over 24 jobs were reported in the Stop Tags database. May has seen 124 tags removed over 40 jobs to date.

4.7 Risk to the Tiriti Relationship

Nothing to report.

4.8 Delegated Financial Authority Policy

Nothing to report.

4.9 Legislation changes or updates

Nothing to report.

4.10 Future Planning / What's coming next?

<i>Community Development</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of Te Tai Tokerau Regional Accessibility Strategy implementation plan • Age Friendly Whangārei Plan analysis planned for June
<i>Community Funding</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative Communities Scheme Round 1 closes end June • Whangarei Communities Fund applications ongoing • Supporting management of other Council funds on SmartyGrants platform • Annual community funding report
<i>Community Property</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalising the Asset Management Plan for the Community Property portfolio. • Scoping processes to initiate condition reports of Community Properties, halls and buildings. • Complete asbestos testing in Community buildings and halls and remove / isolate asbestos where it was discovered at 5 properties • Pensioner Housing Tenancy Management and Pensioner Housing Grounds Maintenance procurement.
<i>Community Safety</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing to progress CCTV installation at Whangarei, Kamo and Hikurangi for Year 3 of the Proceeds of Crime funded programme. • Transport team to install cameras on Stage 5 of the Kamo Shared Pathway which will be connected to the CCTV network. • Transitioning CCTV to Business Support and ICT.
<i>Welcoming Communities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcoming Plan public engagement workshops • Newcomers' guide update

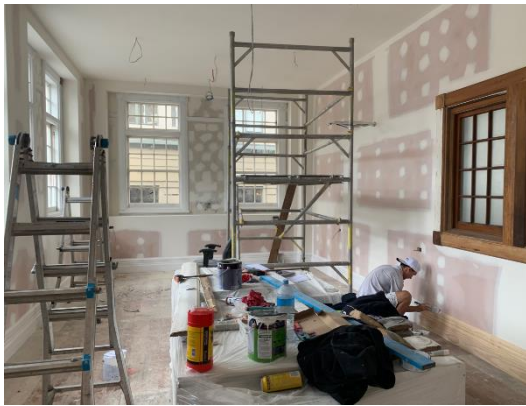
4.11 Capital Works

Major Projects –	Current Stage	Estimated Construction Start Date	Estimated Completion Date
Old Municipal Building (OMB)	Construction	July 2023	October 2025
Summary: The Project is on budget. Lift Anex The construction of the new lift annex is underway with the precast panels being safely installed late May. The ground floor will be constructed over the next two weeks followed by installation of the precast floor panels. 1910's Ground floor The internal lining of the ground floor is complete, with trims and window repairs well underway, wood restoration and painting are underway and forecasted to be complete in July			

1910 first floor.

Interior work on Level 1 is on hold pending the new design. The new design is due at the end of May. The work on preliminary design of level 1 has been reviewed by ARCO and the additional work is expected to push the completion of the project out to November.

Contractor: Arco



5. Customer Services

5.1 Health and Safety

Incident with a team member locking up museum and getting locked out at museum close. Reported Incident in Assura, and revision to system being addressed by Business Support.

Te Iwitahi

On May 6th, our frontline staff experienced an incident involving an aggressive customer who arrived at the Council in an agitated state to inquire about a parking infringement that had gone to court. The duress alarm was activated, and our concierge successfully escorted the customer outside. Although there were no physical injuries, the staff were visibly shaken by the event. Ongoing support has been provided to the staff member involved.

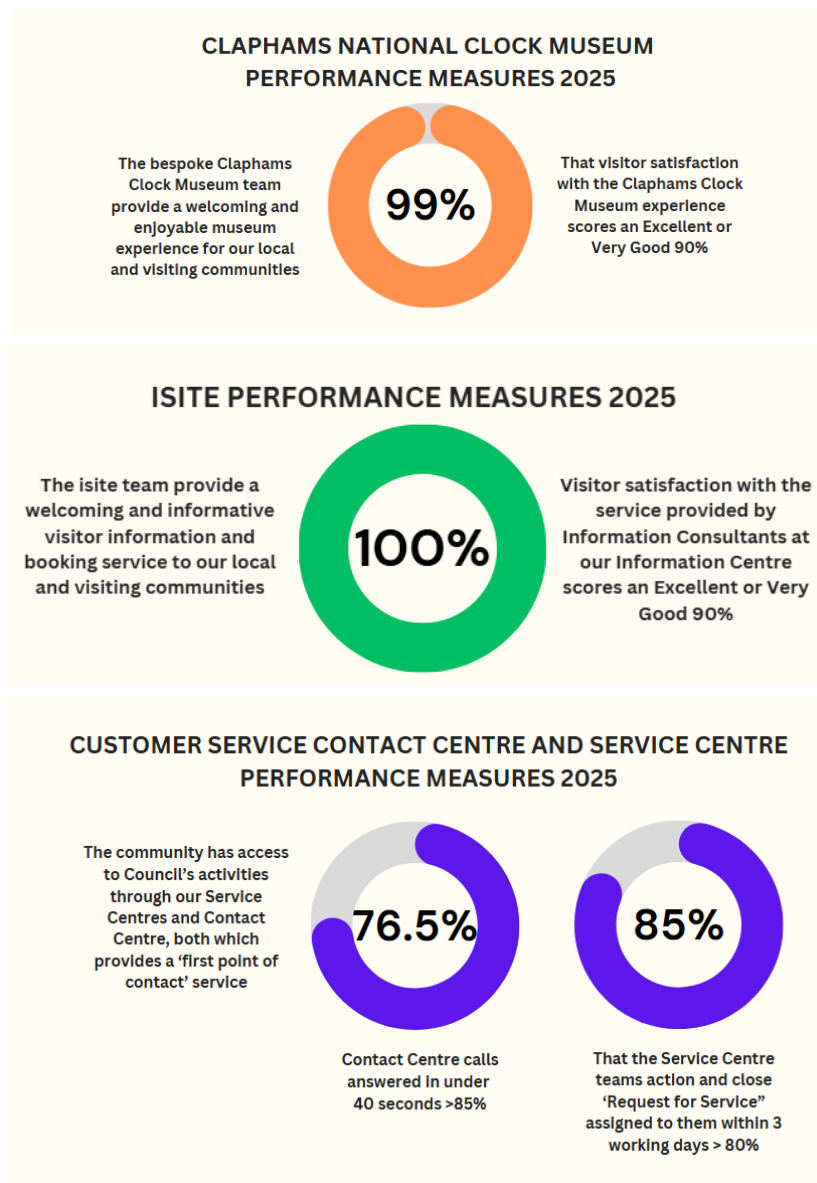
isite

27 May - Intoxicated person was shouting and swearing at other members of the public in the carpark. The security guard intervened to de-escalate the situation. The person continued to shout and swear at the guard, and punched the guard in the chest, into her stab proof vest. Guard called police who later arrived. Police asked if the guard wanted to report the incident, and no staff were involved/affected at the isite or cafe.

5.2 Current Priorities

<i>Clapham's Clocks</i>	Inducting new casual position into museum procedure and work practice. Developing workplans / reviewing workplans for upcoming winter period.
<i>Customer Services</i>	Duty Building Officers are meeting with real estate agents to explain the process and requirements for building works that require a Certificate of Acceptance Customer Services Representatives at the isite can now assist with dog registrations and other dog-related enquiries.
<i>Contact Centre</i>	One new staff started on Monday 26 May which will be good for the team morale. She comes from a retail background.
<i>Customer Requests</i>	The team has been actively working with departments and contractors to share insights and identify improvements based on community feedback. By addressing requests efficiently and enhancing the user experience, these efforts contribute to strengthening the council's reputation and responsiveness within the community.
<i>Coordinators & Site Support</i>	Verbal de-escalation training for staff is being organised. New fixed term staff member is joining our team mid-June.
<i>isite</i>	TRENZ – isite Team Leader attended with District Development. Quarterly Team Meeting – The manager discussed the Customer Services Strategy; A Requests update was also provided. isite NZ visit – Raylene Innes (Regional Capability Co-ordinator) discusses staff training and point of sale reporting.

5.3 Performance Measures and Compliance



5.4 Current challenges/issues

<i>Clapham's Clocks</i>	Getting general administration work done while team members take annual leave; with two team members on duty.
<i>Customer Services</i>	Progress on the security glass installation at Ruakaka has been slower than anticipated, primarily due to difficulties in securing a contractor for the access door installation.
<i>Contact Centre</i>	A busy month with calls with a lot of calls coming in about parking infringement disputes.
<i>Customer Requests</i>	One of the ongoing challenges has been getting a clear picture of the wide range of issues different departments deal with through the request system. Every team has its own unique processes and pressures, so working together across the organisation is key. Building that shared understanding helps provide more consistent support and ensures community concerns are being tackled in a well-informed and coordinated way.

<i>Coordinators & Site Support</i>	Working closely with our business partners across the organisation to be ready for the new dog registration and rates notices that is going out in the new financial year.
<i>isite</i>	Increase in homeless people sleeping in cars. Most are transient and non-disruptive. Security regularly patrolling.

5.5 Overview of Operational Activities

Clapham's Clocks

Clock colouring/design competition (ArtBeat month) – 4 'winners' – 3 local and 1 in Auckland; were very excited and happy to receive their prizes.

Roll out of new Claphams National Clock Museum Kete 'taxonomy' to team. Completely revised structure, user-friendly Kete file set up established with IT and fully functional from 1st May (success after 2 years of planning/working with IT Information Management).

Planning for winter jobs during 'quieter' months.

Developing written content for new 'Saleable booklet' and reviewing before it goes for design with Graphics (anticipated to take most of the winter).

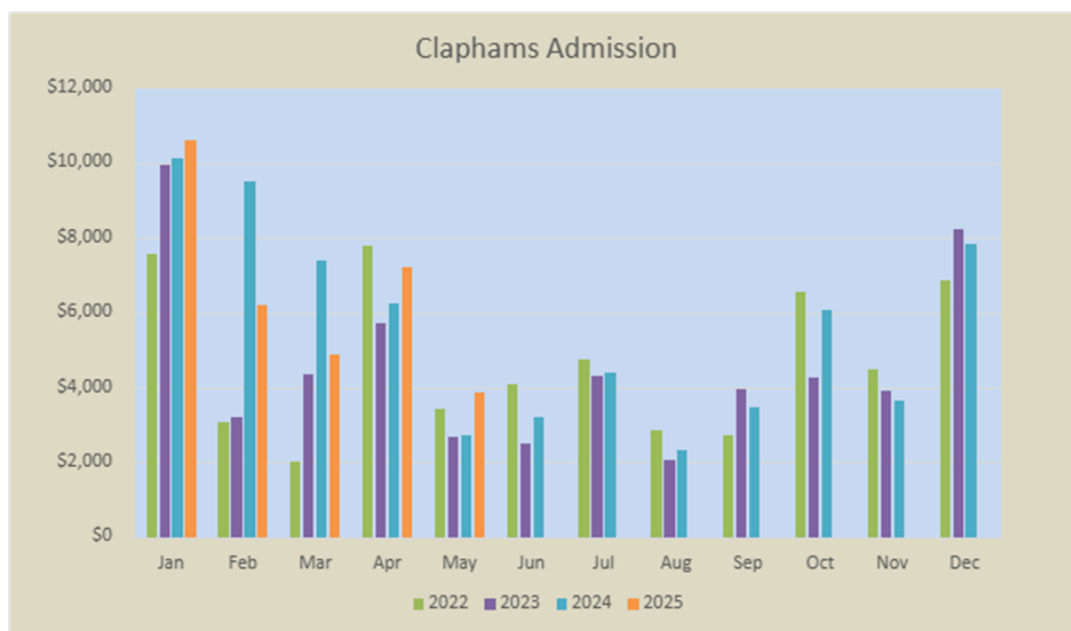
Reviewing status of black interpretation labels in the exhibition hall and planning replacement upgrades over winter; includes edits and redesign requests.

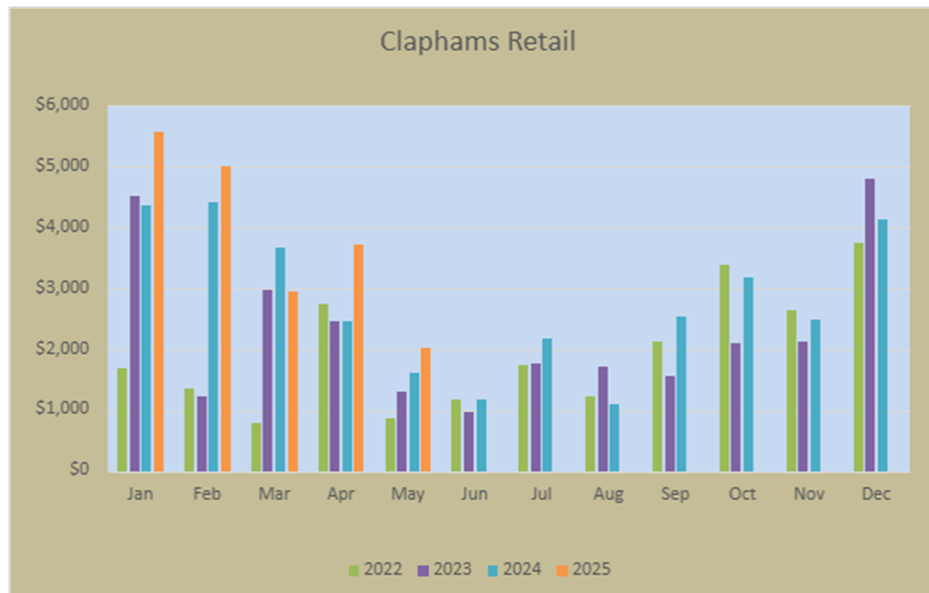
Further interviews for new casual Front of House position undertaken.

Visitor numbers (door count) – 2,639 (down 3% on May 2024)

Paid admission numbers – 462 (up 27% on May 2024)

Admission revenue – \$3848 (up 40% on May 2024)



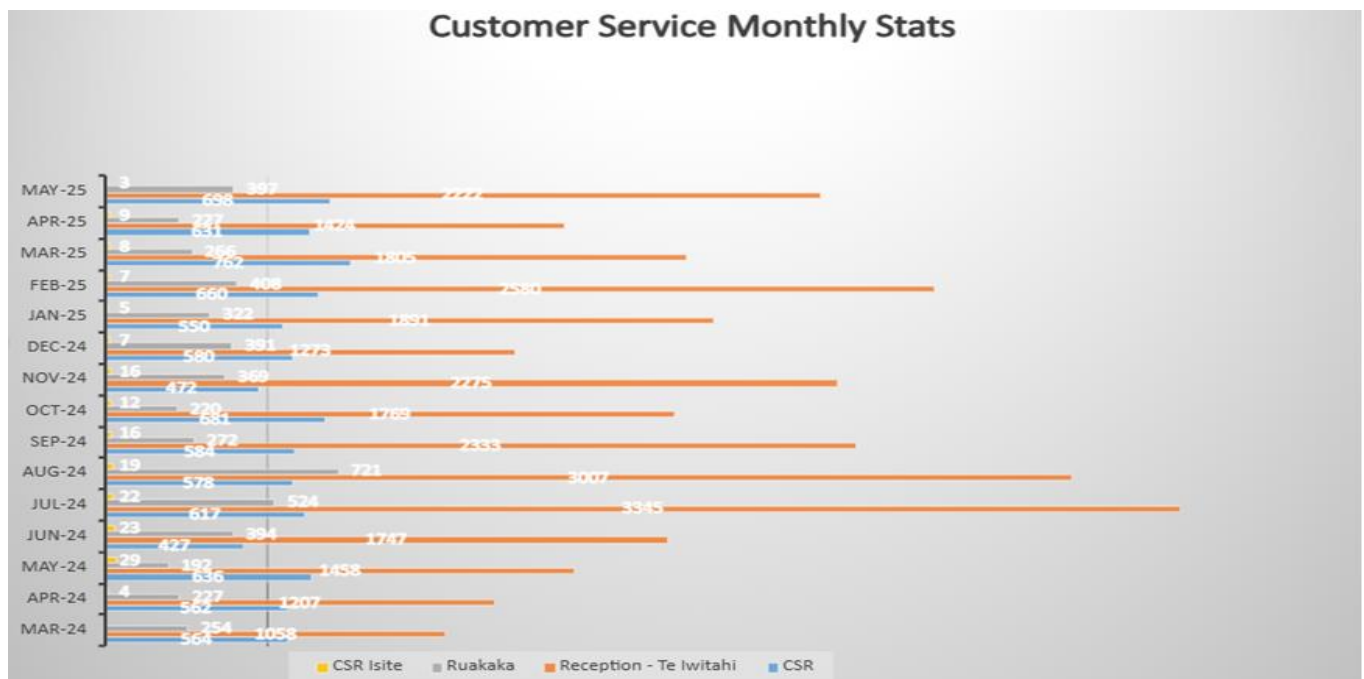


Net retail revenue – \$2028 (up 25% on May 2024)

Total revenue for May 2025 = \$5876 (up 35% on May 2024)

Customer Services – Te Iwitihi Civic Centre and Ruakākā

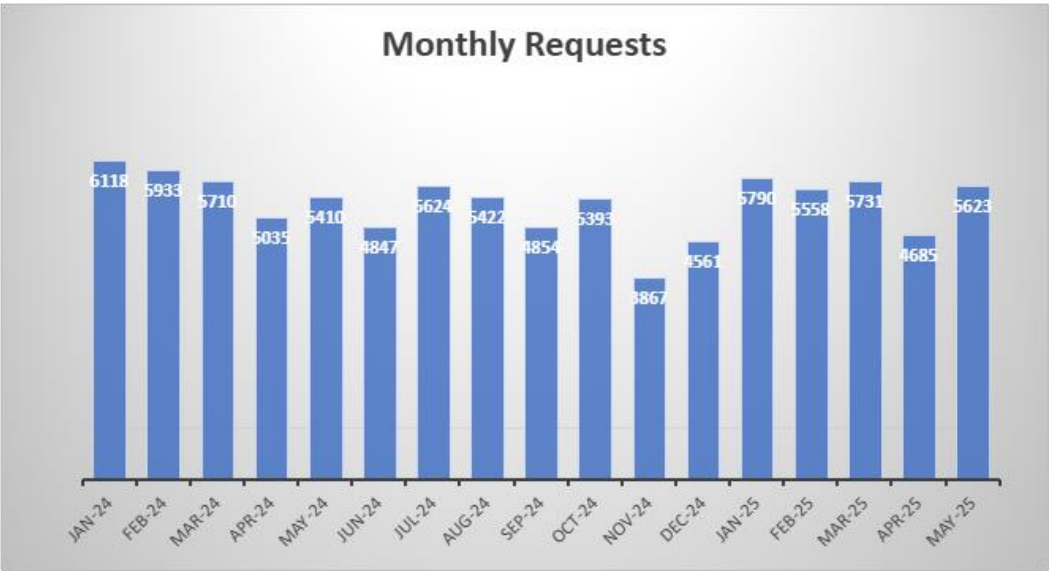
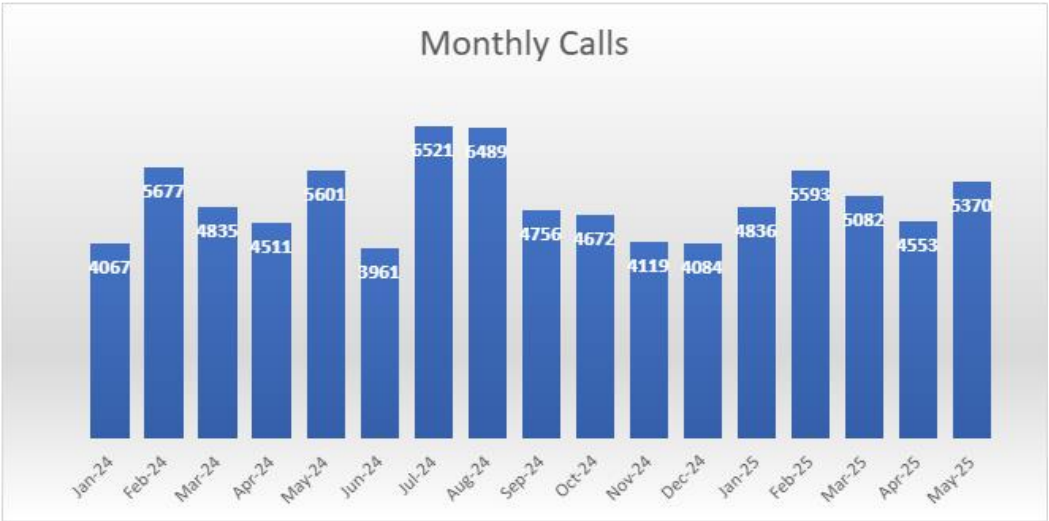
The following graph shows the activity for Customer Services Representatives and Coordinators.



Key

	Number of applications received at the front counter – includes Over 70 parking, LIM requests and any other over-counter applications
	Number of applications handled by Customer Services at Te Iwitihi – includes vehicle crossings and public utility applications
	Number of applications handled by Ruakaka Service Centre
	Number of applications handled at iSite

Contact Centre



Request system dashboard update for Customer Service



Request Type	Number of Requests
Household recycling bins request (internal only)	292
Request a property search	162
Building consent, vehicle crossing, public utilities & other enquiries	67
General enquiries	44
Duty Building Officer	9
Parking permits enquiries	9

Compliments – star rating

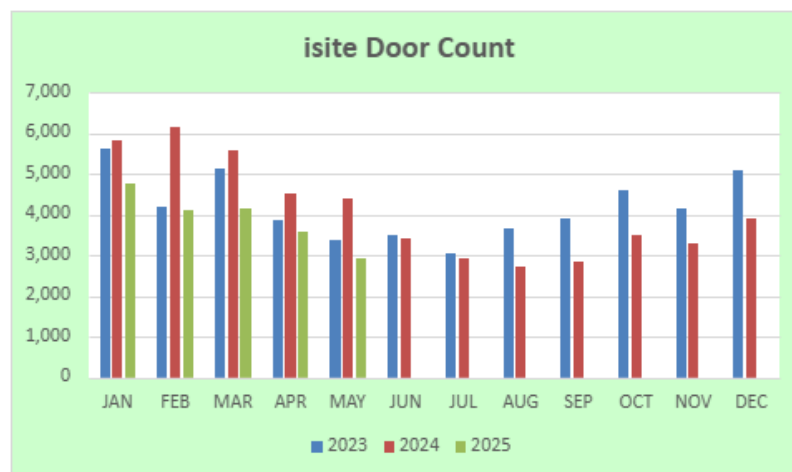
CS2511539	▼	Request a property search	5	29-May-2025	WDC.RM.CUS
CS2511422	▼	Request a property search	5	22-May-2025	WDC.RM.CUS

Customer Requests

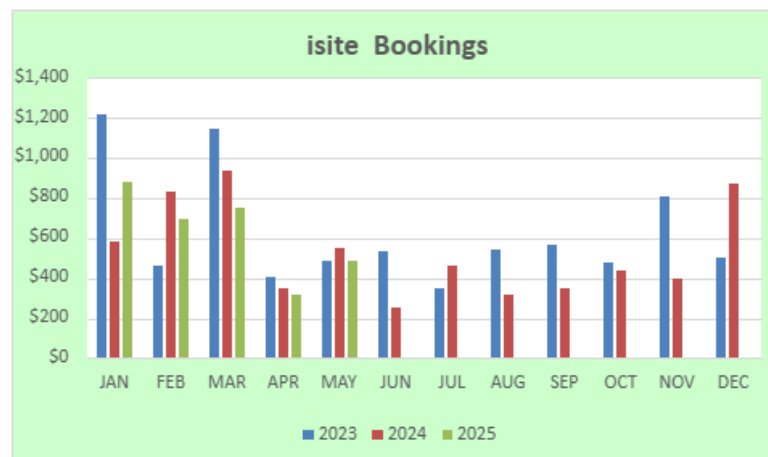
The team have held some hands-on workshops for staff who deal with tricky requests from the Mayor, CE, or Councillors. The process recently got a bit of a refresh to make things flow more smoothly for users.

Request numbers seem to be back to a normal, manageable level for May. This drop might be thanks to seasonal trends easing off, smoother processes, and the ongoing support from the Requests team keeping things on track.

[isite](#)



Visitor numbers were 2926 down 34% on May 2024



Booking revenue was \$487 down 11% on May 2024



Retail revenue was \$4710 up 105% on May 2024

isite Facilities used in May 2025 (as recorded by NDS static guard 9 am – 4.30 pm daily)

Toilets	7,969
Shower users	168

TRENZ 2025 Rotorua

TRENZ is New Zealand's largest international tourism business event and the most important event of the year on the tourism events calendar, bringing together hundreds of international travel buyers with New Zealand's leading tourism operators (sellers) over three days to build or renew relationships and negotiate business for upcoming seasons.

This year Reana Te Hei and Cheree Morrisson represented Whangarei District Council as part of the wider Northland Tourism collective. Fully booked, they connected with 52 buyers from all over the world. Some buyers were very familiar with Whangarei whilst others knew very little. With support from the graphics team Reana and Cheree shared a stunning presentation with buyers showcasing Whangarei, and why we love it here! Follow up has been completed with plans to work alongside buyers in the future to increase business for the district.



Pictured: Barefoot Sailing Adventures, Bay of Islands Tours, Black Robin Transport, Carino Wildlife Cruises, Waitangi Treaty Grounds, Dive! Tutukaka, Kiwi North, Kauri Museum, Explore NZ, Silver Wave Yacht Charters, Te Tihi Ao and Northland Inc. (Hundertwasser Art Centre rep is not present in photo).

isite NZ April 2025 Incentive Winners

Whangarei isite won second highest total sales (tickets+retail) for the month of April (Group 1 annual sales <\$1m)

Havelock North - up 58%

Whangarei - up 40%

Hastings - up 39%

The Prezzy Card prize will go towards the isite's next team dinner.

Information Centre Cold Call RNZ – Jesse Mulligan



Each week Jesse Mulligan from RNZ National randomly calls an isite from across New Zealand. The purpose is to find out more about the area the Information Centre represents and learn about the consultant. On 6 May Jesse called the Whangarei isite. Team member Luca Bostan answered the call. Full interview: [Information Center Cold Call: Dunedin | RNZ](#)



Luca did an outstanding interview, answering questions about Whangarei must dos, mentioning Hundertwasser Art Centre and other highlights. He asked Luca further questions including what to buy from the isite, and if he had met anyone famous at the counter. Jesse talked about his grandparents who are originally from Whangarei. He asked how Luca came to be an isite consultant. Jesse commented that Luca was 'very good at this' and was 'a bright and motivated individual'. Luca started at Council as an isite consultant in August 2022 and works 4 days a week. Well done, Luca!

Black Ferns and Māori All Blacks – 5 July

General Admission tickets are available to purchase from the isite. NZR agreed to provide the isite with 50 Adult and 50 Child tickets. It is expected to sell out, with many already sold online.



5.6 Risk to the Tiriti Relationship

Nothing to report.

5.7 Delegated Financial Authority Policy

Nothing to report.

5.8 Legislation changes or updates

Nothing to report.

5.9 Future Planning / What's coming next?

<i>Clapham's Clocks</i>	Team Lead continues to work on planned 'winter work'. Scheduled July on-site meeting with 'Interpretation contractor' to review existing visitor experience and discuss potential future reviews.
<i>Customer Services</i>	Customer Services Representatives will now be using the Digital Experience Platform (DXP) to support customers with follow-ups and other interactions with Council. This platform also serves as a valuable knowledge resource, enabling staff to provide more accurate and efficient assistance. A Building Consent Calculator is now available on our website, offering customers a simple and convenient way to estimate building consent fees.
<i>Contact Centre</i>	DXP is up and running now and the team are using this. All the team are helping to train our new contact centre rep over the next few weeks.
<i>Customer Requests</i>	Refining some of our request processes to make things simpler and more user-friendly. These updates aim to streamline the experience for both staff and customers, helping things move more smoothly from start to finish.
<i>Coordinators & Site Support</i>	Nomination training for upcoming general elections. Annual review for parking permits for agencies and staff.
<i>isite</i>	Sales training in new year, famils, updating general reference and Ibis operator details Scheduled power outage 29 June – Northpower is replacing pole nearby. isite and café will be closed. Comms in progress Retail stock take end of June

6. Libraries

6.1 Health and Safety

No Health and Safety concerns to report.

6.2 Current Priorities

Continue with security camera upgrade

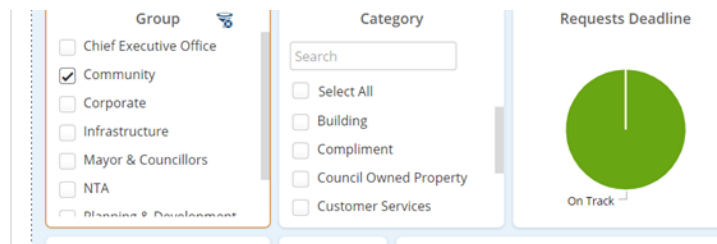
Finalise carpet replacement contract

6.3 Performance measures and compliance

These are reported annually at the end of the financial year.

6.4 Request System dashboard update

There are no outstanding requests for libraries



6.5 Current challenges/issues

- Staffing levels on long weekends
- Skinny Jump modem delivery processes. These modems are provided by Spark to anyone without an internet connection at home

6.6 Overview of Operational Activities for May

Music Month

Music Month was celebrated in Central with live performances during Friday lunchbreaks by artists including Peowhairangi who is a talented 16-year-old singer-songwriter based in Whangarei.



Teddy Bear Sleepover



This was a hugely successful event with over 120 teddies and other favourite soft toys spending the night alone in the library. Left to their own devices there was quite a lot of nocturnal activity including riding the sorter and fortunately all were accounted for in the morning.



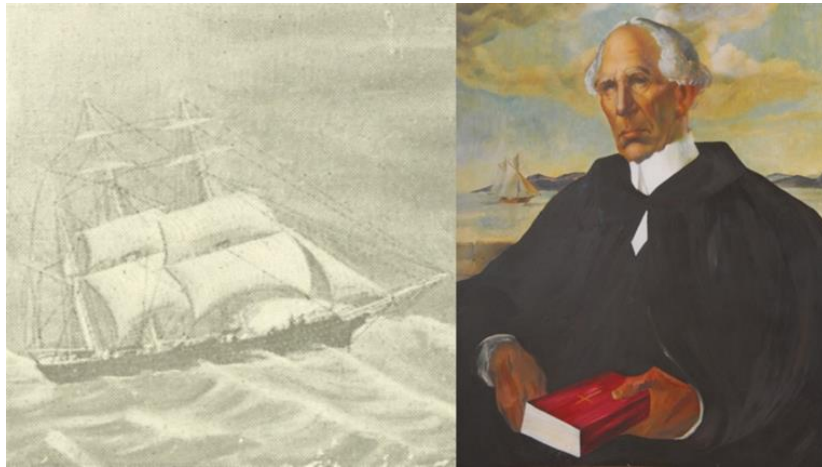
Youth Week



This event was held to advertise what is available at Tikipunga Library and to encourage young people to come to the library and make use of the wide range of facilities.

Heritage Talk

Local author Zana Bell spoke about the Reverend Norman McLeod who spearheaded the migration of the six ships which brought his Gaelic-speaking community to Waipu and Whangarei Heads. This was his second migration as 30 years earlier he led a migration to Nova Scotia. Zana went to Scotland to learn more about this controversial figure.



Jigsaw Puzzle Exchange

This has proved to be a very popular event with the large number of jigsaw enthusiasts in the community who welcome the opportunity to try something new.



Ukulele Workshops

These are free to anyone wishing to attend with all that is needed is bring your own ukulele.



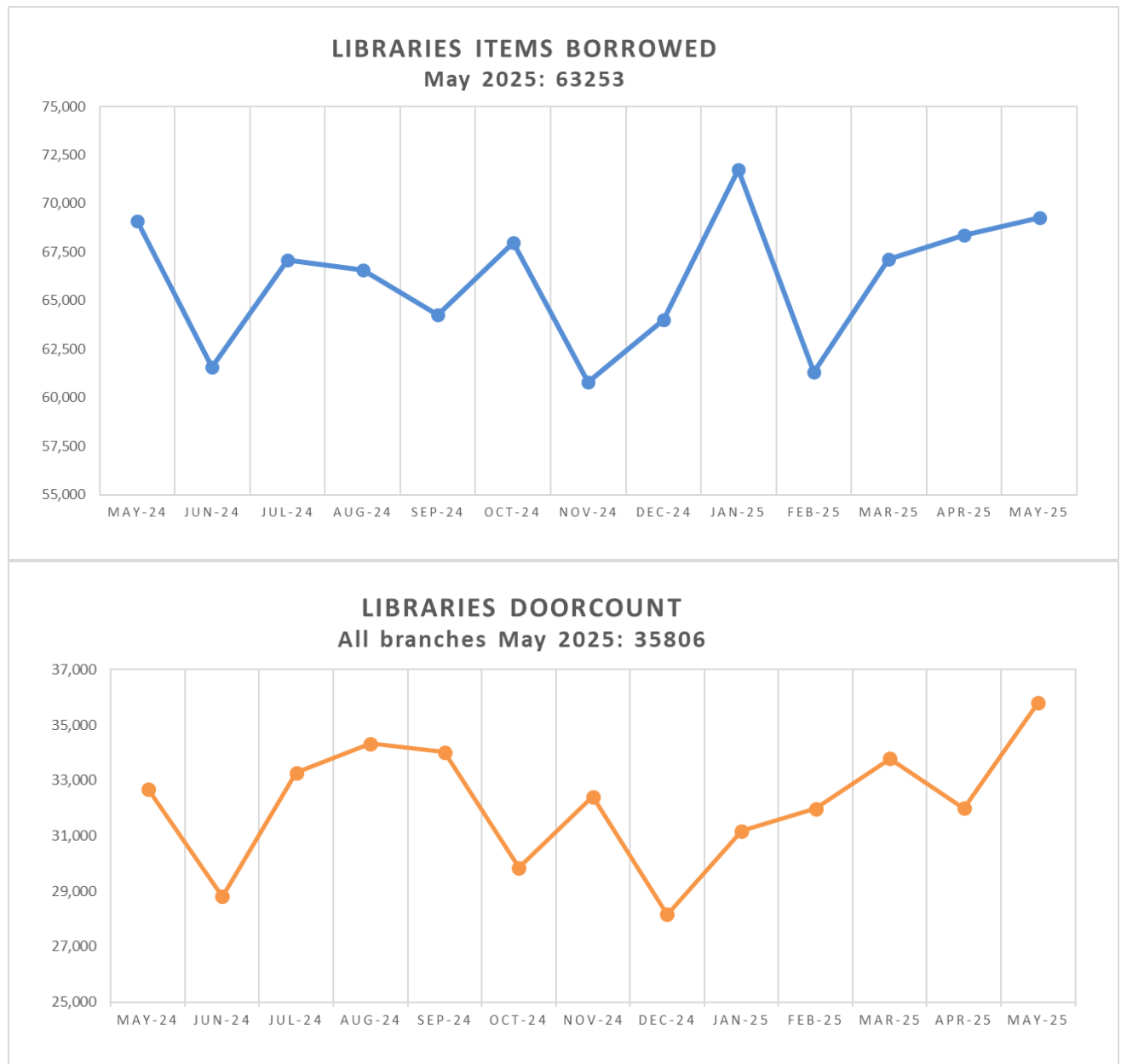
Puanga Matariki Events

This is a series of four talks by wahine Maori speaking on their chosen Kaupapa, sharing their experiences of successfully navigating their professions.

Geva Nhapo Downey who is the Kaimanga Matauranga for Wairau Maori Art Gallery was the first speaker.



Statistics



6.7 Risk to the Tiriti Relationship

Nothing to report.

6.8 Delegated Financial Authority Policy

Nothing to report.

6.9 Legislation changes or updates

Nothing to report.

6.10 Future Planning / What's coming next?

- Matariki celebrations will be a major focus for the next month
- Appointment of Library Manager and induction

7. Venues and Events

7.1 Health and Safety

There were no health and safety issues to report in May.

7.2 Current priorities

The primary focus for venues and events includes planning and implementation of the Maori All Black vs Scotland game on 5 July 2025 and structuring our major events plan for 2025/2026. We are also in the process of closing out the 2024/2025 Major and Community Events Plan, marking a year of strong collaboration between venues, communities, and district-wide event organisers.

The bi-monthly Events and Venues Round Table meetings remain a cornerstone of interdepartmental and cross-community communication within Council. These meetings play a critical role in building strong relationships with key community services, enhancing operational efficiency, and reinforcing community safety and preparedness across all events.

<i>Events strategy 2025 -2030</i>	Completed and ready for council approval
<i>Crowded Spaces Framework</i>	Completed – Development a framework with use of templates by Health and Safety - A crowded spaces framework for Whangārei
<i>Stadium Roof Replacement</i>	Continued support towards the Northland events centre stadium roof replacement project.
<i>Forum North Garden Refit - replace old furniture</i>	Phase two is completed – Phase three will include CCTV cameras and lighting for this area
<i>Stadium Flooring in changing rooms</i>	Work has begun to replace flooring in changing rooms, for the Māori All Blacks Vs Scotland Game July 5, 2025.
<i>Cameron Street Canopy Lights Refit</i>	Replacement and installation of the Cameron Street canopy lighting to align with the canopy bridge.
<i>Forum North Garden Area Phase 3</i>	Lighting and CCTV for the garden area at Forum North to reduce homelessness in this area
<i>Review event development fund</i>	Review of the event development fund. (November 2025)
<i>Multi-Cultural Arts Festival</i>	Development of a multi-disciplinary and multi-cultural Arts festival for Whangārei. 2-year project. Activation possibly 2027
<i>Major event activity plan and implementation</i>	Driving event activity plan for Māori All Blacks Vs Scotland Game July 5, 2025, to assure good community engagement, legacy activation, business ignition and city-wide engagement.
<i>Events Team</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Film Permit Process – in development • 25/26 calendar of events • Continued regulatory improvements for permitting events
<i>Forum North Venue Team</i>	Ongoing training including first aid courses for venue staff.

7.3 Performance measures and compliance

Our venues and events will deliver the outcomes of the Experience Local: Whangārei Events Strategy and will provide for customer satisfaction.

Performance Measure	Year 1 2024-25 target	Year 2 2025-26 target	Year 3 2026-27 target	Years 4-10 2027-34 target
Percentage of Council delivered events that include two or more of the local experience categories (as per the strategy).	100%	100%	100%	100%
Regulatory support for events across our District. Requests submitted via our operational request dashboard to be successful completed in a timely manner. Measured monthly by the operational request dashboard: Reported in the community operational report.	≥80%	≥80%	≥80%	≥80%
Attracting, growing, and sustaining loyal audiences to events and satisfaction with the venues. Measured via the Audience Participation Survey – result is the average across all sampled events through the year.	≥60%	≥63%	≥65%	≥70%

Performance measures are collated at the end of the financial year

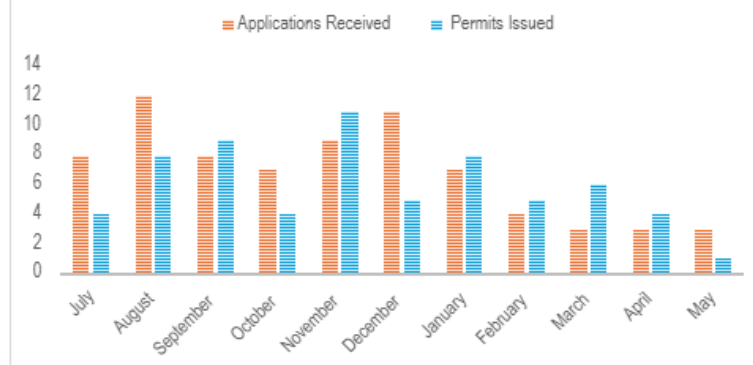
Monthly Measurement – Regulatory support for events across our district.

TEMPORARY ROAD CLOSURES



Temporary Road Closure's currently being processed: 6

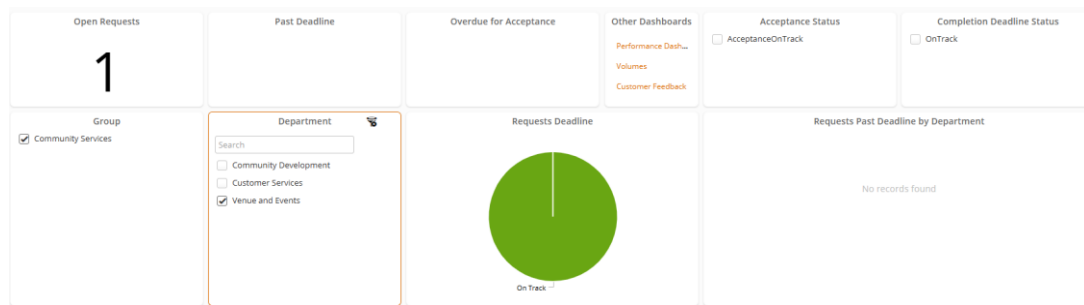
EVENTS ON COUNCIL LAND



Events on Council Land Permits currently being processed: 9

7.4 Request System dashboard update

May 2025



7.5 Current challenges/issues

Positioning Whangārei as a Premier Event Destination

Whangārei's growing reputation as a go-to destination for major events reflects the city's unique appeal, the hard work of the Council's events team, strong community partnerships, and ongoing investment in the events space.

The increasing volume of venue bookings, event sponsorship requests, and regulatory support needs is placing pressure on current resources. To sustain momentum and meet expectations, there is a need to reassess resourcing levels and prioritisation frameworks.

Meeting rising demand while maintaining high service quality is a balancing act. Currently, the team supplements capacity by bringing in contracted staff. However, this model has limitations and may not be sustainable in the long term without a more strategic resourcing plan.

7.6 Operational Activities

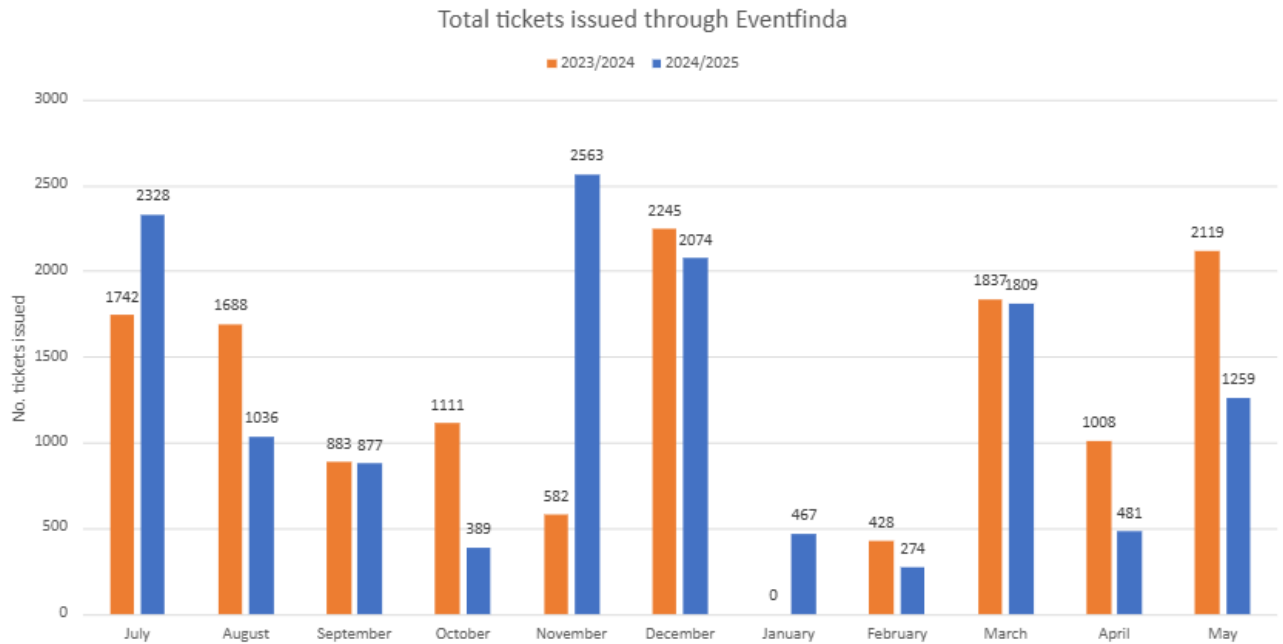
Over the month of May 2025 Forum North Hosted

- 1 Commercial Event over 1 days
- 7 Community Events over 31 days

Forum North Positive Feedback:

Ongoing show by Whangarei Theatre Company – We Will Rock You

"Everyone is very excited about the season opening - we can't wait to have an audience to perform to. Thank you for all your support and assistance in the past weeks - we have been so well served by all the FN team."



Forum North ticketing numbers:

Total year to date (2024/2025): 13,557

2023/2024 total: 15,340

Events/Festivals

<i>Event Development Fund</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OneOneSix grassroots theatre activation October 2024 – June 2025 Matariki concert series – Opera North – May – June
<i>Other Supported Events</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Puanga Matariki Festival (27 May – 24 June) 41 Registered Events Sponsored events within the Festival <ul style="list-style-type: none"> E Tū Ngahere - Puanga-Matariki ki Hihiaua Hika-Riki 2025 Light Up Hikurangi - Matariki Celebration Nukunuku Onerahi Community Matariki Celebration Puanga Matariki: Mana Wāhine Puanga/Matariki at Wairau Māori Art Gallery The Night Library & Cafe Puanga Matariki Edition Whangai i te Hautapu Whangaruru Matariki Celebration Te Kāhui Ako o Te Ākau Matariki Kapa Haka Festival

Puanga Matariki Opening



7.7 Future Planning / What is coming next?

<i>Forum North Venue Upcoming Events</i>	<p>In June there are 11 events</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Commercial and 10 Community events • 21 days of events in the Theatre • 5 days of events in the Conferencing Area
<i>Events team Upcoming Events/Festivals</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Māori All Blacks vs Scotland Game (5 July) • Civic Honours 2025 (5th September) • Silver Festival (1st October to 14th October) • International Rally of Whangarei (6-9 November)



7.8 Risk to the Tiriti Relationship

Nothing to report

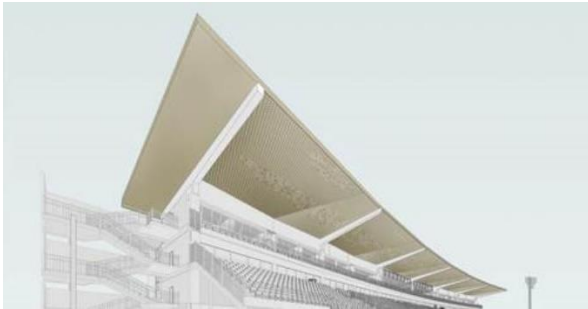
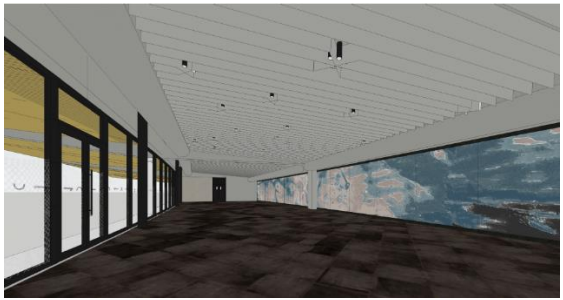
7.9 Delegated Financial Authority Policy

- New Zealand Rugby Union Game (July 2025)
- National Rugby League Game (Date TBC)

7.10 Legislation changes or updates

Nothing to report.

7.11 Capital Works

Major Projects – Venue & Events	Current Stage	Estimated Construction Start Date	Estimated Completion Date
Stadium Roof	Design	November 2026	June 2027
<p>Summary:</p> <p>Project Status: Detailed Design</p> <p>The Preliminary Plus design has been received on time, along with an updated engineer's estimate. The revised design includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional structural steel requirements • A change in the type of HVAC unit to suit the lower roof • The addition of a new back wall and an extended fire separation wall, connecting the existing wall to the underside of the roof • The removal of the new windows along the Level 3 field side <p>The updated engineer's estimate reflects an increase in the total expected project spend to \$11.8 million, which includes the amount spent to date.</p> <p>A Northland Events Centre Roof Replacement Working Group has been established and held its first meeting on 27 May. The project team will provide transparency to working group members regarding the design and projected construction costs. In return, it will offer support and guidance to the Project Team throughout the design and construction phases of the Project.</p> <p>Programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project is on time. • Procurement Plan for Construction due June • Detailed design Ends September • Tendering November – December 2025 • Onsite construction Starting 9th of November 2026 <p>Designer: BECA and Matakohē Architecture</p> <p>Contractor: TBA</p>			
 			

8. Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM)

8.1 Health & Safety

Nothing to report

8.2 Current Priorities

<i>Tsunami Resources</i>	Tsunami Siren Replacement Project is ongoing with 43 constructed / installed (98%) for WDC District (45 total). Waipu and Parua Bay to be installed. Work is well underway for installing for the remaining districts which is total at 95.7%.
<i>Community</i>	Community and Organisational engagement, with specific attention to meeting Iwi Māori and isolated communities to continue developing strong relationships. – once second Emergency Management Specialist is recruited.
<i>Service Level Agreement</i>	Work has started on drafting the Service Level Agreement for 2025/26.

8.3 Performance measures and compliance

Assessment of the Northland CDEM Group Plan 2021-2026 will be undertaken by the Northland CDEM Group office staff at intervals.

8.4 Request System dashboard update

Nil Requests

8.5 Current Issues and Challenges

Vacancy for one WDC Emergency Management Specialist, to be appointed in June.

A new role of CDEM Team Leader/Manager role approved and advertised, to be appointed in July.

8.6 Overview of Operational Activities for May reporting period:

Responses

There have been no emergency events for May that have caused the activation of the WDC Emergency Operations Centre. Heavy rain and thunderstorms have created some weather watches and warnings and staff have monitored.

Emergency Operations Centre (EOC):

Monthly Training has commenced for the EOC Function Leads and is well attended.

Community engagement activities include:

Community engagement activities for the month of May have covered the contact and communications with each Community Response Group (CRG) to support their activity and work continues developing Preparedness Plans for numerous Marae.

Work has slowed in this area due to an Emergency Management Specialist vacancy for this portfolio.

Tsunami Evacuation Modelling Project

The updated tsunami modelling is complete and new GIS models have been completed using both the three-zone and blue-zone mapping. With the release of a new Directors Guideline in 2025 all

regions are directed to change to blue-zone mapping, which Northland has done as part of this project.

The new evacuation models show significant reductions in the zoning for some areas. This change will take some in depth community engagement, as will the change to using blue zones.

Work is underway to replace the tsunami information boards throughout Northland with new maps because of the evacuation modelling project. This should be complete by end of May.

The modelling data is also being supplied to the district councils to utilise in their climate resilience planning.

Whangārei District will start installing these new signs in June.



CDEM Forum

The annual CDEM Forum was held on 30th April. This was well attended and another success with good feedback from the Emergency Management Minister, Hon Mark Mitchell MP and other stakeholders.

8.6. Risk to the Tiriti Relationship

Nothing to report.

8.7 Delegated Financial Authority Policy

Nothing to report.

8.8 Legislation changes or updates

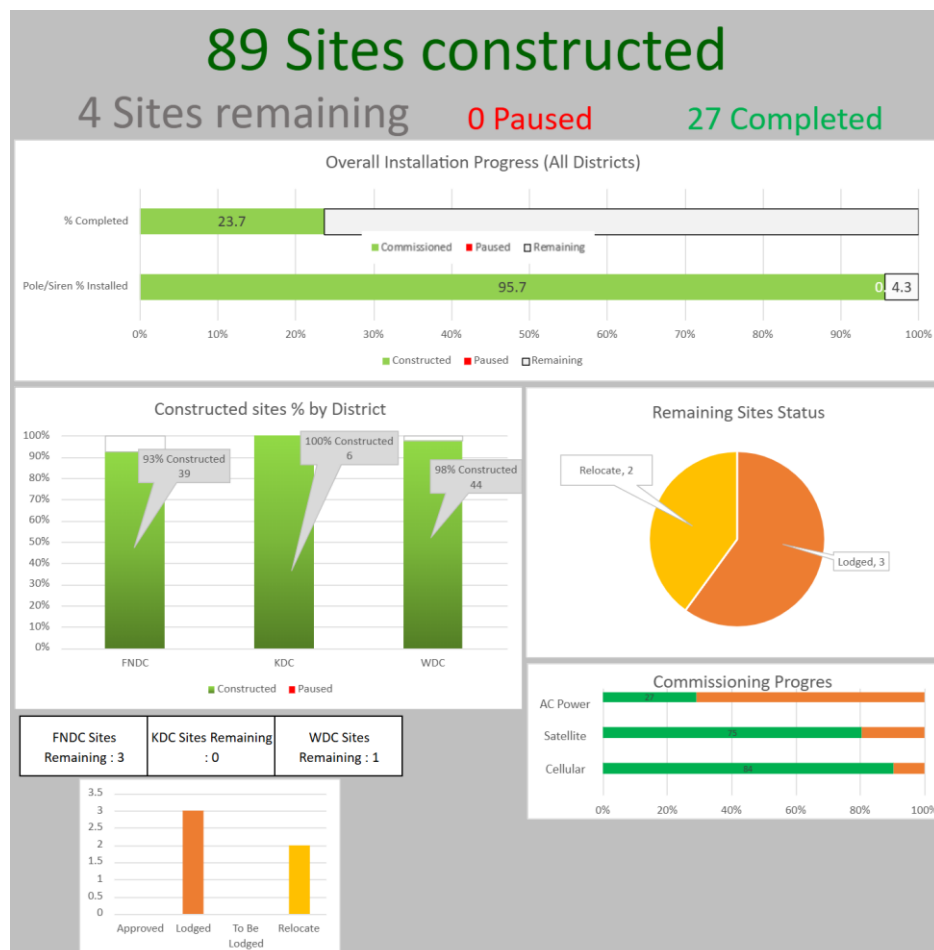
New work is underway on the Emergency Management Bill, a review of the CDEM Act 2002, which had been put on hold by the Government. The Northland CEG/Coordinating Group have developed a combined submission on the Bill from a Northland perspective. This has been submitted.

8.9 Future Planning / What's coming next?

<i>Community Engagement</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marae Preparedness Plan and Māori Engagement within Whangarei District Council • Flood Resilient Māori Communities and Marae Project
<i>Tsunami Sirens</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tsunami Siren Replacement project underway • Tsunami Board Review with new Evacuation modelling May/June 2025
<i>Upcoming Training Courses</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response Manager 23 June • CIMS4 14-15 July • Intelligence Function 16 July • Logistics Function 18 July • CIMS4 8-9 September • Planning Function 10 September • Welfare Function 11 September • Logistics Function 12 September • CIMS4 3-4 November • Intelligence Function 5 November • Welfare Function 7 November • EOC Exercise 19 November

8.10 New Tsunami Siren Project Overview – Northland Region (WDC / KDC / FNDC):

The previously installed siren at Parua Bay has been removed and now has a new site located at the Parua Bay shopping precinct on the Service Station property. The Waipu Cove siren is still waiting to be installed (awaiting resource consent). These should be completed in June, putting WDC as 100% constructed, with commissioning to remain for some (mainly AC supply).



RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC

That the public be excluded from the following parts of proceedings of this meeting.

The general subject of each matter to be considered while the public is excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter, and the specific grounds under Section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this resolution are as follows:

1.	The making available of information would be likely to unreasonably prejudice the commercial position of persons who are the subject of the information. {Section 7(2)(c)}
2.	To enable the council (the committee) to carry on without prejudice or disadvantage commercial negotiations. {(Section 7(2)(i))}.
3.	To protect the privacy of natural persons. {Section 7(2)(a)}.
4.	Publicity prior to successful prosecution of the individuals named would be contrary to the laws of natural justice and may constitute contempt of court. {Section 48(1)(b)}.
5.	To protect information which is the subject to an obligation of confidence, the publication of such information would be likely to prejudice the supply of information from the same source and it is in the public interest that such information should continue to be supplied. {Section 7(2)(c)(i)}.
6.	In order to maintain legal professional privilege. {Section 2(g)}.
7.	To enable the council to carry on without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations {Section 7(2)(i)}.

Resolution to allow members of the public to remain

If the council/committee wishes members of the public to remain during discussion of confidential items the following additional recommendation will need to be passed:

Move/Second

"That _____ be permitted to remain at this meeting, after the public has been excluded, because of his/her/their knowledge of Item _____.

This knowledge, which will be of assistance in relation to the matter to be discussed, is relevant to that matter because _____.

Note:

Every resolution to exclude the public shall be put at a time when the meeting is open to the public.