



Te Pūrongo Whakarāpopoto ā-Tau Summary Annual Report

2022–2023

Mihi

**Ki ngā atua, ngā tūpuna me ngā iwi o te rohe
nei kei te mihi, kei te mihi, kei te mihi**

**Ko te rohe tēnei e hora ai te whenua mai i ngā
pae maunga o Tararua ki Te Tai o Rehua.**

**He kanohi rau o ngā pae maunga o Tararua, arā,
he hukarere, he kāpuapua, te whitinga o te rā
me to rongo hoki i te kō a ngā manu.**

**Kei te take o ngā maunga te wāhi e nōho ai ngā
patupaiarehe i te Riu o Makahika.**

**He maringa nui nō tātou kia whai wāhi ki te
taha uru o Te Tai o Rehua, pēnā i te takutai o
Waitārere, te wāhi takoto o Okatia, te taniwha.**

**Ko ngā moana te wāhi e kitea ai te rātō hei
whakatau i te whatumanawa, ko ngā hua hoki
o te moana hei whāngai i ngā whānau.**

**Toro atu ki ngā tauārai o te rohe, ki te awa o
Ōhau, ki te awa o Manawatū, ki te wahapū o
Manawatū anō, te kohanga o ngā tini manu.**

**Piua ngā mata ki te rangi, ki ngā whetū ārahi
i a tātou, ki te wāhi i topa atu ai te Hōkioi ki
ngā rangi.**

**Hoki mai ki te whenua haumako, ki ngā wai
rērere, kei reira ngā kai hei ora mā tātou.**

**Ko Mangaore te wāhi tākaro, te waioranga me
te tūhonotanga ki te whenua me ngā awa.**

**Mai i Tokomaru ki Te Awahou, ki Taitoko, ki
Manakau rā anō, e karapotitia ana tātou e ngā
pae maunga o Tararua ki te rāwhiti, ko tēnei
whenua, tōku kāinga.**

**I whakatipu ai tātou i te ahurea rangatira, te
manaakitanga me te ngākau mahana o ngā
tāngata o Horowhenua, koia nei tō tātou rohe.**

**Toitū te marae a Tāne
Toitū te marae a Tangaroa
Toitū te tangata**

Tihei mauri ora!

To the gods, the ancestors and the people of
the district

Thank you, thank you, thank you

Boasting the shortest distance from mountain to sea,
the land flows all the way from the majestic Tararua
Ranges to the Tasman Sea.

The Tararua Ranges show us many faces, from snow
kissed, to cloud cloaked, to sun drenched, to filled
with bird song.

In the foothills, the Patupaiarehe or fairy people were
said to have inhabited the Makahika Valley.

We are blessed by the spacious sandy west coast of
the Tasman Sea, such as Waitārere Beach where the
mighty taniwha, Okatia is said to rest.

Beaches with stunning sunsets to soothe the soul,
and plentiful kaimoana to feed the whānau.

Bordered by our treasured Ōhau and Manawatū
rivers, the latter of which features the Manawatū
estuary that beckons numerous species of birds
home to its abundant shores.

Wide open spaces to see the stars that guide us, and
where the powerful Hōkioi bird soared to the heavens.

Our unique rich fertile soil, along with our waterways,
boasts a plethora of foods nourishing all.

Mangaore area bestows a range of outdoor
recreational activities, strengthening our wellbeing,
and connection to the whenua and awa.

From Tokomaru, to Foxton, to Levin, to Manakau,
and surrounded by the Tararua Ranges to the east,
ko tēnei whenua, tōku kāinga (this land my home).

Built on the rich culture and natural hospitality
and warmth of the Horowhenua people, this is
our beloved rohe.

If the land is well
And the sea is well
The people will thrive

I sneeze the breath of life



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Te kupu whakataki a ngā Kaikaunihera me te Tumu Whakarae

Introduction from the Mayor and Chief Executive

We are proud to celebrate and reflect on the many successes and challenges during the 2022-2023 financial year for Te Kaunihera ā rohe o Horowhenua/ Horowhenua District Council. This Annual Report looks back on key moments, decisions and learnings that took place between 1 July 2022 and 30 June 2023, and in line with legislative requirements, was audited prior to its release.

A new Council was elected in October 2022 paving the way for important decisions that will impact how Horowhenua prepares for the future. With a voter turnout of 45.07%, Mayor Bernie Wanden was reelected for a second term and eight new Elected Members were welcomed. Four Councillors returned. The 2022 Horowhenua local government election featured a Māori Ward with two Māori Ward Councillors; a first for our rohe (district) – this Ward was established after Council unanimously supported the idea in May 2021.

Following the triennial election, the newly formed Council discussed the key issues and opportunities facing Te Kaunihera ā rohe o Horowhenua/ Horowhenua District Council and confirmed the general direction they want to lead Horowhenua in. These discussions led to the formation of the Council Plan on a Page, outlining hapori (community) outcomes, values and key priorities.

During this financial year we have been preparing for and responding to Three Waters reform

proposals, the most significant local government changes facing ratepayers and our hapori since the 1980s. In September 2021 Council provided feedback on the central government's initial proposal, strongly advocating for a local voice, local ownership and protection against the future privatisation of three waters assets. All major decisions related to Three Waters now need to go to the Three Waters reform National Transition Unit (NTU) for approval. While it is reassuring to see that some of these issues have been addressed by the three waters working group. We still hold concerns that the voice of Horowhenua could get lost among other councils, the uncertainty around the Three Waters reform and how the general election may impact the reforms adding another layer of complexity. The uncertainty around the Three Waters reform and how the general election results may impact the reforms also adds another layer of complexity.

Some big decisions were made regarding some of these priorities in the Long Term Plan Amendment

(LTPA). Key water infrastructure projects were brought forward and a rates review for a fairer distribution of rates was discussed. Significantly, a landmark decision was made on the future of the Levin Landfill with Council unanimously deciding that it will remain closed and alternative uses will be investigated for the site.

We tried new ways of engaging with our hapori on these topics as we consulted on the LTPA, introducing Cuppa with a Councillor drop-in sessions, forming a citizen's panel for feedback, hosting bus tours of our water and wastewater treatment plants and the Levin Landfill, and we launched online consultation platform Let's Kōrero to give our hapori an interactive and informative space online to share their thoughts and ideas.

Our hapori was clear that they are concerned about water supply. During the 2022-2023 financial year a lot of work was done to progress one of the most significant and aspirational Three Waters infrastructure projects in our recent history – the Poads Road Water Supply Reservoir. Feasibility, hydrology, ecological, archaeological and technical assessments were completed in the 2022-2023 financial year to move the project forward.

This is not the only major infrastructure project we focused on. The Ōtaki to North of Levin project (Ō2NL) will accommodate expected future traffic volumes and support the growth of our

communities. The project will see the construction of a four-lane expressway with a range of safety features, including median barriers, wider shoulders, new intersections and a shared walking and cycling pathway. Approximately 21km of a total 24km of the new expressway is proposed to be built in our district. We recognise the importance of this work and the significant impact it will have on Horowhenua. We have, and will continue to, advocate for the best interests of our hapori as this project is completed.

There were also key achievements celebrated in 2022 regarding the revitalisation and enhancement of the district brand and the Horowhenua District Council organisation. In October 2022 we launched a new destination brand encouraging people to visit, work and move to our rohe and in November 2022 we launched our Organisation Roadmap to help us grow great people, put a focus on partnerships and customers, and lift performance through a focus on accountability and alignment to strengthen the Horowhenua District Council working culture and outputs.

Our teams have produced impressive results. For the first time ever, we delivered on our targeted \$36 million capital programme, a remarkable achievement by our hard working teams who demonstrated excellent project management and proactive engagement with our stakeholders. Our staff were committed to balancing financial prudence, managing supply issues with meeting the needs of the capital projects for the benefit of our hapori. Our Mayor's Taskforce for Jobs (MTFJ) team led Aotearoa in terms of job placement outcomes, connecting more than 100 people with local employers. Our Aquatics and Parks and Property teams worked together to open an accessible Splash Pad and amenity block at Jubilee Park for people to enjoy for years to come, and we

are proudly home to five Green Flag awarded parks. During the 2022-2023 financial year we also celebrated District Plan Lead Lauren Baddock receiving the 2023 Taituarā Emerging Leader of the Year Award for her mahi in leading the delivery of the Tara-Ika Master Plan and associated District Plan change.

While we were able to deliver strongly in some areas, we were not able to deliver our operational budget in line with the budgets that we set. Overall we spent \$11.8m more than was planned. The key reasons were higher interest costs, higher maintenance costs and lower levels of income from our regulatory services because of the slowing economy.

We acknowledge that we can improve our performance measures. There were times we didn't reach our targets, and other times we didn't have the right documentation to demonstrate we met them. As part of our emphasis on Getting the Basics Right (a Council Plan on a Page Top Ten Priority) we are working on improving our performance measure results and validating those results. We are also planning to implement a performance measure review as part of the 2024 Long Term Plan programme.

Our hapori is at the heart of what we do, and to gauge how our hapori are perceiving us we used Ask Nicely online Voice of the Customer software, for the second time to run a series of surveys for honest feedback. It was heartening to find that our Net Promoter Score (NPS) has improved from -16.0% in 2022 to -8% in 2023, meaning our hapori (community) are more satisfied with Council's performance. There was also a significant positive shift in Public Sector NPS (%Promoters + %Passives) – %Detractors) which has improved from 16.0 in 2022 to 31.0 in 2023.

The 2022-2023 financial year was not an easy one for many districts in Aotearoa. We were extremely fortunate that Horowhenua was not

in Cyclone Gabrielle's path. Our Civil Defence Emergency Management function braced for the worst, but there was minimal impact to our rohe during the weather event. We supported Central Hawke's Bay and Tararua districts by deploying staff and resources to assist the emergency response and promoted and helped coordinate a district-wide fundraising event 'The Black Out'.

We are proud of the huge efforts and focus of our Councillors and Officers who continue to make Horowhenua a great place to be. Our ratepayers and residents saw continued development across the rohe while still receiving essential services. New facilities, such as the Jubilee Park Splash Pad and refurbished Youth Space, were opened much to the delight of our community, and other major projects are progressing well. We look forward to more successes in the next financial year as we work hard for our hapori.



Bernie Wanden
Mayor Bernie Wanden



Monique Davidson
Chief Executive Monique Davidson

Mō tēnei pūrongo

About this report

The Annual Report 2022-2023 tells the story of Horowhenua District Council's performance between 1 July 2022 and 30 June 2023, reporting against year 2 of our Long Term Plan 2021-2041 (LTP).

We are committed to being transparent and accountable to our community, and this Annual Report provides detailed information on the financial performance of the organisation as a whole, and for each individual activity. It also sets out how we are tracking our performance measures and fulfils our obligations under the Local Government Act 2002 to report on our past year's highlights, performance results and budget. A separate summary of the Annual Report is also available.

We also produce an Organisation Performance Report (OPR) that is presented at each Council meeting throughout the year. These reports share our stories, our successes, our concerns and where we need to improve. The report is a snapshot of the great work we do across the community.

You can find these reports:

<https://www.horowhenua.govt.nz/Council/Documents/Organisation-Performance-Reports>





He tirohanga ki ā tātou mahi me tō mātou tūnga

Performance and Position at a Glance

Financial performance

OPERATING DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR

\$6.3m

This is mainly due to additional depreciation (unfunded) from the higher 2021/22 valuation of the Three Waters and roading assets, higher net finance costs due to higher interest rates, and underlying additional rates deficit.

64%

64% of our total income comes from rates.

\$13.4m

Capital projects carried over to 2023/24.

REVENUE FOR THE YEAR

\$75m

Total revenue was \$1.5m higher than planned due to funding for the transitional support package and Three Waters reform stimulus fund from DIA which was not planned.

7%

Average rates increase 2022/23.

EXPENSE FOR THE YEAR

\$81.2m

Total operating expenditure was \$11.8m above budget due to additional unfunded depreciation, higher finance costs due to higher interest rates, and underlying additional spending.

\$36m

Actual spend on capital projects. We achieved our target spend of \$36m. The 2022-23 Annual Plan had a total capital programme of \$52m but \$35m was budgeted to be spent.

Financial position

\$694m

Council's net value as at 30 June 2023.

\$149m

Net debt at 30 June 2023.

NET DEBT IS

213%

of operating income against a limit of 225%.

COUNCIL'S ASSETS AS AT 30 JUNE 2023

\$890m

Property, plant and equipment (PPE) of \$847m made up 95 percent of the total asset value. PPE ended the year \$55m higher than budget mainly due to higher than expected revaluation.

COUNCIL'S LIABILITIES AS AT 30 JUNE 2023

\$197m

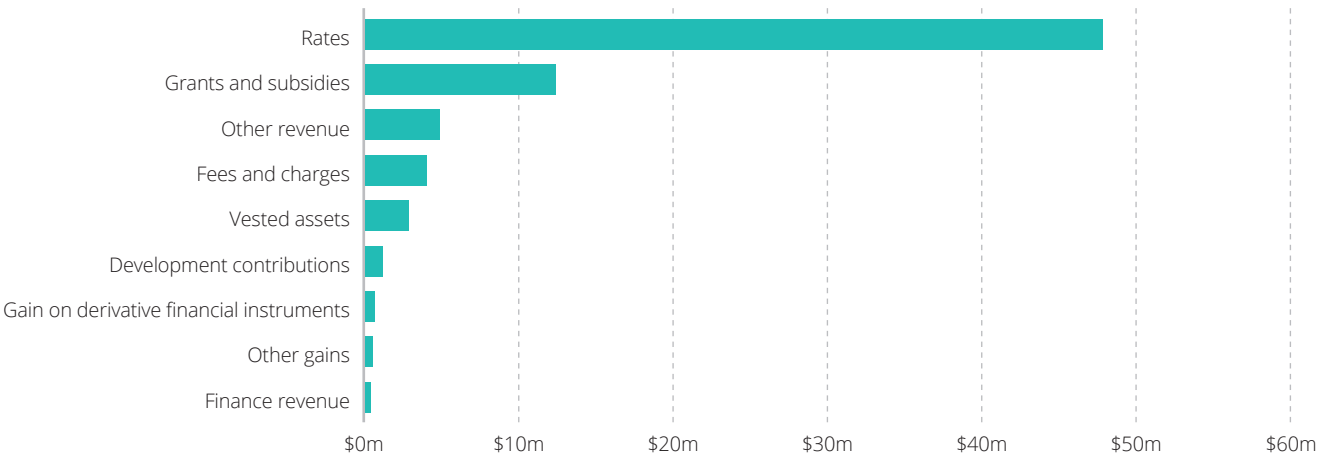
\$168m was medium to long term borrowings from the Local Government Funding Agency, and the remainder mainly trade creditors and accruals.

AA-

Credit rating from S & P Global.

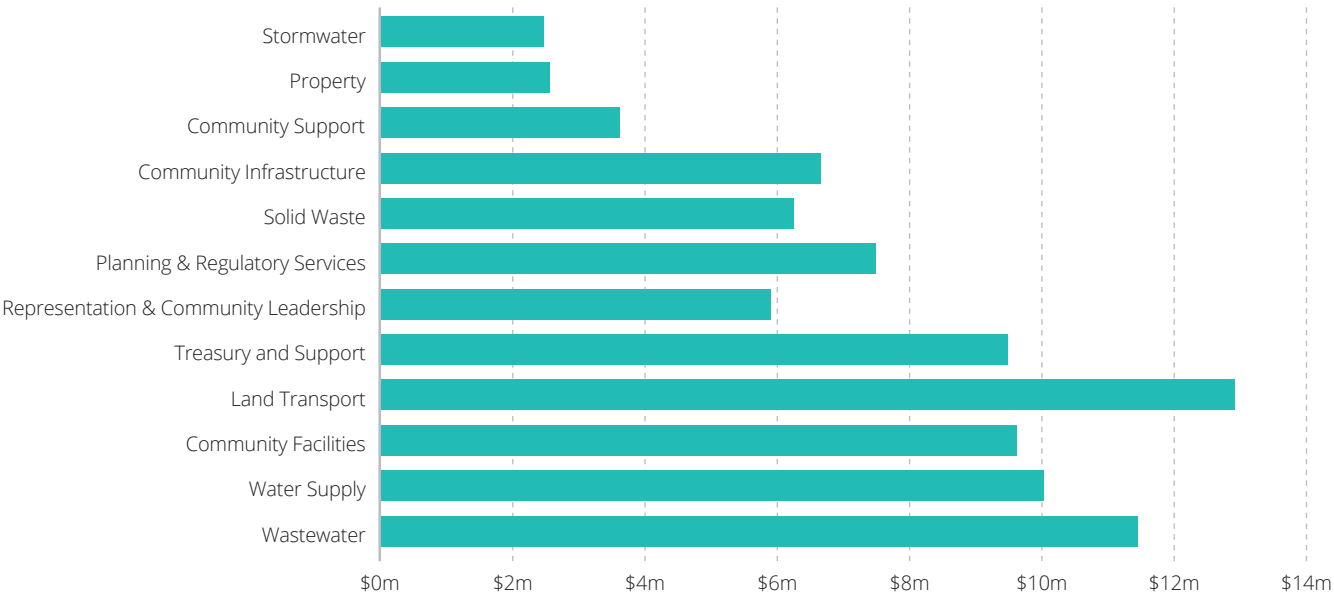
The graph below shows Council's revenue for the 2022/23 financial year.

Revenue

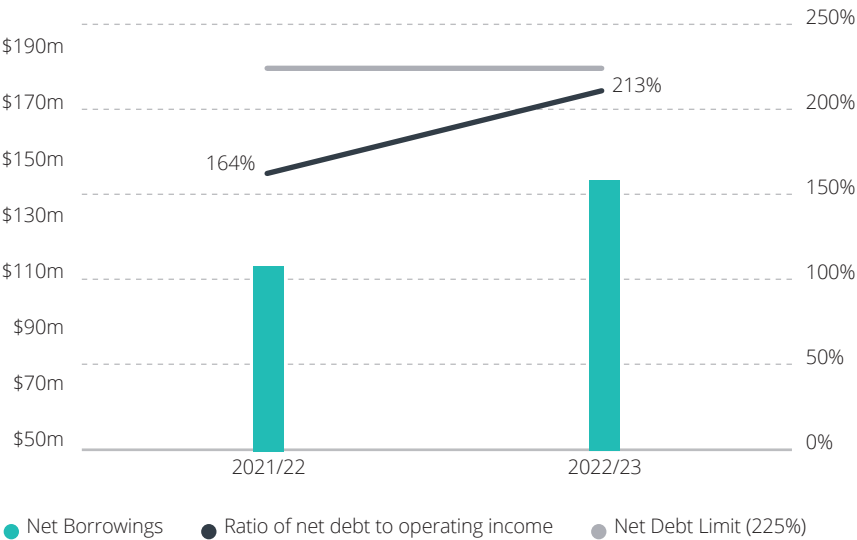


The graph below shows Council's operating expenditure by activity for the 2022/23 financial year.

Operating Expenditure



Net Debt














Net Debt (total borrowings less term deposits, borrower notes and cash) is well below the limit of 225 percent set out in the 2021-2041 Long Term Plan.

We budgeted to borrow an additional \$12m as part of the 2022/23 Annual Plan. However, for the year our net borrowings increased by \$31m. This contributed to a higher than planned Net Debt to Operating Revenue ratio of 213% in June 2023. The table below shows the main reasons for the higher net borrowing requirements in 2022/23.

	Increase/ (decrease) in net borrowings
Higher Opening net debt	\$14m
Lower proceeds from sale of assets	\$3m
Lower than expected capital grants (largely due to timing)	\$1.6m
Additional operational deficit (include higher net interest)	\$4.5m
Higher Debtors and Payables	\$6.9m
Higher than budgeted capital spend	\$1m
Increase in Net Debt for 2022/23	\$31m

Non-Financial Performance Measure Results

Activity	Achieved	Not Achieved	Total
 Land Transport	4	1	5
 Solid Waste	4	6	10
 Stormwater	5	1	6
 Wastewater	4	2	6
 Water Supply	6	4	10
 Community Facilities	8	5	13
 Community Infrastructure	6	1	7
 Property	2	1	3
 Community Support	16	8	24
 Regulatory Services	10	6	16
 Representation and Community Leadership	5	3	8
TOTAL	70	38	108

Te Wāhi o te Māori ki te Whakatakotoranga Whakatau

Māori contribution to the decision-making process

Te Kaunihera ā rohe o Horowhenua/Horowhenua District Council is committed to continually enhancing our relationship with Māori. Council recognises the unique position of Tangata whenua in our rohe and we are dedicated to fostering the development of Māori capacity to contribute to the decision making processes of the Council. While it is a requirement in Schedule 10 of the Local Government Act (LGA) 2002, Council aims to extend beyond the legislative framework, to build and maintain strong and meaningful relationships with the Māori hāpori (community). This is acknowledged through Council's community outcomes, specifically the outcome "Partnership with Tangata Whenua".

Background

The Local Government Act 2002 recognises and respects the Crown's obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi by placing some specific obligations on councils. These obligations are intended to facilitate participation by Māori in local authorities' decision making processes. The Act includes requirements for councils to:

- ensure they provide opportunities for Māori to contribute to decision making processes
- establish and maintain processes for Māori to contribute to decision making
- consider ways in which they can foster the development of Māori capacity to contribute to decision making processes
- provide relevant information to Māori
- take into account the relationship of Māori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral land, water, sites, wāhi tapu, valued flora and fauna, and other taonga.

The Local Government Act 2002 places a clear mandate on local authorities, requiring them to be well informed about the potential impact of their decision making on the wellbeing of the Māori hapori. These provisions apply to all Māori, emphasising the need for local authorities to gain a comprehensive understanding of Māori values, concerns, and aspirations relating to economic, social, cultural, and environmental wellbeing.

This responsibility extends to acknowledging and comprehending the unique challenges faced by pre- (Te Tiriti o Waitangi) settled Iwi in contrast to those Iwi who have reached settlements with the Crown, and in a Horowhenua context requires us to acknowledge that two of our Iwi are presently in a pre-settlement stage. The underlying intent behind these provisions is to encourage both local authorities and Māori organisations to move beyond engaging on matters of environmental or cultural importance only, to become an integral part of decision making.

Māori Ward Councillors

After unanimous Council support in May 2021, a Māori Ward was established for the 2022 local government elections. This financial year we welcomed Māori Ward Councillors – Nina Hori Te Pa and Justin Tamihana to Council. We look forward to their contribution and input as Council looks to strengthen Iwi/Māori partnerships.

Council continues to foster our partnerships across all Iwi partners and has active Memorandum of Partnerships in place with:

- Muaūpoko Tribal Authority
- Te Iwi o Ngāti Tukorehe Trust – representing Ngāti Tukorehe, Te Mateawa, Ngāti Te Rangitawhia and Ngāti Kapu (Ngāti Raukawa)
- Te Kotahitanga o Te Iwi o Ngāti Wehi (Ngāti Raukawa)
- Rangitāne o Manawatū.

Whilst an active Memorandum of Partnership is not currently in place with Te Runanga o Raukawa Inc, Council values the partnership and understands the key role they have in the rohe.



Council is working closely with Te Tūmatakahuki to navigate a wide range of common interests. Te Tūmatakahuki is made up of membership from 12 of the 13 Raukawa hapū who reside in Horowhenua, and are named as follows – Ngāti Turanga, Ngāti Rakau, Ngāti Te Au, Ngāti Takihiku, Ngāti Ngārongo, Ngāti Whakatere, Ngāti Pareraukawa, Ngāti Huia ki Poroutawhao, Ngāti Huia ki Matau, Ngāti Kikopiri, Ngāti Hikitanga and Ngāti Wehi Wehi.

Te Tūmatakahuki Navigator role was established in January 2023 and is positioned within the Community Infrastructure Group. Te Tūmatakahuki is a partnership between Council and mandated Ngāti Raukawa ki te Tonga hapū representatives, from within the Horowhenua.

This newly established position plays a pivotal role in advocating for the perspectives of Te Tūmatakahuki hapū members. Additionally, it carries the responsibility of creating and managing a register of key strategic projects and commitments of both parties. The role works alongside Council Officers, hapū representatives and technical experts to build and maintain relationships.

Te Tūmatakahuki Navigator reports to Te Tūmatakahuki on progress and develops project scopes for support and input at Te Tūmatakahuki monthly hui. This role has contributed to the significant increase in Māori engagement during this financial year. This role is an example of Council listening to the needs of Iwi/hapū and being open to different ways of working to enhance Māori Contribution to Decision Making.

Additionally, it is important to note that Ngāti Apa have a statutory acknowledgement within Horowhenua and although there is no Memorandum of Partnership, we recognise their standing in the rohe.

Council is on a journey of learning as we take steps towards improving our knowledge and understanding in Te Ao Māori. Significant progress has been made in growing cultural capacity and capability across the organisation, with the introduction of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Cultural Competency training across the organisation. In May 2023, a Māori Culture Induction Toolkit – Tūhono ki Te Ao Māori – was launched to assist all staff in their knowledge and continued learning.

As part of our journey, Council have identified the need for the development of a Māori Engagement Framework. This work has been prioritised to be undertaken during the 2023/24 financial year. Council sees this as an opportunity to reset existing relationships and agreement with Iwi/hapū, but to also provide greater expectations on what good looks like, as we seek to bring our community outcomes of Partnership with Tangata Whenua to life.

Whether it be our annual Matariki programme, engagement on the closure of the Levin Landfill, planting days or better understanding cultural aspirations across our Capital Programme, there are numerous touch points across the daily mahi (work) of Council where we continue to rely on the cultural expertise and aspirations of Māori to guide our mahi.

Māori see people and the environment as closely interrelated – Ko au Ko te taiao, Ko te taiao Ko au (I am the environment, the environment is me), and share with Council, a strong interest in maintaining and protecting the environment, as well as achieving a bright future for the Horowhenua. Council is committed over the period covered by this Annual Report and beyond, to enhance relationships and enable more meaningful opportunities for Māori Contribution to Decision Making.

Te Mahere Kaunihera i te Whārangī Council Plan on a Page

Following the October 2022 election, the newly formed Council took the time to discuss the key issues and opportunities facing Te Kaunihera ā rohe o Horowhenua/ Horowhenua District Council and to set its direction.

Council recognised that the platform built by Horowhenua 2040, and the Horowhenua Blueprint has provided building blocks for success. The context of growth, reform and change, means that they wanted to put a focus on the future through tackling the hard issues, lifting organisation performance and ultimately shifting the dial on how the communities we serve see value in Horowhenua District Council.

Through these discussions Plan on a Page was developed which confirmed the general direction Council wishes to take our rohe.

The development of the Plan and its priorities was guided by our Community Outcomes, it put a deliberate focus on 10 top priorities and nine other areas that were considered important to focus on.

The Plan also sought to align the organisation's vision, values and pillars with governance to demonstrate a commitment for both the governance and operational sides of Council to work together to achieve the priorities.

Council adopted their Plan on a Page at the February 2023 Council Meeting. Like all priority

setting documents, the Plan will be reviewed on a regular basis.

Since then, both the operational and governance side of Council have been looking at ways it can use the Plan on a Page to provide the focus, prioritisation and resource needed to achieve the best results for our hapori through the Plan.

A large component of the newly drafted Chief Executives Key Performance Indicator (KPIs) measures were structured around the Top Ten Priorities. This will ensure the organisation has the focus it needs in its strategic direction, organisational planning and prioritisation of work.

To help Elected Members monitor our progress on how we are achieving the priorities of the Plan, the Organisation Performance Report (OPR) highlights how we are tracking.

The Full OPR provides detailed updates from the organisation on how it has progressed both the Top Ten Priorities and Other Areas of Focus. The Interim OPR provides a brief update on just the Top Ten priorities until a comprehensive update is provided in the next Full OPR.

You can find all OPRs on our website <https://www.horowhenua.govt.nz/Council/Documents/Organisation-Performance-Reports>

Discussions have started on how to ensure all decision making on both the operational and governance side of the organisation includes consideration of the Plan on a Page.

Plan On A Page

The Outcomes we want to achieve



We uphold Te Tiriti o Waitangi and its principles and recognise the role of Mana Whenua as kaitiaki of their rohe. We support them to maintain and enhance tikanga with their ancestral lands and waterways, wāhi tapu and other taonga, and build mutually respectful partnerships with tangata whenua, supporting whanau, marae, hapū and iwi in achieving their aspirations.



We contribute to improving our natural environment for current and future generations to enjoy, and protect the important natural features in our district. We ensure our built environment supports the wellbeing of our people and manage competing pressures on resources sustainably.



We provide efficient, reliable and affordable infrastructure, developing and maintaining facilities and infrastructure to meet the needs of current and future generations. Our community facilities and infrastructure are resilient, helping us to respond to climate change and natural hazards, working with partners to develop infrastructure that enables growth.



We are business friendly, supporting diversity and resilience in our local economy and work with others to make our economy grow. We aspire for economic security for all of our people and seize growth opportunities for our district.



We value the diversity of our people, and how our district's heritage shapes our community's sense of identity and pride. We provide infrastructure, services, facilities and places to build resilient and connected communities where people of all ages and backgrounds feel included and safe. We are building collaborative relationships with service providers to enable all people to live positive and healthy lifestyles, encouraging our people to participate in local decision making.

Our values – what we stand for

Mahi Tahi

We are one team, stronger together as we work with and for our community to deliver outcomes that matter.

#arohatōmahi

We love our work and know that our work matters. That is why we do what we say we will do and apply energy and enthusiasm across our mahi.

Manaakitanga

We put our people first by showing them that they matter, through a focus on whānau's needs and aspirations.

Tiakitanga

We proudly and professionally contribute every day to the care of our community and whenua with courage, positivity and mana – leaving a legacy which future generations will embrace.

Our top 10 priorities



Enabling affordable **housing** that meets the needs of a growing population through the implementation of the Housing Action Plan



Get the basics right and support the customer focused delivery of **core services**



Achieve the best outcome for Horowhenua in the face of **Three Waters Reform** Transition



Deliver the **capital infrastructure programme**, and achieve an increase in the percentage of completed works



Enable the **rebuilding** of the Horowhenua District Council organisation, with a focus to empower a culture of excellence, service and continuous improvement



Reset our **engagement and partnership** approach, and work more with and for the community



Complete a **Rates review** as part of the Long Term Plan Amendment, to ensure a rating system that is fair and equitable



Deliver on the Levin **Town Centre Transformation** Strategy



Provide advocacy and leadership to **Ōtaki to North Levin** expressway project



Make a decision on the **Future of the Levin Landfill** and follow through on the review of our WMMP

He rau ringa e pakari ai nga taura whiri i o tatou hapori – mai te pae maunga o Tararua ki te moana

With many hands the threads which weave our neighbourhood and communities together will be strengthened from the Tararua ranges to the sea. Growing neighbourhoods and building stronger communities together.

Our other areas of focus



Undertake a review of Council policies



Undertake a review of Council Bylaws



Monitor the implementation of CouncilMARK recommendations and progress



Review and approve Section 17a Reviews, to ensure we are reviewing the way we deliver services



Implement zero based budgeting across the organisation



Increase resiliency to weather events by dealing with longstanding stormwater issues



Develop a Māori Engagement Framework



Develop the Horowhenua Blueprint Implementation Plan



Continue to foster our community wellbeing networks, preparing ourselves for a new future for Local Government

Our four pillars



'You' Matter



Work Matters



Performance Matters



Partnerships Matter

Our committee structure – how we work



Risk and Assurance Committee

The purpose of the Risk and Assurance Committee is to contribute to improving the governance, performance, and accountability of Horowhenua District Council by ensuring that Council has appropriate financial, health and safety, risk management and internal control systems in place. The committee seek reasonable assurance as to the integrity and reliability of Council's financial and non-financial reporting while providing a communications link between management, Council and the external and internal auditors and ensuring their independence and adequacy.



Chief Executive Employment and Performance Committee

The Chief Executive Employment and Performance Committee will have responsibility for the effective monitoring of the Chief Executive Officer's performance and has the authority to undertake the annual remuneration review.



Delivery of Capital Projects Steering Group

Monitor the delivery of the Capital Projects Programme, and guide scope and direction of the programme achieving an increase of % of works completed.



Review of District Plan Steering Group

Monitor the delivery of the District Plan project, and guide scope and direction of the project.



Rating and Financing Review Taskforce

Lead and monitor Rates Reviews, and a review of associated Rates and Revenue and Financing Policies as part of the Long Term Plan Amendment and Long Term Plan 2024 – 2034.



Three Waters Transition and Planning Taskforce

Lead and monitor the transition of Three Waters Assets to the new Water Entity, and provide direction to the organisation throughout transition.



Community Funding and Recognition Committee

The Community Funding and Recognition Committee is responsible for the effective allocation and monitoring of Council's grants. In addition, the committee is responsible for considering applications and making recommendations for Civic Honours and Youth Excellence Scholarships.



Community Wellbeing Committee

The Community Wellbeing Committee brings together representatives from Council, government and non-government organisations, and community forums.



Hearings and Regulatory Committee

The Hearings and Regulatory Committee will consider and determine matters under the Resource Management Act 1991 and Dog Control Act 1996.



District Licensing Committee

The Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012 (the Act) requires Council to appoint a District Licensing Committee to deal with licensing matters. The District Licensing Committee is appointed to administer Council's alcohol licensing framework, as determined by the Act.



Ō2NL and Town Centre Taskforce

Lead and monitor key inputs required by Council for the Ōtaki to North Levin Project with a key focus on delivering Levin Town Centre Transformation.



Waste and Landfill Taskforce

Lead and monitor the development and implementation of the WMMP and Section 17a Review of Solid Waste for Horowhenua.

NGĀ MAHI WHAKAHIRAHIRA KUA OTI I A MĀTOU



THE DIFFERENCE WE HAVE MADE THAT WE ARE PROUD OF





Engaging with our Hapori (Community) during the LTPA process

The Long Term Plan (LTP) sets out the services and projects the Council will provide to the Horowhenua hapori (community) all the way out to 2041.

This year we proposed making some changes to rates affordability, the future of the Levin Landfill and water projects through the LTP Amendment (LTPA).

The formal consultation period started on 27 March 2023 and ran until 1 May 2023. During this period we encouraged our community to engage with the LTPA process by making submissions. Hearings took place on 10-11 May, followed by deliberations on 31 May and 1 June 2023. Elected Members adopted the final Long Term Plan Amendment and Annual Plan on 28 June 2023.

As an organisation, we are always challenging ourselves to think outside the box about how we engage with our hapori. We want to work closer with the hapori we serve, putting them in front of mind in all that we do.

To break down the barriers which prevent our community from engaging with Local Government we tried innovative new ways to connect with our hapori in our 2021-2041 Long Term Plan Amendment (LTPA) and Annual Plan (AP) 2023/24 consultation process.

We invited people to engage with us in various ways – in person, in writing and online – so they could respond in their preferred channels, at times that suited them, and in ways that encouraged participation and interaction in Council's consultation process. Our goal was to be responsive, transparent and open.

We wanted to ensure our hapori felt heard, that their feedback was valued, and assured that decision making is transparent and not pre-determined.

Early engagement on the LTPA began on Monday 20 February and consultation closed Monday 1 May 2023. During this time we adopted a number of ways to connect with and respond to our community.

The Long Term Plan Amendment covered some complex topics. Early engagement helped us to introduce the topics and context surrounding those topics, so that when we asked our community for their views and provided our preferred options for each topic, they were able to feel more informed.

Water Infrastructure Video

One example of how we informed our community about complex topics in early engagement was our Water Infrastructure video. This was created to help show the impact of a severe weather event on our infrastructure and therefore why bringing forward planned investment or investing more in stormwater, wastewater and drinking water were critical to ensuring three waters infrastructure is fit for purpose, now and into the future. The video was uploaded to our Horowhenua District Council Facebook page and is available at www.facebook.com/HorowhenuaDC/videos/759593415617404

Let's Kōrero

Nurturing trust and confidence with our hapori (community) through effective visual storytelling was important when planning the LTPA consultation.

Traditionally our website content for Long Term Plans and Annual Plans has been condensed into a single consultation (engagement) page on our Horowhenua District Council website, with feedback largely limited to online forms.

Through 'Let's Kōrero', our online community engagement platform, we were able to break down each of the key topics in the LTPA/AP (Rates Review for a fairer distribution of rates, the future of the Levin Landfill, our key water infrastructure and adjusting fees and charges) into their own online engagement pages and provide our hapori with an online space to share ideas, ask questions, participate in quick polls, discuss important topics, and provide feedback.



Where possible, eye-catching infographics were used, and information was presented in ways to make it easy for the reader to understand and digest.

Bringing all of these pages together under a main 'Hub' page, we have also been able to share our growth story, outline key dates and profile our Elected Members.

In the early engagement phase (Friday 10 March to Sunday 26 March 2023) there was 550 total visits across all pages, and 113 total engagements with the online tools across all pages.

During formal consultation (Monday 27 March to Monday 1 May 2023) there was 3,140 total visits across all the pages, 113 total engagements with the online tools and 429 documents downloaded.

Water treatment plant and Levin Landfill tours

To help people get up close and personal to key issues in the LTPA of water infrastructure and the future of the Levin Landfill we tried something new in 2023. We offered tours so the community could learn first-hand how drinking water is treated at our water treatment plant, and to be at the Levin Landfill site as they were updated on the issue.

Two tours, with 20 people each, were run on Saturday 22 April 2023. The tours concluded at Te Takeretanga o Kura-hau-pō where attendees joined Elected Members for a BBQ, asked further questions and watched drone footage of the sites (including parts that could not be seen on the tour). The BBQ was open to all members of our hapori (community), not just those who had secured a place on the tour.

Social Media

Our Social Media channels, Facebook in particular, is a useful and popular tool we use to engage our community throughout the year.

Between Friday 10 March and Monday 1 May 2023, 20 posts were

published on our Horowhenua District Council Facebook page relating to the LTPA. Twelve of these posts were boosted to reach a wider audience beyond our current Facebook followers.

During the six Facebook lives held, the Mayor, Elected Members and our Executive Leadership Team discussed the key topics and answered questions provided by the online audience in real time.

The posts reached an audience of 162,923, with an overall engagement of 22,557 (949 comments). Emoticon-based sentiment was measured at 632, with 508 of these being positive.

Eleven posts were published to Instagram in the same period. All posts were static images, organic posts and shared to stories. The overall account reach for these posts was 1,339, with a total of 28 engagements. 'Like' based sentiment was recorded at 24 across all posts.

Citizen's Panels

In December 2022 we emailed ratepayers and put a shout out on social media and in the local paper, asking our hapori (community) if they'd like to be included in a Citizen's Panel. We had 120 community members express their interest and held three focus groups which attracted approximately 40 people.

Participants were asked for their views on the strengths and weaknesses, challenges and opportunities of our rohe. Attendees sorted through a list of 24 programmes of work and were encouraged to prioritise those, then discuss as a group. Participants discussed their ideas for alternative revenue streams for Council and had a bit of fun when asked to personify the Horowhenua District Council brand. The final part of the session saw Mayor Bernie speak to the key topics in the Long Term Plan Amendment, Council's preferred options and why they were Council's preferred options.

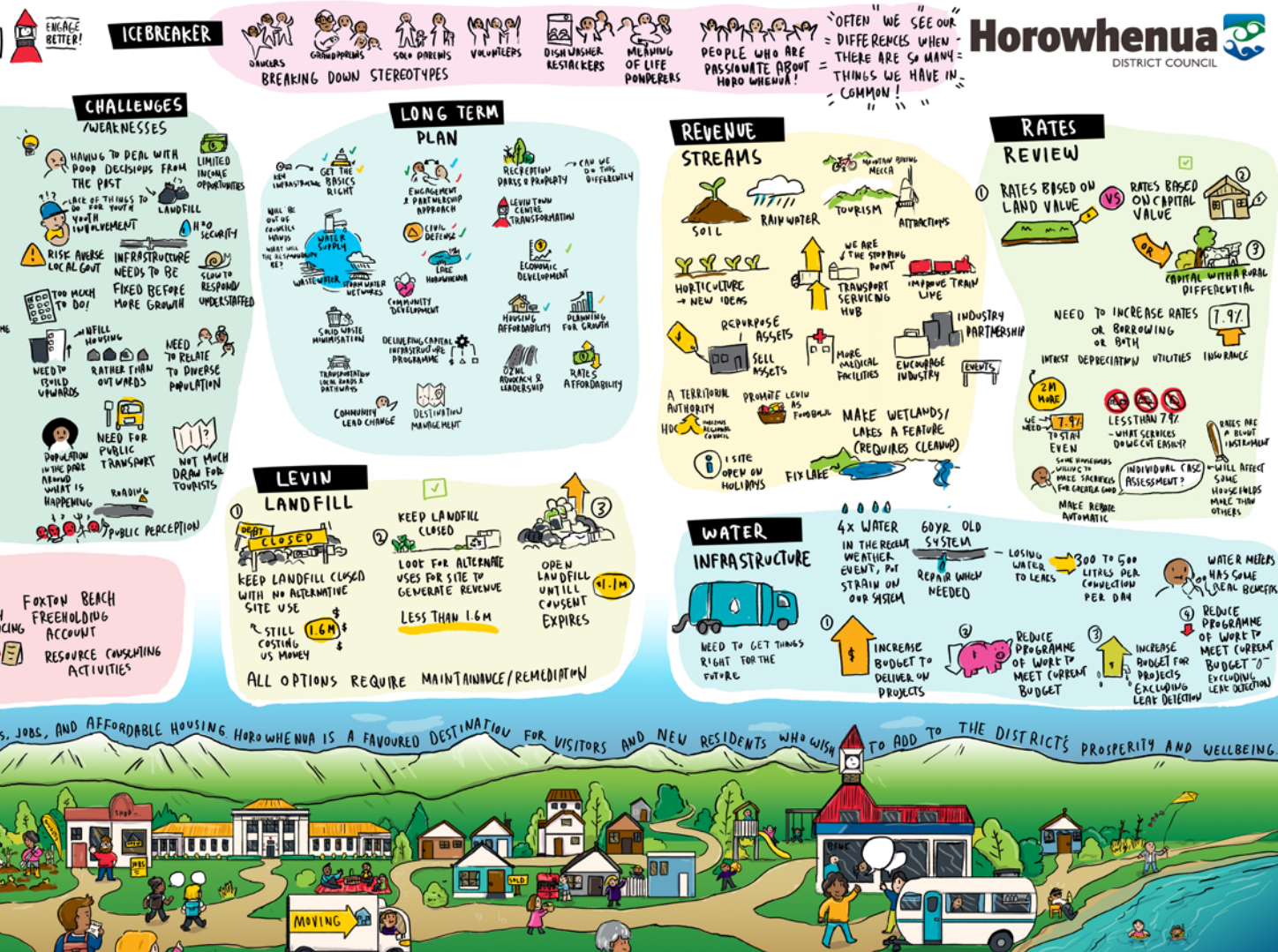


The Citizen's Panel provided an opportunity for our hapori to come together alongside Elected Members and Council staff to share ideas and debate key topics facing our rohe. We're excited to continue this approach with future community engagements.

Citizen's Panels help us to better understand our hapori and their needs, and to achieve shared aspirations.

Live illustrator

During one of the Levin Citizen's Panels, a live illustrator captured the kōrero, and this image was shared with the wider community online and in one of our regular print publications 'Community Connection'.



Print Media

While we embraced new ways of engaging our hapori (community) during the LTPA, we did not forget traditional channels. Information about the LTPA and the key topics were included within our regular bi-monthly publication 'Community Connection' published in the Horowhenua Chronicle. Digital versions are also available on our website and approximately 6,750 residents receive the publication in an email format. Through this publication, our hapori were encouraged to engage with the LTPA online (via Let's Kōrero, social media or email), on paper (filling out submission forms or contacting us via post) or in person (speaking to one of our Council Officers or Elected Members).

Radio

Targeting Horowhenua residents and ratepayers ages 18 to 65+, (particularly 30 to 45 year olds, which we find notoriously hard to engage with), a series of radio ads aired between Monday 20 February (early engagement) and Monday 1 May 2023 when consultation closed. Depending on the key topic and call to action, eight different ads ran on radio stations MoreFM, The Breeze, Magic, The Edge, The Rock and Magic.

Cuppa with a Councillor

Although not specifically intended for the LTPA, regular 'Cuppa with a Councillor' sessions were introduced during the consultation period giving Horowhenua residents the chance to sit down with one of our Elected Members and discuss issues with them.

Now regularly held every second Thursday of each calendar month, Councillors are stationed at our Community Centres (Te Takeretanga o Kura-hau-pō, Te Awahou Nieuwe Stroom and Shannon Library) between 10.30am and 12.30pm allowing people to have a face to face kōrero about things happening in the rohe.

Poads Road Water Supply Reservoir

With frequent water restrictions in the district in the warmer months and a rapidly growing population, our community has been asking Council for more reliable water services in Horowhenua, particularly in Levin and Ōhau, for the past few years.

The issue is becoming more urgent. Housing growth, climate change, high turbidity (muddiness in the water) and the new freshwater standards are driving us to look at ways to augment our current water supply.

The Poads Road Water Supply Reservoir (WSR) project, the most significant and aspirational 3Waters infrastructure projects in our recent history, aims to construct a large scale off-river water reservoir to improve the resilience and reliability of the Levin drinking water supply and to provide sufficient water to meet the projected growth demands for the town.

During this financial year we have been making progress on getting this important project off the ground.

BACKGROUND

The Levin and Ōhau drinking water supply is currently sourced directly from the Ōhau River at an intake site near the existing Water Treatment Plant (WTP) on Gladstone Road.

Post-treatment storage of approximately 12,000m³ is provided at the WTP site. This equates to less than 24 hours of supply (less than one day of current peak demand). The post-treatment storage does not provide sufficient storage to meet extended periods of drought or high turbidity in the river.

We need more storage for raw water (reservoir) and treated water (tanks) at the Levin Water Treatment Plant. As our population in Levin grows our water storage is no longer sustainable.

ENGAGING OUR COMMUNITY

As outlined in the Council Plan on a Page, we have a commitment to achieve the best outcome for Horowhenua in the face of Three Waters Reform transition. We are also committed to delivering our capital infrastructure programme, and this major project will mean great outcomes for our community once complete.

As part of the Long-Term Plan Amendment 2021-2041 (LTPA) consultation, we encouraged our community to consider the importance of, and ways of, using water more mindfully.

In April 2022 we published a video to help people understand the importance of investing in water infrastructure, and how construction costs, weather events and population growth is making this issue more urgent. Through social media, radio and print media we encouraged our community to share their views on consultation website letskorero.horowhenua.govt.nz before a solution went before Elected Members for adoption, and the green light was given to invest a significant amount of money.

Our community must understand that our challenge is not just limited to water supply or storage. There is a shared responsibility to use water sustainably for the benefit of the river, and for both Council and the infrastructure we maintain and everyone in our community.

Rainwater harvesting has been encouraged, and we will continue to promote sustainable lifestyle choices, but a more impactful solution to water supply issues in the district is needed.

WHAT IS PROPOSED IN THE POADS ROAD WATER SUPPLY RESERVOIR (WSR) PROJECT?

- The construction of a large storage reservoir – around 600,000 to 700,000m³ (up to 73 days of water supply at current average demand)– outside of the river corridor and above the flood level.
- A new subsurface intake in the River to supply the reservoir. The intake will be below the river bed and therefore will not affect fish passage. Council has already obtained resource consent for the remaining core allocation from the Ohau River. A resource consent will soon be sought from the Regional Council for construction of the new intake and for a new water permit. The new water permit will replace the existing permit and will allow Council to take some of its existing allocation at the reservoir site to fill the reservoir. The consent application will also seek a supplementary allocation at the reservoir site. The supplementary allocation means that water can be taken when the river is above median flow for purposes of filling up the reservoir. No water will be taken from the new intake when the River is at low flow.
- Once the reservoir is operational, Council should be able to avoid any abstraction from the river at times of low flow. Council is seeking to retain its ability to abstract at low flow from the existing WTP site but this will only be used very rarely – e.g. in cases of extended drought and when the reservoir water has already been used.
- The reservoir will be constructed via cut-to-fill, with material excavated from the site being used to build the reservoir embankments. Additional material which will be excavated to create the reservoir will be used as aggregate on other local infrastructure projects.
- The reservoir will be lined to prevent seepage, and will be

constructed to meet seismic design so that it is usable after an earthquake.

- There will be landscaping and planting around the reservoir to ensure that reservoir fits with the surrounding area and, where practicable, to improve the amenity and ecology value of the site.
- The current Water Treatment Plant has the capacity to treat up to 15,000m³ of water per day. Once the reservoir is constructed, the scheme will operate with water being supplied to the Treatment Plant as a blend of water from the existing intake and the reservoir.

WHAT WE ACHIEVED IN THE 2022-2023 FINANCIAL YEAR

The adjusted Annual Plan budget was requested and confirmed during a Council meeting on Wednesday 14 September 2022 and consent applications are now ready to be lodged.

Following the election, Elected Members attended a series of workshops that began on 9 November 2022, to bring them up to speed with everything from our key strategic documents and how they inform work, to key topics like Three Waters, the Future of the Levin Landfill and Rates Affordability.

During the 2022-2023 financial year, we continued investigating the feasibility of the Poas Road WSR project, moving into the consenting phase.

We have been working closely with our iwi partners to find a culturally appropriate solution that is the best for the environment and our community, and we will continue to liaise with them throughout the project delivery.

We have also been consulting with stakeholders such as Horizons Regional Council Rivers Management Group, the Department of Conservation and the New Zealand Fish and Game Council.

The next key decision point for Council, subject to consenting outcomes, was a commitment for construction funding in the LTPA. This commitment will be taken forward into the 3Waters transition process and provide the highest level of certainty that this critical asset will be provided for our community.

WHAT HAS BEEN INVESTIGATED?

- An options assessment, reviewing the available water supply and storage options to ensure the chosen option is the right one, was independently peer reviewed in mid-2022 and finalised in March 2023.
- Council completed a pre-feasibility assessment in November 2020, which saw three intake options assessed. The intake options feasibility was undertaken between June and September 2022. This work identified the preferred intake as a subsurface infiltration gallery in the Ōhau River adjacent to the reservoir site.
- A hydrology assessment and technical assessments to support the consenting and design processes were completed in March 2023. This work has confirmed sufficient water availability in the supplementary allocation framework to support the projected community demand.
- An ecological assessment of the reservoir site was completed in January 2023. This confirmed there were no wetland habitats, sensitive environments or threatened or endangered species within the reservoir site.
- An archaeological assessment of the reservoir site was completed in October 2022.
- Preliminary design, developed to sufficient detail to support consenting and costings was developed between June 2022 and March 2023.
- Consent applications were prepared. Since March 2023, we have been working through some final matters with iwi prior to lodgement.

OTHER OPTIONS WE CONSIDERED

We have put in a lot of groundwork to ensure we've considered what is best for the river and our community. We considered other options such as groundwater bores in the Gladstone Road and Tararua Road areas, using other surface water resources such as the Manawatū or Ōtaki rivers, and seawater desalination options were considered.

In the current economic climate, our community are struggling with, and worried about the increased costs of living, including rates increases. The Poads Road WSR Project, focused on constructing a large water supply on Council-owned land between Poads Road and the Ōhau River, is very cost effective compared to other options. The peer review of options agreed that this is the most cost effective and efficient solution.

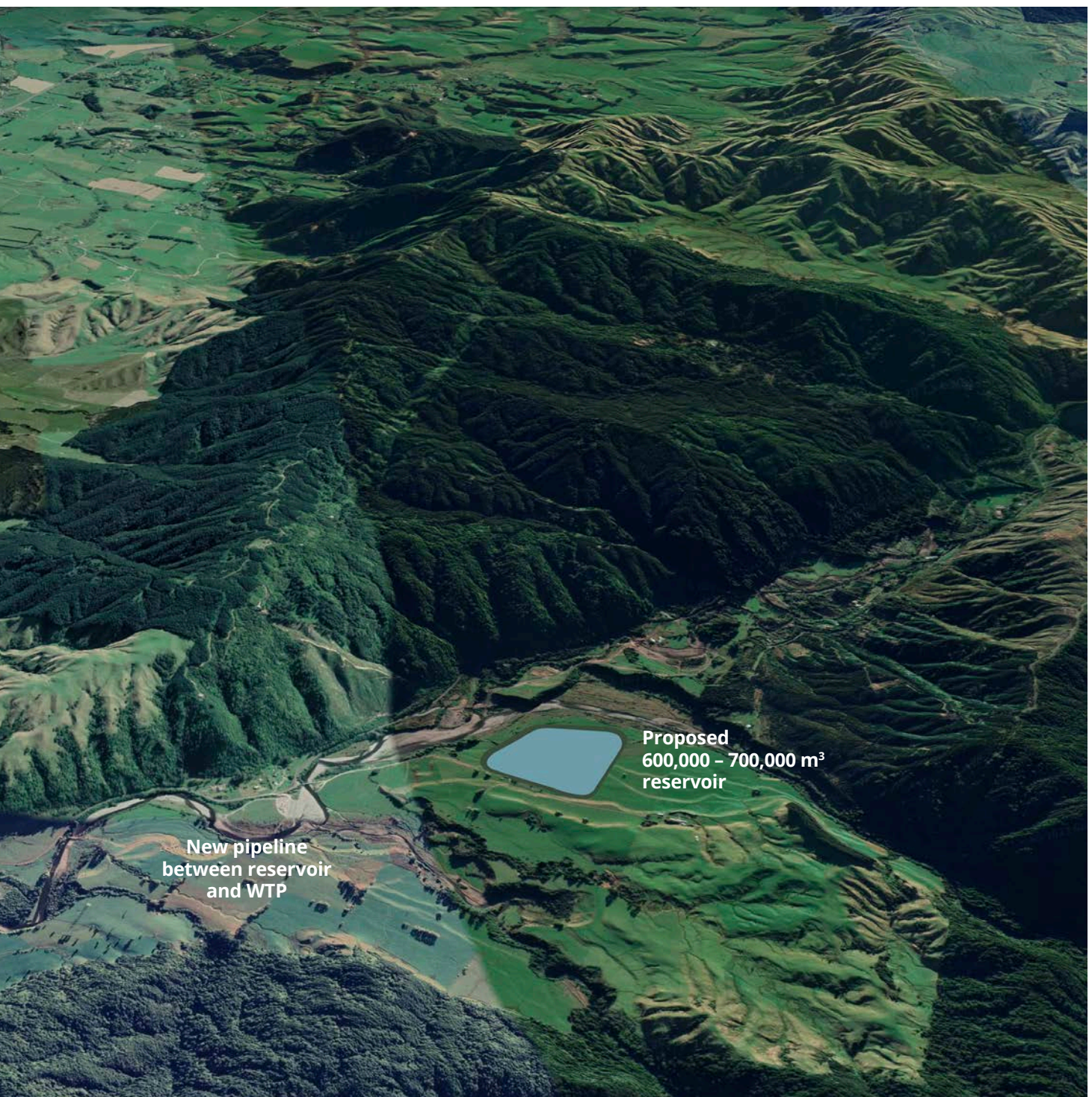
Following concept design and multi-criteria analysis, a single reservoir was selected as the preferred option mostly due to effectiveness and cost considerations. The embankment required to separate the site into two reservoirs results in a significant loss of stored volume. The storage volume of a single reservoir is in the order of 700,000m³ compared to 460,000 m³ for a two reservoir option.

How will it work



Some key milestones are yet to be achieved, which means we can't get ahead of ourselves. The consenting process is complex and could take several years, given the scale of the work proposed. We are considering other options to manage water consumption in Horowhenua in the meantime, including district-wide water metering required to

identify leaks. We are ensuring new developments provide for rainwater harvesting and continue to implement our water demand management strategy.



Responding to those in need during Emergency situations

Extreme weather once again hit Horowhenua in the 2022-2023 financial year. While we were tremendously fortunate to have avoided the worst of Cyclone Gabrielle's impact, we did have events in our district which required a Civil Defence Emergency Response.

EXTREME WINTER WEATHER

Through our Social Media channels, Horowhenua residents were informed of weather watches and warnings during the year as they were issued, and regular Horowhenua Emergency Management Committee Meetings facilitated by us and attended by representatives from FENZ, Police, Horizons Regional Council were held to ensure the district is prepared at all times for extreme weather situations. During these meetings, stakeholders share key learnings from recent responses, discuss emergency management in our community and ensuring we're best prepared in the event of an emergency.

Our Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) team were put on standby when wild wintry weather caused disruption in the district on 12 July 2022. The weather caused minor property damage, downed trees and fences, and caused flooding in areas.

Council contractors and Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ) responded to public incident reports, clearing fallen trees and debris which blocked roads. During the weather event, they also monitored a red stickered commercial building, which had been red stickered following a tornado in May 2022, as it had loose roofing iron, which had the potential to come off and harm someone.

Our roading team and contractors worked with FENZ also responded to non-urgent requests regarding surface flooding in Levin and Waitārere Beach, caused by the weather.

FLOODING

Several rain events during the 2022 winter meant soils were saturated and surface water couldn't drain away as well as it normally would. After consistent heavy rain, the surface water levels were abnormally high.

After continued heavy rain on 28 July 2022, and with more on the forecast, our CDEM team were again put on standby. Multiple non-urgent requests regarding surface flooding were received and ponding also caused power outages in isolated areas in Waitārere Beach.

Residents were cautioned to be especially careful when driving as a number of locations experienced flooding:

Hōkio Beach

- Kingi Street
- Tuiti Street.

Waitārere Beach

- Waitārere Rise
- Ramona Avenue
- Waka Tete Place
- Truebridge Drive
- Kanuka Drive.

There was also flooding on the corner of Hickford Road and Foxton-Shannon Road.

Working with Helping You Help Animals (HUHA), our Animal Welfare team offered support to any animal impacted by the adverse weather.

POLICE INCIDENT

On Thursday 4 August 2022, Police cordoned Bledisloe Street, Levin following a report of a person threatening self-harm. It was believed he had weapons and chemical agents and would resist attempts to remove him from the property.

As a precautionary measure a cordon was put up, around 80 residents were asked to immediately leave their homes for their safety, and members of the public were asked to avoid the area. This caught people out that were not at home and those affected was uncertain when they could return or access their belongings including essentials like medications. This left dozens of people needing to find alternative accommodation at very short notice.

FENZ and Ambulance staff supported the Police-lead response which continued overnight, while a team from Council provided welfare for those who had been evacuated from their homes.

A welfare centre was set up at Te Takeretanga o Kura-hau-pō as a base for those needing a place to go for help, accommodation, kai and other resources. Council staff immediately dropped their day to day jobs to provide manaakitanga

to those that unexpectedly lost access to their home and essential possessions. Providing, hot drinks, kai, blankets and a friendly ear. Council staff also liaised with police to come and provide updates for those at the welfare centre. The Mayor and some Elected members also arrived to help.

While most people were able to make alternative arrangements with friends and family for the two nights the cordon was in place the CDEM Welfare team got to work finding accommodation for those that couldn't. Practical support such as vouchers and nappies was also provided

Our communications team worked with Police to keep our residents informed as the event unfolded, publishing eight Police statements and providing regular updates on our social media channels.

During the incident there was a significant amount of potentially harmful misinformation in Facebook community groups which could have escalated the situation. Our acting Social Media Lead worked with the group admins, during the unfolding event, to block and censor these comments to shut down any false information and to ensure online chatter regarding the incident was kept factual and from official sources.

The incident drew national attention, and on Friday 5 August a joint press conference fronted by Police and Mayor Bernie Wanden was held at the Council Civic Building.

CYCLONE GABRIELLE

Horowhenua braced for the worst when we were informed that Cyclone Gabrielle was heading to Aotearoa shores. In preparation, the CDEM team met on 10 February 2023. Early monitoring suggested that the Upper North and East Coast of the North Island will be most severely impacted by the impending weather system, and Horowhenua could expect

severe gales of between 120km and 140km. The forecast also predicted that the Tararua Range was likely to receive a substantial amount of rain.

The severe wind and heavy rainfall anticipated could've led to fallen trees, power outages, rapidly rising rivers, potential flooding, hazardous driving conditions and possible challenges for our treatment plants. Council and our contractors continued to monitor the situation during the weather warnings, and residents were reminded on ways they could prepare themselves and loved ones for the cyclone through Council's media releases and social media and links to getready.govt.nz were shared.

Fortunately, the weather predictions for Horowhenua were not as feared. Our hearts went out to neighbouring regions who experienced severe impacts to their communities, infrastructure and properties.

After hearing how hard Hawkes Bay in particular was hit, we were quick to send support.

As an initial show of manaakitanga to those impacted by the cyclone, Council staff offered to help with the response and within 24 hours Council deployed staff to help with logistics, operations and welfare across Hawke's Bay and Tararua.

As weather warnings were lifted, three of our experienced Incident Management Team members and two local building inspectors travelled to Central Hawke's Bay to help, bringing with them a truck load of bottled water. More staff, water tankers and resources deployed in the following days.

We were one of eleven Councils adopting another Council as part of 'Adopt a Community', a nationwide initiative which connects councils with regions worst hit by Cyclone Gabrielle – community to community.

Our adopted district – the Tararua District - suffered 1,500 faults to their roading network as a result of Cyclone Gabrielle, including 150 drop outs and more than 25 roads were closed in the Cyclone's wake.

To offer support and aroha to the district, we encouraged Horowhenua residents to give financially if they were in a position to do so to our Mayoral Flood relief fund.

To support our friends and neighbours in both Tararua and Hawkes Bay, the Council hosted 'The Black Out', an initiative with the goal of raising \$100,000 for the districts.

Schools and community organisations were encouraged to 'Black Out' on Friday 31 March, host mufti days for people to wear black and give a gold coin donation. Businesses dressed shop fronts in black, also collecting donations from customers.

To support the cause, participating schools were put in a draw to win a school pool party at the Levin Aquatic Centre.

There was a Black Out street appeal, and residents were encouraged to donate to our Mayoral Relief Fund, the proceeds of which went directly to the Hawkes Bay and Tararua Districts. As part of The Black Out, an evening auction was held on Saturday 1 April at Te Takaretanga o Kura-hau-pō showcasing the district's producers and local businesses.

The event was supported by the Horowhenua District Council, Horowhenua Taste Trail, Lemonface Design, Get Content, and a collective of community members. In total \$108,971.60 was raised.





Destination rebrand launch

Living in Horowhenua, we know of the special experiences, opportunities, relationships, history and outdoors we enjoy while living, working, learning and playing here. We launched a new destination brand in October 2022 which shares these stories with the wider world, highlighting what makes Horowhenua a unique and great place.

The new brand celebrates the unique strengths of our rohe. We worked with Iwi partners and community groups on the project which was many months in the making.

The development of the Horowhenua brand, and the opportunities that follow, became a priority after trends revealed that more people were visiting and spending more money in our district, outshining national averages between 2016 and 2019. To maximise the opportunities of this largely organic growth we reviewed Horowhenua as a destination and the Horowhenua Destination, Development and Management Plan 2020-2030 was born.

To ensure the Horowhenua NZ brand was nurtured to its fullest potential, the rebrand included the development of a new destination website, marketing and paid media strategy to drive visitors to site and new boundary signage.

The overarching kaupapa while redeveloping the brand narrative was the desire to honour our obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi, to be inclusive, to showcase our rich cultural heritage and include the use of Te Reo Māori and local story telling. While Iwi partners contributed to The Destination Management Plan, we also wanted to ensure we engaged appropriately while refreshing the Horowhenua brand.

We invited local businesses, community and interest groups, Iwi/hapū, rangatahi, elected members and tourist operators to participate in a brand workshop in April 2022 as part of the process. Exploring the proposition 'only in the Horowhenua will you find', it was evident that our uniqueness comes from the whenua and its relationship to its people. Chief Executives of Muaūpoko Tribal Authority, Rangitāne and Te Rununga o Raukawa were interviewed. From there, the team learnt about what makes Horowhenua so unique.



Horowhenua has the shortest distance in Aotearoa from the Maunga (mountains) to the Moana (sea). This unique geography has provided for its people and enabled them to thrive and prosper, whether that be tangata whenua, early settlers, market gardeners or the many producers and businesses that call Horowhenua home today.

It was a natural fit that the Horowhenua district brand reflect the enduring and enriching natural elements of the whenua (land). The aim of the brand design was to visually represent Horowhenua – our majestic Tararua Range, and the many puna, wetlands and varying types of wai – be that lakes, rivers, streams or ocean.

The design is closer to the shape of a coastline rather than just a river or stream, linking Levin, Foxton, Manakau, Waikawa, Shannon, Tokomaru and Ōpiki, reflecting on Horowhenua and its place on the West Coast of the Lower North Island.

The tono– or call to action – featured on destination marketing came from the idea that the district embraces and nourishes people, whether they choose to live here or simply visit: Come find yourself: Huraina tō mata. And for those already living here: Ko tēnei whenua, tōku kāinga – This land, my home.

The brand refresh is supported by The Destination Plan which has three key objectives:

1

GROWTH

It is projected that with sufficient investment, Horowhenua destination development could double the contribution of visitor spending to \$200m by 2030 – approximately 10% growth per annum.

2

SUSTAINABILITY

With a focus on developing a thriving and sustainable visitor sector, the aim is that Horowhenua is renowned for its built, natural and cultural heritage and experiences. Driven by collaborative, passionate and proud people and is unique and authentic in its offerings.

3

INCLUSIVITY

That tourism is viewed as an opportunity to enrich the cultural, physical, and mental wellbeing of the Horowhenua hapori (community). And that we develop and apply protocols, grow experiences, and share stories that build visitor understanding of kaitiakitanga – respect for mana whenua and enhanced community capacity to exercise manaakitanga.

When we launched the new brand in October 2022, our boundary signage was given a refresh, and our rohe was advertised in six neighbouring regional tourism organisations and 15 iSites encouraging people to experience all Horowhenua offers.

Local businesses, accommodation, activities and destinations feature on a new website – www.horowhenuanz.co.nz – which was created as part of the brand refresh. Any one from around the world can explore the website to learn about our district's history, culture, events and experiences and plan their visit, or move, to the rohe. We will continue to grow and develop this website, with new listings continuing to be updated and added, and a travel blog is in the works.

Our Communications team distributed 7,000 newly designed visitor information guides to Ruapehu, Whanganui, Manawatū, Hawke's Bay, Taranaki, Wellington and Horowhenua iSites, and engaged with Tourism NZ to ensure Horowhenua job and event listings go direct to our Horowhenuanz.co.nz website.

There are more than 120 listings on the new destination site and tourism stories are shared via social media almost daily to promote those commercial businesses.

As at 30 June 2023 the website had 57,161 views and 26,658 active users explored the site to learn more about our rohe.

Horowhenua NZ Facebook visits increased by 644%, and our reach rose to 357,944. We gained 88 Instagram followers, and our profile visits were up 29% to 1,049.

Visitors spent more money in our rohe than last year. Domestic tourism electronic card transactions increased to \$84.5m year ended June 2023, up 6.29% since launch on 5 October 2022. International tourism electronic card transactions increased to \$5.9m year ended June 2023 up 110% since launch.*

On monthly average for June 2023 saw 6,069 domestic visitors and 198 international visitors visit Horowhenua**.

Under the Horowhenua NZ brand, we are publishing monthly 'What's On' event listings in the Horowhenua Chronicle, and while sporting Horowhenua NZ merchandise, Council staff promoted the brand at popular annual event the New Zealand Rural Games in Palmerston North.

Financed by Three Waters Better Off Funding, a 12-month fixed term Destination Management Lead position has been created and will commence September 2023 to focus on evolving the brand and providing recommendations on an effective business model and governance structures and seeking funding opportunities.

* Sources MBIE <https://teic.mbie.govt.nz/ste/regions/relianceOnTourism/#indicatorSection2>

** <https://tourismnz.dataventures.nz/>





Leading the way in Community Connectedness

One of our Community Outcomes is Strong Communities. We know that being connected to your community is vital to wellbeing. We are committed to building an even more connected and inclusive Horowhenua where all residents feel valued and have a sense of belonging.

Throughout the year, through events, community partnerships and our facilities and places we celebrated and brought people together to strengthen our hapori.

We value the diversity of our people and want to help them thrive and live positive and healthy lives here in Horowhenua.

During this financial year we have shone on the national stage in connecting employers and employees through the Mayor's Taskforce for Jobs (MTFJ), and welcoming refugees to our rohe.

Mayor's Taskforce for Jobs

Mayor's Taskforce for Jobs (MTFJ) is a nationwide partnership between Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) and the Ministry of Social Development that supports young people into suitable training, employment and mentoring opportunities, helping remove barriers to employment or training.

Horowhenua MTFJ, led by Mayor Bernie Wanden, creates new employment opportunities for our rangatahi. It has proven a valuable initiative since its inception in Horowhenua in 2021, achieving results beyond the expectations of the contract, leading Aotearoa in terms of job placements and changing many lives.

Through targeted initiatives and partnerships with local businesses the team were successful in filling more than 100 new job

opportunities for this financial year. Thirty-nine people were placed in the construction industry, 20 in primary industries, eight in hospitality, four in retail and four in government, three in health and aged care, three in education and training, two in arts and recreation and the remaining 17 across other industries.

The programme focuses mainly on young people aged between 16 and 24 who are not engaged in education, employment or training; however the programme is designed to help anyone who is disadvantaged in the job market.

Our programme coordinators work with clients individually to determine their needs and support them in gaining the skills and confidence to get into work or training. This support includes picking clients up and taking them to appointments and interviews. It involves supporting clients to achieve their driver's licence, access extra training or qualifications, write their CVs, prepare for job interviews, access counselling, and pay for work uniforms, footwear and tools. The coordinators work with their clients to determine the type of work that would suit them and then contact relevant employers to advocate on their behalf.

Eighty percent of all entry level jobs are not advertised, so our MTFJ Coordinators have spent time building relationships with local business owners who they reach out to when they have a suitable candidate. This is a relationship that

is built on trust and that is why it is imperative to find the right match for both the employer and employee.

Once the clients are in work, they receive six months post placement support to help them settle into work life, with the MTFJ team supporting the client to manage any challenges they might experience in their new environment.

We recognise a thriving economy is essential for the wellbeing of our rohe, and our local businesses play a vital role in sustaining our economy. Like many businesses nationwide, our local employers are not immune to the current shortage of staff. Through MTFJ, rural and small businesses have an opportunity to cultivate local talent with a deep understanding of the community to join their team. Businesses can receive assistance with recruitment, training and wage subsidies to help offset part of the cost of onboarding and training new staff.

In May 2023, the national MTFJ programme received \$18 million over two years, securing multi-year funding from Central Government in

this year's budget announcement to ensure that the programme can be delivered into the future.

Welcoming Communities Refugee Resettlement

Talk to any visitor to Aotearoa New Zealand and the first things they are likely to comment on are the beautiful scenery and the friendly locals. Kiwis are seen as friendly, hospitable and inclusive – qualities highlighted by Welcoming Communities Te Waharoa ki ngā Hāpori.

There are 34 local councils (including Horowhenua District Council) and five local boards working with their communities to implement Welcoming Communities, a programme that puts the welcome mat out to newcomers: recent migrants, former refugees and international students.

Communities that make newcomers feel welcome are likely to enjoy better social outcomes, and stronger economic growth. In this environment, everyone is able to participate in the economic,

civic, cultural and social life of the community. Building connections between locals and newcomers means everyone feels included and knows they belong.

The Welcoming Communities Programme uses an outcomes-based Standard made up of eight outcome areas important to creating a welcoming and inclusive environment.

The communities, councils and agencies involved in Welcoming Communities co-designed the Standard together. New Zealanders also had input through a nationwide consultation in 2017.

The Standard enables the participating councils to:

- benchmark their policies, services, programmes and activities
- identify where and how further efforts could be directed through their Welcoming Plan activities
- assess progress over time
- seek accreditation as a 'Welcoming Community'.





Councils who chose to participate received funding of \$50,000 a year to roll out a Welcoming Communities programme. We successfully applied for funding in 2020 and received three years of funding to June 2023. The Welcoming Communities framework aligned well and was instrumental to support the wider community with the Levin Refugee Resettlement Programme.

In February 2019 Levin was selected as a designated refugee resettlement town. Unfortunately due to Covid restrictions, the arrival of refugees was initially postponed. However, in October 2022 we welcomed our first refugee family to Levin, and a further 70 to 80 Colombian refugees arrived by the end of the financial year.

In anticipation of the arrival of the refugees, we initiated a collaborative effort involving Iwi, community partners and various agencies.

Together we embarked on a journey to understand, discuss and address any concerns and challenges that might arise. This innovative and community driven approach was distinct, setting us apart from other councils and regions, to collaborate to learn about and talk through concerns and challenges. This unique community-based approach was something no other council or region had taken. The Refugee Resettlement Network was established and met monthly from May 2022 through to October 2022 when the first Colombian former refugee families arrived. This group continues to meet now on a six weekly basis.

The Welcoming Communities framework and Refugee Resettlement meetings have been integral to supporting the transition for Former Refugees from Colombia to their new home here in Horowhenua. They have allowed

everyone in the group to foster relationships and stay connected, talk through challenges, provide a safe space for real, honest and courageous conversations and to utilise networks to the benefit of the new families' arriving.

Thirty community and social service agencies and groups have been involved with the Refugee Resettlement process, including NZ Red Cross, Immigration NZ, Muaūpoko Tribal Authority, Te Whatu Ora, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Social Development, English Language Partners NZ, Literacy Aotearoa, UCOL, Police, Corrections, local schools, colleges and other local support or services.

The group had many things to consider before the first refugees arrived. Discussion centred on how to prepare for the refugees, the specific and unique needs of the group, and how we will help them



get used to the New Zealand way of life. The group aimed to ensure the refugees had the best start so that they settle well, are supported and feel like they belong.

We had to decide how all the different agencies and groups could work together and make sure everyone was on the same page. We also had to think about the hapori and sensitivity toward current community members without homes, living in poor housing conditions and those struggling to access social and health care.

We discussed educating the hapori about refugees' needs, language, and culture and the benefit refugees bring to the rohe. During these meetings we learnt from other refugees about their experiences, and we also learnt from experts in various relevant fields and other resettlement areas and what went well for them and what did not.

The programme was so successful, that representatives from the Refugee Resettlement Network were invited to present at the National Refugee Resettlement Forum in July 2023, an annual event facilitated by the Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment. The Forum provides refugee resettlement stakeholders with the opportunity to actively engage on strategic refugee resettlement issues. Government agencies, non-government organisations, service providers, former refugee communities and international organisations participate in the Forum.

We were able to share what made our Welcoming Communities Programme so unique– the whole community approach, embedding Māori tikanga into the programme, putting the new families at the centre of the programme, having a can-do attitude, going the extra mile, and learning from others.

We shared success stories particularly in the education field. The programme was able to acquire new Chromebooks for students, and school aged children received free internet for a year plus 30 hours of digital literacy training. Six Spanish speaking teacher aides were placed in schools, and cultural competency training and training on the refugee journey was provided for schools. Additional in class and after hours support was also provided for students.

We also shared stories of community support. Barista training was made available, bike safety and baby gear was donated, fridges loaned, houses were blessed, people attended Spanish classes, and positive refugee stories were shared through photography exhibition 'Mementos' at Te Takeretanga o Kura-hau-pō. We also hosted WEAVE, a multicultural event celebrating the diverse cultures in Horowhenua.

We were able to help arrange mobility passes, driver's licences, prescriptive glasses, jobs from

supportive employers, first aid training and mental health capacity training.

Our new Colombian families reciprocated the kindness they received by getting involved in community events in which they put on concerts and cooked Colombian food.

Our challenges were also highlighted at the National Refugee Resettlement Forum. As it was the first time refugees have been settled in the rohe, and there was learnings and confusion around who was responsible for what. We experienced some communication crossovers and duplication of work. Through the process we gained a better understanding of other organisations processes, while tackling the issue around lack of housing, and finding financial support for refugees.

We brought along two of the recently settled refugees to share their stories at the Forum of how they have successfully settled into Levin, thriving under our manaakitanga and contributing to not only the wider hapori but also the Welcoming Communities programme.

The next step is to empower Former Refugees to drive and determine their own outcomes and future here in Horowhenua, along with developing a Welcoming Communities Plan with other community ethnic and cultural leaders. A plan that will ensure collective and shared responsibility for the outcomes.

Better Off Funding

In July 2021 Central Government announced a comprehensive Three Waters support package, with an initial tranche of \$500M made available for councils to apply to. Local Government could use this funding to invest in community wellbeing initiatives that would contribute to their communities and enhance the environment.

We saw this as a great opportunity to bring some projects forward and undertake others which we would have otherwise been unable to do. In August 2022, we asked Officers to identify projects that met the criteria and participate in a 'dragons' den' event in which Elected Members formed a panel to hear project proposals. Eleven projects were deemed as having significant benefits to our community and environment and were included in a Better Off Funding application.

In December 2022, we were notified that our Better Off Funding Application of \$4.99M was successful, and a funding agreement was signed in early 2023. An initial 10% of funding was received in March 2023 to allow the projects to progress.

When the Better Off Funding was announced there was initially an additional \$1.5B to be made available in July 2024. We were making plans to work with our iwi

partners to apply to the second tranche of funding, however, in April 2023 Central Government announced a reset of the Three Waters Reform, and this funding was discontinued. The announcement had no bearing on the already allocated tranche 1 of Better Off Funding.

Projects to Receive Better Off Funding

LEVIN TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT

The Levin Town Centre Development will create a new town centre, deliver new housing, remove high risk earthquake-prone buildings, enable a night time economy and promote a vibrant retail and food space, areas for public congregation, and establish prominent east-west connections to key community spaces.

The Better Off Funding will be used to purchase properties which will enable the project to start earlier than planned.

MANAKAU DOMAIN UPGRADE AND SHARED PATHWAY

Working with the local community groups and sports clubs, this project aims to upgrade the sportsground, replace the public toilets, develop a new playground and install a shared pathway along Waikawa Beach Road.

LAKE PUNAHAU DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Working in a co-governance partnership with the Lake Horowhenua Trust and Lake Domain Board. This project focuses on the preparation and delivery of the Lake Punahau Development Plan, including a Reserve Management Plan. The plan will provide a framework for the delivery of a

strong, long term outcome for the health of Lake Punahau, and can incorporate the growth impacts for the Levin Township and how it interacts with this hugely important water body.

WAITĀRERE BEACH SURF CLUB DEVELOPMENT

This funding will allow the development of additional works that was not included in the original plans and funding, for the rebuild of the Waitārere Beach Surf Club. These include:

- Upgrades to the parking facility
- Upgrades to the public toilets and infrastructure
- Installation of BBQ units
- Landscaping of the area
- Signage to promote the local ecology and cultural significance
- Removal of exotic species and native planting.

TE MAIRE PARK DEVELOPMENT

This project focuses on the development of the southern end of Te Maire Park in Shannon using concept plans that have been developed in close cooperation with local Iwi and the Shannon Progressive Association.

It will establish a shared path between the park and town centre and create a recreational space for reflection and relaxation with landscaping, seating, BBQ and a pergola, to enhance use and understanding of the significance of flax and water in the area.

TRIG MOUNTAIN BIKE TRACK IMPROVEMENTS

Mountain biking is increasing in popularity and Levin has a track that could be a national attraction. However, this track was damaged during storms several years ago. Fixing this track and adding new tracks will double the rideable area at the Trig and make it suitable to hold national events, attracting visitors whose spending in the rohe will contribute to our economy.

SPOTLIGHT ON TRIG MOUNTAIN BIKE IMPROVEMENTS

This project has made good progress and will be led by volunteers from the Levin Mountain Bike Club. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to deliver on the project has recently been agreed upon and signed by the Council and the Club to allow the Trig mountain bike track rebuild and improvements project to begin.

The Club has extensive experience building mountain bike tracks at the Trig using volunteer labour and we are confident that they have demonstrated that they have the expertise and capacity to deliver the project.

The funding was allocated to this project will enable them to machine build an extension to the top ridgeline track from the corner of Trig Road and Grey Bush Road to Stag Road, hand build new tracks from the new ridgeline track to the eastern side of the ridge and rebuild and improve existing tracks on the western side of the hill.

The new tracks will be either grade three or four which will cater for beginners through to advanced riders. This is a two year project that will be completed by April 2025, and the Club is required to regularly report its progress to the Council. Once complete it will be a welcome enhancement to an already well utilised facility and will contribute to the vitality of our rohe and economy.

EVENTS AND DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

In October 2022, Council launched its refreshed brand that celebrates our district's unique strengths and enables the Horowhenua to realise its potential.

In conjunction, Council commissioned the development of an Events Strategy, to align with the new brand and provide direction for event attraction, management and growth in Horowhenua.

The recommendations of the Strategy included funding a position that could build a tool kit of shared

resources and work as a concierge for event organisers. The Better Off Funding also allows for the establishment of a contestable major events fund and operational costs to invest in flags, signage and other events related capital.

The funding will allow us to recruit a suitable person to fill a Destination Management Lead position and implement recommendations from the Strategy.

FOXTON AQUATIC CENTRE

Better Off Funding will also contribute to the costs of the current rebuild of the Foxton Pool.

Rural Halls Drinking Water

We have a number of rural halls in our rohe which are a critical asset in rural communities, as they provide a community gathering and connection place for residents. In most instances these facilities are not connected to the main Council water supplies or lack adequate wastewater systems.

This project will give rural halls resiliency by upgrading the provision of drinking water and wastewater collection and processing.

LEVINABLE PROJECT

We have worked with stakeholders to develop a proposal for a fully inclusive and accessible playground known as 'Levinable' on a local Council reserve. The reserve is centrally located and establishment of an accessible playground on this reserve would result in the creation of a unique asset for the rohe.

Better Off Funding means we can turn what are currently concept designs into detailed designs and work with partners to plan, apply for funding for, and develop the project.

FOXTON COURTHOUSE

Te Awahou/Foxton is the oldest town settlement in Manawātū region, a town of significant historical importance including pre-European settlement history. The Foxton Courthouse operated from 1929-1971 before it was used as a museum from 1975. It closed in

2013 after the building was identified as earthquake-prone. This project will include a high level feasibility study on the future of the Courthouse to be used for funding applications, the completion of an updated strengthening solutions and pricing proposal and commencement of any upgrade work which can be completed within the funding envelope.

LEVIN TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT

\$2,000,000

FOXTON POOL REDEVELOPMENT

\$500,000

TE MAIRE PARK DEVELOPMENT

\$500,000

WAITĀRERE BEACH SURF CLUB DEVELOPMENT

\$500,000

MANUKAU DOMAIN SHARED PATHWAYS

\$400,000

RURAL HALLS DRINKING AND WASTEWATER

\$400,000

EVENTS AND DESTINATION MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

\$350,000

TRIG MOUNTAIN BIKE TRACK IMPROVEMENTS

\$100,000

FOXTON COURTHOUSE REDEVELOPMENT

\$80,000

LAKE PUNAHOU DEVELOPMENT

\$80,000

LEVINABLE PROJECT

\$80,000

SUMMARY ACTIVITY UPDATES



The following pages provide you with a summary of activity information contained in the Full Annual Report. For detailed information on an activity please refer to the Full Annual Report.



Ngā Ara Whenua Land Transport

Description of activity

The Land Transport Activity aims to provide and maintain roads, footpaths and cycle paths across the rohe (district) that meet the needs of our hapori (community).

Key insights

After significant landslips impacted Gladstone Road, we completed a new 1.6 km section of Gladstone Road including two new bridges. This was a challenging project overcoming weather, budget, and ecological considerations. We were grateful for support from Waka Kotahi and our local community engagement.

Initiated work on the Speed Management Plan. Our first Speed Management Plan will cover ten years from 2024 to 2034.

We received provisional approval for just over \$2.8M funding from the Transport Choices package utilising the Climate Emergency Response Fund in March 2023 for development of active transport improvements.

THIS ACTIVITY CONTRIBUTED TO THE FOLLOWING COMMUNITY OUTCOMES



WHAKATAUKI

**Manaaki whenua
Manaaki tangata
Haere whakamua**

Care for the land
Care for the people
Go forward

5.4%

Last year 5.4% of the sealed local road network was resurfaced.

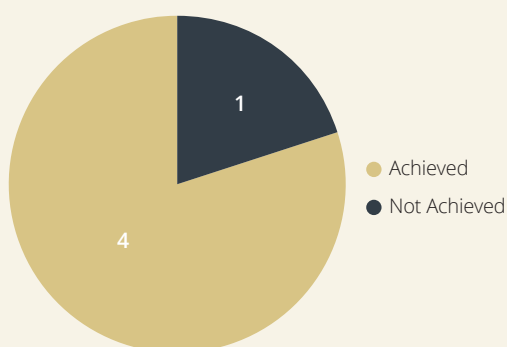
4%

Of the footpaths network are poor or very poor condition footpaths

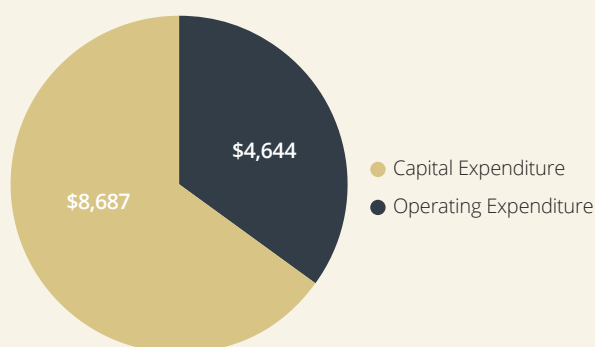
12%

Of the footpath network is in excellent condition.

How well did we perform against our Performance measures



Our investment (\$000)



Te Para Totoka Solid Waste

Description of activity

The Solid Waste Group of Activities consists of Council providing services to collect and safely dispose of residential and commercial solid waste. Council also provides education to our hapori on how to reduce solid waste to landfill.

Key insights

Elected Members decided through the Long Term Plan Amendment to close the Levin Landfill.

A weighbridge was installed at Foxton Transfer Station.

Council contracted Enviroschools and Zero Waste Education to facilitate sustainability projects and modules for the schools in our rohe.

THIS ACTIVITY CONTRIBUTED TO THE FOLLOWING COMMUNITY OUTCOMES



Strong
Communities



Vibrant
Economy



Outstanding
Environment



Fit for purpose
Infrastructure

WHAKATAUKĪ

Toitū te marae a
Tāne Mahuta

Toitū te marae
a Tangaroa

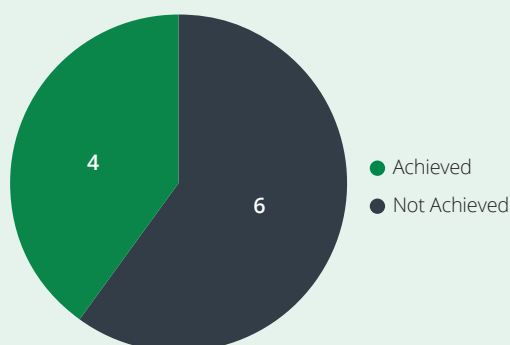
Toitū te tangata

If the land is well
and the sea is well,
the people will thrive

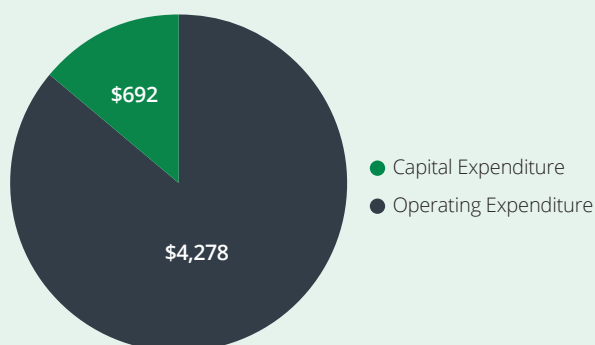
4 EVENTS

Council attended 4 events to promote waste minimisation.

How well did we perform against our Performance measures



Our investment (\$000)



Te Wai Ua

Stormwater

Description of activity

As part of the Stormwater Activity, Council provides and maintains a stormwater system that aims to remove water from the roading corridor, and in some cases residential and commercial properties, to reduce the occurrence of flooding during rainfall events.

Key insights

Stormwater continues to be a challenge for the Council as we work towards getting better information about flooding events, reviewing our resourcing and relationships with our contractors.

Established the internal 'Stormforce Group' to work collaboratively together on resolving stormwater planning and issues.

Significant progress has been made to the Coley Pond stormwater detention pond and wetland which will service the increased stormwater discharge from the residential growth in the North East Levin area.

Developed the Horowhenua Lakeside Master Plan which allows us to view, on one page, all the different Council workstreams that impact Horowhenua Lake (Punahau).

THIS ACTIVITY CONTRIBUTED TO THE FOLLOWING COMMUNITY OUTCOMES



WHAKATAUKĪ

Matariki tāpuapua

The pooling waters of Matariki. (Relating to Waipunarangi the star that associates with rain).

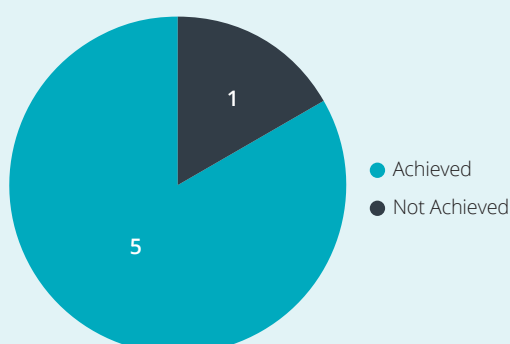
13,261

There are 13,261 stormwater connections as at 1 July 2022

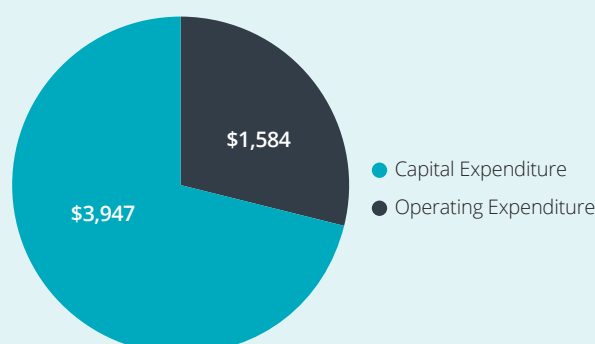
40%

40% of respondents were satisfied with our stormwater service an increase from 35% the previous year

How well did we perform against our Performance measures



Our investment (\$000)



Te Wai Para Wastewater

Description of activity

The Wastewater Treatment Activity aims to protect human health by removing human effluent and trade waste from urban properties and treating it before discharging it back into the environment.

The Council owns and operates several schemes:

Levin – Screening, sedimentation, biological filtration and oxidation
- To land (kanuka and manuka plantation)

Waitāre – Oxidation ponds - To land (pine plantation)

Shannon – Oxidation ponds - To land (Velvaleen farm)

Foxton – Oxidation ponds - To adjacent farm for irrigation

Foxton Beach – Oxidation ponds - To land (pasture)

Tokomaru – Oxidation ponds - To land (wetland)

Key insights

Actively worked towards making big decisions on the Tokomaru, Levin and Foxton wastewater treatment plants.

Kings Drive wastewater pipes are deteriorating; works are underway to replace these, and work is expected to finish September 2023.

During the financial year we finalised planning for wastewater services for Tara-Ika and this started construction.

We are looking at three different options for the Tokomaru Wastewater Treatment plant to ensure it can.

THIS ACTIVITY CONTRIBUTED TO THE FOLLOWING COMMUNITY OUTCOMES



WHAKATAUKI

Tiakina te Wai para kia Ora ai te Whenua

Look after the wastewater
so the land is healthy

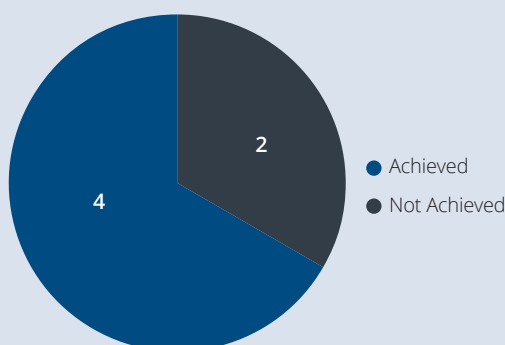
\$392K

\$392K was spent on transporting sludge from our wastewater treatment plant to Bonny Glen Landfill

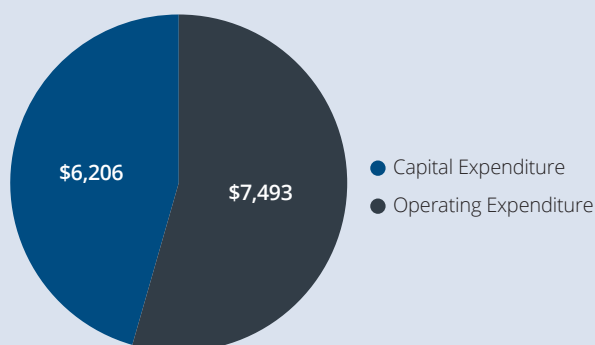
3hr 56min

3hr 56min is the average time to resolve a blockage

How well did we perform against our Performance measures



Our investment (\$000)



Te Whakarato Wai Māori Water Supply

Description of activity

The Water Supply Activity aims to provide a safe and reliable supply of water to urban (residential, industrial and commercial) and agreed rural properties, which adjoin urban areas.

Key insights

Tokomaru Water Treatment Plant – More frequent wet weather events mean on occasion we have had to shut down the Tokomaru WTP. This is due to higher turbidity (muddiness) from the river and because we do not have sufficient treated water storage to handle these issues. This means that water is sometimes trucked in from another source. A new upgrade is being planned to alleviate this issue.

As part of setting the Long Term Plan Amendment, we have agreed to implement district-wide water metering to understand and reduce water leakage. Leakage means we are paying to store and treat water that ends up being lost through water leakage in pipes.

THIS ACTIVITY CONTRIBUTED TO THE FOLLOWING COMMUNITY OUTCOMES



Strong
Communities



Vibrant
Economy



Outstanding
Environment



Fit for purpose
Infrastructure

WHAKATAUKĪ

Ko te wai te ora ngā mea katoa

Water is the life giver of all things.

68% CUSTOMER SATISFACTION RATING

Customer Satisfaction rating achieved this year is 68%. A decrease of 5% from the previous year.

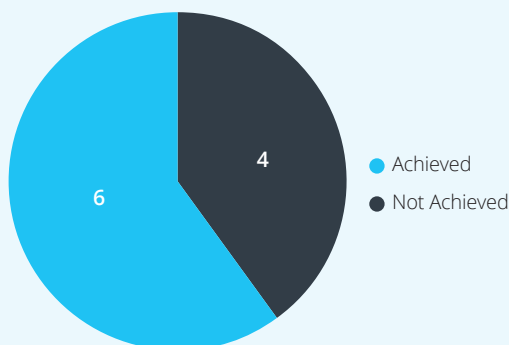
94%

94% of hydrants tested passed the Fire Fighting flow test

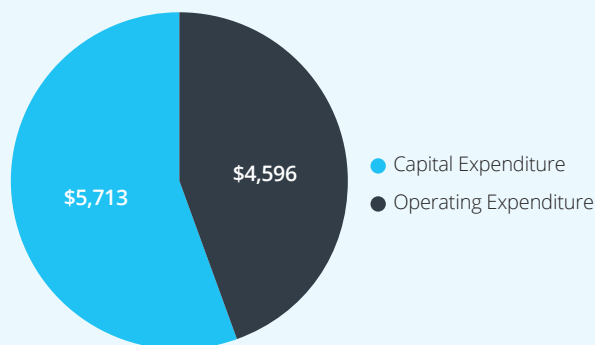
289L PERSON/DAY

The average water consumption across the district is 289L/person/day.

How well did we perform against our Performance measures



Our investment (\$000)



Ngā Taiwhanga ā-Rēhia Community Facilities

Description of activity

The Community Facilities Group of Activities is made up of a number of sub-activities which aim to provide passive and active amenities for our hapori (community) to utilise.

The Community Facilities and Services Group of Activities includes:

- Aquatic Centres
- Recreation Community Centres and Libraries.

Key insights

Started the rebuild of the Foxton Pool due to be finished summer 2023.

New Jubilee Park Splash Pad completed and opened in December 2022 which has been immensely popular since opening.

We were proud of the way that we worked alongside rangatahi in the design and renovations at the Youth Space. The Youth Space was completed in June 2023 and is a hugely popular with our teenagers.

Steam train adventure organised for summer school holiday reading programme.

THIS ACTIVITY CONTRIBUTED TO THE FOLLOWING COMMUNITY OUTCOMES



Strong
Communities



Vibrant
Economy



Outstanding
Environment



Fit for purpose
Infrastructure



Partnership
with
Tangata Whenua

WHAKATAUKI

**Ko ngā pae tawhiti, whaia
kia tata. Ko ngā pae tata,
whakamaua kia tina**

The potential for
tomorrow depends
on what we do today

1913 SWIM SCHOOL
PARTICIPANTS

Participants in swim school classes

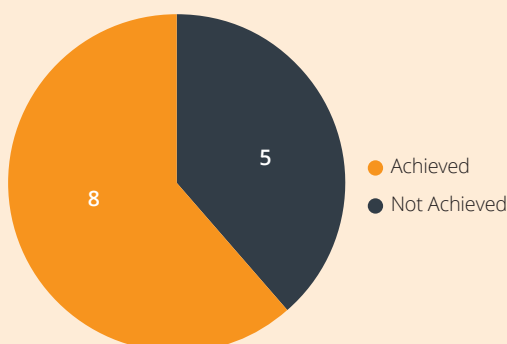
\$5.7M

To rebuild Foxton Pool

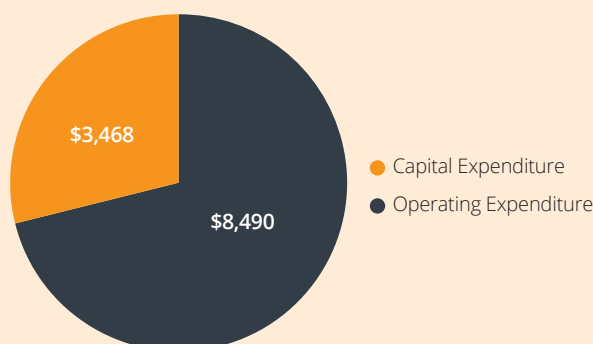
229,007

Items loaned from our libraries

How well did we perform against our Performance measures



Our investment (\$000)



Tūāhanga Hapori Community Infrastructure

Description of activity

The Community Infrastructure Group of Activities consists of a number of sub-activities with the goal to provide passive and active recreational amenities for our hapori to use and enjoy.

The Community Infrastructure Group of Activities includes:

- Reserves and Beautification
- Urban cleansing
- Public Halls
- Public Toilets
- Sports Grounds
- Cemeteries

Key insights

During the year we renewed our community assets, replacing smaller items and completing larger projects like the Hank Edwards toilet refurbishment at Waikawa Beach. We worked closely with the hapori for this project and incorporated community requests for a new shelter and BBQ area.

Donnelly Park Netball Courts now features three new tennis and two new basketball courts, alongside 10 new netball courts.

The construction of the new purpose built Levin-Waitārere Surf Life Saving Club started in November 2022 and is on track to be completed in November 2023.

We are supporting a community group who have proposed a Butterfly Pathway. They are reviewing and updating design plans for the pathway.

THIS ACTIVITY CONTRIBUTED TO THE
FOLLOWING COMMUNITY OUTCOMES



Strong
Communities



Vibrant
Economy



Outstanding
Environment



Fit for purpose
Infrastructure



Partnership
with
Tangata Whenua

WHAKATAUKI

Me mahi tahi tātou mo te oranga o te katoa

We should work together for
the wellbeing of everyone

12,000 SPINIFEX
PLANTS
500 PINGAO
PLANTS

12,000 spinifex plants and 500 pingao plants planted with coastal communities during community planting days to promote coastal resiliency.

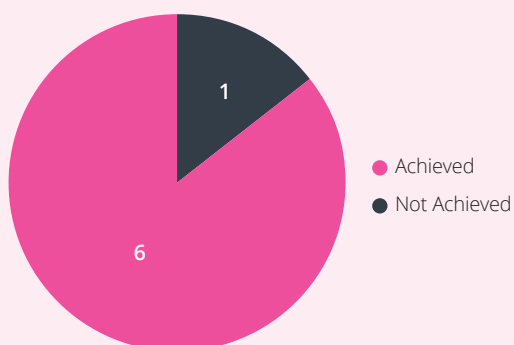
265

Our three community halls were booked 265 times averaging 10 times a fortnight

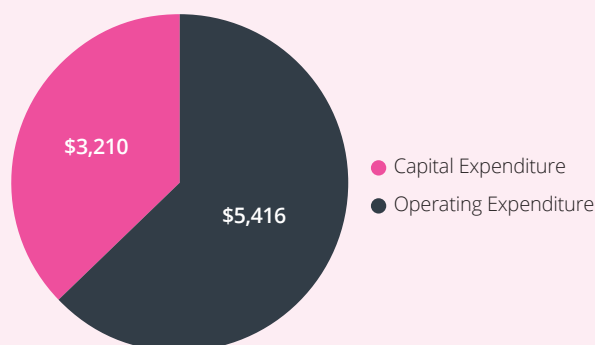
\$1,989M

invested to renew community assets

How well did we perform against our Performance measures



Our investment (\$000)



Ngā Rawa Property

Description of activity

The Property Activity is vital for supporting all of Council's functions that rely on land and buildings. The Council owns various property assets that serve both its operations and the wellbeing of our hapori (community). In 2015, the Council adopted a Property Strategy, aiming to assess its property assets districtwide in relation to their importance to core Council functions. This evaluation informs decisions on maintaining, investing in, or selling current assets. The Strategy evaluates ten key criteria, including strategic importance and maintenance costs, such as earthquake strengthening, among other factors.

Key insights

During the financial year we sold \$1.7M worth of property. This was significantly less than our target of \$4.1M set during the 2021-41 Long Term Plan.

During the financial year, six Council buildings were issued Earthquake Prone Building Notices.

THIS ACTIVITY CONTRIBUTED TO THE FOLLOWING COMMUNITY OUTCOMES



Strong
Communities



Vibrant
Economy



Outstanding
Environment



Fit for purpose
Infrastructure



Partnership
with
Tangata Whenua

WHAKATAUKĪ

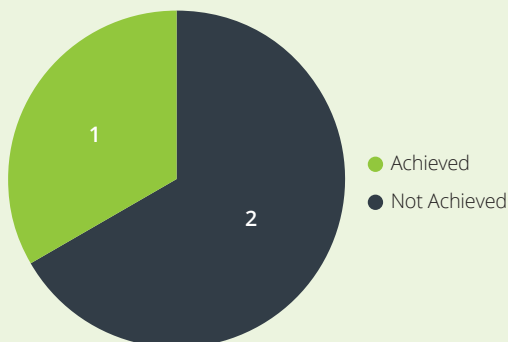
**Hei āwhina i te hapori,
ka ora ai te hapori.**

Helping the hapori
to thrive.

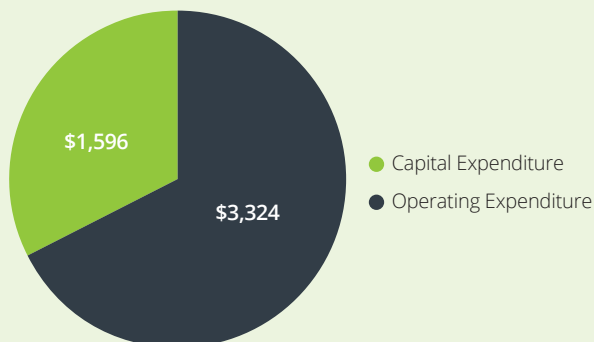
Key insights

**4 NEW COMMUNITY LEASES
WERE GRANTED THIS YEAR**

How well did we perform against our
Performance measures



Our investment (\$000)



Te Tautāwhi i te Hapori

Community Support

Description of activity

These activities provide for the social and economic wellbeing of our hapori (community). Combined, they support our hapori, to drive positive social and economic development outcomes, ensure our hapori can respond to and recover from an emergency event, access community grants and funding, and visitor information within the rohe. The Community Support Group of Activities includes the following:

- Emergency management
- Community Engagement
- Visitor Information
- Destination Management
- Economic Development

Key insights

Muaūpoko Tribal Authority, Council, Youth Services, and OnBoard Skate Inc. worked in partnership to organise Taitoko/Horowhenua Vibes, which were held weekly/fortnightly for youth across the rohe.

Mayor's Taskforce for Jobs (MTFJ) and Welcoming Communities were very successful in bringing our rangatahi into jobs and welcoming refugees into our communities. We were also to exceed our targets and achieving national recognition for their success, which is great for our hapori.

During the financial year we transitioned from yearly satisfaction surveys for all activities. We adopted 10 smaller surveys which will make sure we have continuous feedback on services and facilities.

The Youth Empowerment Project (YEP) engages young people through community based education, mentoring, employment readiness, and enrichment programming to help them and strengthen ties to whānau and hapori. Through this programme we have enhanced youth engagement.

A highlight of this was the third Uenuku Ball. Uenuku (which translates to 'rainbow') allows rainbow youth and their allies to come together, bond and find a sense of belonging. This connection empowers those who may have previously felt disconnected to meet with like-minded people, find support and use their voice for positive change and personal growth.

THIS ACTIVITY CONTRIBUTED TO THE FOLLOWING COMMUNITY OUTCOMES



WHAKATAUKI

Mahia i runga i te rangimārie me te ngākau māhaki

With a peaceful mind and respectful heart, we will always get the best results

750 PEOPLE ATTENDED THE AGE ON THE GO EXPO

750 people attended the Age on the Go expo (an annual event showcasing services and technology available for the older people) which had 70 stalls

10 BUSINESS AFTER 5 EVENTS

The Horowhenua Company Limited held 10 Business After 5 events last financial Year

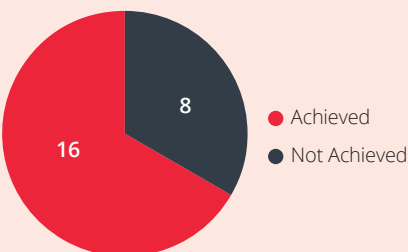
66 STAFF

66 staff have completed their intermediate Emergency Operations Centre 2 day training

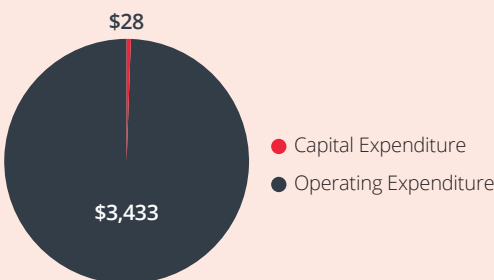
6051

6051 collective responses to our annual satisfaction surveys

How well did we perform against our Performance measures



Our investment (\$000)



Ngā Ratonga Whakariterite ā-Ture Regulatory Services

Description of activity

The Regulatory Services Group of Activities provides advice, consenting services, assessment, education, compliance and enforcement. This Group of Activities aims to protect the health and safety of our hāpori and the environment they live within. The Regulatory Services Group of Activities includes the following activities:

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Resource Consenting | 6. Building Compliance |
| 2. Building Consenting | 7. Resource Management Compliance |
| 3. Environmental Health | 8. Animal Control |
| 4. Alcohol Licensing | 9. General Regulatory Services |
| 5. Parking Enforcement | |

Key insights

Over the financial year our teams have gained more competencies in consenting, which along with decreased demand has meant building applications are being processed in a more timely manner.

External market forces have had a significant impact on the volume of consenting required which has also assisted in improving timeframes. Demand has decreased following a very strong period of demand, impacting the overall financial position.

Our dog registration campaign boosted online renewals, increasing online registrations from 1,620 to 2,195 by July 2022.

We developed and implemented coaching session to help our businesses to understand their compliance obligations.

THIS ACTIVITY CONTRIBUTED TO THE
FOLLOWING COMMUNITY OUTCOMES



Strong
Communities



Vibrant
Economy



Outstanding
Environment



Fit for purpose
Infrastructure

WHAKATAUKI

I orea te tuatara ka patu ki waho

A problem is solved
by continuing to find
solutions.

266 NEW DWELLING
UNITS

New dwelling units were consented this financial year compared to 394 the previous year.

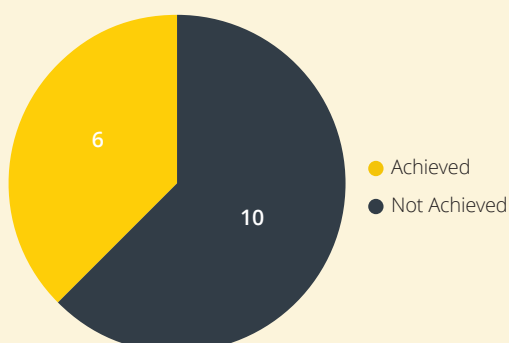
32 BUILDING CONSENTS
WITHDRAWN

Building consents applications were withdrawn this financial year, 5% of total applications.

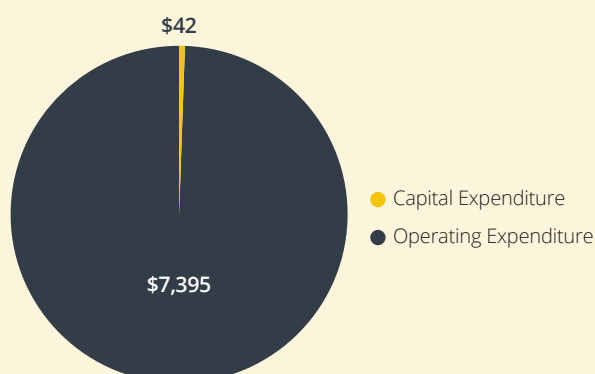
6162 DOGS
REGISTERED

Dogs were registered at the end of the financial year.

How well did we perform against our Performance measures



Our investment



Te Whakakanohi me te Hautū i te Hapori

Representation and Community Leadership

Description of activity

This Group of Activities comprises of how Council meets its responsibility to represent the hapori (community) as well as provide leadership to the hapori and how Council will involve the hapori in decision making processes and long term strategic planning.

Key insights

Council completed a Long Term Plan Amendment with key topics being the Rates Review, Levin Landfill, and upgrading our water programme.

Local Government Elections held on 8 October 2022 were successfully delivered, fulfilling our legislative duties and responsibilities.

Starting in March 2023 monthly opportunities have been provided available for our hapori to come and have a cuppa and a chat with a Councillor, about local topics that are important to them.

We're keeping abreast of central government reforms and making submissions where relevant to our rohe (district).

How well did we perform against our Performance measures

THIS ACTIVITY CONTRIBUTED TO THE FOLLOWING COMMUNITY OUTCOMES



Strong Communities



Vibrant Economy



Outstanding Environment



Fit for purpose Infrastructure



Partnership with Tangata Whenua

WHAKATAUKĪ

Mā pango, mā whero ka oti ai te mahi.

If the leaders work together with the community, the job will get done.

350 PEOPLE ENGAGED

350 people engaged with Council at the LTPA in-person events

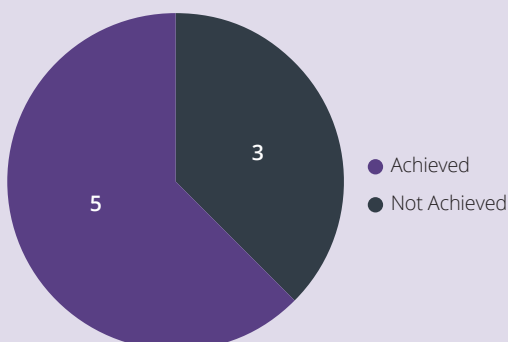
124 LGOIMA REQUESTS

124 LGOIMA requests received
85% were processed on time

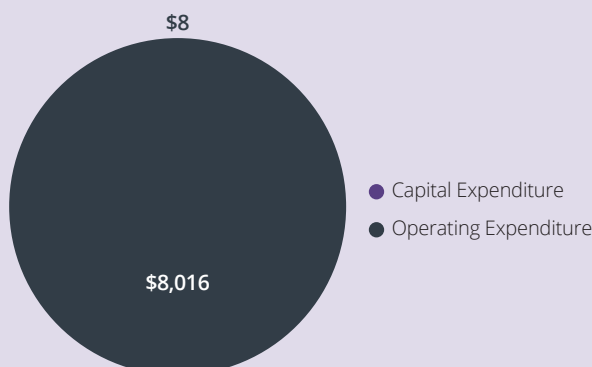
45.07%

Voter turnout for the 2022 elections was 45.07% the 5th highest for provincial councils across New Zealand.

How well did we perform against our Performance measures



Our investment (\$000)





NGĀ PĀRONGO PŪTEA



SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS



Summary of Financial Statements

These summary statements cover Horowhenua District Council (Council) and the Horowhenua District Council Group comprising Council and the Shannon Community Development Trust (Group).

The primary objective of Horowhenua District Council is to provide local infrastructure and local public service and perform regulatory functions for the community for social benefit rather than making a financial return.

Accordingly, Council has designated itself as a public benefit entity (PBE) for financial reporting purposes.

The full financial statements of Council and the Group have been prepared in accordance with and are fully compliant with Tier 1 PBE accounting standards.

Council's summary annual report complies with PBE FRS 43 Summary Financial Statements.

The financial statements are presented in New Zealand dollars and all values are rounded to the nearest thousand dollars (\$000s).

The summary financial statements of Council are for the year ended 30 June 2023 and do not provide a complete understanding as the financial statements in the Annual Report 2022/23. The full annual report was authorised for issue by Council on 25th October 2023.

Copies are available from Council on request (refer to back page for contact details).

Summary Statement of Comprehensive Revenue and Expense

	Council Actual \$000 30 June 2023	Council Budget \$000 30 June 2023	Council Actual \$000 30 June 2022	Group Actual \$000 30 June 2023	Group Actual \$000 30 June 2022
Revenue					
Rates revenue	47,815	47,227	43,408	47,815	43,408
Other revenue	27,067	28,835	28,536	27,083	28,543
Total income	74,883	76,062	71,944	74,898	71,951
Expenditure					
Finance costs	5,508	3,467	3,088	5,508	3,088
Other expenses	75,653	65,597	70,397	76,222	70,404
Total expenses	81,161	69,064	73,485	81,170	73,492
Operating Surplus / (deficit) before taxation	(6,278)	6,998	(1,543)	(6,273)	(1,541)
Income Tax Expense	-	-	-	-	-
Operating Surplus / (deficit) after taxation	(6,278)	6,998	(1,543)	(6,273)	(1,541)
Write back of revaluation losses on land & buildings	-	-	-	-	-
Surplus/ (Deficit) attributable to: Horowhenua District Council	(6,278)	6,998	(1,543)	(6,273)	(1,541)
Other Comprehensive Income					
Gain / (loss) on infrastructural assets revaluations	(15)	-	43,213	(15)	43,213
Gain / (loss) on operational assets revaluation	-	-	16,293	-	16,293
Gain / (loss) on restricted assets revaluation	-	-	30,282	-	30,282
Gain / (loss) on carbon credit	(463)	-	419	(463)	419
Total other comprehensive revenue and expense for the year	(478)	-	89,207	(478)	89,207
Total Comprehensive Income for the year	(6,756)	6,998	87,664	(6,751)	87,666
Total comprehensive revenue and expense attributable to Horowhenua District Council	(6,756)	6,998	87,664	(6,751)	87,666

The main variances from budget are discussed in the notes following the statement of comprehensive revenue and expense in the full Annual Report 2022/23

Summary Statement of Changes in Ratepayer Equity

The ratepayers' stake in Council's assets for the Year Ended 30 June 2023

	Council Actual \$000 30 June 2023	Council Budget \$000 30 June 2023	Council Actual \$000 30 June 2022	Group Actual \$000 30 June 2023	Group Actual \$000 30 June 2022
Equity at 1 July	704,681	625,100	616,436	705,058	616,812
Opening adjustment on adoption of NZ IPSAS 41	131	-	-	131	-
Total Comprehensive Income	(6,757)	44,355	88,245	(6,757)	88,245
Asset Revaluation reserve on disposal	(4,404)	-	-	(4,404)	-
Equity at 30 June	693,652	669,455	704,681	694,035	705,058
Equity is represented by:					
Retained Earnings	246,021	267,488	252,590	246,406	252,967
Revaluation Reserve	437,886	389,873	442,305	437,886	442,305
Reserves and Special Funds	9,746	12,094	9,788	9,746	9,788
	693,652	669,455	704,682	694,037	705,059

CHANGES IN NET WORTH

The Council's net worth is represented by equity which is the difference between what the community owns (assets of \$891M) and what the community owes (liabilities of \$196M).

The Council's net worth at the end of the year was \$694M, a reduction of \$11M from 2021/22. The main reason for the decrease was the increase in borrowings by \$44M, partly offset by an increase of property, plant and equipment by \$11M and an increase in cash and cash equivalents. Debtors and other receivable of \$21M.

Summary Statement of Financial Position

The assets owned by Council and liabilities owned by council as at 30 June 2023

	Council Actual \$000 30 June 2023	Council Budget \$000 30 June 2023	Council Actual \$000 30 June 2022	Group Actual \$000 30 June 2023	Group Actual \$000 30 June 2022
Assets:					
Current	35,357	13,408	12,481	35,390	12,507
Non-current	855,192	800,689	842,860	855,192	842,860
Total assets	890,549	814,097	855,341	890,582	855,367
Liabilities and ratepayers' equity:					
Current	52,803	39,102	44,162	52,451	43,811
Non-current	144,094	105,540	106,498	144,094	106,498
Total liabilities	196,897	144,642	150,660	196,545	150,309
Ratepayers' equity	693,652	669,455	704,681	694,037	705,058
	890,549	814,097	855,341	890,582	855,367

Council's financial position is explained by the following major asset types:

CURRENT ASSETS

Term Deposits- This is an increase of \$18M in cash holdings from the previous year due to \$15M term deposits held for debt maturities due in 2024.

Other current assets (including receivable and recoverables, prepayments and non-current assets held for sale) – \$16M.

NON-CURRENT ASSETS

Property, plant and equipment (PPE) (including land, buildings, pipes, roads and other infrastructure assets) – \$847M. The increase of \$11 million when compared to 2021 largely reflects the capital spend of \$36M offset by depreciation and amortisation expense of \$19M.

Other non-current assets (including other non-PPE assets investment properties and investments in controlled entities and associates) – \$8M.

Our major liabilities include:

CURRENT BORROWINGS

Borrowings (maturing in the next 12 months) – \$33M

Other liabilities (payables and provisions) – \$19M

NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES

Borrowings (maturing past 12 months) – \$135M

Other liabilities (provisions and derivatives) – \$9M

The combined increase for liabilities from the previous year of \$46M is mainly due to increase in gross borrowings of \$44M. Taking on more debt allowed Council to finance large projects and their continued maintenance while ensuring future generations pay for their portion of the costs associated with the new assets.

Summary Statement of Cashflows

The inflows and outflows of cash for the Year Ended 30 June 2023

	Council Actual \$000 30 June 2023	Council Budget \$000 30 June 2023	Council Actual \$000 30 June 2022	Group Actual \$000 30 June 2023	Group Actual \$000 30 June 2022
Net cash flows from:					
- operating activities	(13,183)	24,322	11,528	(13,177)	11,528
- investing activities	(35,550)	(30,820)	(30,932)	(35,550)	(30,932)
- financing activities	44,000	8,356	16,000	44,000	16,000
Net increase in cash and bank	(4,733)	1,858	(3,404)	(4,727)	(3,404)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	5,998	2,522	9,402	6,024	9,426
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	1,265	4,380	5,998	1,297	6,022

CHANGES IN CASH HELD

Rates (including water by meter) and user charges are the primary source of our operating activities' cash inflows.

The majority of these net cash inflows, together with new borrowings (financing activities), are used in the purchase and development of assets around the district (investing activities).

Lesser cash from operating activities compared to budget is mainly due to expected capital grant not received due to the Tara-Ika programme moving out to future years, and additional expenditure compared to budget in areas such as professional fees, maintenance, and interest costs.

The increase in financing activities compared to budget is mainly due to increase in gross borrowings allowing Council to finance large projects.

Additional Notes

WATER SERVICES REFORM PROGRAMME

The New Zealand Government is implementing a water services reform programme that is intended to ensure all New Zealanders have safe, clean and affordable water services. The Government believes this will be achieved by establishing new public entities to take on the delivery of drinking water, wastewater and stormwater services across New Zealand. The reform will be enacted by three pieces of legislation:

- The Water Services Entities Act 2022, which (as amended by the Water Services Entities Amendment Act 2023 on 23 August 2023) establishes ten publicly owned water services entities and sets out their ownership, governance and accountability arrangements. A water services entity is established (for transitional purposes) on the date on which the appointment of the entity's establishment board takes effect, and its establishment date (operational date) will be a date between 1 July 2024 and 1 July 2026.
- The Water Services Legislation Act 2023, which amended the Water Services Entities Act 2022 on 31 August 2023 to provide for the transfer of water services assets and liabilities to the water services entities.
- The Water Services Economic Efficiency and Consumer Protection Act 2023, which provides the economic regulation and consumer protection framework for water services. The consumer protection framework will come into force on 1 July 2024 and the rest of the Act came into force on 31 August 2023.

COMPLIANCE

A statement of compliance to generally accepted accounting practice in New Zealand can be found in the full annual report. The full financial statements comply with the standards for public sector public entities (PBE Standards) reporting.

EVENTS AFTER THE END OF THE REPORTING PERIOD

There are no material non-adjusting events after the reporting date.

The full annual report can be viewed on the Council website www.horowhenua.govt.nz. Print copies of the annual report are available at the libraries and service centres of our rohe (district).

Independent Auditor's Report

To the readers of the Horowhenua District Council and Group's summary of the annual report for the year ended 30 June 2023

The summary of the annual report was derived from the annual report of the Horowhenua District Council (the District Council) and Group for the year ended 30 June 2023.

The summary of the annual report comprises the following information on pages 56 to 63:

- the summary statement of financial position as at 30 June 2023;
- the summaries of the statement of comprehensive revenue and expense, statement of changes in ratepayer equity and statement of cashflows for the year ended 30 June 2023;
- the notes to the summary financial statements that include other explanatory information; and
- the summary of performance information (described as "Summary Activity Updates").

Opinion

In our opinion:

- the summary of the annual report represents, fairly and consistently, the information regarding the major matters dealt with in the annual report; and
- the summary statements comply with PBE FRS-43: Summary Financial Statements.

However, the summary of performance information includes a limitation in scope to the equivalent extent as the full audited statements of service provision in the full audit report. This limitation is explained below in *The full annual report and our audit report thereon* section.

Summary of the annual report

The summary of the annual report does not contain all the disclosures required by generally accepted accounting practice in New Zealand. Reading the summary of the annual report and the auditor's report thereon, therefore, is not a substitute for reading the full annual report and the auditor's report thereon.

The summary of the annual report does not reflect the effects of events that occurred subsequent to the date of our auditor's report on the full annual report.

The full annual report and our audit report thereon

We expressed a qualified opinion on the statement of service provision and an unmodified opinion on the other audited information in the full annual report for the year ended 30 June 2023 in our auditor's report dated 25 October 2023. The basis for our qualified opinion on the statement of service provision is explained below.

Statement of service provision: Our work was limited in the prior year with respect to the verification of the number of complaints for some services

In the prior year, the District Council was unable to report a reliable number of complaints received against performance measures set out in the Non-Financial Performance Measure Rules 2013 (the Rules) made by the Secretary for Local Government. These performance measures are included in the statements of service provision for each activity.

These mandatory performance measures include the total number of complaints (per 1,000 connections) received about the following:

- drinking water clarity, taste, odour, pressure or flow, continuity of supply, and the District Council's response to any of these issues.
- wastewater odour, wastewater system faults and blockages, and the District Council's response to issues with the wastewater system.
- the performance of the stormwater system.

The Department of Internal Affairs has issued guidance to assist local authorities in applying the Rules, including on how to count complaints. Our audit testing found that, up until January 2022, the District Council had not been counting complaints in accordance with this guidance issued by the Department of Internal Affairs and that the District Council's method of counting was likely to have understated the actual number of complaints received for the year ended 30 June 2022, reported as comparative information.

The issue has been resolved for the 30 June 2023 financial year following a change in business rules. As the issue cannot be resolved for 30 June 2022 year, the reported performance for each performance measure for the 30 June 2023 year may not be directly comparable to the 30 June 2022 performance information.

Emphasis of matter - uncertainty over the water services reform programme

Our auditor's report on the full annual report also includes an emphasis of matter paragraph drawing attention to the developments in the Government's water services reform programme.

The Water Services Entities Act 2022, as amended by the Water Services Entities Amendment Act 2023 on 23 August 2023 and the Water Services Legislation Act 2023 on 31 August 2023, establishes ten publicly owned water services entities to carry out responsibilities for the delivery of three waters services and related assets and liabilities currently controlled by local authorities. Water services entities' establishment dates are staggered, with all the water services entities becoming

operational between 1 July 2024 and 1 July 2026. The financial impact of the water services reform on the District Council as outlined on page 233 of the full annual report remains uncertain until the relevant water services entity's establishment date is known, and the allocation schedule of assets, liabilities, and other matters to be transferred is approved. Information about this matter is also disclosed on page 63 of the summary financial statements.

Council's responsibility for the summary of the annual report

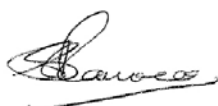
The Council is responsible for preparing the summary of the annual report which includes preparing summary statements, in accordance with PBE FRS-43: Summary Financial Statements.

Auditor's responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on whether the summary of the annual report represents, fairly and consistently, the information regarding the major matters dealt with in the full annual report and whether the summary statements comply with PBE FRS 43: Summary Financial Statements.

Our opinion on the summary of the annual report is based on our procedures, which were carried out in accordance with the Auditor-General's Auditing Standards, which incorporate the Professional and Ethical Standards and the International Standards on Auditing (New Zealand) issued by the New Zealand Auditing and Assurance Standards Board.

In addition to our reporting on the summary and full annual reports, we have carried out an audit of the District Council's Long Term Plan Amendment 2021-2041 and a limited assurance engagement related to the District Council's debenture trust deed which are compatible with independence requirements. Other than these engagements, we have no relationship with, or interests in, the District Council or its subsidiaries and controlled entities.



Clint Ramoo
Audit New Zealand
On behalf of the Auditor-General
Wellington, New Zealand
27 November 2023



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