

Community Connection

Issue 221 AUGUST 2025



Monique Davidson

Message from the CE

Kia ora Horowhenua,

Local councils have spent a lot of time in the news recently, with plenty of discussions in Central Government about how things should run. With some reforms and other changes in the pipeline, the way things are done in the future may look a little uncertain, but what I do know is we have a dedicated team here at Horowhenua District Council who will roll with the punches and continue doing all they can to serve this community.

Council spending has been a hot topic and nobody likes to hear rates are increasing. We understand that, but balancing the wants and needs of the community with affordability remains a challenge. We are doing our best to provide a good balance as we strive to do what we said we would in the Long Term and Annual plans. Increased costs, Central Government reforms, and affordability pressures facing our communities mean it is as important as ever that we look for efficiency and effectiveness in everything we do. I can assure you we take this seriously and will continue to do so. I encourage you to be curious, informed, and ask questions about the impact of the proposed changes on the future role and function of Local Government.

One myth we are working on busting is that Council debt is a bad thing. We're responsible for building some big-ticket items – think water treatment plants, roads, and facilities. These are essential but don't come cheap and just like most people wouldn't buy a house with cash, we don't pay up front for assets that will serve our community for many decades.

For example: Say we must build an important piece of infrastructure that will cost hundreds of millions of dollars. Rather than pay with rates and other Council income, which would be unaffordable and unsustainable, we use debt to pay for it. This means ratepayers share the cost equally over the asset's lifetime.

Having no debt at all would mean astronomical rates increases, and we know that's not what our community wants. We are acutely aware of the impact that rates increases have on our residents, particularly those on low and fixed incomes. Borrowing allows us to balance rates affordability while still delivering the infrastructure the community needs.

In other news, candidate nominations for this year's Local Government Election close at midday today (1 August) and I'm looking forward to learning more about the brave people who have put their hands up. My challenge to you is to not stand idly by and let others decide your future when it comes time to vote. Do what you can to learn about the candidates, discover who best represents your values, and have your say in September/October.

This week also marks a couple of important opportunities in the community development space. Nominations for the 2025 Civic and Youth Excellence Awards opened on Monday – a great opportunity to celebrate our local heroes – and today you can start applying for Community Grants and Funding. Head to our website to find out more.

Ngā mihi,

Monique Davidson

Monique Davidson
Chief Executive

Council Meetings

Risk & Assurance Committee Meeting
Wednesday 6 August 2025, 10am to 12pm
Council Chambers, Horowhenua District Council, 126 Oxford Street, Levin

Council Meeting
Wednesday 6 August 2025, 1pm
Council Chambers, 126 Oxford Street, Levin

Community Wellbeing Committee Meeting
Wednesday 13 August 2025, 10am to 12pm
Council Chambers, Horowhenua District Council, 126 Oxford Street, Levin

Meeting dates and times are subject to change. Please refer to horowhenua.govt.nz/Council/Council-Meetings for the full meeting schedule, minutes and agendas.



Water meters save half billion litres

Smart water meters have saved an average of 46 litres of treated drinking water per person on our town supplies every day this year. That's more than half a billion litres – or 206 Olympic swimming pools!

How does it work? The meters identify leaks on people's properties. We let the owners know so they can fix the leaks. By doing so, they're avoiding potentially expensive damage to their property, as well as extra cost if the leak causes them to use more water than they've already paid for in their rates.

To make it easier for people there is an amnesty period if a leak is found on your property and has caused you to use more than your water allocation. You can apply within three months of your water meter being installed for 100% remission on your excess water usage bill if it's caused by a leak, upon proof of repair.

Outside of this three-month amnesty, you can apply for up to 50% remission on the excess usage charges incurred because of the leak upon proof of repair.

Smart meter installation is coming along well – we've finished in Shannon, Foxton and most

of Levin, and we're working our way through Foxton Beach and Tokomaru.

And at Council we're doing our bit by repairing and replacing water pipes to keep everything flowing and prepare us for the future.



No bones about it, dog registrations are now overdue

Dog registration renewal notices hit letterboxes and inboxes in early July and payment is now overdue, which means a 50% penalty fee.

More than 3500 Dogs have been registered in the district so far. If you've already renewed, just display your new red registration tag on your pet once it arrives and you're all set!

We understand times are tough, especially with the rising cost of living, so we truly appreciate those of you who have already paid.

Registration helps us quickly and easily reunite lost dogs with their owners. When a registered dog is found, we can access the owner's contact information and ensure a swift and safe return home, reducing the stress for both the pet and the owner. Your registration fee helps fund this important service.

The registration fee also supports community safety and dog education programmes.

All dogs over three months of age need to be registered for the 2025/26 year as soon as they reach this age.

GRANTS & FUNDING

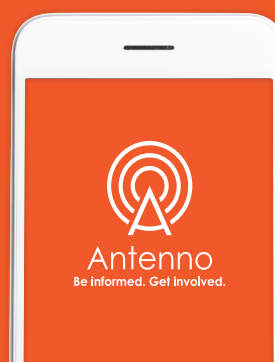
Opens 1 August 2025

horowhenua.govt.nz/grants

Horowhenua
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Download free app Antenno to report issues, as well as receive alerts and notifications.

www.horowhenua.govt.nz/Antenno



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App Store

GET IT ON
Google Play

Nominate a local legend for the Civic and Youth Excellence Awards


**HOROWHENUA
CIVIC & YOUTH
AWARDS CEREMONY**
Celebrating Community Champions

Do you know a local legend or rising star who helps make the district a better place? Nominations are now open for Horowhenua District Council's Civic and Youth Excellence Awards. They don't have to be caped crusaders, just everyday heroes who love their community.

Civic and Youth Excellence Awards honour people who give their time, energy and heart to our communities – from long-serving volunteers and unsung community heroes, to inspiring rangatahi leading the way in sport, the arts, academia and community service.

The awards support the aims of Horowhenua District Council's Community Wellbeing Strategy by helping to strengthen community pride, connection and belonging. By recognising the achievements of our people, we help create a district where everyone feels seen, valued and supported.

How to Nominate

These awards are for the everyday legends – the people who quietly go about making life better for others.

Anyone can nominate. Whether you're a teacher, coach, committee member or neighbour – if you know someone who deserves recognition, we'd love to hear from you.

Don't wait or assume someone else will do it – this is your chance to say thank you and give them the recognition they deserve.

Nomination forms and full criteria are available online at:

horowhenua.govt.nz/CivicAwards

horowhenua.govt.nz/YouthExcellence

If you need help with your nomination, call 06 366 0999 or email community@horowhenua.govt.nz



Horowhenua Christmas Parade & Carnival



Saturday 6 December 2025

MORE INFORMATION SOON



FITNESS PROMO

Come and try any fitness class for \$1



Levin Aquatic Centre
Foxton Pools

For more information please contact the **Levin Aquatic Centre**

06 368 0070 aquatics.horowhenua.govt.nz
AquaticsHorowhenua [horowhenua_aquatics_fitness](https://www.horowhenua.govt.nz/aquatics_fitness)

Horowhenua
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Every Wednesday 5-8pm
Te Takeretanga o Kura-hau-pō car park

@ events@horowhenua.govt.nz Pop Up Eats Horowhenua