Community Connection

Issue 249 November 2026

Horowhenua DISTRICT COUNCIL





Bernie Wanden

Message from the Mayor

Kia ora Horowhenua,

Council achieved a significant milestone last week. For the first time in five years, Council has met its balanced budget benchmark. It's an important achievement in our newly adopted 2025/26 Annual Report, and one worth recognising.

Put simply, the revenue we received was enough to cover our day-to-day operating costs. That might sound straightforward, but achieving it in the current environment has taken considerable work and careful financial management. This isn't about celebrating a single financial result. It's about creating a stronger foundation for the future of Horowhenua.

Achieving a balanced budget has long been an important goal of mine. I'm proud of this result and of the commitment and professionalism of our staff, alongside the positive and constructive decision-making of elected members. Together, they have helped us reach this milestone while continuing to deliver the services and infrastructure our community relies on every day.

Local government continues to operate in challenging times, and affordability remains a real concern for our community. While there is always more work to do, this year's Annual Report shows we are heading in the right direction, with a continued focus on value for money.

It also gives us a solid foundation as we prepare for our next Long Term Plan. A significant amount of work is already underway ahead of consultation in March. Council has adopted draft Community Outcomes and considered options for community facilities, property, and recycling and waste minimisation. These discussions will help shape the choices we bring to our community about the next decade.

When consultation opens, I encourage everyone to get involved. Your feedback will help shape the services we provide, the projects we invest in and the priorities we focus on for years to come.

Ultimately, the reason all of this matters is the people of Horowhenua. Careful financial management helps us provide the everyday services people depend on and look after the places where our community comes together. Planning ahead means thinking about what people need today and the Horowhenua we want future generations to call home.

Getting out into the community brings that purpose to life. It's one of the best parts of this job, and a reminder that serving Horowhenua is both a responsibility and a joy.

One of the highlights of the past few weeks was welcoming 35 new New Zealand citizens at our Citizenship Ceremony on 20 October. No matter how many of these ceremonies I attend, each one feels just as special. It's a privilege to share such an important milestone with individuals and families beginning a new chapter in their lives.

To all our new citizens, congratulations and welcome. Thank you for choosing to make your home here and for the contributions you make to our community.

We also celebrated the Levin Menz Shed's 15th anniversary on 4 November. For 15 years, the Shed has brought people together through friendship, shared skills and a willingness to give back. Whether making toys for children, supporting community projects or simply providing a place to connect, its members and volunteers make a difference across Horowhenua.

Thank you to everyone who has been part of that journey, and happy 15th anniversary. The Shed is a wonderful example of what people can achieve when they give their time and talents to others.

That spirit of service will also be in our thoughts next week, on 11 November, as we pause for Remembrance Day. We will remember those who served and sacrificed for our country, reflect on their courage and give thanks for the freedoms we enjoy because of their service.

I encourage you to join us at one of the commemorations in Levin or Foxton as we come together to remember.

Lest we forget.

Ngā mihi,

Mayor Bernie Wanden

Horowhenua's proposed Local Alcohol Policy

Horowhenua District Council is asking for feedback on its proposed Local Alcohol Policy (LAP) 2026.

The Local Alcohol Policy guides alcohol licensing decisions across the district.

As part of a six-yearly review, Council is proposing to largely retain the current policy approach, while updating the policy wording and format and introducing two proposed changes.

The proposed changes relate to:

- Location-related exceptions: Clarifying when exceptions to existing restrictions around sensitive locations may be considered.
- Remote alcohol sales and deliveries: Introducing proposed measures relating to Buy Now Pay Later (BNPL) payment options and age checks when alcohol is purchased and delivered.

The draft policy also removes the expired bottle-store cap and historical references that no longer apply.

We're keen to hear whether you think the proposed approach is right for Horowhenua.

These are proposed changes only. Council has not made any final decisions, and the current policy will remain in place while the review is completed.

Consultation closes at 4pm on Friday 4 December 2026.

Visit Let's Kōrero to read the proposal and make a submission.

letskorero.horowhenua.govt.nz/ProposedLAP2026

Council Meetings

11 Risk and Assurance Committee Meeting
Wednesday 11 November 2026, 10am to 12pm
Council Chambers, 126 Oxford Street, Levin

18 Community Wellbeing Committee Meeting
Wednesday 18 November 2026, 10am to 12pm
Council Chambers, 126 Oxford Street, Levin

25 Horowhenua District Council Meeting
Wednesday 25 November 2026, 10am to 5pm
Council Chambers, 126 Oxford Street, Levin

Meeting dates and times are subject to change.
horowhenua.govt.nz/CouncilMeetings

CUPPA WITH A COUNCILLOR

Levin - Te Takeretanga o Kura-hau-pō
Thursday 12 November 2026, 10.30am to 12.30pm
Wednesday 25 November 2026, 6pm to 7.30pm

Shannon - Shannon Library
Thursday 12 November 2026, 1pm to 2.30pm

Foxton - Te Awahou Nieuwe Stroom
Thursday 19 November 2026, 10.30am to 12.30pm

ROYAL NEW ZEALAND ARMY LOGISTIC REGIMENT

21 Supply Company Charter Parade

Thursday 12 November 2026
12pm, Main Street Foxton

Join 21 Supply Company as it proudly marks its Freedom of the Community with a Charter Parade through Main Street, Foxton. Come along and celebrate the longstanding relationship between the Company and the Foxton community.

All welcome.

Temporary Road closures will be in place during the parade.



Horowhenua DISTRICT COUNCIL

In the Works

Fit for purpose Infrastructure

Major milestone reached in wastewater treatment plant upgrade

The Levin Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrade has reached an important milestone, with the reopening of Tiro Tiro Road and a contract signed to deliver the next phase of the programme.

A big thank you to everyone for your patience while Tiro Tiro Road was closed.

Over the past 12 months, crews have completed a new 1.5km wastewater pipeline connecting to the treatment plant. The pipeline replaces infrastructure installed in 1963 that has reached the end of its intended life and forms an important part of Council's long-term plan to upgrade the plant.

The new infrastructure improves the resilience of the wastewater network and will help ensure the plant can continue to meet the needs of our growing district.

Council has now signed a contract with Verbrec to deliver the next phase of this programme. This next phase includes the construction of a new Headworks facility, which is the first step in the wastewater treatment process. The facility will remove larger materials before wastewater moves through the rest of the plant, helping to protect critical infrastructure, improve operational performance, and support the long-term reliability of the network.

This is an important milestones in one of the district's most significant infrastructure projects, helping ensure Levin's wastewater network continues to support our community now and into the future.

For more information, visit
horowhenua.govt.nz/LevinWWTP

Land transport update

Annual resealing season is here

Every year around this time, you might spot our contractors out resealing roads across the district. It's like giving your road a fresh coat of sunscreen before summer hits.



Resealing protects the road surface rather than repairing it. Over time, sun, rain and traffic wear down the top layer of bitumen. By resealing, we're:

- stopping water from seeping in and damaging the road base
- extending the life of the road, and saving big on costly rebuilds later
- keeping your drive smoother and safer for years to come.

This year's reseal sites are spread throughout the district, including Ōhau, Foxton, Levin, Ōpiki, Shannon and Waitārere Beach.

If your street is on this year's programme and you live in an urban town, our contractor will deliver a letter before the work starts. It will tell you when the work takes place, the hours and how long it will take.

So if you see road crews out there, give them a wave and ease off the accelerator. They're helping keep your journeys smooth for the long haul.
horowhenua.govt.nz/annualreseals

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

What are those yellow box covers?

You may have noticed a bright yellow cover on a small box near the roadside and wondered what was going on.

These are water sampling points, used by our team to regularly test the quality of the drinking water supplied to homes and businesses across the district. The testing helps ensure the water coming from your tap is clean, safe and meets national drinking water standards.

Before taking a sample, our team lets the water run for a short time to flush out any water that has been sitting in the pipe. While this can sometimes look like a leak, it's actually a normal part of the testing process.

The yellow covers have recently been introduced to make it clear when water quality testing is underway. If you see water flowing from one of these sampling points, there's no need for concern. It's simply our team carrying out important work behind the scenes to keep our water supply safe.

Testing is just one part of how we care for our drinking water network. As we head into the warmer months, we're also encouraging everyone to use water wisely. Small actions such as fixing leaks, taking shorter showers and watering gardens in the early morning or evening can all help reduce demand on our water supply.

Find out more about saving water this summer:
horowhenua.govt.nz/WaterSavingTips



Diwali

Join us for a free event in celebration of Diwali, the Festival of Lights

Saturday 21 November 2026
5-9pm Gladys Taylor Park, Levin

Diwali celebrates the triumph of light over darkness, good over evil, & renewal of life. Festivities are organised in collaboration with our Indian Community and will provide an opportunity to learn and engage with the rich traditions of Indian culture.

horowhenua.govt.nz/Diwali

Horowhenua District Council

TE AWAHOU COLLECTIVE PRESENTS

Kotahi tonu te wairua o ngā mea katoa

An exploration of the seen and unseen ways we are connected, featuring works by artists of the Te Awahou Collective. Discover traditional and contemporary art across carving, harakeke, textiles, ink on paper and moving image, here at Te Awahou Nieuwe Stroom all summer.

31 OCT 2026 - 21 FEB 2027

Te Awahou Nieuwe Stroom · Te Awahou Riverside Cultural Park · Piriharakeke Generation Inspiration Centre

Remembrance Day 2026

Wednesday 11 November

To mark the armistice that ended the First World War in 1918, Remembrance Day commemorations will be held in Levin and Foxton.

Levin - 10:40am
Cenotaph, Remembrance Park, corner Cambridge and Bath Streets

Foxton - 10:40am
Cenotaph, Main Street

RSA

Horowhenua District Council

enquiries@horowhenua.govt.nz www.horowhenua.govt.nz HorowhenuaDC 06 366 0999 Private Bag 4002, Levin 5540
126 Oxford St, Levin 5510 **Customer service hours:** Monday – Friday 9am to 5pm and Wednesdays 9.30am to 5pm.