

12 December 2016

Manurewa Local Board input on Rates Rebate (Retirement Village Residents) Amendment Bill

This feedback is provided by the Manurewa Local Board in response to a request from Auckland Council to provide input on the rates rebate (Retirement Village Residents) Amendment Bill.

The Manurewa Local Board promotes the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of current and future communities in the Manurewa area. The board is a firm advocate of the Ministry of Social Development's Positive Aging Strategy which has identified affordable and appropriate housing options for older people as a key point and also recommends providing adequate assistance towards the cost of local authority rates.

Background

The Rates Rebate (Retirement Village Residents) Amendment Bill provides for residents of retirement villages with occupation rights agreements (ORAs) to be eligible for a rates rebate. The Bill was introduced on 5 May 2016, received its first reading on 9 November 2016 and submissions will close on 12 January 2017. The Local Government and Environment Select Committee is due to report on 9 May 2017.

Currently residents of retirement villages with ORAs pay rates but, in most circumstances, pay indirectly (i.e. to the retirement village owner) rather than directly to the local authority. As they are not the direct ratepayer, these residents are not currently entitled to a rates rebate. The Bill seeks to address this anomaly.

Key Points

1. The Manurewa Local Board supports the Rates Rebate (Retirement Village Residents) Amendment Bill, as it will provide for equitable treatment of ratepayers whether they own their property in fee simple or have an Occupation Rights Agreements.
2. The board support Auckland Councils draft submission seeking amendments to the Bill to address two areas of inequity. Specifically the draft submission seeks amendments to include:
 - Residents of Papakainga housing with ORAs. This would ensure these ratepayers are treated equitably with the owners who hold their properties in fee simple.
 - Water and wastewater charges levied by Watercare Services Limited in the calculation of entitlement for a rates rebate. In other jurisdictions in New Zealand water charges are levied through rates and are therefore incorporated into the rates rebate calculation. This change would treat all ratepayers across the country equitably no matter how their council decided to provide for water and wastewater services.

3. The board supports the proposed submission to be reported to the Finance and Performance Committee at its meeting on 13 December 2016 for consideration and approval.

Yours sincerely



Angela Dalton - Chair
Manurewa Local Board
Email: Angela.Dalton@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz
Ph: 0212833311