

## Attachment Two - Local Board Resolutions

September 2016

The following are resolutions and/or feedback provided by this local board to inform the Request for Proposal document.

### **Devonport-Takapuna**

#### **Community Facilities Maintenance Contracts 2017**

Devonport-Takapuna Local Board feedback on the Community Facilities Maintenance Contracts 2017 was tabled at the meeting. A copy of the tabled document has been placed on the file copy of the minutes and can be viewed at the Auckland Council website.

Resolution number DT/2016/171

MOVED by Deputy Chairperson G Gillon, seconded by Chairperson J Bergin:

#### **That the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board:**

- a) ratify the board's feedback on Community Facilities Maintenance Contracts 2017, as tabled at the meeting.
- b) delegate to the Chairperson and the Parks Portfolio holder sign off of any minor changes to the submission.

#### **CARRIED**

### **Attachment A**

The Devonport-Takapuna Local Board (the board) thanks the Community Facilities team for the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed maintenance service specifications, local outcomes, and the overall structure for the new Community Facilities Maintenance contracts.

The board has the following comments to make:

#### **Proposed Geographical Clusters for Community Facilities maintenance contracts**

1. The board is comfortable in principle with the approach of splitting contracts by geographic area, and agrees that the proposed Tahurangi area, which covers the North-metro

local board cluster and the Hibiscus and Bays local board makes sense as it is largely the same area governed by the legacy council.

2. The board notes the potential for financial efficiencies being likely through the appointment of a smaller number of contractors than is currently the case, but it warns that any tender awarded largely on price is likely to encourage shortcuts and compromises from the contractor, resulting in sub-standard outcomes that may take some time to become evident.
3. The board is not comfortable with the idea of all of the community facilities work being awarded to a single contractor in each cluster, as that approach will likely exclude smaller local suppliers from being able to tender for the work successfully. The board believes that local contractors have much better knowledge of the facilities, have better connections with local communities, a commitment to the area and pride in being part of the community they live in. They are likely to be able to work with the subjective outcomes described in the service specifications in a more nuanced way than would be possible from a contractor not having strong local connections.
4. The board also notes council's commitment to the Empowered Communities Approach and doubts that the idea of a single contractor, particularly an external contractor, being responsible for all maintenance activity over four board areas would encourage any empowerment of communities, particularly where community-led enhancements to local service specifications were contemplated.
5. Notwithstanding the concern expressed in paragraph three, the board strongly agrees with the principle of having a single contractor responsible for all maintenance in a particular location (for example, a single contractor responsible for the mowing, garden maintenance building maintenance and cleaning in a single park). The board has seen too many examples of a lack of pride and ownership for all of the activity at a particular location and agrees that the principle of "horizontal management" of an area is a good initiative. The board notes that a similar approach was adopted by North Shore City Council and was successful.

### **Proposed service specifications by asset group**

6. The board supports the outcomes based approach to setting service levels.
7. The board supports in principle the setting of different outcomes for different asset groups, but asks for a more flexible approach in areas where different asset groups are adjacent to one another. For example, should a library be located in a premier park, such as is the case in Devonport, any difference in the delivery model for each asset group would be more apparent than it would be if the assets were not directly comparable. The board therefore asks that particular care is taken in classifying assets to make sure that the higher standard is applied throughout all nearby assets, regardless of their classification.
8. The board notes comments made at its briefing of 23 August that the timing to align Auckland Transport's asset management for transport terminals with the proposal for community facilities generally is not synchronised. The same concerns expressed in paragraph seven are therefore even more pertinent when the public has an opportunity to compare the maintenance of adjacent or nearby assets managed by different arms of council. For example, Auckland Transport's public toilets on Devonport Wharf may be perceived to be cleaned to a different standard to the toilets in the nearby library. Any such difference would also create concerns about the effectiveness of the approach to maintenance, as the different parts of the council family are not perceived by most in the community as separate independently run organisations.

9. The board notes the comment in the preface to Attachment Two, which states that "...a standard service level (baseline) across the region [will ensure] that each facility is fit for purpose...". It wonders, therefore, why the phrase 'fit for purpose' is then repeated against the expected outcomes for some asset groups, but not all. For example both Neighbourhood Parks and Premier Parks propose an outcome for facilities such as playgrounds that they are 'fit for purpose' but no 'fit for service' statement is applied to the delivery model for Sport Parks, which have particular maintenance and ground preparation requirements relating to the codes using them, and the competitive levels of the sports teams using them. The board therefore asks that particular care is taken with the words to ensure that the delivery model outcomes are appropriate to the intended use of each facility.
10. The board notes comments made by officers at the 23 August briefing that more specific detail about the delivery model will be applied to the contracts than is mentioned in the delivery model statements. The board is concerned that the outcome statements against many of the asset groups are too vague. For example, what is meant by 'well maintained'? The board requests further engagement with staff about the meaning of those statements so that there is agreement between staff and the board on expected outcomes to ensure they are well understood.
11. The board is pleased to learn that there will be a much higher standard applied to contract audit than has been the case in the past, and that that function will be brought in-house. Board members are able to quote too many examples of past sub-standard contractor performance, even though the letter of the service specifications was met. Moving to an outcome-based model should greatly assist in improving contractor performance but comprehensive and robust audit is also essential. The board asks staff to ensure that council has the resources to maintain an effective audit function.
12. While all of the asset groups are important, the board is mindful that one of the most important functions that it and council as a whole has is to, as much as is reasonably possible, look after the needs of those in our communities that are disadvantaged. To that end the board is very sensitive to the needs of older people, particularly those requiring housing support from council. It asks that staff take a holistic approach to facilities maintenance for housing for older persons and consider the grounds and the buildings within the grounds as inseparable parts of the same facility, and that all should be safe, healthy, maintained to a high standard, and visually and aesthetically pleasing.
13. The board notes that there is a specific delivery model for the public toilets asset group, but toilets are also mentioned in the outcomes of a number of other asset groups, and there appears for some asset groups to be an opportunity for a differing interpretation of the expected outcomes. The board asks staff to be clear that toilets are important public facilities that must always be kept clean to the highest possible standard for public health reasons, and yet are also facilities that can negatively affect council's reputation when users find the toilets to be unclean (or worse) when they need to use them.
14. While the board accepts that the outcome statements are not intended within an asset group to suggest some kind of prioritisation, it is uncomfortable with the words applying to Takapuna Beach in section 15 of the asset groups. Some people might suggest that words applying to beaches such as Mission Bay suggest a higher level of service (grooming, sand replenishment) than that applying to Takapuna Beach (seaweed removal). While the board understands the intent of the words, it wishes to stress that Takapuna Beach is widely recognised as one of the nation's most attractive urban beaches, and is also one of the busiest for all sorts of uses. It is also a primary driver of Takapuna's economy. The board asks, therefore, that the highest possible service levels applying to beaches in particular apply to Takapuna Beach, consistent with its tidal nature and underlying fragility. The board suggests that the matrix for seaweed removal is a means to an end for a department restricted to very tight beach

maintenance budgets, and that there is room to consider a much higher status (and budget) for the beach than is currently provided. The same comments apply to the many Stormwater outlets onto the beach which compromise the visual amenity of the beach and pollute it with Stormwater contaminants.

### **Smart procurement principles**

15. The board supports the intent of the Smart Procurement principles.
16. The board notes with interest the statements in Attachment three about environmental outcomes, and it supports those ambitions. The board has held a consistent clearly expressed position about the use of chemicals for weed control, including in its local board plan where it states "*weeds in and beside reserves, sports-fields and roads are controlled by non-toxic means whenever possible*". It seems that the intentions expressed in Attachment three have a strong connection with the board's stated intentions for weed control, however it has been persistently disappointed by council's approach that sees such methods of weed control as an optional extra, and therefore to be paid for out of local board locally driven initiatives budgets, rather than being picked up as part of base contracts. If the Community Facilities team is serious in its intention to comply with the words in Attachment three, then the board would expect to cease having to pay for mechanical edging of borders, as that would be picked up as part of contracts that are environmentally sensitive, and sensitive to Auckland Council's commitment to environmental action.
17. The board wishes to point out that since the formation of Auckland Council many assets have been 'discovered' for which no budget or service delivery model, or 'ownership' exists. The most notorious and expensive example in this local board area is Victoria Wharf in Devonport, which was found post-amalgamation to be in a state of near-collapse. It caused real consternation for the Parks department when they were advised that they were the asset 'owner' and the repair bill was going to be \$6 million. The board sincerely hopes that all of these 'hidden' assets have now been discovered, but as recently as this calendar year it has had discussions with staff (particularly Parks Sport and Recreation staff) about open spaces with no maintenance plan and a lack of awareness that the asset existed. The board sees this new delivery model as a real opportunity to address such outstanding legacy oversights and asks that the parallel work-stream to improve the quality of information is given a high priority. It also asks that whatever contractual arrangements are eventually agreed, the arrangements have enough flexibility to satisfactorily address any oversights.

### **Delivery model options for Gulf Islands**

18. The board has no comment to make on the delivery model options for Hauraki Gulf islands

### **Devonport-Takapuna Local Board**

**September 2016**