

## **Feedback on Project 17: Auckland Council Maintenance Contracts**

The Kaipātiki Local Board (the board) is pleased to comment on Project 17: Auckland Council Maintenance Contracts (Project 17) to inform the Finance and Performance Committee at its 30 March meeting. The board notes that there will be the opportunity to meet successful suppliers in April and May 2017 to discuss and refine local service level variations.

The board provides the following feedback:

### Standard and Enhanced Assets (**Attachment C**):

- a) note there will be a further opportunity to review the list with the selected supplier over April and May 2017.
- b) note a number of assets are provided on multiple places on the asset list and request clarification as to the reason.
- c) note the following assets were not included in the list and request that their inclusion is investigated further :
  - i. Kaimataara o Wai Manawa, Opaketai Beach Haven Gardens, 15 Chartwell Ave (Kaipatiki Community Facilities Trust), Lindisfarne Hall, Glenfield Community Centre, and Larking's Landing (Hilders Park, Beach Haven).
- d) request that specific assets are included on the asset list so that the board can understand what classification is being applied within the locations outlined in the list, for example:
  - i. BMX pump track at Birkenhead War Memorial Reserve;
  - ii. Skate parks at Birkenhead War Memorial Reserve and Marlborough Park;
  - iii. Learn to ride bike track at Onepoto Domain, Normanton Reserve and Lynn Reserve,
  - iv. Annual flower gardens at various locations, specifically the flowerbed at the roundabout at Verrans Corner; and
  - v. the boat located off Larking's Landing ('Frank's Boat').
- e) request the following assets receive enhanced maintenance service levels:
  - i. Fernglen Native Plant Gardens – due to the ecological significance of the plants in the gardens, particularly around the lower garden tracks and fern garden areas;
  - ii. Kaimataara o Wai Manawa – due to the significance of the location in Birkenhead, as the premier civic and open space in the Town Centre;
  - iii. Opaketai Beach Haven Garden – in recognition of the memorandum of understanding between the Kaipatiki Local Board and the Beach Haven Birkdale Residents Association; and
  - iv. Birkenhead, Glenfield and Northcote Town Centres – due to the significance of these town centres within the Kaipatiki area, with a particular note for street planting and annual flower gardens.

- f) note that the following asset can be removed from the list:
  - i. Muriel Fisher House at 36 Kauri Rd - Fernglen Native Plant Gardens – as this has been removed from the site.
- g) request inclusion as part of the asset register road reserves that boarder parks where they appear to be the same park, such as the land between the ends of Verran Road and Inglis Street, which are not part of Ridgewood Reserve.

**Full Facilities Contract Service Specifications (Attachment D):**

- a) support the approach of outcome based service levels.
- b) support the emphasis on high quality sports field maintenance.
- c) support the inclusion of track maintenance as a scheduled item in the specifications, but request the specific inclusion of bridges as part of regular track maintenance where relevant.
- d) support the goal to eliminate the use of agrichemicals over time.
- e) note that the intention to use the lowest toxicity approach to target specific plant pests in recognition that many species cannot be reasonably controlled without the use of chemicals due to growth arising from bulbs or rhizomes below ground level that hand pulling cannot control.
- f) request that it is specifically noted that learn to ride bike facilities and all hard edges are maintained manually or by mechanical methods rather than by chemical spraying.
- g) request dog exercise equipment is maintained manually or by mechanical methods rather than by chemical spraying.
- h) request that the boundaries of council-owned community spaces abutting kindergarten and preschools be maintained manually or by mechanical methods rather than by chemical spraying.
- i) support contract flexibility to include working with volunteers.
- j) support contract flexibility to include local third party contractors.
- k) support the community empowered approach, acknowledging the health and safety obligations, and request health and safety training of the community partners is provided in the service specifications.
- l) support the requirement for local cadetships and opportunities for local youth to be offered a job with training and development opportunities.
- m) request that new assets get added to the asset registers as soon as practical, triggering a variation to the contract schedule, to ensure they receive the maintenance required.
- n) request improvement in the level and quality of communication between suppliers and the Kaipatiki Local Board, particularly when issues arise in relation to parks and track assets that require removal, immediate maintenance or closure (with specific focus on playground equipment and tracks through parks).
- o) note the response maintenance is still under negotiation with some suppliers, but support the proposed response maintenance criteria, with particular support for the supplier to call the customer to inform them that works have been undertaken and check that the customer is satisfied.

- p) note that the condition of assets will be continually monitored by the in-house Council team, and that the grading of our existing assets will be consistent.
- q) note the incorporation of a spray free register and seeks to clarify what assets are on or can be added to the register and at what cost.
- r) note that there is no longer a requirement for the Kaipatiki Local Board to top up for mechanical edging from our operational Locally Driven Initiative (LDI opex) budget, as this is now incorporated into the baseline level of service
- s) note that the role of the strategic broker, from within the community empowerment unit, will need to be considered alongside the parks volunteers team for Kaipatiki to ensure we are able to provide the most efficient support for our Pest Free Kaipatiki programme and volunteers
- t) note that illegal dumping will be managed by Waste Solutions, but that from the public's perspective the service should appear seamless.
- u) note that the maintenance schedules for leisure centre and pool closures will now be coordinated via a single centralised team within Community Facilities. This team will ensure that shutdowns are carried out as quickly as practicable to ensure the proper maintenance is delivered; and will review the frequency of shutdown so as to reduce the impact on leisure centres' service delivery.

**Supplier Specific Information (Attachment E):**

**Smart procurement principles**

- a) The board supports the intent of the Smart Procurement principles, including the following areas:
  - environmental outcomes;
  - Māori responsiveness outcomes;
  - local community outcomes
  - diversity and inclusion outcomes; and
  - local employment and training outcomes
- b) The board values the tremendous role of volunteers in the Kaipātiki area. Not only do they demonstrate true pride in the area, they are highly skilled and effective in what they do. The park volunteers in particular do an amazing job caring for our parks and if their contribution was to be financially remunerated, it would be in the millions of dollars annually. It is therefore crucial that the new contract approach doesn't result in a transactional relationship between contractors and volunteers. Instead the relationship has to be built on respect and shared value for what each other contributes.

## Local priorities

The Kaipatiki Local Board provided the following resolutions from its September 2016 board meeting. Noted below are additional comments to acknowledge where consideration has been provided by Project 17.

- a) The board acknowledges that the following point has been considered:
  - *The board notes that staff have confirmed that the existing 2015/2016 service levels will become the 'standard' service levels in the 2017 Parks and Building Maintenance Contracts and any specific current or future enhancements beyond this standard will be identified in the contracts to ensure that service levels do not reduce. The board advocates for mechanical edging in parks to be re-established as the standard level of service over chemical spraying due to the potential health risks associated with the use of glyphosate.*
  
- b) The Board wish to advocate for the inclusion of dog exercise equipment and learn to ride areas to be spray free:
  - *The board requests that staff, as part of the 2017 Parks and Building Maintenance Contracts tendering process, work to ensure that playground areas, dog exercise areas and learn to ride areas are spray free where possible.*
  
- c) The Board strongly advocate for the inclusion of Pest-free Kaipatiki Strategy into the SMART procurement targets. We note that this strategy has been acknowledged by officers, but was omitted from Attachment E – Supplier Specific Information
  - *It is important that the specifications take into account the local policy decisions of the board. Of particular relevance is the recently endorsed Pest-free Kaipātiki Strategy (a copy of this strategy is attached to this submission for reference). The Pest-free Kaipātiki Strategy is a community-led approach and should be influential in how things are maintained, to demonstrate that Auckland Council is committed to an Empowered Community approach. Currently treatment of noxious plants / weeds and pests are inconsistent in terms of how they are managed. Successful implementation and organisational support for the Pest-free Kaipātiki Strategy will allow us to better use our collective resources, by helping to ensure that we do the right things, at the right time and the right place.*
  
- d) The Board wish to advocate for inclusion of maintenance of narrow road frontages and entry points into our parks and reserves to be included in the baseline level of service for Kaipatiki.

- *Several parks and reserves in the board area have narrow road frontages and entry points. It is important that there is greater emphasis on tree / plant growth maintenance in these areas to ensure safety (real and perceived) and resident engagement with these parks and reserves is maintained.*
- e) The Board would like to understand how the general public are being regularly made aware of, and being updated on, activities and performance of the contract.
- *Service levels need to be easily understood and measurable so that they are able to be communicated to the community. This will engage community in their local area as they will be aware when the service levels are not being met. In-line with this approach, council needs to improve active promotion of when things are going well or when successes are achieved with contractors going above and beyond their contracted responsibilities.*
- f) The Board wish to acknowledge the enhancement of the contract to incorporate the maintenance of tracks in and through our parks and bush reserves as a baseline level of service as Kaipatiki has a significant amount of track.
- *The board strongly advocates for the maintenance of tracks in and through our parks and bush reserves are included on a regular maintenance schedule as these are critical assets in Kaipātiki.*
- g) The board acknowledge that the baseline level of service for sports park field maintenance has been incorporated into the contract
- *The board requests a clearer understanding of what service levels are for sports park field maintenance to enable effective communication with sports clubs.*
- h) The Board wish to advocate for Fernglen Native Plant Gardens to be included with an enhanced level of service.
- *The board is privileged to have the Fernglen Native Plant Gardens within its board area. The reserve contains collections of ferns and alpine plants and other natives, which is unique in the Auckland region, if not in New Zealand. It also contains an area of mature bush. The board requests that Fernglen Native Plant Gardens is given strong consideration to being specified as a High profile/Sensitive Site. The board requests Fernglen Native Plant Gardens to be treated in the same way as a botanical garden. The board opposes the need to support the required level of maintenance of this facility through locally driven initiative budget.*

- i) The board wish to advocate for the inclusion of maintenance (such as lawn mowing) for community-owned assets be included as an option for our community partners.
- *The board requests that staff consider including maintenance (such as lawn mowing) for community-owned assets that provide valuable community services, e.g. community halls and sports facilities, in the 2017 Parks and Building Maintenance Contracts.*