

Annual Budget 2017/2018 consultation feedback report for Waiheke Local Board

Purpose

1. This report summarises all feedback received through the Annual Budget 2017/2018 consultation on Waiheke Local Board proposals. It also summarises feedback on the regional proposals from people or organisations based in the Waiheke local board area.
2. The purpose of this report is to inform the Waiheke Local Board of the views of their local community on the annual proposals. This will build on the board's understanding of community priorities and preferences as established in the development of the Waiheke Local Board Plan 2014.
3. The feedback received will inform the Waiheke Local Board decisions on allocation of their local budgets in their local board agreement for 2017/2018. It will also inform the Waiheke Local Board discussions with the Finance and Performance Committee on 9 May on advocacy and local priorities in relation to the regional budgets and proposals.

Executive Summary

4. Out of the 8058 submissions received on the Annual Budget 2017/2018, 54 were submissions from people living in Waiheke Local Board area or concerning Waiheke Local Board local proposals.
5. The Waiheke Have your say event held on 9 March 2017 was attended by 10 members of the public and 86 items of feedback were received.
6. Due to relatively low numbers of feedback it is difficult to identify key trends however there was balanced opinion of many of the board's proposals and advocacy areas.
7. **Waiheke Local Board local proposals consulted on for 2017/2018**
 - a. Progressing initiatives identified within the Matiatia masterplan;
 - b. Progressing initiatives identified within the Pathways (Greenways) plan;
 - c. Continuing to advocate for quality roading, footpath and cycling network to a standard consistent with the rest of Auckland, taking into account Waiheke character;
 - d. Completing an Artworks complex needs assessment;
 - e. Continuing to progress marine protection and waterway research;
 - f. Developing an integrated approach to ecological restoration and pest management across the island;

- g. Progressing options for tourism infrastructure funding;
- h. Continuing to investigate housing issues on Waiheke;
- i. Supporting a governance review which has good outcomes for Waiheke;
- j. Reinstatement of the Rural Urban Boundary;
- k. Continuing to progress the development of a community swimming pool.

8. Regional proposals consulted on for 2017/2018

Issue 1: Rates increases

- a. Feedback shows our community generally support the charge kept as is – a 2.5 per cent average rates increase.

Issue 2: Rating stability

- b. Feedback shows our community support businesses receiving the same rates increase as residential ratepayers in 2017/2018. Analysis of comments indicates that most submitters who ticked disagreed, supported a higher business increase.

Issue 3: Paying for tourism promotion

- c. There was general support for the proposal to fund tourism promotion from a targeted rate on accommodation providers rather than general rates.

Issue 4: Paying for housing infrastructure

- d. There was general support for the proposal to change our funding policy to allow infrastructure for new housing developments to be funded by targeted rates, rather than ratepayers across Auckland.

Issue 5: Paying council staff a living wage

- e. There was strong support for the proposal to implement a living wage policy for all council staff, funded from savings within the existing budgets.

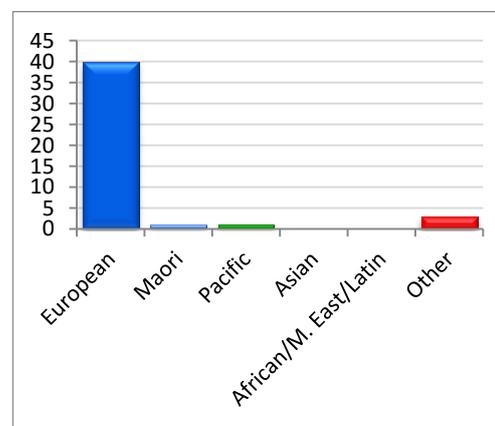
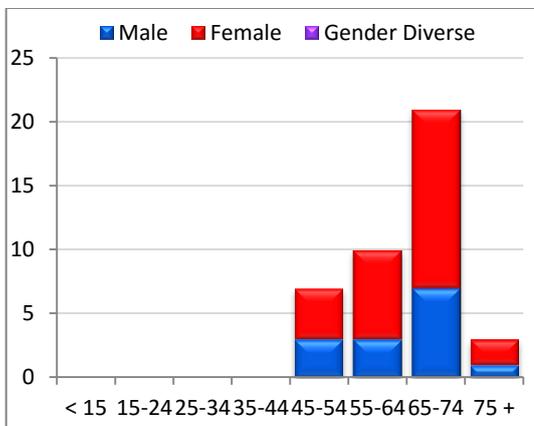
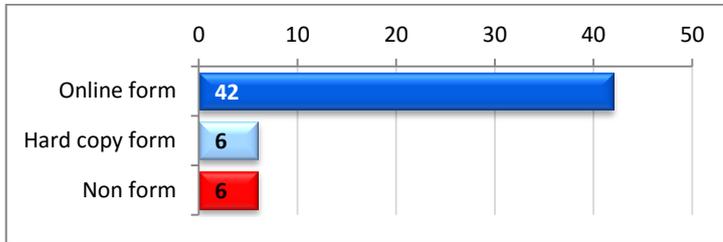
Context

9. This report is being provided to the Waiheke Local Board summarising the local consultation feedback received on the annual budget. Council received feedback in person at community engagement events, through written forms (including those submitted online) and through social media.
10. Feedback on Waiheke Local Board local proposals and on regional proposals from the Waiheke Local Board area was received through:
 - Written feedback – 48 feedback forms
 - In person – Feedback was received through our Have your say event on 9 March 2017

- Social media – six feedback points were received through social media channels

11. The following provides information on the demographic of the written submissions received:

Submission type:



12. Feedback received on the local proposals

13. Feedback on local proposals

14. Progressing initiatives identified within the Matiatia masterplan

- High priority.
- Masterplan hasn't been finalised yet so it's hard to comment.
- Ensure any proposals include full community consultation.
- Use the wharf tax to fund Matiatia masterplan implementation.
- Utilising the car rental business leased area for parking.

15. Progressing initiatives identified within the Pathways (Greenways) plan

- Greenways plan hasn't been finalised yet so it's hard to comment.
- Mako / Church Bay Road requires walking network improvements.
- Is cycling something the board should be advocating when the roads are so unsafe.
- Concerns the Greenways project will compromise areas of high biodiversity areas. Request F&B representation on development of Greenways Plan.

16. Continuing to advocate for quality roading, footpath and cycling network to a standard consistent with the rest of Auckland, taking into account Waiheke character

- High priority.
- Develop a locally created transport plan for the Island and implement it.
- Ensure Auckland Transport listen to the public it serves and are accountable for their decisions and actions.
- Swales instead of kerb and channelling.
- Putiki Road issues - work needed now.
- Basic infrastructure needs to be in place before little network connection projects.

17. Completing an Artworks complex needs assessment

- Strongly support - consistent with the original stated priority to invest in the "renewal of existing assets".
- Low priority, been done before and spending not likely to result in any improvement.
- A needs assessment should canvas all options including new art gallery.
- Support for the assessment, Artworks Gallery would like to be involved.
- Please complete a needs assessment for the Waiheke Community Art Gallery.
- Improve the common areas of the building housing the gallery. Consider setting aside space for a Waiheke Gallery Permanent Art Collection.
- Approach the (Artworks) needs assessment as a tourism complex / information centre / environment centre / Arts complex.
- Add the Arts into the priority list. Performing arts will start performing as both a valuable community asset and as a tourist option to drive people to our island (through offering packages via ATEED and tour operators incorporating both local businesses and Artworks Theatre).

18. Continuing to progress marine protection and waterway research

- Marine protection should be of higher priority than tourism.
- Marine reserve - Location needs to be carefully considered. Needs to be well away from recreational swimming and fishing and boating areas in heavy use.
- Strongly support marine reserves around Waiheke.
- Not the role of the Waiheke LB, therefore no priority.
- Boatie needs to be taken into account of in regards to marine reserves.
- Marine protection - areas around northern beaches that could be appropriate for marine reserves. Need to put a stake in the ground where there is minimal opposition. There are places that aren't in anyone's back yard. These should be prioritised.
- We are an essential part of the Marine Park. We know what the faults are and we are part of a bigger picture. We want a pristine environment. We are left to pick up the pieces. We are missing the bigger picture, there is nothing sparkling about the Gulf anymore.

19. Developing an integrated approach to ecological restoration and pest management across the island

- High priority, in addition to what is planned, of developing an integrated approach to ecological restoration and pest management across Waiheke Island.
- Address roadside weed control also which is currently both expensive and out of control.
- Not a primary role of the Waiheke LB, therefore low priority.
- Kauri Dieback should be a priority, why has it fallen off, no funding and no advocacy to regional council. Waitakere and Great Barrier Local Board provide funding for Kauri Die back projects.
- Make Waiheke Pest Free. Onetangi Beach Ratepayers Ass bait extension. Extended to whole of Waiheke. Back on to Government programme.
- Pest Free should be part of the ecological blueprint of Waiheke.
- Ecological protection, restoration and weed and pest management. We have really good aviation birds, forests that are suffering. Need to think about protecting what we have. F&B have been leading discussions with the board re wildlife signage, dog access, blue penguins and grey faced petrels. Include protection in that priority.

20. Progressing options for tourism infrastructure funding

- Alter the wharf tax system and give the money to the Local Board to use on tourism infrastructure.
- We need to actively discourage increased tourism. The nature of our island has changed enough already.
- Marine protection should be of higher priority. Tourism can take a back seat.
- Waiheke is marketed as a jewel in Auckland's crown but its success is causing problems with pollution of our beaches and fisheries .
- ATEED has scrapped Info stand at Matiatia, has resulted in confused tourists asking local shop keepers. Waiheke spirit is personal, one on one.
- Not a primary role of the local board, therefore low priority.
- Would be good to see the figures on wharf tax, how much is it and where is it spent.
- Wharf tax is a key issue and needs to be resolved and allocated to local improvements.
- Tourism push is too much, it has affected our island too greatly.
- Is there a levy or local tax that can be returned to the local board.
- Council is far too orientated towards tourism, which destroys our beautiful island and does not care about the locals, who live here all year round and have to suffer the consequences, i.e un-affordable rents and house prices, restaurant prices, too much traffic etc. etc.

NB There are further comments relating to local tourism under the regional proposal feedback section (paragraph 40).

21. Continuing to investigate housing issues on Waiheke

- Not a primary role of the Waiheke LB, therefore low priority.
- Housing should be of higher priority than Tourism.

- Housing is a huge issue on the island. There needs to be a minimum building WOF for rental properties. There are lots of tourists now coming to the island and there aren't going to be any people working in services as they have nowhere to live.

22. Supporting a governance review which has good outcomes for Waiheke

- Priority.

23. Reinstatement of the Rural Urban Boundary

- High priority.

24. Continuing to progress the development of a community swimming pool.

- Request a facilitated consultation process with the community, with regards to the development of an indoor community pool.
- Priority is all year swimming pool for teaching, accident rehabilitation, elderly and disabled physical well-being, social well-being etc.
- I strongly support a swimming pool for our children to learn to swim in, otherwise tragic drownings in an island community are inevitable. This summer, the only public pool on the island at the school has been closed for maintenance so no children have had lessons.
- Only supported by a faction of the community and highly unlikely to obtain funding, and therefore low priority.

Additional feedback not related to priorities

25. Infrastructure

- Infrastructure spending on basics like drainage needs urgent attention.
- The Waiheke Local Board continues to waste ratepayers' money by neglecting basic infrastructure.
- We pay full Auckland rates and do not get sewage and town water, our share of council spending should be increased on roading and drainage, as well as public parking, especially at Matiatia.
- Sewage and stormwater.
- Infrastructure spending on basics like drainage needs urgent attention.
- Major road drainage issues from flooding need fixing at Onetangi.

26. Recreation facilities

- Boat ramp. Why is there no allocation in the budget for a much needed additional boat ramp on the northern side of the island for all weather/tide launching. Sandy Bay is dangerous.
- Boaties needs also need to be considered.
- Is there going to be a needs assessment for sports and recreation needs? - need to ensure all community are involved and there are many different interests.

27. Open space

- The board needs to continue with its work to ensure that the landfill material unlawfully placed in the main branch of the Rangihoua tributary at the south-east corner of Rangihoua Park is removed from the park.
- Little has been done about Reserve Management Plans.

28. Governance

- Take notice of what the local board suggests. They know what is best for Waiheke. Do not ignore them.
- This question is insulting given the lack of influence that our local board has with the council - which has a history of opposing local wishes.
- Waiheke should be supported in its bid to break away from Auckland Council. Our community's values are totally different from city people.
- A marina at Kennedy Point is strongly opposed by Waiheke residents and should be refused consent.
- Marina is needed on Waiheke to service the demand from tourists.
- Abandoning the hugely popular community fruit trees project is a mistake.
- The funding would not cover half of the priorities list.
- Support for enabling houseboats in identified areas in the Unitary Plan.
- The Board needs to prioritise the developing issues from greater number of visitors to the island as well as the increasing number of new businesses starting up. The board need more decision-making for business activity, e.g. Jetskis and and Segway.
- Board needs to ensure there is a strategy around the development of the District Plan - this is the blueprint document, we need to ensure board members are on the panel.
- Create a blueprint for Waiheke - this is the Waiheke we want, and the constraints around the roading, urban design, marine environment. There is no Waiheke character overlay that will intesect with planners, transport etc.
- Seems to make no difference what the public think in regards to District Plan and planning. E.g Essentially Waiheke was done and never made a statutory document. Ensure Essentially Waiheke is included as a statutory document within the District Plan.
- Don't keep failing to notify 98% of consent applications. This is supposed to be a democracy, not a bureaucracy.

29. Waste

- The board also needs to prioritise returning the waste services to community ownership so that the disastrous performance in diversion can be addressed.

Overview of feedback received on regional proposals from Waiheke Local Board area

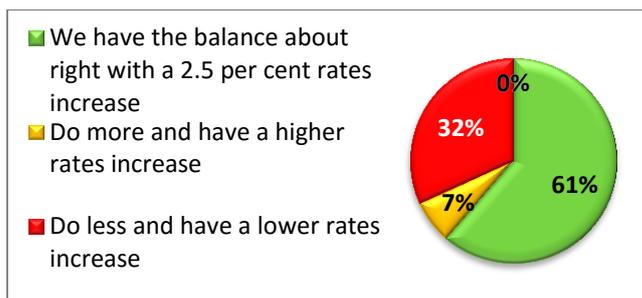
- 30. The consultation on the proposed annual budget focused on five key issues,
 - Issue 1: Rates increases,
 - Issue 2: Rating stability,
 - Issue 3: Paying for tourism promotion,
 - Issue 4: Paying for housing infrastructure and
 - Issue 5: Paying council staff a living wage.
- 31. The written feedback received from the Waiheke Local Board area on these key consultation topics is summarised below, along with an overview of any other areas of feedback on regional proposals with a local impact.

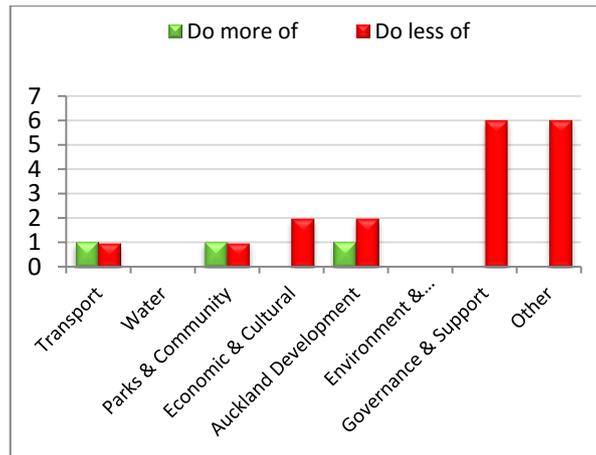
Issue 1: Rates increases

- 32. Aucklanders were asked if we have the balance right with a 2.5 per cent average rates increase or should we have a higher rates increase (3.5 per cent) and do more or a lower rates increase (2 per cent) and do less.

Question 1: Delivering our planned investments and services will require an average rates increase of 2.5 per cent for 2017/2018. A higher rates increase would enable us to do more, while a lower rates increase would mean we can do less. What do you think?

- 33. The graphs below give an overview of the responses from the Waiheke Local Board area.





34. Comments relating to rates increase – regional proposal

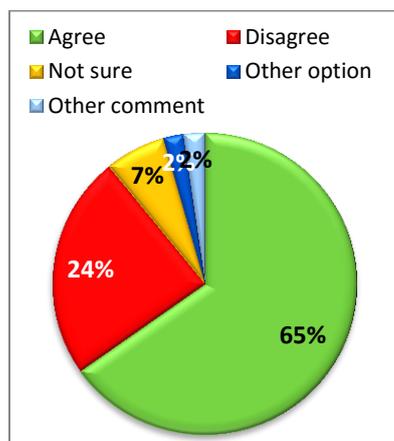
- Using more money to create and maintain large park and recreation facilities instead of turning the space into housing.
- Reduce council salaries and streamline bureaucracy.
- Stop funding events, promoting tourism or other non-essential services.
- Focus on core business such as maintaining infrastructure (roads, sewerage etc) and ensuring decent transport services.

Issue 2: Rating stability

35. Aucklanders were asked if businesses should receive the same rates increase as residential ratepayers in 2017/2018.

Question 2: The council has been adjusting the share of general rates between businesses and residential ratepayers over time. This has resulted in businesses having a smaller increase than residential ratepayers. We are proposing that for 2017/2018 both should receive the same rates increase. What do you think?

36. The graphs below give an overview of the responses from the Waiheke Local Board area.



37. Comments relating to rating stability – regional proposal

- Businesses can factor the rates into their expenses or operating costs

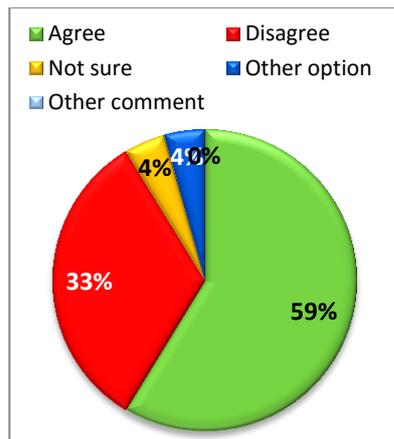
- Running a business is a life option. Higher rates must be factored into a business plan or operating costs. Residing is a life must. We all need to live in safe, secure homes. Residents must pay less than businesses.
- Residential rates are already high and we have taken a hit year after year with people on fixed income struggling as interest rates are low. I think commercial should bear rise this time, as with so many more people coming to Auckland in recent years they must be in a better position and can be absorbed as an expense at tax time, which residential can't do.
- Businesses need all the assistance they can get.

Issue 3: Paying for tourism promotion

38. Aucklanders were asked if they agree or disagree with the proposed targeted rate on accommodation providers to fund tourism promotion rather than from general rates.

Question 3: The council spends \$20-30 million on tourism promotion and major events each year. We are proposing to fund this from a targeted rate on accommodation providers rather than general rates. What do you think?

39. The graphs below give an overview of the responses from the Waiheke Local Board area.



40. Comments relating to tourism promotion – regional proposal

- Tourism taxes are used through Europe, and is appropriate here.
- Accommodation providers and businesses are the winners from tourism.
- Residential rate payers should not be expected to pay for an activity which puts added pressure on their facilities and infrastructure.
- Council should invest more in city street maintenance, pavements, sewage, public spaces and public toilets (basic infrastructure) rather than events.
- A targeted rate should not penalise accommodation providers, other stakeholders involved in serving our tourists should also be targeted, i.e. the extra should come from the tourists.
- Ratepayers should not pay for advertising for businesses.
- Tourism is not of 'significant' benefit to the Waiheke community and infrastructure can't cope with numbers.

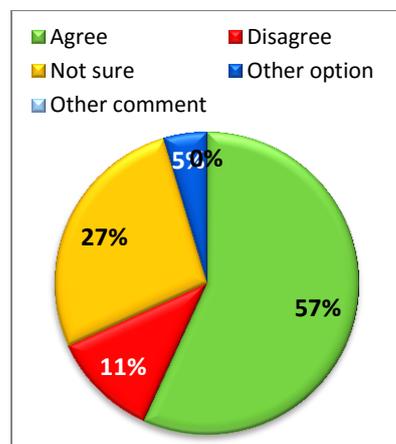
- Many Waiheke visitors are from the Auckland region, and are therefore paying from rates and an extra tariff. This proposal will greatly impact the way we do business.
- Consider an entry or landing tax instead.

Issue 4: Paying for housing infrastructure

41. People were asked if they supported changing our funding policy to allow infrastructure for new housing developments to be funded by targeted rates alongside existing growth charges, rather than ratepayers across Auckland.

Question 4: The council is proposing to change our funding policy to allow infrastructure for new housing developments to be funded by targeted rates, rather than ratepayers across Auckland. What do you think?

42. The graph below gives an overview of the responses from the Waiheke Local Board area.



43. Comments relating to housing infrastructure – regional proposal

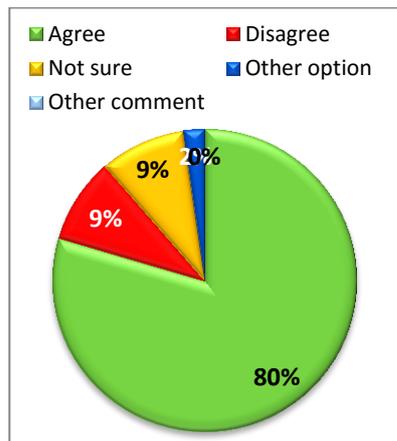
- Infrastructure for new housing developments should not be funded by rates at all. It should be funded by the developers.
- Tend to believe that housing is a central government issue rather than local council. Keep local council housing by all means particularly for vulnerable people.
- Stop landbanking from foreigners or people owning land purely for capital gain.
- Need to protect horticultural land in Pukekohe and council needs to change the Unitary Plan to reflect this. We cannot become a country that imports our fresh vegetables. This land needs to be kept out of the hands of developers.
- Disincentive to development, not developers fault there's been underinvestment in the past and lack of planning.
- The wider infrastructure which interconnects the new area to others is part of the whole city so should be paid for by the whole city.
- Any housing policy should take into consideration natural resources and existing infrastructure. While there is a housing crisis, empty houses and holiday homes could be charged a higher rate.

Issue 5: Paying council staff a living wage

44. People were asked if they support the council to implement a living wage policy over the council term ending October 2019 to ensure all council staff can afford typical living costs. This would be funded from savings within the existing budgets.

Question 5: The council is proposing to implement a living wage policy over the council term ending October 2019 to ensure all council staff can afford typical living costs. This would be funded from savings within the existing budgets. What do you think?

45. The graph below gives an overview of the responses from the Waiheke Local Board area.



46. Comments relating to paying council staff a living wage - regional proposal

- Reduce management salaries to enable a living wage.
- We want to encourage young people with innovative ideas into council positions not drive them away because they can't afford to live in Auckland.
- Proposal is an insult to ratepayers on lower or fixed incomes who are faced with higher and higher rates every year. It is not up to these ratepayers to pay more than necessary for Council staff to have a living wage.
- Living wage should come out of current salaries budget.