

Annual Budget 2019/2020 consultation feedback report for Wāitakere Ranges Local Board

1. Purpose

This report summarises feedback relating to the Wāitakere Ranges Local Board received through the Annual Budget 2019/2020 consultation. This includes:

- Feedback on the Wāitakere Ranges Local Board priorities for 2019/2020
- Feedback on regional proposals in the Annual Budget 2019/2020 from people or organisations based in the Wāitakere Ranges local board area

The feedback received will inform the Wāitakere Ranges Local Board decisions on allocation of their local budgets in their local board agreement for 2019/2020. It will also inform the Wāitakere Ranges Local Board input and advocacy on regional budgets and proposals that will be agreed at their business meeting on 18 April and subsequently discussed with the Finance and Performance Committee on 8 May.

2. Executive Summary

This report summarises consultation feedback on the Annual Budget 2019/2020 (including on local board priorities for 2019/2020).

Council received feedback in person at community engagement events, through written forms (including online and hard copy forms, emails and letters) and through social media.

Feedback on Wāitakere Ranges Local Board priorities for 2019/2020

The local board consulted on the following priorities:

- Priority 1: Continue to support community environmental initiatives in the Wāitakere Ranges Heritage Area
- Priority 2: Support Shadbolt House to develop into a writer's residence alongside partners Going West Trust
- Priority 3: Finalise Local Paths (Greenways) Plan
- Priority 4: Continue to support Māori engagement and aspirations

158 submissions were received on Wāitakere Ranges local board priorities for 2019/2020, showing that the majority of people either partially support (53%) or support (23%) the local board's priorities.

Free-text commentary was broad and challenging to theme. The board received support for its environmental initiatives, though submitters wanted more to be done about water quality at swimming spots (e.g. beaches.) Submitters were generally favourable towards Glen Eden improvement initiatives but had some concerns around future planning and ongoing upkeep.

The board also received some general feedback about transport options and poor roading maintenance – specifically with regards to Glen Eden and rural areas. There were not enough free-text comments to generate themed feedback on the other priorities.

Feedback on regional proposals in the Annual Budget 2019/2020 from the Wāitakere Ranges local board area

Out of the 5,249 submissions received on the regional proposals in the Annual Budget 2019/2020, 253 submissions on regional issues were from people living in the Wāitakere Ranges local board area. Submitters could comment on one or more issues therefore the following numbers will not add to 253.

Changes to rates and fees

- **Annual waste management changes**

Of the 29 individuals who commented, 7 supported the changes, 1 partially supported and 21 did not support it.

A number of the comments described frustration with the current waste collection system. The increased costs were seen to be unfair as west residents were also required to purchase tags. People questioned the quality of the service as there were issues of dumping and uncleanliness in their area.

- **Food scraps targeted rate**

Of the 16 individuals who commented, 8 supported the changes and 8 did not support it.

Those who opposed the change questioned the value of this initiative to households that already compost food.

- **Waitākere rural sewerage targeted rate**

Of the 184 individuals who commented, 12 supported the changes and 172 did not support it.

Most who disagreed felt that water quality would decline as a result of the change and were concerned about the lack of upkeep from some owners in the area. Many gave positive feedback about the service currently provided by council contractors.

A specific analysis of the feedback from this, and those received from outside the board area, will be sent at a later stage by the regional team coding this question.

- **Urban boundary rating**

All five submitters who commented on this change were in support.

- **Religious properties rates**

Of the 60 individuals who commented, 18 supported the change, 3 partially supported it and 39 did not support it.

Many commentators wanted religious groups to be charged rates like any other group with no exemptions. A sizeable number also acknowledged that some religious groups may not have reserves to pay for this, and that increased expenses would reduce their capacity to provide social services.

- **Regulatory fees**

Of the 13 individuals who commented, 1 supported the change and 12 did not support it.

Most comments received discussed frustrations with the consenting process and felt the costs were already high. Many questioned whether an increase in fees would reflect an increase in the quality of service provided.

Feedback on the proposed amendment to the 10-year Budget 2018-2028 regarding property transfers

Out of the 5,249 submissions received on the proposed amendment to the 10-year Budget 2018-2028 regarding property transfers, 156 submissions were from people living in the Wāitakere Ranges local board area. 52% of submitters in the local board area supported the amendment, with a further 28% partially supporting it. Only 17% did not support the amendment.

Those who provided comments were concerned that a transfer would create duplication or inefficiencies but welcomed moves to reduce costs. Some also commented on the accessibility of the waterfront to the general public and did not wish for this to be reduced. Others provided general commentary on their concerns for the future of the waterfront – including decisions on a stadium and the location of the port.

3. Context

Auckland Council consulted on its Annual Budget 2019/2020 and a proposed Amendment to the 10-year Budget 2018-2028 regarding property transfers between 17 February and 17 March 2019.

The Annual Budget 2019/2020 must include a Local Board Agreement for the Wāitakere Ranges Local Board which sets out our priorities and how we're going to pay for them.

Auckland Council also consulted on the Our Water Future discussion document at the same time. The feedback received on this discussion document will be presented at a later date.

Types of feedback

Overall Auckland Council received feedback from 5,249 people in the consultation period. This feedback was received through:

- Written feedback – 2,423 hard copy and online forms, emails and letters
- In person – feedback was received through 14 have your say events and 51 community events.
- Social media – 19 comments on regional issues were received through Facebook and Twitter.

4. Feedback received on Wāitakere Ranges Local Board priorities for 2019/2020

The local board consulted on the following priorities:

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Feedback received through written submissions

158 submissions were received on Wāitakere Ranges Local Board priorities for 2019/2020, showing that the majority of people either partially support (53%) or support (23%) the local board's priorities.

The responses from submitters in the Wāitakere Ranges local board area is graphed in figure 1.

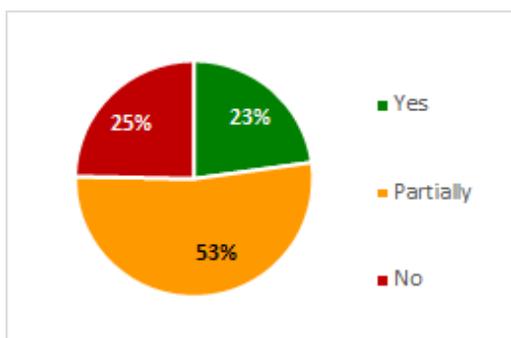


Figure 1: Response to "Are we on the right track with our priorities?".

Those who supported the priorities generally did not provide comment. Of those who did, people supported the improvements to Glen Eden.

"I support the board in prioritising investment into the Glen Eden town centre. I support this because maintaining a vibrant and attractive town centre is an important part of creating a liveable and prosperous community. Glen Eden in its current state also has a lot of area for improvement.."

"The Waitakere Ranges Local Board is severely restricted financially due to the lower population, but still has responsibility for the whole of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area that includes the Centennial Park and the Water catchment for Auckland. The Waitakere Ranges Local Board is therefore tasked with care and custody of the needs of the residents, but also the recreational needs for ALL of Auckland and the preservation of the asset marketed by ATEED. Their priorities are the best that can be achieved with the severely limited budget at their disposal."

Those who partially agreed did so for a number of reasons including: being unsure of what the priorities were; wanting specific actions to be described before they confirmed their support; concern around how certain priorities are progressing; and wanting more action in their specific areas.

The following are a series of quotes that illustrate these reasons:

“The local board has too much focus on Glen Eden, Titirangi and Huia. Northern parts of the local board (Swanson, Bethells) usually do not get included in any plans.”

“The general priorities are right, but we need more specific actions in our area e.g. food scrap collection or community composting, community bokashi bins etc. Also, we need community projects with expert guidance advising neighbourhoods of specific actions individuals can take to protect waterways to clean up the beaches, particularly regarding ameliorating the effects of run—off in heavy rain. We also need incentivisation to a) reduce household water usage year on year, and b) install water tanks to increase water holdings.”

Of those who said no, most were generally frustrated with council processes and actions locally and regionally. In particular, people felt their rates did not offer value for money and were generally opposed to any increases. Some also misinterpreted the question and discussed their frustration with the proposed change to the Waitākere rural sewerage targeted rate or the regional track closures. Many discussed issues that are the domain of Auckland Transport. A minority of ‘no’ responses actually discussed the priorities and because of low numbers, it was difficult to theme.

Feedback on local topics

Free text comments covered a broad range of issues affecting individuals at local level, thus developing themes was challenging. Many, with the exception of the two themes below, did not comment on the priorities listed by the board but generic local issues.

- Environment

People liked the local board’s approach to environmental initiatives but wished to see greater coverage in their areas with respect to weed management and general upkeep. Communities also wished to be engaged in the process of looking at environmental issues within the board area.

A large number of submitters also commented on the quality of their local beaches and swimming areas. Many wished to see greater steps being taken to make these areas clean.

Kauri dieback was also discussed at length but an analysis was not undertaken as this is outside of the scope of the local board. Most discussed the need to re-open the tracks as soon as possible due to the social and psychological impact of the closures on the local community. Any feedback on Kauri dieback was sent through to the regional team co-ordinating the recently finished consultation. As the Annual Budget consultation period overlapped with the Waitākere Tracks consultation, the regional team have agreed to process feedback received via our channels.

Some submitters acknowledged the lower budget available to the board but the high demand for budget towards recreational facilities, such as the ranges, which serve a large portion of Auckland.

- Glen Eden

Many acknowledged the importance of prioritising the Glen Eden town centre, though some residents wanted more of a focus on other areas within the board. There was some concern about the way in which the town centre was being planned – the lack of park and ride options came up frequently as a narrative. General concerns around safety, cleanliness, vehicle congestion and homelessness were also noted.

Feedback received through events

The Wāitakere Ranges Local Board held four events:

Have Your Say

- Huia – Wāitakere rural sewerage targeted rate specific
- Piha – Wāitakere rural sewerage targeted rate specific
- Glen Eden – general Annual Budget feedback

Community Event

- Titirangi Markets – drop-in and water strategy discussion

A total of 85 people were engaged through these four events.

Feedback on other local topics

These topics were also of local interest, though fall under the jurisdiction of Auckland Transport and as such are largely outside the decision-making scope of the local board.

- Transport

There were a number of comments on transport, particularly out to and within rural parts of the local board who felt that they weren't getting a return on their rates. There were also observations on the lack of park and ride options within the board area – Glen Eden and Swanson had specific mentions.

"I think we need a community shuttle around the Oratia, Piha and Karekare circle — to enable people to get from A to B — both locals and tourists. Transport out here is sparse. Many drink down at Piha at the RSA etc and need a community shuttle till 12 midnight to get people home safely."

- Roothing

Roothing and footpath maintenance was bought up a few times – particularly in areas where there is considerable seasonal traffic e.g. Piha and Huia. One commentator discussed the need for better active transport options to neighbouring local boards. Residents wanted better and more frequent maintenance.

Requests for local funding

There were two requests from the public

One submitter wished to have a skatepark at Piha for young people.

Friends of Regional Parks also made a submission requesting funding. They request funding for Regional Parks staff to:

1. complete the 10 year update to the Regional Park Management Plan, to prepare a regional park acquisition strategy,
2. to prepare park and recreation plans to accommodate population growth, changing demographics, and the impacts of park closure

Information on submitters

The tables and graphs below indicate what demographic categories people identified with. This information only relates to those submitters who provided demographic information.

Age and Gender

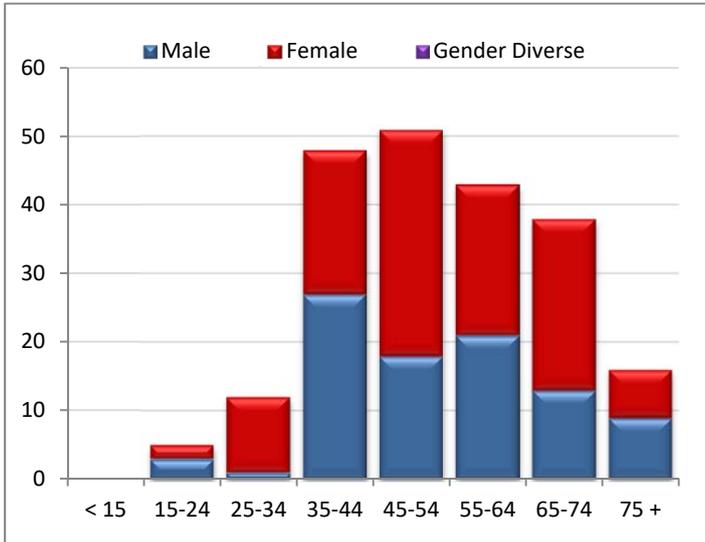


Figure 2 shows that submitters were largely middle aged and evenly split between female and male.

Age	Male	Female
< 15	0	0
15-24	3	2
25-34	1	11
35-44	27	21
45-54	18	33
55-64	21	22
65-74	13	25
75 +	9	7
Total	92	121

Table 1 shows raw numbers in the gender/age category. There were no submitters who checked 'gender diverse'

Ethnicity

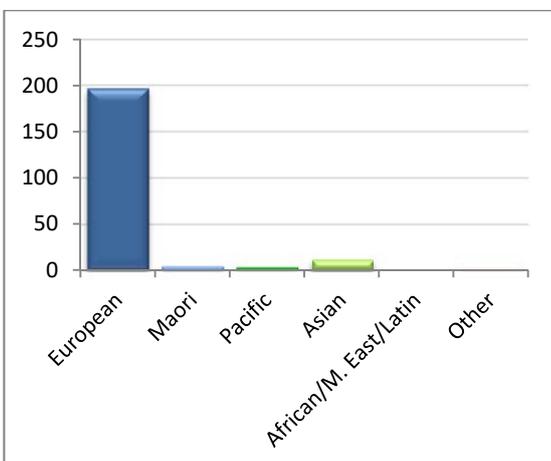


Figure 3 shows submitters by ethnicity, revealing a large New Zealand European skew

Ethnicity		#	%
European		197	94%
	Pakeha/NZ European	172	82%
	Other European	25	12%
Maori		5	2%
Pacific		4	2%
	Samoan	3	1%
	Tongan	0	0%
	Other Pacific	1	0%
Asian		12	6%
	Chinese	6	3%
	Indian	3	1%
	Other Asian	3	1%
African/Middle Eastern/Latin		0	0%
Other		1	0%
Total people providing ethnicity		209	105%

Table 2 shows submitters by ethnicity

5. Overview of feedback received on the Annual Budget from Wāitakere Ranges Local Board area

The Annual Budget 2019/2020 sets out our priorities and how we're going to pay for them. The regional consultation on the proposed Annual Budget focused on changes to rates and fees:

- Changes to rates and fees
 - Annual waste management changes
 - Food scraps targeted rate
 - Waitākere rural sewerage targeted rate
 - Urban boundary rating
 - Religious properties rates
 - Regulatory fees

The submissions received from the Wāitakere Ranges Local Board area on these key issues is summarised below, along with an overview of any other areas of feedback on regional proposals with a local impact.

Changes to rates and fees

Aucklanders were asked about a proposed small number of rating and fee changes.

Question 1: We are proposing a small number of rating and fee changes for 2019/2020

These changes include:

- *a \$20.67 increase to the annual waste management charge to cover increased costs*
- *extending the food scraps targeted rate to 2000 properties in the North Shore former trial area to whom the service is available*
- *phasing out the Waitākere rural sewerage service and targeted rate over a two-year period (2019/2020-2020/2021)*
- *adjusting the urban rating boundary to apply urban rates to 400 properties in recently urbanised areas (that receive the same services as their adjacent urban neighbours)*
- *not charging rates on some parts of the land owned by religious organisations, and*
- *an increase to some regulatory fees (such as resource consent, building control and mooring fees) to cover increased costs.*

Please tell us what you think about some or all of these changes

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“I think the idea of phasing out the septic tank service is a ridiculous idea. Our waterways are already suffering from poorly maintained, aged and damaged septic tanks. The advantage of the council managing this service is that it is done on a scheduled basis avoiding laziness or inattentiveness on the property owners’ part.”

6. Overview of feedback received on the proposed amendment to the 10-year Budget 2018-2028 regarding property transfers from Wāitakere Ranges Local Board area

The question and text below is directly from the feedback form. The feedback from the Wāitakere Ranges Local Board area is set out under the question.

Panuku is Auckland Council’s urban development agency and currently owns and manages about \$790 million of city centre waterfront properties. We are proposing to transfer the legal ownership of those properties to Auckland Council. Panuku would continue to manage the properties. The resulting ownership structure would reduce governance duplication, increase consistency with other

development areas and maximise future flexibility. The city centre waterfront properties are strategic assets so we want to know what you think of the proposal.

What is your opinion about this proposal?

Out of the 5,249 submissions received on the proposed amendment to the 10-year Budget 2018-2028 regarding property transfers, 156 submissions were from people living in the Wāitakere Ranges local board area. 52% of submitters in the local board area supported the amendment, with a further 28% partially supporting it. Only 17% did not support the amendment.

Those who provided comments were concerned that a transfer would create duplication or inefficiencies but welcomed moves to reduce costs. Some also commented on the accessibility of the waterfront to the general public and did not wish for this to be reduced. Others provided general commentary on their concerns for the future of the waterfront – including decisions on a stadium and the location of the port.

“Any efforts to reduce duplication are welcome so long as costs are not increased by Auckland Council to compensate”

“Support this so long as it does not destroy, public access to waterfront areas. Must stay available to all not just the rich”

The graphs below give an overview of the responses from the Wāitakere Ranges Local Board area.

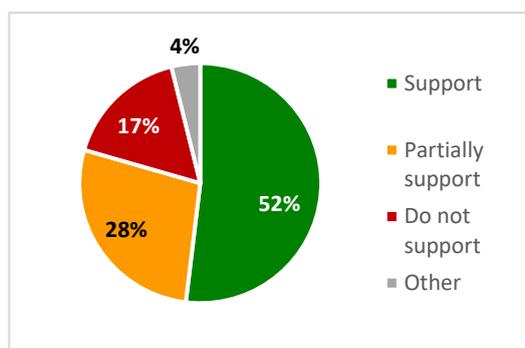


Figure 4 shows the majority of submitters either support or partially support the proposed amendment to the 10-year Budget 2018-2028 regarding property transfers

10 Year Budget Amendment	Code	Count	%
What is your opinion about this proposal?	Support	81	52%
	Partially support	43	28%
	Do not support	26	17%
	Other	6	4%

Table 3 shows the position of submitters who gave feedback on this question