

I hereby give notice that an ordinary meeting of the Howick Local Board will be held on:

Date: Thursday, 13 June 2024
Time: 1.30pm
Meeting Room: Howick Local Board Meeting Room
Venue: Pakuranga Library Complex
7 Aylesbury Street
Pakuranga

Howick Local Board

OPEN AGENDA

MEMBERSHIP

Chairperson	Damian Light
Deputy Chairperson	Bo Burns
Members	Katrina Bungard
	David Collings
	Bruce Kendall
	John Spiller
	Mike Turinsky
	Adele White
	Peter Young, JP

(Quorum 5 members)

Claire Bews
Democracy Advisor

6 June 2024

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1 Nau mai | Welcome

The Chair will open the meeting and welcome everyone present.

2 Ngā Tamōtanga | Apologies

At the close of the agenda no apologies had been received.

3 Te Whakapuaki i te Whai Pānga | Declaration of Interest

Members are reminded of the need to be vigilant to stand aside from decision making when a conflict arises between their role as a member and any private or other external interest they might have.

Adoption of the Howick Local Board Agreement 2024/2025

File No.: CP2024/06706

Item.4

Te take mō te pūrongo

Purpose of the report

1. To adopt the local content for the Long-term Plan 2024-2034 which includes the Howick Local Board Agreement 2024/2025, the message from the chair, and approved local board advocacy.
2. To adopt a local fees and charges schedule for 2024/2025.

Whakarāpopototanga matua

Executive summary

3. The Local Government (Auckland Council) Act 2009 states that for each financial year, Auckland Council must have a local board agreement (as agreed between the Governing Body and the local board) for each local board area.
4. From 28 February to 28 March 2024, council consulted on the proposed Long-term Plan 2024-2034. Local boards considered the feedback received and then provided feedback to the Budget Committee at a workshop on 8 May 2024 on regional issues, community feedback, and key local board initiatives and advocacy areas.
5. The Howick Local Board formally resolved its feedback on the Long-term Plan 2024-2034 at its business meeting on 2 May 2024 (HW/2024/48). That feedback was reported to the Budget Committee meeting on 16 May 2024 to be considered as part of the decision-making on the final Long-term Plan.
6. For the council to finalise the Long-term Plan 2024-2034, local boards need to approve the local content for the Long-term Plan 2024-2034. This includes a local board agreement, a message from the chair, and the approved local board advocacy, as well as a local fees and charges schedule for 2024/2025.
7. On 27 June 2024, the Governing Body will meet to adopt Auckland Council's Long-term Plan 2024-2034 including 21 local board agreements.

Ngā tūtohunga

Recommendation/s

That the Howick Local Board:

- a) whai / adopt the local content for the Long-term Plan 2024-2034, which includes the Howick Local Board Agreement 2024/2025, the message from the chair, and approved local board advocacy (Attachment A in the agenda report).
- b) whai / adopt a local fees and charges schedule for 2024/2025 (Attachment B in the agenda report).
- c) tautapa / delegate authority to the Chair to make any final minor changes to the local content for the Long-term Plan 2024-2034 (the Howick Local Board Agreement 2024/2025, message from the chair, and approved local board advocacy).
- d) tuhi ā-taipitopito / note that the Howick Local Board Agreement 2024/2025, will be included in the Long-term Plan 2024-2034 to be adopted by the Governing Body when it meets on 27 June 2024.

Horopaki Context

8. The Local Government (Auckland Council) Act 2009 states that for each financial year, Auckland Council must have a local board agreement, as agreed between the Governing Body and the local board, for each local board area.
9. The Howick local board agreement is informed by the Howick Local Board Plan 2023. Local board plans are developed every three years and outline the priorities and preferences of the communities within the local board area in respect of the level and nature of local activities to be provided by the Auckland Council in the local board area.
10. Throughout the development of the Long-term Plan 2024-2034, local board chairs (or delegated local board representatives) have had the opportunity to attend Budget Committee workshops on key topics and provide local board views on regional issues being considered as part of the Long-term Plan 2024-2034.
11. One local “Have Your Say” event was hosted in the Howick Local Board area to engage with the community and seek feedback on both regional and local proposals. Data was also passively collected at six other events via feedback board.
12. A report analysing the feedback on local board priorities, as well as feedback from those living in the local board area related to the regional issues, was included on the 2 May 2024 business meeting agenda.
13. Local boards considered this feedback, and then provided feedback to the Budget Committee at a workshop on 8 May 2024 on regional issues, community feedback and key local board initiatives and advocacy areas.
14. The Howick Local Board formally resolved its feedback on the Long-term Plan 2024-2034 at its business meeting on 2 May 2024 (HW/2024/48). That feedback was reported to the Budget Committee meeting on 16 May 2024 to be considered as part of the decision-making on the final Long-term Plan.
15. The Howick Local Board also approved advocacy initiatives for the Long-term Plan 2024-2034 at the 30 November 2023 business meeting (HW/2023/230).

Tātaritanga me ngā tohutohu Analysis and advice

Howick Local Board Agreement

Key features of the local board agreement

16. The local content for the Long-term Plan 2024-2034 (Attachment A), includes the Local Board Agreement 2024/2025, the message from the chair, and approved local board advocacy.
17. Table one below provides an outline of the sections in the local board agreement:

Section	Description
Planned operating and capital spend in 2024/2025	The planned capital spend to renew and develop assets and operating spend to maintain and operate assets as well as deliver local activities.

<p>Priorities by activity area</p>	<p>Funding priorities, levels of service, and performance measures for local activities which contribute to key community outcomes.</p> <p>These are set out under each local activity area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Community Services • Local Planning and Development • Local Environmental Management • Local Governance.
<p>Funding Impact Statement</p>	<p>This funding impact statement has been prepared to meet the requirements of Section 21(5) of the Local Government (Auckland Council) Act 2009. It covers the year from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025 and outlines the council's sources of funding for local activities in this local board area and the plan to apply them.</p>

Consideration of submissions and feedback

18. The Howick Local Board has considered the submissions and feedback received as part of consultation on the Long-term Plan 2024-2034.
19. A full analysis of the submissions and feedback on the Long-term Plan 2024 – 2034 for the Howick Local Board can be found here:
https://infocouncil.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/Open/2024/05/20240502_HW_AGN_12157_AT_WEB.htm
20. The local board consulted on the following priorities, however, these are not included in the Local Board Agreement 2024/2025 due to lack of available budget and staff resource:
 - Review and refresh the Howick Heritage Plan
 - Review and refresh the Howick Tourism Plan
 - Explore the development of a Howick Ward 'business collective', or other group, to provide support for small business owners outside of the established Business Improvement Districts. This work may lead to establishing a new business association and possible new Business Improvement District (BID) programme.

Service levels and performance measures

21. As part of the Long-term Plan 2024-2034, the service performance measures framework has been reviewed against council's legislative requirement to have performance measures (and targets) that enable the public to assess the level of service for major aspects of local activities.
22. New performance measures and targets, different to prior years, are proposed for inclusion in the Local Board Agreement 2024/2025. These new measures better reflect local levels of service, but also local boards' increased decision making and their role in setting service levels for local activities.

Local Fees and Charges

23. The Governing Body has agreed to the setting of baseline fees and charges for Active Communities and venue hire spaces, and therefore these fees have been reflected in the schedule of fees to be adopted by the local board.

Item.4

Pool and leisure centres

24. The review of fees and charges for Active Communities services have been split into two phases due to its size and complexity. The first phase of the fees, bookable spaces for hire at 19 of the 25 council managed sites, were reviewed and adopted as part of the Annual Budget 2023/2024.
25. As part of the consultation on the Long-term Plan 2024-2034, the council consulted on the second phase of the review of fees and charges for Active Communities services, which focused on the appropriate level of cost recovery for all the services provided from pool and leisure centres including memberships, swim schools and entrance fees. The assessment of cost recovery was balanced with enabling the council to provide a service that can be accessed by all parts of the community across the network.
26. The second phase includes both council-managed pool and leisure facilities and memberships and aquatic entrance fees for facilities managed under contract. There are 45 Active Communities sites across the Auckland region, 25 of these are managed directly by Auckland Council.
27. The proposed changes introduce an Auckland wide membership option to allow customers to access all 45 pool and leisure council-managed and contracted sites. It is also proposed to align legacy and discontinued memberships to current membership options over three years.
28. The proposed changes will establish baseline fees for like services across Active Communities activities. This will mean that the impact on each facility will vary. Changes are proposed to the following baseline fees:
 - entrance to all council managed and contracted pools and leisure facilities along with an increased discount rate for qualifying customers.
 - swimming lessons to better align to market rates, along with a new discount rate for those who qualify.
 - OSCAR before and after school care and holiday programme fees to maximise government subsidies and ensure costs are recovered.
 - term programme fees to simplify the fees framework.
29. After reviewing local board feedback, changes have been made to the proposed supervising adult and spectator fees. The proposed fee for these services which was consulted on as part of the consultation document was set to increase however, this fee is now proposed to be retained at previous levels. However, the proposed decrease to the supervising adult fee at Tepid Baths and West Wave Pool and Leisure Centre fee is proposed to proceed as the fees at these facilities were generally much higher than at other sites.
30. Learn to swim fees have also been reviewed following consultation. As the current fees at Manurewa Pool and Leisure Centre (Manurewa Local Board), Moana-Nui-a-Kiwa Pool and Leisure Centre (Mangere-Otahuhu Local Board) and babies fees at Tepid Baths (Waitemata Local Board) and Stanmore Bay (Hibiscus and Bays Local Board) are lower than those for the rest of the network, these fees are now proposed to be moved to a mid-point in financial year 2024/2025 to transition them to full alignment with the network in financial year 2025/2026.

Venue hire and bookable spaces

31. Venue hire and bookable spaces incorporates council managed community halls, community centres, art centres and bookable library spaces.
32. The review of this portfolio has been split into two phases. The consultation on the Long-term Plan 2024-2034 included proposals following phase one of the review of baseline fees across similar venues to ensure they are charged appropriately across the portfolio. Fees for 252 bookable spaces at 110 venues are included in this review.
33. The existing pricing frameworks currently in place for bookable spaces contains variations and inconsistencies inherited from legacy councils. The basis for phase one of the review is the Hire Fee Framework which considers the size, condition and quality of each bookable space, the levels of staffing, the amenities available, and current patterns of utilisation of the spaces. Phase one of this review addresses variations within local board and adjacent areas to bring pricing of comparable venues closer together.
34. Fees for around half of the venues reviewed in phase one are not proposed to change as they have been set at an appropriate level when compared to spaces nearby or with similar types of spaces or capacity. While some fees are proposed to increase, a number of fees are proposed to decrease.
35. Phase two, planned for 2025/2026, will assess the appropriate level of cost recovery balancing value to the ratepayer and accessibility for customers and communities.
36. The current discounts framework is not proposed to change, and these will be applied to eligible community groups and regular hirers.
37. At its 16th May 2024 business meeting, the Howick Local Board resolved (HW/2024/61) that the Howick War Memorial Hall operate as an official venue for hire and appropriate fees be applied to the hireage of the hall commencing 1st January 2025.

Other fees and charges

38. All other local fees and charges are proposed to increase by an inflationary adjustment of 4.7 per cent.

Tauākī whakaaweawe āhuarangi **Climate impact statement**

39. The decisions recommended in this report are procedural in nature and will not have any climate impacts themselves.
40. Some of the proposed projects in the local board agreement may have climate impacts. The climate impacts of any projects the council chooses to progress with will be assessed as part of the relevant reporting requirements.
41. Some of the proposed projects in the local board agreement will be specifically designed to mitigate climate impacts, build resilience to climate impacts, and restore the natural environment.

Ngā whakaaweawe me ngā tirohanga a te rōpū Kaunihera **Council group impacts and views**

42. Local boards worked with council departments to develop their local board work programmes for 2024/2025 that will be adopted at June business meetings. The draft local board work programmes help inform the local board agreements.

Ngā whakaaweawe ā-rohe me ngā tirohanga a te poari ā-rohe **Local impacts and local board views**

43. This report seeks local board adoption of its content for the Long-term Plan 2024-2034 and other associated material, including the Local Board Agreement 2024/2025.

Tauākī whakaaweawe Māori Māori impact statement

44. Many local board decisions are of importance to and impact on Māori. Local board agreements are important tools that enable and can demonstrate the council's responsiveness to Māori.
45. Local board plans, which were developed in 2023 through engagement with the community including Māori, form the basis of local priorities. There is a need to continue to build relationships between local boards and iwi, and where relevant, the wider Māori community.
46. Of those who submitted feedback on the Long-term Plan consultation, seven per cent identified as Māori. There were submissions from 23 Māori entities, many of which provided specific feedback on local priorities and advocacy. Of the 23 Māori entities, 12 presented feedback at a Town Hall Have Your Say event specifically for mana whenua and mātāwaka entities. These submissions were provided to the local board for consideration at local board workshops during the development of their local board agreement.
47. Ongoing conversations will assist local boards and Māori to understand each other's priorities and issues. This in turn can influence and encourage Māori participation in the council's decision-making processes.

Ngā ritenga ā-pūtea Financial implications

48. The local board agreement includes the allocation of locally driven initiatives (LDI) funding and asset based services (ABS) funding to projects and services for the 2024/2025 financial year.
49. LDI funding is discretionary funding allocated to local boards based on the Local Board Funding Policy, which local boards can spend on priorities for their communities. Local boards can also utilise LDI funding to increase local levels of service if they wish to do so.
50. Funding for ABS is allocated by the Governing Body to local boards based on current levels of service to run and maintain local assets and services including parks, pools and recreation facilities, community facilities, and libraries.
51. As part of the Long-term Plan 2024-2034 decisions the Governing Body adopted to amend the Local Board Funding Policy to take effect from 1 July 2025. As part of this change there will no longer be a differentiation between ABS and LDI funding after 2024/2025 and funding will be allocated to bring 18 local boards to within 5 per cent of funding equity within four years.
52. A local fees and charges schedule for 2024/2025 is adopted alongside the Local Board Agreement 2024/2025. The fees and charges have been formulated based on region-wide baseline service levels and revenue targets. Where fees and charges are amended by a local board that results in lower revenue for the council, the shortfall will need to be made up by either allocating LDI funds or reducing expenditure on other services to balance overall budgets.

Ngā raru tūpono me ngā whakamaurutanga Risks and mitigations

53. Decisions on the local content of the Long-term Plan 2024-2034, including the Local Board Agreement 2024/2025 and a local fees and charges schedule for 2024/2025, are required by 13 June 2024 to ensure the Governing Body can adopt the final Long-term Plan 2024-2034 including each local board agreement, at its 27 June 2024 meeting.

Ngā koringa ā-muri

Next steps

54. The Governing Body will meet on 27 June 2024 to adopt the Long-term Plan 2024-2034, including the 21 local board agreements in volume 3.
55. It is possible that minor changes may need to be made to the attachments before the Long-term Plan 2024-2034 is adopted, such as correction of any errors identified and minor wording changes. Staff therefore recommend that the local board delegates authority to the Chair to make any final changes if necessary.
56. Local board agreements set the priorities and budget envelopes for each financial year. Work programmes then detail the activities that will be delivered within those budget envelopes. Work programmes will be agreed between local boards and operational departments at business meetings in June 2024.

Ngā tāpirihanga

Attachments

No.	Title	Page
A	13 June 2024, Howick Local Board - Adoption of the Howick Local Board Agreement 2024/25 - Local Board Agreement	15
B	13 June 2024, Howick Local Board - Adoption of the Howick Local Board Agreement 2024/25 - Fees and Charges 2024/25	25

Ngā kaihaina

Signatories

Authors	Ian Milnes - Senior Local Board Advisor
Authorisers	Victoria Villaraza - Local Area Manager

Te Poari ā-Rohe o Howick

Howick Local Board

He kōrero mai i te Heamana

Message from the Chair

Tēnā koutou,

It's my privilege to present our Local Board Agreement for 2024/2025, the first under the new Local Board Plan 2023.

We're grateful for the feedback from the public during consultation in early 2024. We acknowledge the ongoing challenges as the costs of living continues to put pressure on households and businesses. We're also keenly aware of how this impacts our community organisations and clubs. We clearly heard that you want us to focus on delivering tangible outcomes within the next 12-months. Together with budget constraints, this means deferring some initiatives like the community-led climate action plan and business collective.

We're thrilled to have already delivered Te Tahiwanga Taiohi East Auckland Youth Space, recognising a decade-long dream to provide a dedicated space for local youth. Together with the ongoing support for the Howick Youth Council and increased investment into the Young Enterprise Scheme, we're proud to be supporting our taiohi (youth).

We're maintaining our strong investment into protecting and restoring our environment. We're continuing to fund Pest Free Howick and the Howick Stream Improvement Programme (delivered by the Otara Lake and Waterways Trust), while adding a targeted focus on Pakuranga and Botany Streams. We know we can't tackle our environmental challenges alone - we need to empower the community to adopt local parks and waterways, with sufficient support to ensure locals are set up for success.

We're focusing our capital expenditure on renewing the assets in the most critical condition, while doing everything we can to provide for our population growth. We're taking a strategic approach to ensure we're providing toilets and playgrounds where they're needed. We may need to optimise our existing asset portfolio, conditional on robust public consultation.

The Flat Bush Community Centre and Library continues to be our top priority for the Long-term Plan. Given the financial challenges both community and council face, we're actively working on new ways to fund this project.

Ngā mihi,



Damian Light

Chair Howick Local Board

Howick Local Board area



LEGEND

- Local board office
- Subdivision boundary
- Public open space (Unitary Plan)
- Railway
- Arterial road
- Medium road
- Minor road

We are home to **266** local parks, **14** sports parks, **4** libraries, **4** recreation centres, **7** community halls and houses

Data sources: Council Growth Scenario AGS23v1 (Feb 2024), StatsNZ Census 2023 (initial release May 2024)

Howick Local Board Plan 2023

The Howick Local Board Plan 2023 sets out the aspirations the local board has for the area. The outcomes in the Howick Local Board Plan are:

Ō Tātou Tāngata

Our People

Supporting people in our diverse communities to be strong, resilient, inclusive and healthy, and who actively participate to make our area a wonderful, safe place to live, work and play.

Tō Tātou Taiao

Our Environment

Protecting our natural environment to ensure the world we pass on to future generations has been well looked after and nourished.

Tō Tātou Hapori

Our Community

Supporting community participation with our services and facilities and maintain them in such a way as to efficiently provide maximum benefit for our area.

The local board agreement outlined in this document reflects how we plan to support these outcomes through agreed activities in the 2024/2025 financial year. In addition, each local board carries out responsibilities delegated by the Governing Body in accordance with the delegated power, and with the general priorities and preferences in the local board plan.

Working with Māori

Delivering on Auckland Council's commitment to Māori at a local level is a priority for local boards. The council is committed to meeting its responsibilities under Te Tiriti o Waitangi / the Treaty of Waitangi and its broader statutory obligations to Māori.

To meet this commitment, the Howick Local Board Plan seeks to deliver outcomes for Māori. Initiatives that deliver Māori outcomes are those which support Māori identity and culture, advance Māori well-being and support Māori to participate in local decision-making as identified in the "Kia Ora Tāmaki Makaurau" framework. Examples of this include:

- incorporating Māori culture, language, art and stories into the design of public spaces.
- strengthening relationships with Ngāi Tai ki Tamaki to identify joint aspirations and acknowledge them as kaitiaki of our area.
- support the Tūpuna Maunga Authority to protect and enhance Ōhūiarangi / Pigeon Mountain
- supporting Ngāi Tai ki Tamaki in its management of Te Naupata / Musick Point via the local board's work programme.

Howick Local Board Agreement 2024/2025

Planned operating and capital spend in 2024/2025

Key areas of spend	Community Services	Environmental Services	Planning Services	Governance	Total
Planned Operating Spend 2024/2025	\$31.1 million	\$684,000	\$812,000	\$1.1 million	\$34.0 million
Planned Capital Spend 2024/2025	\$7.8 million	-	-	-	\$7.8 million

Priorities by activity area

Auckland Council’s 2024/2025 funding priorities for local activities which contribute to key community outcomes in the Howick Local Board area are set out below under each local activity.

Local Community Services

We support strong, diverse, and vibrant communities through libraries and literacy, arts and culture, parks, sport and recreation, and events delivered by a mix of council services, community group partnerships and volunteers.

Our annual budget to deliver these activities includes operating costs of \$31.1 million and capital investment of \$7.8 million.

The key initiatives we have planned for 2024/2025 include:

- empowering community groups to deliver beneficial outcomes for Howick and identify opportunities for collaboration through a contestable Community Grants programme.
- supporting Te Taiwhanga Taiohi – East Auckland Youth Space in delivering programmes designed to cater to issues identified by youth using the space.
- supporting community groups through operational grants, such as the Howick Volunteer Coastguard and a variety of community bands
- continuing the implementation of programmes to increase social connectedness and build community networks that support and strengthen community resilience.
- ongoing renewal and maintenance of assets, including playgrounds, park lighting, park walkways and pathways and toilet block refurbishment

The local community services and key initiatives outlined above contribute towards achieving the following outcome/s in the Howick Local Board Plan:

- Outcome 1: Our People
- Outcome 3: Our Community

Levels of Service

We measure our performance against the following measures for each local priority. The level of service statement is in bold below.

Performance measure	Actual 2022/2023	Annual Plan Target 2023/2024	Long-term Plan Target 2024/2025
Enable a range of choices to access community services and recreation opportunities			
Number of visits to library facilities	779,666	837,200	823,000
Percentage of time physical library services are accessible to the community	New measure	New measure	100%

Number of visits to Pool and Leisure Centres	New measure	New measure	923,000
Percentage of time main Pool and Leisure Centre services are accessible to the community	New measure	New measure	95%
Percentage of local community facility asset components that are not in poor or very poor condition	New measure	New measure	82%
Number of local community events delivered	New measure	New measure	4
Number of activities and events delivered which support local communities to be physically active	New measure	New measure	75
Provide opportunities for communities to lead and deliver their own initiatives			
Number of partner organisations supported to sustain their governance capacity and capability	New measure	New measure	15
Provide urban green spaces (local parks, paths and Ngahere) and access to the coast			
Percentage of local parks, facilities and spaces meeting maintenance quality standards.	New measure	New measure	90%
Percentage of local open space asset components that are not in poor or very poor condition	New measure	New measure	94%

Local Planning and Development

Local planning and development includes supporting local town centres and communities to thrive by developing town centre plans and development, supporting Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), and heritage plans and initiatives.

Our annual operating budget to deliver these activities is \$812,000.

The key initiatives we have planned for 2024/2025 include:

- supporting the Howick BID to investigate broadening the BID area to include more commercial and business properties in the local board area

The local planning and development activity, including the key initiatives outlined above contribute towards achieving the following outcome/s in the Howick Local Board Plan:

- Outcome 4: Our Places
- Outcome 5: Our Economy

Levels of Service

We measure our performance against the following measures for each local priority. The level of service statement is in bold below.

Performance measure	Actual 2022/2023	Annual Plan Target 2023/2024	Long-term Plan Target 2024/2025
Support a strong local economy			
Percentage of Business Associations meeting their Business Improvement District (BID) targeted rate grant agreement obligations	100%	100%	100%

Local Environmental Management

We support healthy ecosystems and sustainability through local board-funded initiatives such as planting, pest control, stream and water quality enhancements, healthy homes, and waste minimisation projects.

Our annual operating budget to deliver these activities is \$6847,000.

The key initiatives we have planned for 2024/2025 include:

- continue to support the Howick Stream Improvement Programme with additional focus on developing a community stream restoration plan for the Pakuranga and Botany Creek catchment
- continuing to support Pest-Free Howick to deliver a significant pest removal programme across the local board area
- supporting local volunteer environmental initiatives including community planting, annual pest plant and animal control and environmental education, through the ecological and environmental programme
- continue the Industrial Pollution Prevention Programme (which educates and informs industry about the impacts they may have on local waterways) to broaden its outreach and include all businesses.

The local environmental management activity and key initiatives outlined above contribute towards achieving the following outcome/s in the Howick Local Board Plan:

- Outcome 2: Our Environment
- Outcome 3: Our Community

Levels of Service

We measure our performance against the following measures for each local priority. The level of service statement is in bold below.

Performance measure	Actual 2022/2023	Annual Plan Target 2023/2024	Long-term Plan Target 2024/2025
Protect, improve and minimise risks to the natural environments and cultural heritage			
Number of events in stream enhancement programmes	New measure	New measure	9
Rounds of pest control carried out in key areas	New measure	New measure	9

Local Governance

Activities in this group support the local board to engage with and represent their communities and make decisions on local activities. This support includes providing strategic advice, leadership of the preparation of local board plans, support in developing local board agreements, community engagement including relationships with mana whenua and Māori communities, and democracy and administrative support.

Our annual operating budget to deliver these activities is \$1.1 million.

Levels of Service

We measure our performance against the following measures for each local priority. The level of service statement is in bold below.

Performance measure	Actual 2022/2023	Annual Plan Target 2023/2024	Long-term Plan Target 2024/2025
Respond to the needs and aspirations of mana whenua and Māori communities			
Number of local activities that deliver moderate to high outcomes for Māori as outlined in 'Kia Ora Tamaki Makaurau' (Council's Māori outcomes framework).	New measure	New measure	Set baseline

Howick Local Board Grant Programme 2024/2025

File No.: CP2024/06557

Item.5

Te take mō te pūrongo

Purpose of the report

1. To adopt the Howick Grants Programme 2024/2025.

Whakarāpopototanga matua

Executive summary

2. The Auckland Council Community Grants Policy guides the allocation of local, multi-board and regional grant programmes to groups and organisations delivering projects, activities and services that benefit Aucklanders.
3. The Community Grants Policy supports each local board to review and adopt their own local grants programme for the next financial year.
4. This report presents the Howick Grants Programme 2024/2025 for adoption (as provided in Attachment A to this report).

Ngā tūtohunga

Recommendation/s

That the Howick Local Board:

- a) adopt the Howick Grants Programme 2024/2025 included as Attachment A to the agenda report.

Horopaki

Context

5. The Auckland Council Community Grants Policy guides the allocation of local, multi-board and regional grant programmes to groups and organisations delivering projects, activities and services that benefit Aucklanders.
6. The Community Grants Policy supports each local board to review and adopt its own local grants programme for the next financial year. The local board grants programme guides community groups and individuals when making applications to the local board.
7. The local board community grants programme includes:
 - outcomes as identified in the local board plan
 - specific local board grant priorities
 - which grant types will operate, the number of grant rounds and opening and closing dates
 - any additional criteria or exclusions that will apply
 - other factors the local board consider to be significant to their decision-making.
8. Once the local board grants programme 2024/2025 has been adopted, the types of grants, grant rounds, criteria and eligibility will be advertised through an integrated communication and marketing approach which includes utilising the local board channels.

Tātaritanga me ngā tohutohu Analysis and advice

9. The aim of the local board grant programme is to deliver projects and activities which align with the outcomes identified in the local board plan. The new Howick Grants Programme has been workshopped with the local board and feedback incorporated into the grants programme for 2024/2025.

Tauākī whakaaweawe āhuarangi Climate impact statement

10. The local board grants programme aims to respond to Auckland Council's commitment to address climate change by providing grants to individuals and groups with projects that support community climate change action. Local board grants can contribute to climate action through the support of projects that address food production and food waste; alternative transport methods; community energy efficiency education and behaviour change; build community resilience and support tree planting.

Ngā whakaaweawe me ngā tirohanga a te rōpū Kaunihera Council group impacts and views

11. The grants programme has no identified impacts on council-controlled organisations and therefore their views are not required.
12. Based on the main focus of an application, a subject matter expert from the relevant Auckland Council unit will provide input and advice. The main focus of an application is identified as arts, community, events, sport and recreation, environment or heritage.

Ngā whakaaweawe ā-rohe me ngā tirohanga a te poari ā-rohe Local impacts and local board views

13. The grants programme has been developed by the local board to set the direction of its grants programme. This programme is reviewed on an annual basis.

Tauākī whakaaweawe Māori Māori impact statement

14. All grant programmes respond to Auckland Council's commitment to improving Māori wellbeing by providing grants to organisations delivering positive outcomes for Māori. Applicants are asked how their project aims to increase Māori outcomes in the application process.

Ngā ritenga ā-pūtea Financial implications

15. The allocation of grants to community groups is within the adopted Long-term Plan 2021 - 2031 and local board agreements.

Ngā raru tūpono me ngā whakamaurutanga Risks and mitigations

16. The allocation of grants occurs within the guidelines and criteria of the Community Grants Policy. Therefore, there is minimal risk associated with the adoption of the grants programme.

Ngā koringa ā-muri Next steps

17. An implementation plan is underway, and the local board grants programme will be locally advertised through the local board and the council channels, including the council website, local board Facebook page and communication with past recipients of grants.

Ngā tāpirihanga Attachments

No.	Title	Page
A	Howick Community Grant Programme 2024/2025	45

Ngā kaihaina Signatories

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Options for voting methods in local elections

File No.: CP2024/06158

Item.6

Te take mō te pūrongo

Purpose of the report

1. To receive feedback from local boards on a range of voting method options following the Governing Body's 27 April 2023 decision asking staff to investigate options of postal, booth or a combination voting method for the 2025 elections.

Whakarāpopototanga matua

Executive summary

2. Postal voting is the current voting method for Auckland Council elections.
3. Following the review of the 2022 elections, several short and long-term issues were identified. These include:
 - some eligible voters not receiving voting documents
 - few special voting centres
 - general consequences of a declining postal service
 - general decline in voter turnout.
4. In March 2023 local boards were asked for their feedback on whether council should move from a 'postal only' voting method to a 'combination' (postal and booth) voting method. (Attachment A)
 - 14 supported combination voting (postal, with booth on election day).
 - One supported postal and online voting.
 - One supported online voting, and booth voting on election day.
 - One supported retaining postal only.
 - Four did not provide feedback on this issue.
5. In April 2023 the Governing Body supported staff to investigate options of postal, booth or a combination method of voting for the 2025 election. The council can change its voting method through resolution.
6. Local boards are being consulted on this topic again, as the option for a booth only voting method is now also under consideration.
7. Staff are investigating the feasibility of five options:
 - Option One - postal voting with limited special voting centres (status quo)
 - Option Two - postal voting with more special voting centres (status quo plus)
 - Option Three - booth voting
 - Option Four - combination voting (postal, with booth on election day only)
 - Option Five - combination voting (booth and postal).
8. The management of postal voting is relatively straightforward. The short-term issues identified at the 2022 election can be remedied through the addition of more special voting centres on election day (status quo plus option).

9. The management of booth voting is more complex and comes with risks and higher costs. The organisation will need to build capacity to manage a booth voting election with up to 630 voting places, and to hire and train up to 3000 temporary staff.
10. Booth voting has not been used in local elections since 1992 and the current booth voting regulations have not been tested since that time. No recent policy work has been done to determine if any amendments to the regulations are necessary to ensure their workability in the modern context. The Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) has stated it may be challenging for policy work to be completed and ready for the 2025 local elections.
11. A combination method will be costly (estimated between \$10.7-\$17.1 million) with the separate costs for postal and booth operations. Additionally, the close of voting on election day for postal is 12 noon, and 7pm for booth. This could lead to the confusion and frustration of voters.
12. Staff recommend that the postal voting method should be retained, with an increase of special voting centres to avoid queues on election day (status quo plus option).

Ngā tūhonga Recommendation/s

That the Howick Local Board:

- a) whakarite / provide feedback on their preferred voting method provided in this report and on the staff recommendation for the status quo plus option.

Horopaki Context

13. Auckland Council appoints an Electoral Officer to conduct its elections for mayor, councillors and local board members. The Electoral Officer also conducts the elections for five licensing trusts.
14. The Chief Executive is responsible to the council for “facilitating and fostering representative and substantial elector participation in elections and polls held under the Local Electoral Act 2001”. For this reason, a small team of seconded, fixed term and sometimes volunteer staff work alongside the Electoral Officer to ensure all eligible voters are well informed and motivated to vote and that voters have a diverse range of candidates to choose from.
15. The Governing Body can make decisions about specified matters relating to elections, including the voting method.
16. The Local Electoral Act 2001 allows a council, through resolution, to change the voting method of its elections. The authorised methods are:
 - postal voting (current method)
 - booth voting
 - a combination method.
17. Attachment B provides details of the different methods of voting. Attachment C provides three flow charts outlining how voters would interact with each of the three distinct voting processes (postal, booth and combination) and how each process interacts with the others.
18. Online voting is not an option within the Local Electoral Act 2001. The Governing Body has not previously considered a change from postal voting.
19. Voter turnout has declined from 59 per cent at the first Auckland City Council postal method election (1986), down to 35.5 per cent at the 2022 Auckland Council election. Although Auckland Council’s result was up 0.3 per cent from the 2019 election it still does not compare favourably with other parts of New Zealand. The average voter turnout at the 2022 elections across local governments was 42 per cent.

20. An evaluation of the Auckland Council 2022 elections was provided to the Governing Body in April 2023 (Attachment D). This review outlined several short and long-term issues with the postal voting method from Auckland voters including:
 - some voters not receiving voting documents. This is largely because the Electoral Commission have difficulties getting eligible voters to enrol or update their enrolment information when they shift to another residential location. This information needs to be up to date so that eligible voters can receive their voting pack in the mail.
 - the need to travel far for a special voting centre
 - having to queuing at a special voting centre on election day
 - the challenge of voting paper security.
21. Long-term issues were also identified, including:
 - the declining and costly postal service
 - the general decline in voter turnout.
22. One of the options in the 2022 evaluation is to consider moving from postal voting to a combination method (postal and booth) at the 2025 election, whereby booths are staffed on election day and do not close until 7pm. Postal voting would be available as has been past practice, closing at 12 noon on election day. Including this option, staff are investigating the feasibility of five options:
 - Option One - postal voting only (status quo)
 - Option Two - postal voting with more special voting centres ('status quo plus')
 - Option Three - booth voting only
 - Option Four - combination voting (postal, with booth on election day only)
 - Option Five - combination voting (booth and postal).
23. The Department of Internal Affairs (DIA), in their 2023 Briefing to the Incoming Minister, has signalled changes to current voting method regulations. They describe the need to modernise a system that 'relies heavily on traditional postal services and has not kept up with many improvements to parliamentary election processes.' DIA believe these changes might happen in time for the 2028 elections.
24. This report provides a staff recommendation that responds to the short-term issues described above and outlines current risks with options that respond to the long-term issues.

Tātaritanga me ngā tohutohu Analysis and advice

Option One – Status quo – postal voting with limited special voting centres

25. Postal voting is used in every council in New Zealand and is widely supported by Electoral Officers across local governments who are a mixture of both independent and council staff. It is relatively cost effective, and a system known to those who are involved so there is a high probability of achieving a clear and defensible election result.
26. It does have some problems however which are contained in Attachment D and noted above which has led to improvements being made in recent years such as the provision of special voting centres.
27. To overcome people not receiving their voting papers, special voting centres have been used to ensure eligible voters can cast a vote during the electoral period.

28. At the 2022 election the eight special voting centres had lines out the door, with some voters queuing on the last hours of the last day.
29. New Zealand Post have previously advised that postage costs will rise in the order of 30 per cent per annum meaning that the estimate of the 2025 election costs of postage is likely to be around 100 per cent more than the 2022 elections, with mailer printing set to increase by 25 per cent over the same period.

Option Two – Status quo plus – postal voting with more special voting centres

30. Despite its drawbacks, postal voting is a straightforward and relatively cost-effective method for Auckland Council to administer and has a high likelihood of a clear and defensible election result, compared to booth only voting. A postal voting election, with increased special voting centres would provide a short-term response to some of the issues from the 2022 election. An increase in the number of special voting places (minimum one per local board area) will reduce travel and wait times and ensure those who do not receive or lose their voting documents can easily vote.

Option Three - Booth voting

31. The main perceived benefit to Auckland Council running booth voting for the next election is that it would be similar to Parliamentary elections which is something that voters are very used to and attracts nationwide media coverage. Booth voting also would overcome the issue of a declining postal service and address perceptions about postal ballots being stolen and/or misused.
32. There are some drawbacks however:
 - Booth voting has no provision for voters outside of Auckland. Currently, the Local Electoral Regulations 2001 do not give voters who are overseas and outside of Auckland voters an option to return their vote electronically. DIA has stated that they have started early policy work to allow the return of votes electronically for overseas voters but if any changes are made, they may not be ready for the 2025 local elections.
 - To be comparable to a booth voting experience provided by the Electoral Commission for Parliamentary elections, up to 3000 temporary staff would need to be hired and up to 630 voting places would need to be managed over the voting period. This resource has not been budgeted for. The capacity and capability of the organisation to manage this large undertaking is a risk. The financial and reputational cost to re-run a booth voting election is extremely high.
 - Auckland Council and Independent Election Services (our contracted service provider) have not run a booth voting election before.
 - Voter turnout might be impacted. Dale Ofoske, the Auckland Council Electoral Officer, suggests there could be up to a 10 per cent decrease in voter turnout. This is based on the last booth voting election undertaken by a local authority in New Zealand, where Hutt City Council adopted booth voting for their 1992 election and achieved a 26 per cent turnout compared to the previous postal voting election where a 45 per cent turnout was achieved. Although there may be other circumstances relating to that case, it is worth bearing in mind that a shift of this nature has risks.
 - Time taken to cast a vote is not conducive to booth voting. Voters in a general election have to make only two choices; one for an electorate vote and one party vote. This is in contrast to the number of choices for an Auckland local election where a mayor, councillor, up to nine local board members and five licensing trusts are decided. The regulations state that candidate profiles must be provided when a voting document is issued. The time it will take for voters to review candidate profiles and make their decision could cause long wait times at polling places. This was evidenced at special voting places in 2022.

Options Four and Five - Combination postal and booth voting

33. The benefits of a combination method, of postal and booth voting, are that these options overcome the known problems of postal and booth voting as follows:
- a combination voting method provides a process (postal voting) for overseas and outside of Auckland voters with a way to return their votes, which booth voting only does not.
 - a combination voting method, reduces reliance on and responds to the declining postal service, while giving voters more options for casting and returning their votes.
34. There are additional risks however:
- The risk with a combination of voting methods is the potential for widespread confusion and frustration. Conveying to voters a combination method, and the different closing times of postal and booth voting, 12 noon and 7pm, respectively, is not straightforward. This could also impact on a later release of election results.
 - Because turnout trends for election methods are mixed, the potential level of confusion could decrease turnout.
 - Managing and running two discrete election method processes (plus special voting) is a capability and capacity risk. Council and independent election providers in New Zealand do not have sufficient experience to run a booth voting election.
 - If systems fail and an election result is not clear, the financial and reputational cost to re-run an election is high (above \$10million).
 - The cost of running the postal voting method will have increased by approx. \$2.6 million since 2022 by the time council runs the 2025 election, the addition of a booth voting method in addition to postal will further increase costs. This is covered further in the financial analysis section.

Staff recommendation

35. Staff recommend retaining the postal voting method with an increase in special voting centres (the 'status quo plus' option).

Tauākī whakaaweawe āhuarangi Climate impact statement

36. This report discusses booth voting. The climate impact of people travelling to a booth is likely to be mixed, depending on where they are located.
37. Voting documents for postal and booth method elections rely on the use of paper. A more climate friendly option would be online voting. However, online voting is currently not an authorised voting method in the legislation.

Ngā whakaaweawe me ngā tirohanga a te rōpū Kaunihera Council group impacts and views

38. A decision about the voting method affects how voters elect the mayor, councillors and local board members. It does not have major impacts on the council group.
39. In some options, libraries and volunteer staff may be engaged. Libraries have been consulted and are able to help. Volunteer staff will be engaged if necessary.

Ngā whakaaweawe ā-rohe me ngā tirohanga a te poari ā-rohe Local impacts and local board views

40. In March 2023 local boards were asked for their feedback on whether council should move from a 'postal only' voting method to a 'combination' (postal and booth) voting method.
- 14 supported combination voting (postal, with booth on election day).
 - One supported postal and online voting.

- One supported online voting, and booth voting on election day.
- One supported retaining postal only.
- Four did not provide feedback on this issue.

41. Local communities have not been consulted regarding voting methods.

Tauākī whakaaweawe Māori Māori impact statement

42. Demographic data shows that turnout for electors of Māori descent was lower than the average turnout. [Further analysis conducted by RIMU about who voted in the 2022 local elections](#) suggested that a range of interrelated factors may be contributing to these discrepancies, including:

- differences in the perceived relevance of local government to the everyday life of different communities
- differences in family and work commitments and an ability to pay attention to local politics in light of other life priorities
- the complexity of the local government system and voting process, along with differences in knowledge about local government across communities in Auckland
- for some communities, a lack of identification with and ability to see one’s identity reflected in the local governance system
- a distrust of and disengagement from the local government system, particularly amongst Māori
- the existence of a social norm of non-voting in some families, neighbourhoods and communities.

43. The impact of a different voting method on Māori voter turnout is not known and difficult to estimate. This is also true for non-Māori voter turnout.

Ngā ritenga ā-pūtea Financial implications

44. Of the options considered, the estimated financial implications run between \$10,060,390 and \$19,849,574. Only options One and Two have sufficient budget provided for in the Long-term Plan. Any other option would require additional funding to be made available by making further trade-offs in another budgetary allocation.

45. The costs below are estimates. This is especially true for options which include booth voting as not all costs are known.

Option	Description	Cost (estimate)
Option One - Postal voting only (Status quo)	Same as 2022, with 8 special voting centres	\$10,060,390
Option Two - Postal voting, plus more special voting centres (Status quo plus)	Same as 2022, with a minimum of one special voting centre per LB	\$10,160,390
Option Three - Booth only	20 places per LB, 7 days	\$11,377,653
	30 places per LB, 7 days	\$13,714,734

Option	Description	Cost (estimate)
	20 places per LB, 14 days (same voting period as Parliamentary elections)	\$15,467,546
	30 places per LB, 14 days	\$19,849,574
Option Four - Combination: Postal voting, with booth voting on election day	Postal, with 20 places per LB on election day	\$10,673,874
Option Five - Combination: Booth and Postal voting	30 places per LB, 7 days	\$17,071,634

Ngā raru tūpono me ngā whakamaurutanga Risks and mitigations

46. Staff have taken the short-term issues from the findings of the 2022 election to provide a recommendation to maintain postal voting, with more special voting centres (status quo plus).
47. In consideration of the declining postal service and voter turnout, staff will continue to work with DIA, the Electoral Commission, and other entities to inform policy work for any potential changes for the 2028 elections.
48. The analysis in the body of this report includes information on the risks of each option and Attachment E describes these in more detail. This analysis shows that Option Two 'status quo plus' has the least risks. The risks noted include:
 - voter fraud
 - voter intimidation
 - technical issues
 - long queues and voter suppression
 - misinformation and disinformation
 - security concerns
 - accessibility issues
 - logistical challenges
 - communication of results
 - postal service
 - fit for purpose.

Ngā koringa ā-muri Next steps

49. Your feedback will be provided to the Governing Body in June where a decision on the voting method for the 2025 local elections will be sought.

Item.6

Ngā tāpirihanga Attachments

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C	Voting method flow charts	91
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E	Risk analysis	115

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