

9 April 2018

Chief Executive
Kāpiti Coast District Council
175 Rimu Road
Private Bag 60601
Paraparaumu 5254

Regarding: Draft Long Term Plan

Tēnā koe

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a written submission on the Kāpiti Coast District Council Draft Long Term Plan 2018 -2028.

Council and Regional Public Health have a common agenda – working with communities where they live, work and play to protect and improve their quality of life. Regional Public Health (RPH) wants to support Council with public health knowledge and skills where appropriate. By working together we can be more efficient, reduce the burden of engagement on our communities and be more effective in achieving our common goal. A collaborative approach will also facilitate smarter use of each agencies finite resources.

This submission provides a public health perspective and information for Council to consider in their planning decisions. Kāpiti Coast District Council's (KCDC) policy and planning are an integral part to the health and wellbeing of our communities.

We are happy to provide further advice or clarification on any of the points raised in our written submission. We request to be heard in support of our written submission. The contact point for this submission is:

Kiri Waldegrave, Senior Public Health Advisor
kiri.waldegrave@huttvalleydhb.org.nz, 04 570 9130

Kind regards

Dr Stephen Palmer
Medical Officer of Health

Peter Gush
Service Manager

How this document is structured:

- A. An overview of Regional Public Health
- B. General comments on the Long Term Plan (LTP)
- C. The three waters
- D. Responses to your specific questions

A. WHO WE ARE – Regional Public Health

Regional Public Health (RPH) serves the greater Wellington region, through its three district health boards (DHBs): Capital & Coast, Hutt Valley and Wairarapa and is based at the Hutt Valley District Health Board, and are located at three bases – Porirua, Hutt Valley DHB and Masterton.

Our business is public health action – working to improve the health and wellbeing of our population and to reduce health disparities. We work with others to promote and protect good health, prevent disease, and improve quality of life across the population, with a particular focus on children, Māori and working with primary care organisations. We are funded mainly by the Ministry of Health and we also have contracts with the District Health Boards and other agencies to deliver specific services. We have 130 staff with a diverse range of occupations, including medical officers, public health advisors, health protection officers, public health nurses, analysts and evaluators.

B. GENERAL COMMENTS ON YOUR LONG TERM PLAN

RPH respects and acknowledges that KCDC decisions have a significant impact on health. We see this through appropriate management of infrastructure (e.g. water and sewage) and creating environments that support wellbeing through reducing the exposure to tobacco, facilitating access to healthy food and promoting urban design that encourages physical activity. This is the basis for making a submission on your Long Term Plan (LTP).

In light of the 2016 Kaikoura earthquake¹ and an increase in adverse weather events² RPH commends KCDC on their approach to assessing and investing in key infrastructure that will protect the health and wellbeing of our communities in an adverse event.

Council and RPH have important roles to play readying and responding to adverse events in our region. For RPH that means maintaining civil defence and public health emergency planning and response capacity, and ensuring there are appropriate numbers of staff trained in emergency management. For council that could mean readying similar response mechanisms as well as protecting core infrastructure such as water supply and public transport from the effects of emergency events, and making sure they are in a position to recover.

¹ The risk for a significant earthquake affecting the Wellington region has increased following the 2016 Kaikoura earthquake. A significant earthquake would affect infrastructure and key transport routes

² Many of New Zealand's towns and cities are affected by flooding from rivers, lakes, overland flow, the sea and in some cases, a combination of all of these. Regular flooding has a toll on communities, it can move people out of their homes and make it difficult to move around and get to work. This impacts on the economy and an individual's social connectedness.

It is important that we continue to work together in building resilient infrastructure and communities. Through this collaborative emergency planning and response, the impact of emergency events on vulnerable communities (particularly Māori) will be minimised. We will also be able to grow each other's knowledge and skills.

Our organisations are already working together on issues around disease surveillance, drinking water, wastewater and stormwater. We look forward to continued and enhanced collaboration. We also have staff who work with other agencies in emergency preparedness and management and are willing to assist KCDC on request.

C. THE THREE WATERS

The LTP process provides an opportunity to document the council's pathway to addressing the management of drinking water, wastewater and stormwater ('the three waters') infrastructure as a critical factor in building long-term resilience and emergency management. RPH acknowledges that there are significant challenges and drivers around actions to be taken in this area. These include:

- the development of infrastructure to keep pace and meet the need for new urban development;
- the challenge of increasing frequency of severe weather events (e.g. leading to flooding) and other natural disasters (e.g. earthquakes) which determine how well the infrastructure can perform;
- the impacts of the DIA three waters infrastructure review and government recommendations from the Havelock North Drinking Water Campylobacter Outbreak Inquiry Report;
- meeting the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management targets;
- the current review of the Greater Wellington Proposed Natural Resource Plan and associated new requirements for monitoring and management of stormwater and wastewater discharges; and
- progressive implementation of the catchment specific whitua committees to determine local water quality and quantity parameters.

The response to such large challenges requires a strong focus on collaboration between multiple agencies with a willingness to share expertise and resource across traditional council boundaries, it also requires consideration of models of shared resources and asset management to achieve economies of scale and equitable access to the limited technical expertise at the regional and national levels.

One such collaborative approach that has resulted from the Havelock North Inquiry is the regional drinking water joint working group. That is in the process of being established for the greater Wellington region but requires the mandate and support from all councils to achieve the agreed aim of "safeguarding the Wellington region's drinking water".

A significant challenge is the management of water demand while maintaining water quality. Water demand is an issue for the whole region and not only in areas that have had to implement or explore a more urgent response.

Due to the complexity and inter-relatedness of managing all three waters infrastructure and the impact that this infrastructure has on the built environment (e.g. location of urban growth; how we use the environment for recreation and activity) we recommend a spatial planning approach. Such an approach would see the use of citizen panels, and other forms of face-to-face community consultation, that captures the interactions and supports coordinated decision making for the built environment.

The LTP consultation process also provides another opportunity to engage the community in awareness of the challenges around the three waters management and being part of finding the best way forward. Often this infrastructure is hidden and not well understood compared with other infrastructure such as roads.

Raising the profile of this critical part of a safe and healthy urban environment will facilitate community “buy-in” for the hard decisions that need to be made around how to distribute funding for maintenance, improvement and capacity building.

Additionally there are actions the community can take to support additional planning, performance and resourcing. It is important to have ongoing initiatives, which increase the community’s understanding and engagement with the hidden infrastructure and the values they attach to the impact on their environment.

A collaborative and coordinated regional approach would strengthen this awareness raising, including linking to current actions that are associated with specific programmes (e.g. enviroschools) or legislative requirements (e.g. resource consent requirements including public engagement for managing specific discharges).

D. IN RESPONSE TO YOUR SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

1. Where we're heading

We support KCDC’s direction, in particular key capital spending projects in the 3 waters and road works to improve resilience.

2. Financial and infrastructure strategies?

We support a focus on resilience and growth.

RPH places significant importance on the need for the drinking water infrastructure upgrades. We are currently working with the water supply management staff to support improvements in water treatment and management that will improve compliance with the NZ Drinking Water Standards.

3. Should we change the way we share rates across the district?

No comment.

4. What should we do next to address flood risks?

We support stormwater flood mitigation and management. Flooding can result in evacuations, road closures and loss of amenity. In addition, overflow due to floods or less severe rain events contaminate water bodies creating health risks for recreation water users and affecting the environment and kai moana. New regulatory standards are likely to require a more vigilant focus on ensuring the impacts of discharges (including stormwater) are minimised.

Further support for this area can be found in Sections B and C of this document.

5. Coastal hazards and climate change

We support work in this area.

6. Housing

We support KCDC reviewing the options the council has to influence housing issues. Your LTP consultation document acknowledges some of the complex issues relating to housing. RPH coordinates a healthy housing program and have public health advisors that have expertise in this area. We would be interested in participating in any key stakeholder meetings on this issue and providing advice on request.

7. Replacing the Paekakariki seawall

No comment.

8. Paraparaumu and Waikanae town centres

No comment.

9. Mclean Park

RPH supports investment in outdoor spaces and partnership with mana whenua. Providing safe and interesting opportunities for residents to be physically active promotes physical and mental wellbeing, prevents disease and improves social connectedness and quality of life.

10. Kāpiti Island gateway

We commend Council for its active and inclusive relationship with mana whenua. We respectfully suggest mana whenua are significant partners in any promotion about Kāpiti Island or any activities that could impact on Kāpiti Island.

11. So you support a rates increase

No comment.

12. Changes to fees and charges

We encourage KCDC to ensure community facilities remain affordable for low income families.

13. Key policies development contribution fees

No comment.

14. Proposed changes to our revenue and financing policy

No comment.

15. Proposed change to our rates remission policy

No comment.

16. General

We congratulate KCDC on the requirement for new builds to have water storage tanks. RPH submitted on this issue in 2012. We would be interested in working with KCDC further to implement the recommendations of this submission, in particular maintenance and safe use of the water.

RPH offers its support, skills and knowledge in the areas of housing quality, public and active transport, community development and empowerment, and healthy food environments to ensure the people of Kāpiti are thriving.

We note that in your consultation document a lot of a ground work was undertaken to shape the direction of the Long Term Plan. RPH is always keen to participate in these early direction setting discussions. We understand that this is a significant time of influence. Please add us to your database of community and agency consultation stakeholders.