

23 April 2018

Chief Executive
Porirua City Council
P O Box 50218
Porirua 5240

Regarding: Draft Long Term Plan

Tēnā koe

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a written submission on the Porirua City 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. Porirua City Council's (PCC) policy and planning are an integral part to the health and wellbeing of our communities.

Please note a separate joint submission between the Primary Healthcare Organisations (PHOs) in Porirua and RPH has also been made with a particular focus on the impacts of chronic diseases such as type 2 diabetes on our communities.

RPH also supports submissions made by Glenview School, Cannon's Creek School and Titahi Bay North School. These submission express the voice of the children who are significantly affected by the current food environment.

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:

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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 RPH is 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 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 of health, 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 PCC 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 PCC 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 PCC 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 recommendations emerging from Department of Internal Affairs three waters infrastructure review 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. This group 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 that 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).

RPH commends council on the Porirua City Waters Dashboard. This is an effective way to communicate complex information to a wide audience.

RPH commends council for its strong emphasis on the three waters and note that the upgrade of your wastewater treatment plant is the single biggest project in your 20-year capital programme.

We note that the conservation of water has been identified as important but this is still at a modelling stage for options. We would encourage council to think about this within a resilience strategy or approach.

D. IN RESPONSE TO YOUR SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

Strategic property

As outlined on page 9, we are keen to support and influence future development in the city as it grows and changes by investing in property near Transmission Gully Motorway. Do you support strategic investment in property near Transmission Gully Motorway?

Yes / ~~No~~ / *Unsure*

We support the council to facilitate residential development near to the link roads to Transmission Gully Motorway. This will assist in the revitalisation of eastern Porirua but care will need to be taken around encouraging walking, cycling and the use of public transport. Also zoning should discourage the establishment of outlets that supply unhealthy food, especially near early childhood services and schools.

Revitalising Eastern Porirua

As outlined on page 10, it's the ideal time for Council to work with central government and other partners to provide practical solutions for some of the issues like access to jobs and community services in Eastern Porirua. We are considering building a multi-functional community facility to house services such as a library, recreation facilities, community meeting rooms, and office space for businesses, government agencies, and other groups.

Do you support the idea of a modern community facility in the East, built in partnership with others?

Yes / ~~No~~ / ~~Unsure~~

We support the idea of a modern community facility in the East, built in partnership with others. Investing in recreational facilities and commercial development is an opportunity to invest in the health of the local community by taking a healthy environments approach. A revitalization of Eastern Porirua may also enable us to work together to improve the local food and built environment

We would also encourage council to consider the quality of housing in Eastern Porirua and investigate options council has to influence housing issues.

Paid parking in the city centre

Overall, do you support the concept of the customer paying for parking at the time rather than every ratepayer? Without adoption of paid parking, rate increases may be higher.

~~Yes~~ / ~~No~~ / ~~Unsure~~

What best describes your interest in this proposal?

I work or study in or near the affected area

Comments

RPH is concerned that those disadvantaged most by these charges could be those from low socio-economic groups as they are located near services that are accessed by these vulnerable communities (e.g. WINZ, court, police station, bus station).

Subsidising recycling in school sand preschools

As outlined on page 15, most schools and preschools in Porirua do not recycle because of the cost. We want to support waste minimisation and Council would like to offer subsidised recycling to help offset the cost and encourage more schools and preschools to better manage rubbish and recycling.

What option do you support?

~~*Option 1: introduce subsidised recycling for schools and preschools*~~

Option 2: fully fund recycling in schools and preschools

~~*Option 3: keep it how it is*~~

Comments

We would encourage council to fully fund recycling in order for all schools and preschools to participate. As mentioned in your LTP consultation document the environment is one of the most common concerns for young people. We also note that children and young people are at the heart of the city for Porirua so it would seem supporting this initiative is very important. We would encourage council to consider the development of a full education programme that supports the recycling initiative in schools and preschools.

Improving connections to Titahi Bay

As outlined on page 17, we are looking at creating a safe pathway along the busy Titahi Bay Road between Onepoto Road and Wi Neera Drive, and also addressing the coastal erosion that originally caused us to defer the project due to cost.

Which option do you support?

Option 1: complete the pathway on the harbour side and address the erosion around the coast

~~*Option 2: defer addressing the coastal erosion and complete the pathway on the inland side instead*~~

~~*Option 3: keep it as it is*~~

Comments

We support improving pedestrian and cycling connections to Titahi Bay to make it easier and safer for walkers and cyclists. 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. Our preference is for option 1 as this will make choosing active transport option a more attractive choice.

A second fenced dog park in the city

As outlined on page 18, we are considering creating a second fenced dog park in the city. If this is supported there are three possible locations with different advantages and disadvantages.

Do you support the establishment of a second fenced dog park in the city?

Yes | ~~No~~ | Unsure

General comments

RPH commends PCC on the second publication of the Children and Young People Status Report and the development of a strategic framework for children and young people. Children are a priority population for RPH and location specific data, such as the status report, provides a useful platform for our planning.

The four focus areas³ PCC has identified for children and young people align well with our work.

We commend council for taking a special interest in housing quality as this is a key determinant of child health⁴. RPH coordinates a healthy housing program and have public health nurses and 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.

We note that in your consultation document a lot of 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.

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

³ Success in education; being healthy, active and safe; strong connections to cultures, community and the natural environment, and being actively engaged in city decisions.

⁴ <https://porirua.govt.nz/your-council/city-planning-and-reporting/our-strategic-priorities/children-and-young-people/>