

## Community Summary Enhanced Annual Plan Waipā District Council

Arts, culture and creativity contributes to thriving communities. When arts, culture and creativity is supported, strong and visible communities are strong and visible.

Arts, culture and creativity is woven through all aspects of life. It has a key role to play in creating thriving and liveable towns and cities. The creative activation of public spaces supports the preservation of council assets, and promotes social cohesion and community connection. Sustainable creative career opportunities attract and retain workers and innovative businesses.

Arts culture and creativity supports community and individual wellbeing. In Waikato, those who report being highly engaged with arts, culture and creativity have 5% higher overall wellbeing as compared to those with little or no engagement.<sup>1</sup> Research has shown that recreational arts can support mental wellbeing. ‘Those who engaged in 100 or more hours/year of arts engagement (i.e. two or more hours/week) reported significantly better mental well-being than other levels of engagement.’<sup>2</sup>

Councils are currently seeking community feedback around their long term plans (LTPs). Long Term Plans outline Council’s activities and how they are managed, delivered and funded<sup>3</sup>. Under the Local Government Act, Councils must consult with their communities on the LTP (or 10 year plan) every 3 years.<sup>4</sup> A common theme across these consultations is the need to be strategic around prioritising investment.

It is important that investment in community wellbeing is prioritised and protected. The core role of council, as outlined in the legislation, is to promote the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of communities. This is the required (or statutory) purpose of council.

We have a role to play in supporting council in this work, by letting them know that we will support them to deliver these wellbeings. We can share

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<sup>1</sup> Huber Social, ‘Wellbeing and Arts, Culture and Creativity in Waikato’ (Sydney: Huber Social, 2022), p.22, <https://creativewaikato.co.nz/advocacy/researchandreports>.

<sup>2</sup> Christina Davies, Matthew Knuiman & Michael Rosenberg, ‘The art of being mentally healthy: a study to quantify the relationship between recreational arts engagement and mental well-being in the general population, BMC Public Health, vol.16, <https://bmcpublihealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-015-2672-7>.

<sup>3</sup> Waikato District Council

[https://www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/your-council/plans-policies-and-by-laws/plans/long-term-plan#:~:text=The%20Long%20Term%20Plan%20\(LTP,\(including%20proposed%20rate%20increases\).](https://www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/your-council/plans-policies-and-by-laws/plans/long-term-plan#:~:text=The%20Long%20Term%20Plan%20(LTP,(including%20proposed%20rate%20increases).)

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

with the council and with others in our community that we know and care about more than solely economic concerns. It is important that we share about the other things that we value in our lives.

This can be as simple as writing an email or letter to council about the things that you care about.

### **Consultation closes Friday 26 April 2024**

[Here](#) is a link to the council's resources for the Enhanced Annual Plan feedback process. Waipā District Council has decided to pause its Long-Term Plan process until next year so they have time to implement water infrastructure costs, inflation and increased interest costs. It has instead opted for an Enhanced Annual Plan for 2024-25.

It is important to know that you do not need to answer every question, or go into great detail. You can speak from your own experience, and share about what you really value and care about. Anything you can do to add your voice to the chorus is powerful.

You can find the consultation document, supporting documents, and feedback portal here:

<https://haveyoursay.waipadc.govt.nz/enhancedannualplan>

You will need to create an account to provide feedback.

We have pulled out some key moments where arts, culture, creativity and community are mentioned. You might want to mention some of these, and what you want to happen with regard to these. Feel very free to copy and paste from here, and make any edits or additions you would like.

The Waipā District Council's Vision is **'Waipā Home of Champions: Building connected communities'**

It has four community outcomes, which have **community wellbeing at the heart**.

These are:

#### **Socially resilient**

*He aha te mea nui o te ao? Māku e kī atu he tangata, he tangata! It's all about people*

- Waipā is a great place to live, work, play and invest

- We invest in hauora and support for the great work community groups do
- Waipā provides a high quality of life for current and future generations

### **Cultural champions**

#### *Protecting our culture and heritage*

- We champion the unique history of Waipā
- We have a high level of cultural awareness
- We partner with tangata whenua
- We respect the cultural diversity of our district

### **Environmental champions**

#### *Protecting and sustaining our environment*

- Environmental awareness and responsibility is promoted within the community
- We support programmes that promote environmental sustainability
- We are responsive to climate change

### **Economically progressive**

#### *Supporting a thriving, sustainable economy*

- We have financial sustainable decision making and work programmes
- We provide new infrastructure as an economic stimulus for our district
- Our services provide excellent value for money
- We actively promote our district to enable development and business opportunities
- Waipā is a great place to invest and do business

Waipā District Council has paused the following projects:

### **Te Ara Wai - A New Zealand Land Wars Museum planned for Te Awamutu**

Te Ara Wai is a New Zealand Land Wars Museum which has been planned for Te Awamutu for some years.

Waipā District Council recognised that this Museum would be of national significance. Te Ara Wai will tell the story of the 1864 Land Wars that is unique to 'Waipā'.

It would provide places for discovery, questioning and learning, and visitors would be able to take pathways through natural landscapes, battle sites

and early settlements that formed the Waipā community and shaped Aotearoa New Zealand as a nation<sup>5</sup>.

If you think Te Ara Wai is important, the following are some points you may want to consider.

- Museums Aotearoa figures show 35 percent of all international tourists will visit a museum or gallery, usually about four in their entire trip.<sup>6</sup>
- About 17.5 million people visit museums and galleries each year, with the industry supporting nearly 3500 jobs, bolstered by 11,000 volunteers.<sup>7</sup>
- It is important to tell local stories, provide places for discovery and learning and improve the capacity of people to participate in the culture and heritage of the Waipā District.
- It is important to protect the precious taonga of local Iwi so that it is preserved for future generations.

### **A new Cambridge Library**

If you think a new library in Cambridge is important, the following are some points you may want to consider.

- Libraries are an essential service. They contain resources, spaces and which support community wellbeing. We support the provision of continued and future access to libraries.
- The provision of community libraries are named components in local government legislation, they contribute positively to cultural wellbeing through access to knowledge and resources, but also provide spaces for social connections.
- Investment in libraries, in conjunction with investment in soft instructure can support community groups and local artists to work in partnership with the council to deliver creative activities, community activation, and (depending on the design) potential space for shared creative and cultural activities.
- Libraries are community spaces, where people connect and can access education, digital spaces, things like Wi-Fi, computers,

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<sup>5</sup> \$1 million boost for Te Ara Wai'

<https://www.waipadc.govt.nz/our-council/news?item=id:27fjc2s3r17q9sedy3jp> 10 September 2019

<sup>6</sup> Radio New Zealand 'NZ's museums and galleries' funding woes: 'It could be lights out for us' 12 March 2024

<https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/511453/nz-s-museums-and-galleries-funding-woes-it-could-be-lights-out-for-us>

<sup>7</sup> Ibid

printers and scanners, which are necessary in this digital age. It is important that people can access these, even if they do not have them in their own homes.

### **Cambridge Town Hall upgrades**

The Cambridge Town Hall Community Trust undertook community consultation in 2022, to understand community views and expectations on what improvements should be made on the Town Hall and its precincts in the coming years.

Since then it has become a 'Village Heart' to serve and inspire the whole community. A place to create, connect and celebrate. Further upgrades are needed to build on the hard work of the Trust and community.

If you think the Hall upgrades should go ahead, please let Council know. You could speak to the value community halls.

- Community halls provide places for social interaction and connection. They are the social hubs of communities.
- Community halls provide spaces for arts, culture and creative activation.

*NOTE: The Cambridge Town Hall is also facing a \$100k reduction in operating budget in this annual plan. This reduction will have an impact on the services, support and events that are coming through to the Cambridge Town Hall.*

*"The Trust receives a grant as part of its agreement with the council, but based on the Draft Enhanced Annual Plan, we face a \$100K shortfall for 2024/25. The \$500K grant we require would allow us to continue to manage and maintain the hall so it remains open, compliant and available for community use, with the community discount rate preserved." - <https://www.cth.co.nz/eap/>*

**Waipā is also proposing to no longer fund or temporarily reduce the amount spent on some planned renewals.**

**These are outlined below, along with bullet points which provide bullet points for consideration.**

Includes cemeteries, **libraries, parks and reserves**, property, public toilets, **community halls**, roading and footpaths, water and wastewater.

- Some prompts regarding libraries are listed above.
- Parks and reserves are key to community wellbeing. They provide educational, recreational and social cohesion benefits.

- Community halls provide places for social interaction and connection. They are the social hubs of communities.

### **Waipā is also proposing to reduce discretionary and grants funding**

#### **Saving \$50,000 by no longer funding Te Waka: Waikato's Regional Economic Development Agency.**

- An economic development agency is a local organisation that seeks to promote and drive economic growth within a given geographic area.
- As a growing district it is important to consider the implications of not having an agency tasked to drive both residents and visitors to the district.

#### **No longer funding or temporarily reducing the amount spent on some planned renewals**

This includes in cemeteries, libraries, parks and reserves, property, public toilets, community halls, roading and footpaths, water and wastewater

- As the Waipā district grows and families move to the district, they need free, accessible spaces to play and connect with others in their communities.
- Libraries, parks and reserves and community halls are key community assets. They provide connection points and enable social cohesion.
- It is important that these assets are prioritised for the wellbeing of Waipā's communities.
- There is opportunity to engage local artists in the development of public play spaces, and to consider how creative activation can contribute to thriving neighbourhoods.

#### **Reducing Council discretionary grant funding by \$216,800**

This includes:

- Reducing funding to each of the two community boards from \$49,600 to \$20,000
- Reducing the Pirongia Ward committee grant funding from \$27,600 to \$10,000
- Halving the District Promotion Fund from \$150,000 to \$75,000, and
- Halving the Heritage Fund amount from \$75,000 to \$35,000

#### **No longer providing a Community Events Fund**

- Community grants ensure that communities have access to vibrant events and opportunities, and help to retain the people who bring

vitality and joy to our towns. It is important that we prioritise investment in this soft infrastructure.

- These small investments create positive returns for communities in having spaces to connect and share.

### **No longer funding the Cambridge and Te Awamutu iSites**

- I-sites enhance coordination across services and improve access to them, build community and improve interaction, and strengthen relationships and collaboration with other agencies.

### **Reducing funding to Hamilton Waikato Tourism from \$183,379 to \$146,703**

- Tourism contributes to the sustainability of creative organisations who deliver events and tourism outcomes, as well as contributions to national audience engagement for local creative activity.
- Regional organisations make often unseen contributions to celebrating local work externally and encouraging opportunities for development and connection.

**Waipā District Council is still proposing to maintain the level of funding to local community organisations through grants**, with a slight increase of \$1,080 to a total of \$11,080 for the Waipā Mountain Bike Club.

### **Fees and charges 2024/25**

#### **Proposed changes**

- Library fees: Small increases for non-residential subscriptions. Fees to borrow items will remain unchanged to incentivise community use.
- Library community space (Te Awamutu): Commercial hireage costs have increased but there is no increase for community use to encourage use and provide some financial relief for non-profit groups.
- Museum fees (Te Awamutu): Most of the current fees enable cost recovery. The research service time fee has increased to reflect increases in staff costs when completing this service.
- Mighty River Domain – Lake Karapiro accommodation and events: These fees were updated to reflect the commercial benefits derived from this site for event hire and related services, accommodation and camping facilities. In addition, these fees were last updated in 2020/21.

The full list of charges can be found [here](#).

Fees and charges should ideally be kept to a minimum so that spaces and services are accessible for communities.

**Waipā District Council is also asking their communities about whether it demolishes the Cambridge Water Tower.**

The Cambridge Water Tower was constructed in 1902 when the town’s population was around 1,000 people and stands 19.5 metres above ground.

The water tower provided water to Cambridge from 1902-1926 but stopped being used as the springs it drew water from were being polluted. Since then it has had no practical purpose however, it has remained somewhat of a local icon to some of Waipā’s community.

It is registered as a Category 2 Heritage Building by Heritage New Zealand (HNZ). The tower is also identified as a Category B heritage item in Council’s Operative District Plan (ODP), meaning it has regional and district wide significance.

An earthquake assessment in 2014 said the tower met 25 percent of national building standards (NBS). This means Council needs to make a decision on what to do with the tower - remove or restore.

There are two key options for the future of the water tower - remove or restore. Doing nothing is not an option due to the unsafe state the tower is in. Council did consider relocation but the process and costs involved meant that this option wasn’t viable.

**Cambridge Water Tower options**

	<b>Option 1 (preferred) Remove the Cambridge Water Tower</b>	<b>Option 2 Restore the Cambridge Water Tower</b>
<b>Pros</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lower costs</li> <li>- Removal of the risk to public health and safety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Protection of a heritage structure of significance to the Cambridge and wider district/regional community</li> <li>- Removal of the risk to public health and safety</li> </ul>
<b>Cons</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cambridge Water Tower is a Category 2 Heritage Building</li> <li>- Given the water tower is identified as a Category B</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Extra costs for Waipā ratepayers</li> </ul>

	<p>heritage item in Council's Operative District Plan (ODP), a resource consent will be required before demolition can occur</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Iconic nature of the tower will be lost</li> </ul>	
<b>Cost</b>	<b>Total:</b> \$810k for a resource consent and demolition	<b>Total:</b> \$6m (estimated)

If you think the Cambridge Water Tower is important to keep for its iconic value to this community and heritage value then let Council know, an example of communicating this could be:

- Places of heritage tell stories of our past. They are locations we value and connect to as New Zealanders. It is important to protect them.<sup>8</sup>

If you think any or all of the above projects/initiatives are important, then let your Council know.

Creative Waikato are submitting to the long term plan too, and advocating for support for arts, culture and creativity in the Waipā district. If you want to read some of what we will be sharing, you can check out these documents on our advocacy page:

<https://creativewaikato.co.nz/advocacy/standing-up-for-the-arts> - this will contain links to all our public submissions.

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<sup>8</sup> Tātai Aho Rau - Learnz

<https://www.learnz.org.nz/heritage223/discover/looking-after-heritage-sites>