

# Six monthly climate change report

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To: **Environment, Energy and Resilience Committee**

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## 1 Reason for the report - *Te Take mō tēnei rīpoata*

The purpose of this report is to provide the Environment, Energy and Resilience Committee with an update on progress made towards the targets and actions outlined in Council's Climate Change Strategy.

Included as Appendix 1, the 'Six-Monthly 22/23 Climate Change Report', covers the time period 1 January – 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023, and summarises the progress made towards the actions specified in the Council's six climate change action plans. This report also provides an update on Council's ongoing energy management program.

This report will not include the organisational carbon inventory. We report at the end of the financial year through the Toitū Carbon Reduce programme in accordance with ISO 14064-1. This data has not been audited at the date of publication.

## 2 Recommendation - *Tohutohu akiaki*

**THAT** the six-monthly climate change report be **received**.

## 3 Background - *He tirohanga whakamuri*

The Officer of the Auditor General recently observed that climate change will be the key strategic issue to be addressed in the next round of Long-Term Plans. In 2017, the Council signed the New Zealand Local Government Leaders Climate Change Declaration, alongside 70 other councils. The Declaration sets out seven principles to guide future decisions. In 2019, the council confirmed the principles to make sure they aligned with our communities' priorities and aspirations. The Council adopted these principles (Figure 1), which created the foundation for our Climate Change Strategy.



Figure 1: Climate change principles.

In 2020, Council adopted a Climate Change Strategy and six Action Plans (Figure 2). Together, these documents ensure a strategic approach to climate change is taken across the organisation and monitored into the future.

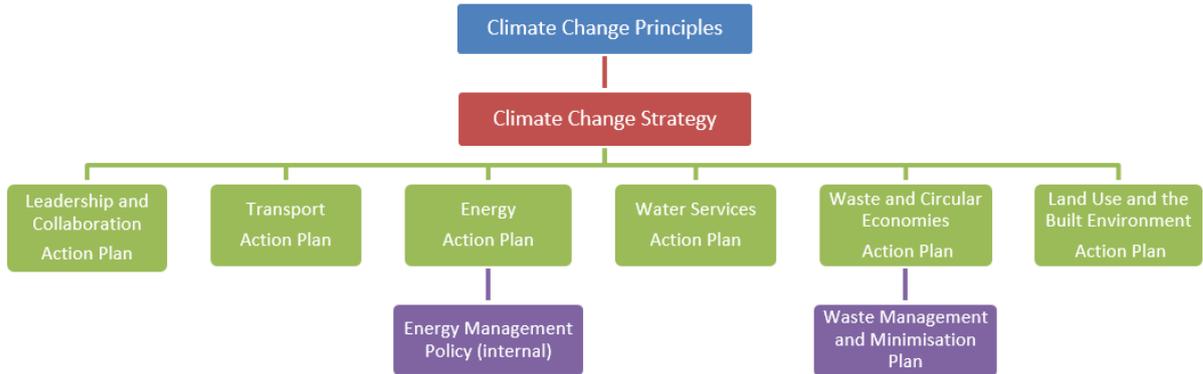


Figure 2: Whakatane District Council Climate Change Framework

## 4 Six monthly climate change report

This Report continues Council's six-monthly reporting against the targets and actions outlined in Council's Climate Change Strategy and six Action Plans.

Since adoption in 2020, we have been implementing the Council's climate change strategy and action plans, which were ambitious in their targets. As we progressed the work, we found that the action plans did not align with resourcing available and across the organisation we have faced constraints preventing us from reaching the longer-term actions which make the biggest impact. Due to financial and resourcing constraints, many of our teams have only been able to progress business as usual, ongoing actions. Progression towards our action plans is included in Appendix 1, which snapshots of the work we have achieved over the past six months.

### 4.1 Leadership and Collaboration Action Plan

As part of our climate change strategy review, we have engaged and collaborated with our community. As part of the project structure the project team established a Steering Group, Technical Advisory Group, Community Committee and Youth Panel. In August 2023 the project team also undertook initial community wide engagement. A survey was published, receiving 172 responses.

Over the past six months the team has been working with and advocating to Regional and Central Government. A submission was made to the Climate Change Commission to support their advice on the second emissions reduction plan. A submission was made to the Ministry for the Environment in support of a proposed Biodiversity Credit System. The team has also been active members of the regional climate change forum, Aotearoa Climate Adaptation Network and the Local Government emissions modelling group. We have collaborated with LGNZ, Far North Regional Council and Beca to undertake a legislative stocktake.

### 4.2 Transport Action Plan

As part of the strategic climate response the Council aimed to reduce Council's total purchased petrol and diesel by 20% by 2021 (compared to 2017/18). We were unsuccessful at reaching this goal for several reasons, for example; technological advancements of EVs are not adequate for off-road vehicles and, a lack of charging infrastructure connectedness means our teams service our remote communities using petrol/diesel vehicles. This target has been modelled in Appendix 1. The modelling includes both transport fuels and operational fuels (diggers, portable generators). We acknowledge that this is a significant area of improvement for our Council. We are, however, aware of aspirational challenges when it comes to transitioning a fleet of vehicles in a short time. As such, whilst working towards such a transition, concurrent work will be undertaken as part of the revised strategy to reduce petrol and diesel use.

The transport team have continued to deliver the Active Whakatāne Strategy. The Council have supported the e-bike library and installed locky docs around town. About 20 staff attended 'go by bike' day, where they received a free coffee if they biked to work. Bike storage facilities have been popular with staff.

Speed limits have been reduced around the district. Slower speeds encourage people to bike and walk, especially school children. Safety concerns were a key barrier of children and parents when asked why they didn't bike or walk to school, as part of our climate change survey.

### 4.3 Energy Action Plan

Staff have been engaged with and committed to the Energy Action Plan. The Energy Management programme supported by Energy Management Solutions (EMSOL) continues to deliver carbon and cost savings through energy reduction.

A solar PV and natural gas feasibility study have been conducted. These are being analysed through a multi criteria analysis to inform the next strategy.

Over six months Jan-June 2023 there was high gas use at the aquatic centre due to a failure of an old shower system. A new heat pump shower system has been installed and the team is working on improving energy efficiency of the unit. Gas has been turned off at the aquatic centre as of 18<sup>th</sup> of October until next winter as it is not required over the summer months. It is anticipated that this decision will result in significant avoided emissions.

The team is consistently looking for ways to improve energy efficiency at our sites. The facilities team are investigating options to replace gas use at Te Whare Taonga o Taketake and Te Koputu, but this is reliant on a combination of external and Long-Term Plan funding. The team is also identifying efficient heating options for the Rex Morpeth redevelopment projects as well as continual removal of old lighting systems and upgrading LEDS.

The team have been monitoring the energy use at the civic centre following the re-development process. Due to a lack of efficient energy management measures, the electricity use has been fluctuating, and high base loads are apparent after hours and on the weekends. These occurrences can potentially be explained due to the lack of energy efficient measures not being included in the building upgrade. As a result, there are no sensor lights or air con systems that get switched off automatically, and therefore remain left on. Work is planned to investigate how we can reduce electricity use. We have seen positive results when it comes to more staff and less energy consumption, potentially due to remote working as well as flexible hours.

### 4.4 Water Services Action Plan

The Three Waters team have been actively engaged in the Energy Management Programme and have been incorporating energy efficiency measures into their infrastructure. Energy audit actions have been feeding into upgrades, for example; high lift pumps have seen large improvements; Paul Road upgrades have seen energy improvements.

The team has also installed meters to track usage at the wastewater sites. 16 automatic meter readers were installed in new private development in Whakatāne. 57 meters were installed in Waimana and 290 assigned for installation in Matatā.

The Three Waters team have been undertaking training modules, which includes how to calculate carbon emissions associated with water services and waste system upgrades.

### 4.5 Waste and Circular Economies Action Plan

The Waste Team continues to implement the Waste Management and Minimisation Plan which was adopted 2021.<sup>1</sup> We are starting to see significant legislative changes from central government which we are preparing for, including national standardised kerbside recycling by February 2024 and mandatory Kerbside food waste collection to be implemented by 2027. The New Zealand Waste Strategy was released at the end of March, which we are analysing to determine what it means for us. Unfortunately, the National container return scheme has been put on hold. The New Waste Legislation is still underway and now expected to be released in 2024.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.whakatane.govt.nz/sites/www.whakatane.govt.nz/files/documents/waste-management-min-plan-2021-web.pdf>

The team have continued education around waste internally and externally. 37 schools are registered in the school waste education program. Through the 'paper for trees' programs which the council supports, our local schools recycled 989 cubic metres of paper and cardboard and earned 526 plants to plant in their community. The waste team have been handing out reuseable produce bags. 10,680 have been given out to 19 schools/kohanga, and to other community groups and members.

The team are undertaking a food waste options assessment, including an investigation into kerbside food waste collection and processing options. This investigation will look at options to work jointly with Ōpōtiki and Kawerau District Councils.

Our project with Community Resources Whakatāne is working to address Construction and Demolition (C&D) Waste. Crew premises are being refitted to accept more C&D waste. A pick-up service for construction sites has been established. Educational material has been produced in paper and online, workshops have been held with builders and Council's building consent team, and we are working with trade educators on including waste minimisation in their curriculum.

#### **4.6 Land Use and the Built Environment Action Plan**

Most of the actions within the land-use and built environment action plan are on-going planning activities. For example, the planning team is working on implementing the National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity to promote and protect significant natural areas across the district. The planning team is also working to promote a built environment which is resilient to climate change impacts. The District Plan requires new builds in flood prone areas to exceed requirements of the building code for floor level height, which helps reduce flood risk. Work is well underway to downscale the regional risk assessment to the local level to inform the District Risk assessment.

### **5 Next steps - *Ahu whakamua***

Our teams continue to find ways in which our original climate change action plans may be implemented, whilst also identifying opportunities for learning and continuous improvement. We are also actively considering how to transition our current action plans into the revised climate change strategy going forward.

### **6 Significance and Engagement Assessment - *Aromatawai Pāhekoheko***

#### **6.1 Assessment of Significance**

While the Council's overall Climate Change work programme is of high significance, the recommendation of this report (to receive the End of Year Climate Change Report) is assessed to be of low significance in accordance with Council's Significance and Engagement Policy.

#### **6.2 Engagement and community views**

The results for progress on Council's Climate Change work programme (as attached to this Report) are publicly available through this agenda and will be made available under the climate change reporting section of Council's public website after this Committee meeting.

## 7 Considerations - *Whai Whakaaro*

### 7.1 Financial/budget considerations

The recommendations of this Report do not have any financial implications.

The Climate Change Action Plans identify some actions which require specific budget allocation. These are noted in the 'resource requirement' column with a '\$' symbol. For actions in the 2020/21 financial year, budget was allocated in the Annual Plan adopted on 15 July 2020. For the medium- and long-term actions in the action plans, budget has been allocated through the Long-Term Plan 2021-31, and will need to be allocated through the Long-Term Plan 2024-34.

### 7.2 Strategic alignment

The Climate Change Strategy and Action Plans have implications for a range of Council policies and planning processes. This includes the Long-Term Plans 2021-31 and 2024-34, Procurement Policy, Operative District Plan and others. The intention is for climate change considerations to be embedded across all Council processes.

### 7.3 Climate change assessment

The decisions and matters of this report (to receive the End of Year Climate Change Reporting 2020/21) are assessed to have low climate change implications and considerations, in accordance with the Council's Climate Change Principles. However, this report provides updates to the Committee on actions that specifically deliver on Council's Climate Change Action Plans and can so be determined to have high significance.

### 7.4 Risks

Not taking climate change action quickly enough may pose the biggest risk, with far-reaching environmental, social, cultural, economic, legislative, and other consequences to our District. The development, adoption and continued monitoring of the Council's Climate Change Strategy and Action Plans ensures a systemic response to climate change across the organisation. These documents are intended to be 'live' and continually reviewed to ensure they are fit for purpose and respond to new data, legislation and government direction as these arise.

#### **Attached to this report:**

- Appendix 1: Six-monthly Climate Change Report 2023