Who's putting local issues on the national agenda?

We are. LGNZ.

2019 Annual General Meeting

Remits

1 Climate change – local government representation

Remit: That LGNZ calls on the Government to include local government representation (as determined by local government) at all levels of policy development, technical risk and resilience assessment, and data acquisition on climate change response policies – with an emphasis on climate adaptation: policy; legal; planning; and financial compensation regimes.

Proposed by: Auckland Council

Supported by: Zone One

Background information and research

1. Nature of the issue

a. Climate change action, impacts and related policy, risk, legal, planning and financial implications are borne most directly by local communities.

b. As the structure and framework for a more cohesive New Zealand-wide approach emerges with the current government, it is critical that the country-wide context is informed directly by the local voice at a local council level so it is integrated appropriately into the wider context.

c. Local government is likely to be responsible for implementing a range of central government climate change policies – it is therefore crucial that local government is represented in policy/technical design process to ensure it is fit for purpose at a local scale and able to be implemented cost-effectively in the local government system.

2. Background to its being raised

a. Climate adaptation and mitigation approaches are being adopted across New Zealand, in some cases well in advance of a coherent national approach. As local councils make progress on strategy, policy, planning and direct initiatives, an opportunity exists to integrate learning, challenges or concerns into the wider national context.

b. Some councils have pioneered new approaches with mana whenua, community engagement, evidence-building and research and cross-sector governance. Without a seat at the larger table, the lessons from these early adopters risk being lost in the national conversation/approach.

3. New or confirming existing policy

This is a new policy.

4. How the issue relates to objectives in the current Work Programme

- The issue relates to LGNZ's climate change work programme, particularly relating to the input/influence on the Zero Carbon Act and Independent Climate Commission, implementation of CCATWG recommendations, decision-making and risk, impacts assessment, and other elements.
- A local seat at the larger New Zealand table would ensure a strong local voice for a range of workstreams.

5. What work or action on the issue has been done on it, and the outcome

Aside from specific LGNZ workstreams relating to climate change (see above), central government has progressed consultation on the Zero Carbon Bill and Interim Climate Change Committee, has appointed a panel to produce a framework for national climate change risk assessment, and has announced a set of improvements to New Zealand's emissions trading scheme. Likewise, a number of councils have progressed action plans and strategies to reduce emissions and prepare for climate impacts. Notably, New Zealand-wide emissions continue to rise and the serious risks associated with climate impacts continue to be better understood – an integrated local and national approach is very much needed in order to make any substantive progress on climate change in New Zealand.

6. Any existing relevant legislation, policy or practice

As described above, the Zero Carbon Act is the main relevant New Zealand legislation with accompanying frameworks, policies and schemes. A range of more local policies from the Auckland Unitary Plan to coastal policies need meticulous alignment and integration with the national approach in order for both to be most effective.

7. Outcome of any prior discussion at a Zone or Sector meeting

Zone 1 agreed on 1 March 2019 to support this remit.

8. Suggested course of action envisaged

- It is recommended that LGNZ work with central government to advocate for these changes.
- It is recommended that LGNZ engage directly with relevant ministers and ministries to ensure local government has an appropriate role in the National Climate Change Risk Assessment Framework, and all related and relevant work programmes.

2 Ban on the sale of fireworks to the general public

Remit:	That LGNZ work with central government to raise the issue (about sale of fireworks) and advocate for legislative change. [updated 29 May 2019]
Proposed by:	Auckland Council
Supported by:	Metro Sector

Background information and research

1. Nature of the issue

The following issues have been identified:

a. Community concern about the negative impacts of the ad-hoc private use of fireworks particularly around the deliberate and unintentional distress to people and animals and damage to property.

b. High demand for council and emergency services who receive a large number of complaints in relation to the use of fireworks.

c. The absence of regulatory powers to territorial authorities to ban the sale of fireworks by retailers to the general public.

2. Background to its being raised

a. The issue was raised during the review of the Auckland Council's Public Safety and Nuisance Bylaw 2013 which prohibits setting off fireworks on public places.

b. During the review of this Bylaw, Auckland Council separately resolved to request the New Zealand Government to introduce legislation to ban the sale of fireworks to the general public and end their private use.

c. Reasons for the decision are stated in the 'Nature of the issue' and further details are in 'What work or action on the issue has been done, and the outcome'.

3. New or confirming existing policy

This is a new policy.

4. How the issue relates to objectives in the current Work Programme

This issue relates to LGNZ's social issues portfolio which reflects working alongside central government to address social issues affecting community safety:

- Community safety is an issue of vital interest for councils as areas which are perceived to be "unsafe" are likely to experience lower levels of social cohesion and economic investment. When asked to rank issues that are most important to themselves and their communities' safety is always one of the top.
- Framed in this way, prohibiting the private use and sale of fireworks through government legislation enhances community safety as a top priority for LGNZ. Furthermore, it also promotes social cohesion by enabling the use of public displays without the worries and danger of ad-hoc private use of fireworks.

5. What work or action on the issue has been done on it, and the outcome

The review of Auckland Council's Public Safety and Nuisance Bylaw 2013 identified that a territorial authority has no regulatory powers to ban the retail sale of fireworks to the general public.

A territorial authority's regulatory powers in relation to fireworks are limited to:

- Prohibiting fireworks from being set off on or from a public place.
- Addressing nuisance and safety issues that may arise from their use on other places (eg private property) and affect people in a public place.
- Addressing noise issues relating to fireworks being set off on other places.

Enforcement is also challenging and resource-intensive. Auckland Council (and potentially other territorial authorities) do not have capacity to respond to all complaints during peak times, and it is difficult to catch people in the act. There can also be health and safety risks for compliance staff.

A ban on the sale of fireworks through legislative reform would therefore be the most efficient and effective way of addressing issues identified in the 'Nature of the issue'.

Any such ban would not prohibit public fireworks displays which enable a managed approach towards cultural celebrations that use fireworks throughout the year.

There is also a known level of public support for such a ban. Public feedback between October and December 2018 on the decision of Auckland Council to request a ban on the sale of fireworks was overwhelmingly supportive. Feedback to Auckland Council resolution was received from 7,997 people online. Feedback showed 89 per cent (7,041) in support and 10 per cent (837) opposed.

Key themes in support included:

- Concerns for the safety of people and animals (68 per cent).
- Concerns about the amount of noise (35 per cent).
- Concerns about stockpiling and use of fireworks after Guy Fawkes night (27 per cent).
- A preference for public fireworks displays only (23 per cent).

Key themes opposed, including from fireworks retailers, were:

- A ban would be excessively restrictive.
- In favour of more regulation on use instead of a ban.
- A ban would end a key part of kiwi culture and tradition.

Similar requests and petitions to ban the sale of fireworks to the general public have been delivered to the Government, including:

- An unsuccessful petition in 2015 with 32,000 signatures, including the SPCA, SAFE and the New Zealand Veterinarians Association.
- A recent petition in 2018 with nearly 18,000 signatures which was accepted on its behalf by Green Party animal welfare spokesperson Gareth Hughes.

A ban on the sale of fireworks would align New Zealand legislation to that of other comparative jurisdictions. For example, retail sale of fireworks to the general public is prohibited in every Australian jurisdiction (except the Northern Territories and Tasmania where strict restrictions on the sale and use are in place).

6. Any existing relevant legislation, policy or practice

Hazardous Substances (Fireworks) Regulations 2001

- Fireworks may be displayed for retail sale or sold by a retailer during the period beginning on 2 November and ending at the close of 5 November in each year.
- A person must be at least 18 years in order to purchase fireworks.

WorkSafe

- Regulates health and safety in a workplace and administers the regulations for storing fireworks in a workplace.
- Approve compliance certifiers who certify public/commercial displays.

New Zealand Police

- Enforce regulations around the sale of retail fireworks, including requirements around the sale period and age restrictions under the Hazardous Substances (Fireworks) Regulations 2001.
- Address complaints about dangerous use of fireworks.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

- Responsible for providing information about the sale of retail fireworks.
- Responsible for approving certifiers to test and certify that retail fireworks are safe prior to being sold in New Zealand.
- Provides approval for hazardous substances, including fireworks and provide import certificates to allow fireworks to be brought into New Zealand and the requirements for labelling and packaging of fireworks.

Auckland Council

- Deals with complaints about noise from fireworks.
- Prohibits setting off fireworks from public places under its Public Safety and Nuisance Bylaw 2013.

New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA)

- Responsible for enforcing Land Transport Rule 1 which covers fireworks being transported on the road.

7. Suggested course of action envisaged

We ask that LGNZ request the Government to include red light running with other traffic offences that incur demerit points.

3 Traffic offences – red light running

Remit: That LGNZ request the Government to bring into line camera and officer-detected red light running offences with other traffic offences that incur demerit points.

Proposed by: Auckland Council

Supported by: Metro Sector

1. Background information and research

1. Nature of the issue

LGNZ strategic goals include a safe system for transport – increasingly free of death and serious injury. This proposal is directly working towards a safe road system, with an integrated approach across infrastructure, operation of the road network and enforcement.

The red-light-running-related crash-risk has increased in recent years (CAS) and additional prevention measures are required to reduce and eventually eliminate the social, financial and road trauma burden of these crashes.

Making use of safety cameras and demerit points would allow the intent of the law to be upheld without the need for significantly increased police presence, and is a cost effective way to ensure safety at high risk camera locations.

Demerit points are more effective than fines in deterring unsafe road user behaviour as the deterrent effect impacts equally across a wide range of road users.

We ask that LGNZ request the Government that red light running be included with other traffic offences that incur demerit points (currently absent from the list of similar offences that acquire points, although this was proposed in 2007).

All councils in New Zealand stand to benefit from reduced red-light running and cost-effective enforcement of safety using red light cameras which can operate more cheaply over wide areas. This will support councils to get strong safety results from their road safety camera programmes.

Demerit point systems (DPS) work through prevention, selection and correction mechanisms. A DPS can help increase compliance with stop signals, reducing the likelihood of exposure to non-survivable forces, and it can help reduce repeat offending among 'loss of licence' drivers who repeatedly make poor safety choices which may lead to a crash.

Applying demerit points to red-light-running offences would help make the whole penalty system more meaningful and fair, and better reflect the risk. It is expected that the costs would be minimal, mostly in the justice sector, however these too can be minimised with an educational approach.

2. Background to its being raised

Road safety crisis

Auckland, as the rest of New Zealand, has an increasing road toll. From 2014 to 2017 Auckland had an increase in deaths of 78 per cent. The rest of New Zealand had an increase of almost 30 per cent in that same period. Serious injuries have increased at similar rates in that time. This follows a long period of gradual reductions in road trauma. The previous methods for managing road safety are no longer working.

A Vision Zero approach requires clear expectations and shared responsibility about safe behaviour at intersections, from road users and legislators and managers of the road system.

Auckland Transport (AT) Independent Road Safety Business Improvement Review (BIR) recommends increasing penalties for camera offences for all drivers, alongside other recommendations for road safety sector partnerships.

National Road Safety Strategy update is underway. It would help to have LGNZ support for changes like this being considered under the strategy.

3. New or confirming existing policy

Red light running or failing to stop at a red signal at intersections:

- Note that in this 2007 release for changes to the demerit system in 2010, proposed a fine of $50 and 25 demerit points for red light running. https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/tougher-penalties-focus-road-safety-package

10 years of driver offence data:

- https://www.police.govt.nz/about-us/publication/road-policing-driver-offence-data-january-2009-december-2018 (accessed at 2 April 2019)

Number of red light running offences for 2014-2018 five year period, all of New Zealand:

- Officer issued: 61,208 or $8.9 million in fines, no demerit points.
- Camera issued: 14,904 or $2.2 million in fines, no demerit points.

4. How the issue relates to objectives in the current Work Programme

The overall strategic focus of LGNZ includes leadership and delivery of change on the big issues confronting New Zealand communities, such as road safety, with a focus on best performance and value for communities. Safety cameras with reliable enforcement tick off a number of these requirements.

This proposal could support three of the five strategic policy priorities in the LGNZ Policy statement 2017-2019, although it does not fit under one alone:

- Infrastructure: LGNZ's policy statement mentions *a safe system for transport – increasingly free of death and serious injury* (p6). This proposal is directly working towards a safe road system, including infrastructure, operation of the road network and enforcement.
- Risk and resilience: Also known as safe and sustainable transport, Vision Zero and this detailed change to road safety supports a risk-based approach to increasing safety in New Zealand communities. Collaboration between local and central government is necessary to achieve the safe system goal and treating no death or serious injury as acceptable for those communities.
- Social issue – community safety: LGNZ supports projects that strengthen confidence in the police and improve perceptions of safety. This proposal reflects the goal of responsive policing, and innovative solutions for dealing with social issues.

Note on equity

While demerit points provide a more equitable deterrent effect compared to fines and help dispel the myth of 'revenue gathering', an increase in the use of demerit points may still impact some low deprivation communities and create 'transport poverty' issues, particularly in areas with high sharing of vehicles. One way to manage this potential equity issue is to use the Swedish model for managing safety cameras where they are only switched on a proportion of the time and are well supported by local road safety education activities.

5. What work or action on the issue has been done on it, and the outcome

From Auckland Transport research report: *Auckland Red Light Camera Project: Final Evaluation Report, 2011*: "When red light cameras were trialled in Auckland between 2008 and 2010, there was a 43 per cent reduction in red-light running and an average 63 per cent decrease in crashes attributable to red light running."

Conversations with AT and Policing Operations on demerits for safety camera infringements indicate that police are very supportive of demerit points for safety cameras.

Reasons include that demerits from safety cameras can be easily transferred to the driver involved in the infringement, which addresses concerns that vehicle owners who are not driving would be unfairly penalised.

Further conversations between AT and New Zealand Police indicate that red light running offences are an anomaly as they do not lead to demerit points. For comparison, failing to give way at a pedestrian crossing is 35 points, and ignoring the flashing red signal at rail crossings, 20 points.

The effect of demerit points on young drivers: incentives and disincentives can have an important impact on young, novice drivers' behaviour, including demerit points as a concrete disincentive.

From OECD research report: *Young Drivers: The Road to Safety* 2006 by the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (EMCT), OECD publishing, France.

Comment on technology used for enforcement:

Existing cameras are more than capable of detecting offences, it is just the legal rules that are preventing this. However, it may be worth considering that new intelligent technology will potentially improve this process even further in future.

6. Any existing relevant legislation, policy or practice

To change the:

- Land Transport Act 1998.
- Land Transport (offenses and penalties) Regulations 1999.
- Land Transport (road user) Rule 2004.

The demerits points system comes from section 88 of the Land Transport Act and expressly excludes offences detected by camera enforcement ("vehicle surveillance equipment" as it is called in legislation).

These sections of the Act are supported by reg 6 and schedule 2 of the Land Transport (Offences and Penalties) Regulations 1999.

7. Suggested course of action envisaged

We ask that LGNZ request the Government to include red light running with other traffic offences that incur demerit points.

4 Prohibit parking on grass berms

Remit: To seek an amendment to clause 6.2 of the Land Transport (Road User) Rule 2004 to prohibit parking on urban berms.

Proposed by: Auckland Council

Supported by: Metro Sector

Background information and research

1. Nature of the issue

Auckland Transport cannot enforce 'parking on the grass berms' without the request signage being in place.

2. Background to its being raised

In 2015 Auckland Transport Parking Services received advice that the enforcement of motor vehicles parking on the berms of the roadway could not be lawfully carried out, without the requisite signage being in place to inform the driver that the activity is not permitted. After that advice, enforcement was restricted to roadways where signage is in place. A programme to install signage was undertaken on a risk priority basis from that time to present.

3. New or confirming existing policy

Change in the existing legislative situation.

4. How the issue relates to objectives in the current Work Programme

The overall strategic focus of LGNZ includes leadership and delivery of change on the big issues confronting New Zealand communities, such as road safety, with a focus on best performance and value for communities.

This proposal supports the Infrastructure strategic policy priorities in the LGNZ policy statement 2017-2019:

- Infrastructure: LGNZ policy statement mentions the right infrastructure and services to the right level at the best cost (p6). This proposal is directly working towards a safe road system, including infrastructure that meets the increasing demands within a reasonable roading investment.

5. What work or action on the issue has been done on it, and the outcome

- September 2015: AT legal team notified Parking Services and Ministry of Transport (MoT) of the issue.
- October 2015: Ministry responded stating it would be included in the next omnibus rule amendment.
- June 2016: AT was advised that the matter would not be progressed as a policy project would be needed. AT also informed that the matter was not in the 2016/17 programme but would be considered in the forward work programme.
- AT advised there would be workshops with local government to determine potential regulatory proposals in the 2017/18 programme. This did not happen.
- November 2016: AT's Legal team wrote to the MoT again requesting for an update on when the workshops would take place.
- November 2016: MoT advised AT that they were currently co-ordinating proposals.

AT have not received an update on the issue since.

6. Any existing relevant legislation, policy or practice

AT's Traffic Bylaw 2012 prohibits parking on the grass within the Auckland urban traffic area. However, the combination of provisions in the Land Transport Act 1998, and the various rules made under it, mean that for AT to enforce this prohibition, we must first install prescribed signs every 100 metres on all grass road margins within the urban traffic area.

It should be noted that this is not just confined to Auckland, but is a nationwide issue, hence our multiple requests for the Ministry to consider the issue.

To note: The same requirements apply to beaches, meaning before AT can enforce a Council prohibition on parking on the beach, signage must first be installed every 100 metres along the beach.

Clearly, installing the required signage on all road margins and beaches is both aesthetically undesirable as well as prohibitively expensive.

Operational practice by AT parking services is to respond to calls for service and complaints from the public. This change is not to introduce a change in enforcement practices.

5 Short-term guest accommodation

Remit: That LGNZ advocates for enabling legislation that would allow councils to require all guest accommodation providers to register with the council and that provides an efficient approach to imposing punitive action on operators who don't comply.

Proposed by: Christchurch City Council

Supported by: Metro Sector

Background information and research

1. Nature of the issue

The advent of online listing and payment platforms like Airbnb and HomeAway have helped grow a largely informal accommodation provider sector around the world on a huge scale. This is presenting challenges for local authorities around the world to adapt regulatory frameworks to effectively capture these new businesses.

The Airbnb market share in Christchurch has grown exponentially from June 2016 to December 2018.

- Rooms in owner-occupied homes listed grew from 58 in June 2016 to 1,496 in December 2018.
- Entire homes listed increased from 54 to 1,281 over the same period (+2,272 per cent).
- Airbnb's share of all guest nights in Christchurch rose from 0.7 per cent in June 2016 to 24 per cent in December 2018.
- In the month of December 2018 there were an estimated 120,000 guest nights in Christchurch at Airbnb providers.

Councils generally have regulatory and rating requirements that guest accommodation providers are required to work within. District Plan rules protect residential amenity and coherence and many councils require business properties to pay a differential premium on general rates.

However, many informal short-term guest accommodation providers operate outside the applicable regulatory and rates frameworks. The nature of the activity makes finding properties being used for this activity problematic. Location information on the listing is vague and GPS coordinates scrambled. Hosts do not provide exact address information until a property is booked, and the platform providers won't provide detailed location, booking frequency or contact details to councils, citing privacy obligations. In their view, the onus is on hosts to

confirm they meet relevant regulatory requirements. In short, we don't know where they are and finding them is an expensive and resource-intensive exercise akin to playing whack-a-mole with a blind fold on.

This means the informal accommodation sector is able to capture competitive advantages vis-à-vis the formal sector by reducing compliance costs and risks. In popular residential neighbourhoods, high demand for this activity can reduce housing affordability, supply and choice and compromise the neighbourhood amenity.

Councils need to be able to require guest accommodation providers to register with them and to keep records of the frequency of use of residential homes for this purpose. This would enable councils to communicate better with providers, ensure regulatory and rating requirements are being met and enable a more productive relationship with platform providers.

Queenstown Lakes District Council proposed a registration approach through its District Plan review but withdrew that part of their proposal after seeking further legal advice. Christchurch City Council has also had legal advice to the effect that registration with the Council cannot be used as a condition for permitted activity status under the District Plan, particularly if that registration is contingent on compliance with other Acts (eg the Building Act, various fire safety regulations, etc). The closest thing to a form of registration that can be achieved under the RMA is to require a controlled resource consent which is still a relatively costly and onerous process for casual hosts.

2. Background to it being raised

Christchurch City Council has received numerous complaints and requests for action from representatives of the traditional accommodation sector – hotels, motels and campgrounds. They have asked for short-term rental accommodation to be brought into the same regulatory framework they are required to operate in.

There are other wider issues to consider such as impact on rental housing availability, impact on house prices and impact on type of development being delivered in response to this market.

Representatives from the Christchurch accommodation sector have raised the disparity in operating costs and regulation that are imposed on them and not the informal sector. They believe the effect of this is:

- Undermining the financial viability of the formal accommodation sector.
- Resulting in anti-social behaviour and negative amenity impacts in residential neighbourhoods.
- Creating a health and safety risk where small, casual operators are not required to meet the same standards that they are.

3. How the issue relates to objectives in the current Work Programme

LGNZ Flagship Policy Project - Localism

''Local government is calling for a shift in the way public decisions are made in New Zealand by seeking a commitment to localism. Instead of relying on central government to decide what is good for our communities it is time to empower councils and communities themselves to make such decisions. Strengthening self-government at the local level means putting people back in charge of politics and reinvigorating our democracy."

Providing councils with the means to require accommodation providers to register will greatly assist them to work with their communities to develop approaches to regulating the short-term guest accommodation sector that best serves that particular community. For many councils it would enable a nuanced approach for each community to evolve under a district-wide policy.

4. What work or action on the issue has been done on it, and the outcome

Christchurch City Council is taking a four-pronged approach to creating a more workable regulatory and rating frameworks.

- Preliminary work is underway to consider changes to the District Plan. These will explore options including:
    - To differentiate between scales of the activity with a primarily residential or rural versus primarily commercial character (likely to be determined based on the number of days a year that a residential unit is used for this activity and whether or not it is also used for a residential purpose);
    - To enable short-term guest accommodation with a primarily residential or rural character in areas where it will have no or minimal effects on housing availability or affordability, residential amenity or character, and the recovery of the Central City; and
    - Restrict short-term guest accommodation in residential areas where it has a primarily commercial character.
- Consideration will be given to business rates approaches that align with any changes to District Plan rules. This may see a graduated approach to imposing business rates based on the level of activity and in line with District Plan compliance thresholds. This is an approach Auckland Council and Queenstown Lakes District Council are using.
- Consideration of a more proactive regulatory compliance approach once any changes to District Plan rules are introduced. The Council is currently responding to complaints related to guest accommodation activity but is not undertaking proactive enforcement due to the difficulty in identifying properties being used as guest accommodation and then enforcing zone rules.
- Advocating for enabling legislation that would allow councils to require all guest accommodation providers to register with the council and that provides an efficient approach to imposing punitive action on operators who don't comply.

5. Suggested course of action envisaged

Convene a working group of local government subject matter experts to prepare a prototype legislative solution to put to the Government to guide advice to MPs.

The solution should enable councils to require all accommodation providers to register and keep records of the frequency of their bookings and should enable councils to develop a regulatory and rating approach that best suits its situation and needs.

Examples of legislation that provide similar powers include:

- Class 4 and TAB Gambling Policies under the Gambling Act.
- Prostitution Bylaws under the Prostitution Reform Act.
- Freedom Camping Bylaws under the Freedom Camping Act.

6 Nitrate in drinking water

Remit: That LGNZ recommend to the Government the funding of additional research into the effects of nitrates in drinking water on human health, and/or partner with international public health organisations to promote such research, in order to determine whether the current drinking water standard for nitrate is still appropriate for the protection of human health.

Proposed by: Christchurch City Council

Supported by: Metro Sector

Background information and research

1. Nature of the issue

Nitrates are one of the chemical contaminants in drinking water for which the Ministry of Health has set a maximum acceptable value (MAV) of 50 mg/L nitrate (equivalent to 11.3 mg/L nitrate-Nitrogen) for 'short-term' exposure. This level was determined to protect babies from methaemoglobinaemia ('blue baby' syndrome).

Some studies, in particular a recent Danish study, indicate a relationship between nitrates in drinking water and increased risk of adverse health effects, in particular colorectal cancer.

The well-publicised 2018 Danish study found that much lower levels of nitrate than that set in the New Zealand drinking water standards may increase the risk of colorectal cancer. The level of increased risk was small, but 'significant' even at levels as low as 0.87 mg/L nitrate-Nitrogen, which is more than an order of magnitude lower than the New Zealand drinking water standard.

Other studies looking at the relationship of nitrate in drinking water and possible adverse human health effects have in some instances been inconclusive or have found a relationship between nitrate in drinking water and colorectal cancer for specific sub-groups with additional risk factors (such as high red meat consumption), but not necessarily at the same level as the 2018 Danish study. The 2018 Danish study is notable because of its duration (between 1 January 1978 to 31 December 2011) and the size of the population studied (2.7 million Danish adults).

There does not appear to be a robust national system for monitoring and reporting nitrate in drinking water, nor a programme or system in place for considering whether the current drinking water standard for nitrate is still appropriate for protecting human health.

2. Background to its being raised

Dietary intake of nitrates include consumption of vegetables such as spinach, lettuce, beets and carrots, which contain significant amounts of nitrate, and processed meat, and to a lesser extent drinking water (when/where nitrate is present).

In the 2015 Environmental indicators Te taiao Aotearoa compiled by Ministry for the Environment and Statistics New Zealand, an overall trend of increasing levels of nitrate in groundwater was observed for the ten-year period 2005-2014 at monitored sites (see Figure 1).

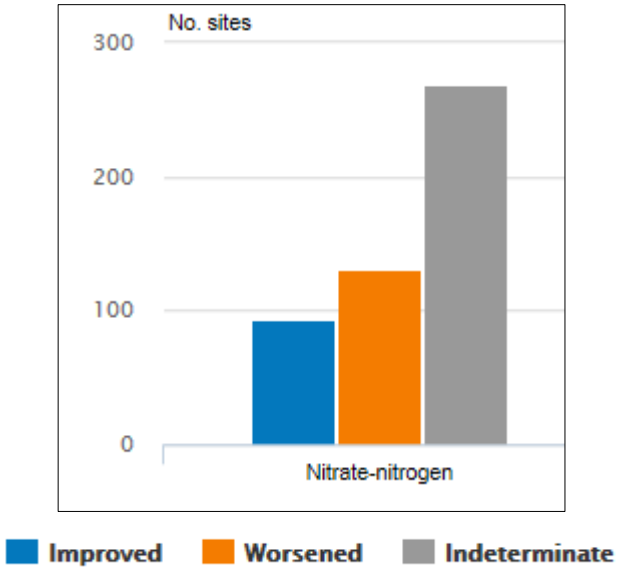


Figure 1. Nitrate levels in groundwater, 2005-2014

Ministry for the Environment's Our Fresh Water 2017 reports that 47 of 361 sites (13 per cent) did not meet the drinking water quality standard for nitrate at least once in the period between 2012 and 2014. The report doesn't indicate whether any or all of these sites are sources of public water supplies.

3. How the issue relates to objectives in the current Work Programme

- One of LGNZ's five strategic priorities concerns councils' infrastructure including that for 'Three Waters': "Water is critical to the future health of New Zealanders and their economy and in a world facing water scarcity New Zealand's water resources represent a significant economic advantage. Consequently, protecting the quality of water and ensuring it is used wisely is a matter of critical importance to local government and our communities. Water is also subject to a range of legislative and regulatory reforms, with the overall allocation framework under review and councils subject to national standards, such as drinking water standards."
- Another of LGNZ's strategic priorities is addressing environmental issues including the quality and quantity of New Zealand's freshwater resources: "Water quality is, and will continue to be, one of the defining political issues for governments and councils over the foreseeable future …"

- LGNZ's Water 2050 project is also relevant. This project is described as: "A fit-for-purpose policy framework for the future (Water 2050) which considers freshwater quality and quantity: including standards, freshwater management, impacts on rural and urban areas, such as infrastructure requirements and associated funding, quantity issues including rights and allocation, and institutional frameworks for water governance."

4. What work or action on the issue has been done on it, and the outcome

The City Council undertakes chemical sampling from approximately 20-25 bores each year as an additional risk management barrier for the provision of its public drinking water supply. This data is shared with Environment Canterbury. The monitoring programme analyses for a number of chemicals, with nitrate being only one of many contaminants analysed. The City Council maintains a database with the results of the chemical monitoring programme.

The extent of the issue with respect to understanding the extent of nitrates in drinking water and its associated human health implication is beyond the scope of the City Council's resources to undertake.

5. Outcome of any prior discussion at a Zone/Sector meeting

To date no City Council drinking water well has exceeded the drinking water standard for nitrate.

Data from the last ten years of the City Council's monitoring programme have shown that in about a third of the samples taken, results have met or exceeded the 0.87 mg/L level for which the 2018 Danish study found an increased risk of colorectal cancer (see Table 1).

Table 1. Nitrate-Nitrogen sampling results of CCC drinking water wells, 2008-2018

	Results *below* 0.87 mg/L	**Results *at/above* 0.87 mg/L**
Total number of samples taken	280	93
Number of wells with 1 or more results	126	57
Concentration range	<0.001 – 0.85	0.89 – 7.1

6. Suggested course of action envisaged

Recommend that central government fund additional research into effects of nitrates in drinking water on human health and/or partner with international public health organisations to promote such research.

Recommend that central government work with regional and local governments to improve monitoring of nitrates in reticulated supplies as well as in the sources of drinking water, noting that in its 2017 report *Our Fresh Water 2017* the Ministry for the Environment has stated that they "have insufficient data to determine groundwater trends at most monitored sites" and that the Ministry of Health's latest report on drinking water *Annual Report on Drinking water Quality 2016–2017* states that "chemical determinants are not regularly monitored in all supplies".

7 Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act (1987)

Remit: That LGNZ initiates a review of Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act (1987) (LGOIMA) request management nationally with a view to establishing clear and descriptive reporting for and by local authorities that will create a sector-wide picture of:

- Trends in the volume and nature of LGOIMA requests over time.
- Trends in users.
- The impacts of technology in terms of accessing information sought and the amount of information now held by local authorities (and able to be requested).
- The financial and resource impacts on local authorities in managing the LGOIMA function.

That LGNZ use the data obtained to:

- Identify opportunities to streamline or simplify LGOIMA processes.
- Share best practice between local authorities.
- Assess the value of a common national local government framework of practice for LGOIMA requests.
- Identify opportunities to advocate for legislation changes on behalf of the sector (where these are indicated).

Proposed by: Hamilton City Council

Supported by: Metro Sector

Background information and research

1. Nature of the issue

A comprehensive understanding of the current state of play in the sector is needed, as are metrics to measure LGOIMA activity nationally to identify opportunities for improvements and efficiencies for the benefit of local authorities and the public.

An appropriate response is needed to address the tension between transparency and accountability to the public and effective, cost-efficient use of council resources to respond to requests under LGOIMA.

Despite guidance provided by the Office of the Ombudsman, it is becoming harder for local authorities to traverse the range of requests made under LGOIMA with confidence that they are complying fully with the Act. Issues such as grounds for withholding information, charging for information or seeking extensions are becoming increasingly problematic as the scope and scale of complex requests grows.

2. Background to its being raised

Anecdotally, local authorities all around the country seem to be noticing:

- An increase in the volume of LGOIMA requests year on year;
- An increase in requests from media;
- An increase in serial requestors;
- An increase in referrals for legal advice to negotiate complex requests and the application of the Act;
- An increase in requests that could be described as vexatious; and
- Consequently, an increase in the costs of staff time in managing LGOIMA.

In seeking to comply with the legislation, local authorities share the Ombudsman's view of the importance of public access to public information in a timely fashion in order to "enable more effective public participation in decision-making; and promote the accountability of members and officials; and so, enhance respect for the law and promote good local government" (s4 LGOIMA).

In many ways technology is making it easier to source, collate and share a far greater range of public information faster. At the same time the ubiquitous use of technology within local government has significantly increased the volume and forms of information an organisation generates and captures, with associated implications for researching, collating and then reviewing this information in response to LGOIMA requests.

<u>Current status:</u>

a. Understandably, the Ombudsman's advice encourages local authorities to apply a very high threshold for withholding information and to take a generous view of what is in the public interest.
b. The scope of requests is becoming broader, more complex and covers longer time periods (to the point where some could be described as fishing expeditions). While local authorities can request refinements to scope, requestors do not always agree to do so or make only minimal changes.
c. There are costs associated with automated searches of systems, databases and email accounts, some of which should not or are not easily able to be passed on to requestors. Not undertaking automated searches increases the risk of pertinent information being omitted.

d. The Ombudsman's guidance is very helpful in the main. However, Ombudsman's guidelines take the view that a council will scope the request then make the decision whether to release the information then prepare the information for release. This often does not reflect the reality of dealing with a LGOIMA request especially large and complex requests. These components are interrelated and cannot be processed as entirely separate stages.

e. A small number of repeat requestors appear to be responsible for an increasingly disproportionate number of the total requests. Some are individuals, but a greater number are media and watchdog groups like the Taxpayers Union.

f. With an increasing amount of information requested, the review of documents, webpages, etc and redaction of text for reasons of privacy or outside-of-scope is significant and onerous.

g. Local authorities are failing to take a common approach to people and organisations that are making the same request across the sector.

h. An increasing number of LGOIMA requests are seeking property/property owner/license-holder information or other information more often than not to be used for marketing or other commercial ends. Yet local authorities are limited in their ability to recoup associated costs in providing this information, or in the case of standard operating procedures, protect their own intellectual property.

3. How the issue relates to objectives in the current Work Programme

LGNZ has a work programme focused on improving the local government legal framework. This remit is consistent with that programme and seeks to focus attention on a particularly problematic part of the framework that is currently not being specifically addressed.

4. What work or action on the issue has been done on it, and the outcome

At a local level, Hamilton City Council has been working continuously over the last 18 months to refine our processes for dealing with LGOIMA requests. This work has ensured that relevant staff as well as the staff in the LGOIMA office and in the Communications Unit are aware of the procedures and requirements for dealing with LGOIMA requests under the Act, and options potentially available where the scope or the complexity of requests tests Council resources. Templates for responses and communications with staff regarding responses have been developed and are used or customised as necessary. We have also introduced a reporting framework so that we have visibility of requests over time and various component factors including time taken to prepare and respond to LGOIMAs. Opportunities for further enhancements relate to understanding and being able to reflect best practice sector-wide.

5. Any existing relevant legislation, policy or practice

Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987; Privacy Act 1993; Office of the Ombudsman Official Information legislation guides; Privacy Commissioner privacy principles.

Hamilton City Council is very conscious of its responsibilities under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, the Privacy Act 1993, and related guidance, and our processes comply with the relevant legislation.

This topic is also closely aligned with Hamilton City Council's strategic imperative: 'A Council that is Best in Business'.

6. Suggested course of action envisaged

LGNZ prioritises a national review of LGOIMA request management as part of its programme to continuously improve the local government legal environment.

8 Weed control

Remit: That LGNZ encourages member councils to consider using environmentally friendly weed control methods.

Proposed by: Hamilton City Council

Supported by: Metro Sector

Background information and research

1. Nature of the issue

There is mixed evidence of the risks associated with using chemical weed control as a method, particularly glyphosate-based, and lobby groups are actively pressuring councils to reduce use. Glyphosate is currently approved for use as a herbicide by New Zealand's Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and most New Zealand councils use it, given it is a cost-effective, proven option for weed control. Most councils take an integrated approach to weed control, which includes the use of glyphosate-based products along with alternative methods.

2. Background to its being raised

In New Zealand, the use of chemicals including glyphosate is regulated by the EPA. A 2016 EPA review concluded that glyphosate is unlikely to be genotoxic or carcinogenic to humans and does not require classification under the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996 as a carcinogen or mutagen.

Internationally, there is controversy surrounding the use of glyphosate. In 2004 a World Health Organisation (WHO) Group (the Joint Meeting on Pesticides Residues) determined that glyphosate does not pose a cancer risk to humans. In 2015, another WHO sub-group (the International Agency for Research on Cancer) classified glyphosate as 'probably carcinogenic to humans'.

In August 2018 a California jury found Monsanto liable in a case linking the use of the company's glyphosate-based weedkillers to cancer. In March 2019, a federal jury in America ruled that use of Monsanto's glyphosate-based weedkiller was a 'substantial factor' in another user developing cancer. These cases have reinvigorated calls to ban the use of glyphosate in New Zealand and worldwide.

3. How the issue relates to objectives in the current Work Programme

LGNZ has an environmental work programme and the proposed remit is consistent with this focus on environmental issues that affect local government and local communities. The LGNZ programme does not specifically address the issue of non-chemical methods of weed control despite strong public interest.

4. What work or action on the issue has been done on it, and the outcome

At a local level, Hamilton City Council staff are currently actively looking at reducing chemical use in general and, more specifically, at alternative weed control methods. Our approach acknowledges the importance of keeping our community and staff safe and healthy. Staff are appropriately trained and required to wear the correct personal protective equipment (PPE) for the task.

Our investigation of non-chemical options has incorporated the following:

- In September 2018, we began trialling use of a steam machine for weed control. The equipment has a large carbon footprint (9 litres of fossil fuel per hour of operation) and requires more frequent application to achieve the same level of weed control.
- The use of a new mulch application machine has enabled sites to be mulched faster than traditional methods, which supresses weeds for longer.
- We have trialled longer grass-cutting heights to reduce Onehunga weed in amenity areas. This has led to a reduction in selective herbicide application.
- We are working with Kiwicare to trial alternative weed control methods in Hamilton parks. Kiwicare has a wide range of alternatives, including an organic fatty acid-based product.

Our current operating approach includes continuous review of application equipment efficiency including use of air-induced spray nozzles droplet control, which results in less spray being required.

As a result of Hamilton City Council's strategy to consider alternatives, one large herbicide sprayer was decommissioned from the council parks fleet in early 2019. This will lead to a reduction in glyphosate used.

Glyphosate is no longer used for weed control in our playground sites. It has been replaced with an organic spray alternative (this option is 30 per cent more expensive than using glyphosate).

Glyphosate use by Hamilton City Council is recorded on a dedicated webpage and a no-spray register is maintained. Residents can opt out of the council spraying programme and take responsibility themselves for weed control along property boundaries and street frontages.

5. Any existing relevant legislation, policy or practice

Hamilton City Council currently operates in compliance with national standards (New Zealand Standard 8409:2004 Code of Practice for the management of agrichemicals), the Waikato Regional Plan and Pest Management Plan and our own Herbicides Use Management Policy.

6. Outcome of any prior discussion at a Zone/Sector meeting

Most councils take an integrated approach to weed control, which includes the use of glyphosate-based products along with alternative methods. Reports this year from Christchurch, where the City Council is phasing out use of glyphosate, indicates levels of service and maintenance appearance have been an issue, along with significant cost increases when glyphosate has been significantly reduced.

7. Suggested course of action envisaged

LGNZ leads a commitment by local government to investigate and trial environmentally friendly alternatives to chemical weed control with results shared amongst member organisations.

9 Building defects claims

Remit: LGNZ calls on central government to take action as recommended by the Law Commission in its 2014 report on "Liability of Multiple Defendants" to introduce a cap on the liability of councils in New Zealand in relation to building defects claims whilst joint and several liability applies.

Proposed by: Napier City Council

Supported by: Zone Three

Background information and research

1. Nature of the issue

- In its report on joint and several liability issued in June 2014 (the Law Commission report) the Law Commission recommended that councils' liability for defective building claims should be capped. Building consent authorities in New Zealand (councils) are disproportionally affected by defective building claims.
- The Government in its response to the Law Commission report directed the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) to further analyse the value and potential impact of the Law Commission's recommendations, including capping liability of councils, and report back to their respective ministers.
- The MBIE website suggests that a Building (Liability) Amendment Bill would be consulted on in 2017 and final policy approval obtained from Cabinet. That Bill, according to the MBIE website, would be aimed to amend the Building Act 2004 to cap the liability of councils and protect consumers by introducing provisions driving greater uptake of home warranty protection. However no progress appears to have been made towards drafting or introducing this Bill into Parliament. At a recent rural and provincial local government meeting in Wellington, MBIE advised that no further action is being taken to progress any capping of council liability.
- This proposed remit is aimed to put pressure on MBIE and the Government to follow the Law Commission's recommendation to limit (ideally by capping) councils' liability in respect of defective building claims.

2. Background to its being raised

- Defective building claims are prevalent throughout New Zealand, both in large centres and small. They are not limited to "leaky building" claims. Claims which include allegations involving structural and fire defects are increasingly common, both for residential and commercial properties.
- The courts have held that councils will generally have a proportionate share of liability in defective building cases in the vicinity of 20 per cent. However, because councils are generally exposed to the full quantum of the claim, when other parties are absent (for example whereabouts unknown, deceased, company struck off) or insolvent (bankrupt or company liquidated), which is the rule, rather than the exception, the Council is left to cover the shortfall. The Law Commission report recognised that councils in New Zealand effectively act as insurers for homeowners, at the expense of ratepayers.
- Other liable parties such as developers, builders and architects can potentially reduce their exposure through insurance and wind up companies in the event of a large claim. Developers often set up a dedicated company for a particular development and then wind that company up following completion.
- Councils on the other hand can no longer access insurance for weathertightness defects (a "known risk"). They have no choice about whether to be involved in the design and construction of buildings, as they have a legislative role as building consent authorities in their districts. They make no profit from developments and cannot increase their fees to account for the level of risk. Yet they are often the main or sole solvent defendant in defective building claims (last person standing).
- The cost to ratepayers of the current joint and several liability system is significant, disproportionately so. This was recognised in the Law Commission report in 2014, but no substantive steps have been taken by central government to address the issue or implement the Law Commission's recommendation that council liability should be capped.

3. How the issue relates to objectives in the current Work Programme

The current LGNZ Work Programme for housing includes an objective of the regulatory and competitive framework of continuing advocacy to government for alternatives to current liability arrangements. Clearly this remit fits squarely within and would assist to progress that objective.

4. What work or action on the issue has been done on it, and the outcome

- The Law Commission report was a result of concerns raised primarily by LGNZ and councils around New Zealand about the effect of joint and several liability in relation to the leaky homes crisis. Prior to release of the report, LGNZ and a number of councils around New Zealand, including Auckland Council, Christchurch City Council, Hamilton City Council, Hastings District Council, Queenstown Lakes District Council, Tararua District Council, Waipa District Council staff, Wellington City Council, as well as SOLGM and BOINZ all filed submissions advocating for a change to the status quo.
- The Law Commission report, as discussed in more detail above, recommended that councils' liability be capped. It was understood from the Government's response to the Law Commission report and from MBIE (both discussed above) that this recommendation was being progressed in a meaningful way. This was further supported by MBIE's submission to the Law Commission prior to the release of the Law Commission report, in which it stated that:
    a. Provisions in the Building Amendment Act 2012 not yet in force, in particular the three new types of building consent limiting councils' liability "are likely to be brought into force within a reasonable time after the Commission completes its review of joint and several liability". MBIE stated that the Law Commission should take the impact of these changes into account in preparing its report. However, these provisions are still not in force.
    b. "The Government has instructed the Ministry to explore options for the consolidation of building consent authorities as part of the Housing Affordability agenda and ongoing reforms in the construction sector. Issues regarding the liability of a central regulator, as well as that of territorial authorities, will be fundamental concerns as consolidation options and other measures to increase productivity in the sector are explored". This does not appear to have been progressed.
- It was only in the last month or so that MBIE has now advised that the recommendation that councils' liability be capped would no longer be progressed.

7. Suggested course of action envisaged

We consider that LGNZ could form a joint working party with MBIE and the Ministry of Justice, and possibly the relevant Minister's (Jenny Salesa's) staff to explore limiting councils' liability for building defects claims, including:

- Disclosing and considering the following information (whether by way of OIA requests and/or as part of a working group):
    - MBIE documents relating to its consideration of the Law Commission report and the reasons why it is no longer progressing the capping of council liability.
    - Ministry of Justice and Minister of Building and Housing's documents relating to the Law Commission report and to proposed capping of council liability.

- MBIE and Minister of Building and Housing's documents relating to implementation of s 17 of the Building Amendment Act 2012.

- Drafting proposed amendments to the Building Act and/or a Building (Liability) Amendment Bill (this work may have been started by MBIE, so this task should await the outcome of the information gathering exercise above).
- Drafting content for a cabinet paper regarding the Law Commission's recommendation that council liability for building defect claims be capped.

10 Social housing

Remit: That LGNZ, in conjunction with central government, urgently focus on the development and implementation of a broader range of funding and financing tools in respect of community/social housing provision, than those which currently exist in the housing needs space. These should include funding to support the operation, upgrade and growth of council housing portfolios and, where a council chooses, access to Income Related Rents for eligible tenants.

Proposed by: Napier City Council, Tauranga City Council and Wellington City Council

Supported by: Zone Three

Metro Sector

Background information and research

1. Nature of the issue

Napier City Council

Social housing, especially for older citizens, is a strategic issue.

New Zealand communities are facing an extremely serious housing affordability crisis that has resulted in the country having the highest rate of homelessness in the developed world. Current policy settings are failing to adequately address the issue.

Local government is the second largest provider of social housing in New Zealand, however, since 1991, successive governments have failed to adequately recognise the contribution we have and are making. Unfortunately, existing policy actively discriminates against councils meeting local housing needs resulting in a gradual reduction in the council owned social housing stock. With Housing New Zealand focussing its attention on fast growing urban areas, social housing needs in smaller communities are not being met.

The issue is becoming more serious as baby boomers retire – the current social housing is not designed to address the needs of this cohort – a role historically provided by councils with support from central government in the form of capital grants.

The issue has already become urgent for Aotearoa New Zealand and its communities.

Tauranga City Council

The western Bay of Plenty SmartGrowth partnership (Tauranga City Council, Western Bay of Plenty District Council, Bay of Plenty Regional Council and tangata whenua), has undertaken some preliminary research into the potential for government assisted bond raising for community/social housing providers using the Federal Government experience from Australia.

It has also identified the Australian rental housing provision tax incentive opportunities that the current Labour opposition has put forward. The partnership is aware of work being undertaken by Treasury in terms of raising the debt ceilings via amendments to the Local Government (Financial Reporting and Prudence) Regulations 2014. The SmartGrowth partnership would welcome the opportunity to work further with LGNZ and others to take a more "four well-beings" focus to the housing funding and financing toolkit than currently exists. This matter is becoming critical for all of the Upper North Island growth councils and other councils such as Queenstown.

Wellington City Council

Housing is an important contributor to the wellbeing of New Zealanders, and councils support the work of the Government to continue to grow and improve social housing provision in New Zealand.

Addressing housing demand and affordability related challenges are significant issues for local government. 62 (93 per cent) of New Zealand's 67 local authorities reference some type of housing-related activity in their current Long Term Plans. As at November 2018, 60 local authorities (90 per cent) collectively own 12,881 housing units and 13 of those provide 50 per cent or more of the total social housing within their jurisdictions.

The social housing currently owned by local authorities equates to 16 per cent of the nationwide social housing stock, with the remaining 82 per cent largely owned by the Housing New Zealand Corporation (HNZC) and Community Housing Providers (CHPs). While there is variation in housing eligibility policy settings at the local level, a significant proportion of tenants housed by local authorities have a similar profile to those housed by HNZC and CHPs.

To help address housing affordability for households on the lowest incomes, central government provides the Income Related Rent Subsidy (IRRS) for those with housing need and that meet policy eligibility criteria. Eligible households generally pay 25 per cent of their income on rent, and a government subsidy is paid to the housing provider for remaining portion of rent.

Despite housing a similar group of tenants, current IRRS policy settings mean HNZC and CHPs can access the subsidy for tenants but local authorities cannot.

This has created considerable inequity in the housing system and is placing pressure on a vulnerable population group in New Zealand. Tenants who would be eligible for IRRS, but who are housed by a local authority, generally have to pay a significantly higher amount of rent. With demand for HNZC public housing and social housing provided by Community Housing Providers outstripping supply in most areas, these households have very few housing options and are unable to access the Government support they would otherwise be eligible for.

The inability to access IRRS has also contributed to housing portfolio sustainability challenges for local authorities, who cannot access the additional funding through IRRS to help maintain their housing portfolios. This challenge has led to vulnerable tenants having to be charged unaffordable levels of rent, and the decline in the overall social housing stock levels owned by local authorities. This has occurred even as social housing demand has increased and housing affordability has become a more acute challenge for more households.

2. Background to its being raised

Napier City Council

Councils provide in excess of 10,000 housing units, making it a significant provider of community housing in New Zealand. Councils began providing community housing across the country, particularly for pensioners, in the 1960's when central government encouraged them to do so through capital loan funding. In the 1980's, this occurred once again and was applied to general community housing developments. Council's rent setting formulas varied but all provided subsidised rents. While the housing stock was relatively new, the rental income maintained the homes, however, now decades on, and with housing at the end of life, significant investment is required. Income from rents has not been enough to fund renewals let alone growth to meet demand.

The Government introduced Income Related Rent subsidy (IRR) in 2000 for public housing tenants and it was later applied to registered Community Housing Providers. This mechanism allows tenants to pay an affordable rent in relation to their income, while the housing provider receives a 'top up' to the agreed market rent for each property under the scheme. In effect, housing providers receive market rent through this mechanism. Being able to generate market rental income is the most successful sustainable model for the provision of community housing. Providers receive an adequate income to cover the cost of providing housing, to fund future renewals and to raise capital for immediate asset management. Councils are excluded from receiving this subsidy, and so are their tenants.

Wellington City Council

Key objectives for councils that provide social housing generally include ensuring that their social housing tenants are well housed in quality homes, and that they pay an affordable level of rent. Balancing this objective with business sustainability continues to be a real challenge for many councils, and has contributed to some divesting their social housing portfolios. At the same time, demand for social housing has generally continued to increase and housing affordability is a more prominent issue, particularly for households on the lowest incomes.

Despite ongoing and repeated lobbying over a number of years from councils and LGNZ, and a commitment from the current government to reconsider IRRS policy settings, local authorities are still unable to access IRRS. This remit recognises the inequitable situation this has created for a significant number of vulnerable households, and the negative impact it has had on the overall supply of social housing owned by local authorities.

3. How the issue relates to objectives in the current Work Programme

Napier City Council

This remit supports LGNZ's Housing 2030 policy and programme, in particular the Social Housing and Affordable Housing workstreams. Housing 2030 is one of LGNZ's four strategic projects. This remit reinforces and supports that initiative.

LGNZ recently hosted a Social Housing workshop with both local and central government agencies to discuss the issues and opportunities and the future role councils could play in the provision of social housing. There was agreement that a partnership approach that recognises local situations with a range of options for support from government (both funding and expertise) would be most suitable.

Wellington City Council

By working with central government, local authorities, and a range of other stakeholders, the current LGNZ housing work programme seeks to establish a central local government housing partnership and improve housing outcomes. The work programme includes three key focus areas: housing supply; social and community housing; and healthy homes.

As part of the 'social and community housing' focus area, LGNZ have already signalled an intention to work with government agencies to enable local authorities to access IRRS. This remit would however provide specific mandate from member councils on this point.

4. What work or action on the issue has been done on it, and the outcome

Napier City Council

As the proposer of this remit, Napier City Council, has undertaken an S17A Review of its own provision of community housing, with further investigation underway. In addition, both at a governance and management level, we have taken part in numerous conferences, symposiums and workshops on the matter in the last two years. We lead a local Cross Sector Group – Homelessness forum and take part in the Hawke's Bay Housing Coalition. We have provided housing for our community for over five decades, supplying just under 400 retirement and low cost rental units in Napier.

Wellington City Council

Wellington City Council, along with a number of other councils and LGNZ have already made a number of formal submissions to central government regarding this issue. To date, central government has advised that no changes will be made to IRRS policy settings at this stage.

5. Suggested course of action envisaged

Napier City Council

This remit supports, as a matter of urgency, the further investigation by central government and LGNZ of the opportunities identified at the workshop and any other mechanisms that would support councils provision of community housing in New Zealand.

It is designed to strengthen LGNZ's advocacy and would provide a reason to approach the Government in the knowledge that local government as a whole is in support.

Wellington City Council

LGNZ, on behalf of member councils, would increase efforts to formally advocate for local authorities to be able to access Income Related Rent Subsidies for all eligible tenants that they house, with implementation within a two year timeframe.

11 Procurement

Remit: That LGNZ investigate the ability of the sector to collaborate in procuring open-source designs and plans for bulk infrastructure that are largely similar, with an initial approach to look at water and wastewater treatment facilities.

Proposed by: New Plymouth District Council

Supported by: Central Hawkes Bay District Council

Otorohanga District Council

South Taranaki District Council

Stratford District Council

Thames-Coromandel District Council

Waitomo District Council

Wellington City Council

Whanganui District Council

Background information and research

1. Nature of the issue

At present, every local authority in New Zealand undertakes bespoke procurement for its own infrastructure despite there being little difference in the infrastructure provided. Each local authority then receives a slightly different product that largely achieves the same outcome.

2. Background to its being raised

Local authorities often face similar challenges, albeit at different times. Local authorities often procure similar infrastructure that deal with the same inputs and outputs, but are bespoke products designed at significant cost.

A good case example, and a useful starting point, is water and wastewater treatment plants. The Government's Three Waters Reform programme received a report from Beca that identified the number of water treatment plants that are non-compliant with water standards. While not all of these plants will require replacement, some of them may do so.

The report identifies that 17 large plants (10,001+ people), 13 medium plants (5,001-10,000 people), 140 minor plants (501-5,000 people), 169 small plants (101-500 people) and 153 neighbourhood plants (25-100 people) are not compliant with standards. A similar story emerges with wastewater treatment plants.

At the same time, the sector is aware of the upcoming increase in renewals across water and wastewater treatment plants (including plants currently compliant with standards). There are a considerable number of plants coming near to the end of their useable lifespan in coming years. Often these plants have to be replaced with an entirely new plant so as to keep the existing plant operating during the replacement's construction.

While there may be some local variation, new water and wastewater treatments plants being built in the future will either be large, medium or small. The increasingly prescriptive regulatory framework will invariably reduce scope for choices and options in plant design. All plants will need to meet the same output quality standards, and will require the same treatment processes (with some minor variations to reflect any local preferences or unique circumstances).

Local authority procurement is a 'hot topic' for the Office of the Auditor-General (OAG). The OAG have signalled a forthcoming report *Procurement workforce capacity and capability in local government* that will aim to encourage greater collaboration between local authorities. Similarly, there is a strong focus on procurement within central government, including all-of-government procurement in which local authorities can choose to be involved.

Local authorities should collaborate now to procure a number of standardised open-source options for water and wastewater treatment plants for the future. These would then be available to all local authorities to use when required, rather than having to go to the market for a new design. These would be tested and implementable designs – the risk of failure would be lower than a bespoke design. The processes used would need to be customisable (such as whether drinking water is fluoridated, or to address particular issues in incoming water). Scalability would, of course, be critical. Council procurement would be limited to build-only contracts.

A collaborative procurement process for standardised designs could lead to significant cost savings. Even a small saving of one or two per cent would result in millions of dollars of savings across the sector. Over time, there would be further consequent savings, such as not having to retrain staff when transferring between authorities or even the capacity for further collaboration through shared services.

If successful, the sector would be well-placed to look at other areas where collaborative procurement processes for standardised designs would be useful. These could include solid waste resource recovery and separation facilities, roading assets, or other significant assets.

3. How the issue relates to objectives in the current Work Programme

LGNZ has placed significant time and energy into the Three Water Reform programme. LGNZ's position paper on these reforms notes strong support for improving the regulatory framework for drinking water. LGNZ oppose the mandatory aggregation of water assets.

This remit will also contribute to the LGNZ strategic policy priorities: Infrastructure; Risk and Resilience; Environmental; and Economic Development.

4. Any existing relevant legislation, policy or practice

The Three Waters Reforms are likely to result in significant legislative reform that impacts on water and wastewater treatment plants.

12 Single use polystyrene

Remit: That LGNZ advocates to the Government to phase out single use polystyrene.

Proposed by: Palmerston North City Council

Supported by: Metro Sector

Background information and research

1. Nature of the issue

Expanded polystyrene is bulky and does not break down. While some technologies exist to reduce the bulk of polystyrene prior to landfill, or to recycle it (for example, to make insulation material), these interventions offer only a partial solution to the prevalence of polystyrene. Single-use polystyrene (such as used in food containers) has further contamination issues, meaning that landfill remains the only means of disposal.

Palmerston North City Council's own Waste Management and Minimisation Bylaw 2016 prohibits the use of polystyrene or styrofoam containers or cups at events held on council land or with council funding. This has encouraged the use of more sustainable substitutes. However, while the council can control, to some small extent, the use of polystyrene and its disposal (for example, by refusing to collect it), in practice its influence is limited. This is because most of the supply of polystyrene originates outside of the city, and the Council has limited ability to ensure it doesn't end up in the waste stream (for example, it can be inside rubbish bags).

2. Background to it being raised

Under section 23(1)(b) of the Waste Minimisation Act 2008, the Government is empowered to ban or regulate certain problematic or wasteful products. This provision is currently being used to phase out single-use plastic shopping bags.

This remit proposal meets both LGNZ remit policy criteria. As with single-use plastic bags, the national regulation of single-use polystyrene products would be more effective in beginning to address their use in the first place, rather than being addressed (as at present) as a city-level waste issue.

Single-use polystyrene contributes significantly to landfill in New Zealand, and it is the view of the Palmerston North City Council that a nationwide ban would reduce the environmental impact of these products.

13 Local Government Act 2002

Remit: That LGNZ pursue an amendment to the Local Government Act 2002 to:

a. Re-number sub-sections 181 (5) and (6) to sub-sections (6) and (7); and

b. Introduce a new sub-section (5) to read: For all purposes the term "any work" in subsection 4 means any works constructed before xx Month 20xx; and includes any works that were wholly or partly in existence, or work on the construction of which commenced, before xx Month 20xx.

Proposed by: Rangitikei District Council

Supported by: Zone Three

Background information and research

1. Nature of the issue

Historic assumptions that there is statutory authority for the siting of Three Waters infrastructure on private land do not reflect the complete picture.

Questions arise:

- May an infrastructure asset owner notify further works on private land where the original works are not protected by written consent (or notification)?
- Does an infrastructure asset owner have authority to restrict a landowner's ability to build over a non-protected asset?
- What is the potential cost to infrastructure asset owners to remedy the absence of enforceable authority?

2. Background to its being raised

An example in the Rangitikei – Hunterville urban and rural water schemes

a. The rural scheme was constructed in the 1970's (government grant involved).

b. Construction was a collective project (county and scheme users).

c. The urban supply draws bulk (raw) water from the rural scheme.

d. Infrastructure is sited on numerous private landholdings.

e. Conscious decision that landowner consents not required (relied on "the Act").

f. Urban supply treatment, storage, reticulation sited on one member's land.

g. Land has changed hands (twice) since urban supply infrastructure developed.

h. Current owners seek renegotiation of access rights as well as compensation.

i. Council and owners negotiating (little progress after seven years).

j. Substantial costs to survey and register easement.

The issue is not unique to Rangitikei

a. Several local authorities from Waikato and Bay of Plenty to Otago have emailed to comment. All record similar experiences to Rangitikei's, both historic and ongoing'. One noted that such incidents arise, on average, monthly.

b. All comments received have noted frustration at the potential costs to formalise previously 'casual' but cordial and workable arrangements with prior landowners.

The power to construct is constrained

- Local Government Act (2002) sections 181 (1) and (2) empower a local authority to construct Three Waters works on private land.
- Section 181 (3) specifies the local authority must not exercise the power to construct unless it has the prior written consent of the landowner (or it has followed the prescribed notification process).
- Similar provisions that existed in previous legislation were repealed by the 2002 Act.

Effect of the law

- The Act provides power to construct; it is the owner consent (or notification process) that provides the authority to enter private land to exercise its power to construct.
- A local authority cannot claim absolute right of access without evidence of owner consent or compliance with the notification requirements.
- The High Court considered the need for fresh consent from, or notice to, subsequent owners (Re Watercare Services Ltd [2018] NZHC 294 [1 March 2018]).

Other infrastructure owners

- The Electricity Act 1992, the Gas Act 1992, and the Telecommunications Act 2001 all provide retrospective authority for siting of infrastructure on private land.
- No record has been found of the rationale behind those retrospective authorities.
- The thread of these authorities could be brought into the Local Government Act.

3. How the issue relates to objectives in the current Work Programme

- Local Government Act (2002) section 181 (4) authorises entry to any work constructed under the Act or the corresponding provisions of a prior Act.
- The effect of the Court's (Watercare) Declaration is to confirm that a local authority must have evidence of prior written consent (or notification) for the original works on that land.

14 Campground regulations

Remit: That LGNZ request the Government to amend the Camping - Ground Regulations to allow councils to approve remote camp facilities on private property, subject to any such conditions as deemed required by a council, including the condition that any approved campground is x distance away from an existing campground, unless the existing campground operator agrees to waive this condition in writing.

Proposed by: Thames-Coromandel District Council

Supported by: Dunedin City Council

Waikato District Council

New Plymouth District Council

Mackenzie District Council

Hamilton City Council

Background information and research

1. Nature of the issue

Currently the 'remote camp site' definition means a camping ground: 'in a national park, state forest, state forest park or public reserve or on Crown Land.' As the provision is only for public land there is no opportunity to provide such an experience on private property.

2. Background to its being raised

Ratepayers, through their council, are having to provide areas for camping for increasing numbers of what are being called "freedom campers", with associated increasing costs to ratepayers and community both regarding environmental and financial considerations.

Unfortunately for councils there is nothing for free, and to provide any public facilities there is a range of costs to provide and maintain the facilities including power, water, waste collection, maintenance, cleaning, and compliance monitoring and enforcement etc. Those costs are increasing.

Enforcement for compliance is increasingly problematic and costly and in addition, social media is sending the wrong messages for our communities who must contend with freedom campers in their area. The result is that prime beach front sites are being degraded through overuse, and abuse of sites available.

While reserve areas can be either managed or leased for a remote camp facility, councils are constrained by the lack of public land where a remote site can be established, particularly in more remote locations. Remote camps have far fewer regulatory requirements than usual campgrounds.

3. How the issue relates to objectives in the current Work Programme

There is work underway regarding freedom camping in New Zealand which is looking at a range of issues in relation to freedom camping.

The Responsible Camping Working Group comprises central and local government representatives, as well as other interested parties, and is currently looking at a number of matters, including the Camping Ground Regulations. A review of the Regulations was one of the recommendations of the Working Group and work is underway specifically on this.

4. Any existing relevant legislation, policy or practice

The remit seeks an amendment of the Camping - Ground Regulations to broaden the definition of remote camp site to allow councils to authorise remote camp sites on private land, taking into account distance from existing campground facilities. A new definition would enable sites to be established where, for a modest fee, an operator would be able to provide basic facilities and recover some of the cost of provision and maintenance.

In addition the 2016 annual general meeting agreed to ask the Government to change to s14(3) of the Camping Ground Regulations 1985 (made under s120B of the Health Act 1956) to allow broader exemptions to the need for provision of camping facilities for those that wish to freedom camp in all areas and not just at “remote” camps; this is yet to be actioned but is being considered by the joint officials body.

5. Suggested course of action envisaged

Amend the Campground Regulations definition for remote sites to allow councils to authorise remote camps on private land taking into account distance from existing campground facilities.

By providing sites where a modest fee is required, the operator provides the basic facilities at no cost to ratepayers or the environment.

15 Living Wage

Remit: Wellington City Council asks that LGNZ members consider engaging with the Living Wage Aotearoa New Zealand Movement when developing policies on payment of the Living Wage.

Proposed by: Wellington City Council

Supported by: Metro Sector

Background information and research

1. Nature of the issue

According to the Living Wage Movement Aotearoa New Zealand, "Over the last 30 years New Zealand has gone from one of the most equal countries in the developed world to one of the most unequal. Wages have stagnated while New Zealanders are working harder and longer than ever before. Growing poverty and inequality hurts us all; workers and their families, employers, business, the Government and society as a whole."

The Living Wage Movement Aotearoa New Zealand was formed in 2012 to generate a conversation about working poverty in Aotearoa. It brings together community, union and faith based groups to campaign for a Living Wage.

The Living Wage is defined as: "The income necessary to provide workers and their families with the basic necessities of life. A living wage will enable workers to live with dignity and to participate as active citizens in society". The Living Wage is an independently researched hourly rate based on the actual cost of living and is reviewed annually. The official 2019 New Zealand Living Wage is $21.15 and will come into effect on 1 September 2019.

Research from around the world shows that paying a Living Wage brings benefits to employers, to the community and most importantly to workers who need it the most.

2. Background to its being raised

The Living Wage Movement Aotearoa New Zealand has an accreditation system available to employers who meet the criteria to become a Living Wage Employer. In order to use this trade mark, employers must sign a license committing the organisation to paying no less than the Living Wage to directly employees and contracted workers, delivering services on a regular and ongoing basis.

This remit recognises that a number of local authorities across New Zealand are currently taking steps towards becoming Living Wage councils.

3. How the issue relates to objectives in the current Work Programme

LGNZ is committed to working alongside central government and iwi to address social issues in New Zealand's communities, including disparity between social groups.

4. What work or action on the issue has been done on it, and the outcome

In September 2018, Wellington City Council became the first council in New Zealand to be accredited as a Living Wage Employer. This was the culmination of implementing a Living Wage and working with the Living Wage Movement Aotearoa New Zealand since 2013, in summary:

- Following a decision in 2013, from January 2014 the Council implemented a minimum wage rate of $18.40 for all fully trained directly employed staff.
- On 1 July 2014, WCC implemented its decision to introduce the Living Wage (at $18.40 per hour) for council and Council Controlled Organisation (CCO) staff.
- On 15 May 2015, the Council's Governance, Finance and Planning Committee passed a resolution to increase the $18.40 rate to reflect annual inflation movement.
- On 28 October 2015, WCC extended the living wage (at $18.55 per hour) to security and core cleaning contractors.
- In July 2017, the Council implemented the New Zealand Living Wage ($20.20 at the time) for staff, CCOs and core contractors as they come up for renewal.
- In September 2018, WCC was accredited as a Living Wage employer.

5. Suggested course of action envisaged

Member councils who are developing policies on payment of the Living Wage will consider engaging with the Living Wage Movement Aotearoa New Zealand to understand the criteria for becoming a Living Wage accredited employer.

16 Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act

Remit:	LGNZ, on behalf of its member councils ask for a review of the effectiveness of the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012 in reducing alcohol harm (eg price, advertising, purchase age and availability) and fully involve local government in that review.
Proposed by:	Wellington City Council and Hastings District Council
Supported by:	Metro Sector

Background information and research

1. Nature of the issue

Wellington City Council

The Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act was introduced in 2012 and has not as yet been reviewed.

There is now considerable experience in how it is working in practice and it is timely that a review is undertaken to ensure it is meeting the outcomes that were sought when it was introduced and that any anomalies that have emerged from regulation under the Act are addressed.

Addressing anomalies: an example of such an anomaly that has become apparent is the definition of 'grocery store' in the Act, where a business is only a grocery store if its largest single sales group (by turnover) is a specified type of food/groceries. In hearings the focus is often more on the accounting statements of an applicant, rather than about alcohol effects.

An established operator for whom the highest turnover item was topping up Snapper cards ahead of groceries applied for a renewal of their licence. The Act requires the District Licensing Committee (DLC) to use turnover as the measure to define the type of business and there is no discretion allowed to the DLC. In effect the DLC had the choice of declining the liquor licence or saying they could only retain their liquor licence by stopping Snapper top ups. They were not a grocery store by definition as Snapper card top ups was the highest turnover item. The obvious decision was to stop the Snapper top ups, to meet the "grocery store" definition, and retain the liquor licence. The overall outcome of considering the safe and responsible sale, supply and consumption of alcohol; and the minimisation of harm was not achieved.

This is one of a range of issues. The District Licensing Committees all report each year to the Alcohol Regulatory and Licensing Authority. This addresses the issues of the operation of the Act. After five years this now provides a considerable base of information that can be used in a wider review to improve the effectiveness of the Act.

Better regulation: The current regulations are tightly prescribed (eg setting maximum penalties or fees), leave little flexibility for local circumstances and have not been reviewed. The process of establishing local alcohol policies has also not been effective.

The Council developed a Provisional Local Alcohol Policy which was notified on January 21, 2014. Appeals were lodged by eight parties which were heard by the Authority over eight days between 20 October and 5 November 2014. The Authority released its decision on 20 January 2015 which asked the Council to reconsider elements of its PLAP. In 2016, the Council resolved that it should not at that time resubmit the PLAP to the Authority, and should instead continue to monitor alcohol-related data in Wellington, work with key stakeholders, and consider future Alcohol Regulatory and Licensing Authority (ARLA) decisions on other PLAP appeals prior to determining if the Council requires a local alcohol policy.

This experience is not uncommon and it has been difficult to establish a comprehensive Local Alcohol Policy which was a key building block of the regulatory framework. As at November 2018 while 34 of the 67 territorial authorities have an adopted LAP, this only covers 28 per cent of the New Zealand population. The majority of New Zealand communities have not been able to achieve the level of community input that was envisaged under the Act. This process needs to be reviewed in light of the experience of how the Act is operating in practice.

2. Background to its being raised

Wellington City Council

This remit recognises that almost all local authorities across New Zealand are currently managing this issue through the licensing powers under the Act. They can bring practical experience of the operation of the Act and help enable communities to benefit from a review of the provisions of the Act.

Hastings District Council

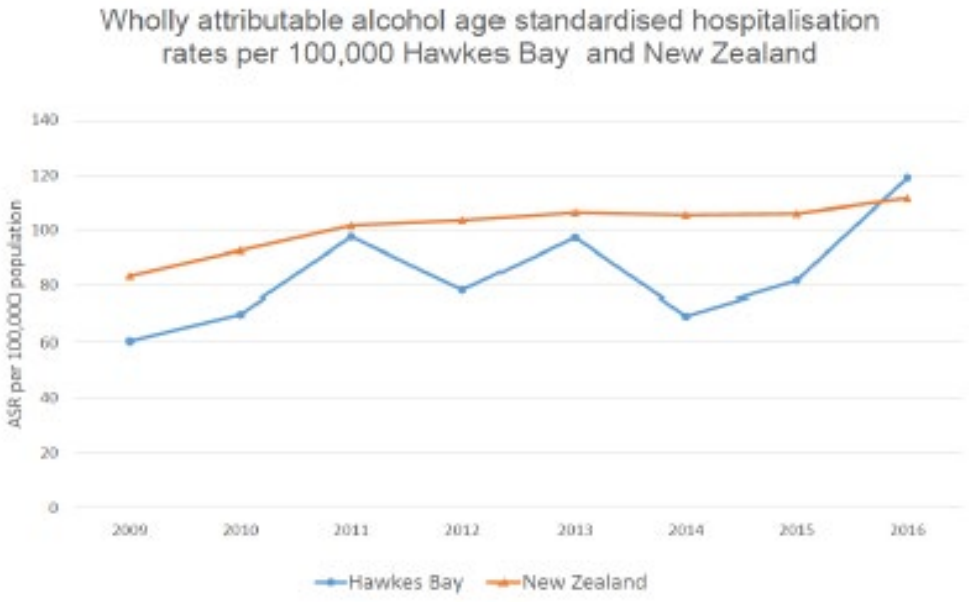
Hawke's Bay faces significant social challenges as demonstrated in the following statistics:

- 25 per cent of Hawke's Bay 0-4 year olds live in a household receiving a main benefit (compared with 18 per cent nationally).
- 40 per cent of Hawke's Bay tamariki Maori aged 0-4 years live in a household receiving a main benefit.
- 250 Hawke's Bay children are in the care of Oranga Tamariki.
- Hawke's Bay rates of violent crime continues to be higher that the New Zealand average and is twice the rate of New Zealand as a whole.
- There were 9,932 family violence investigations by the Eastern Police District in 2017.

- Suicide;
    - Is a major cause of premature, avoidable death in Hawke's Bay.
    - From 2010 to 2015, suicide was the second highest reason for premature death for those aged 0 to 74 years.
    - Since 1 July 2018, 29 people have committed suicide in Hawke's Bay.
- Drugs;
    - Synthetic substances are a serious concern for many whanau.
    - Fewer youth are smoking but more Hawke's Bay adults smoke than nationally.

A contributing factor of these negative statistics is the significant problem that the Hawke's Bay community has with alcohol consumption. For our region the issues manifested by alcohol consumption are a problem across the whole community including for young newly-born babies, infants and children, young people, adults and seniors across the generations. Local alcohol statistics are alarming and include:

- 29 per cent of Hawke's Bay adults drink at harmful levels compared to 21 per cent nationally, and this rate is increasing over time.
- 41 per cent of young people aged 15-24 are drinking hazardously.
- Over half of young men are drinking hazardously.
- The number of 15 years and older hospitalisations wholly attributable to alcohol; see the below graph. Note, there is an increasing rate of people being admitted to hospital due to alcohol.



- Alcohol intoxication or a history of alcohol abuse are often associated with youth suicide.

The statistics relating to our alcohol harm impact negatively on other key community safety concerns including health issues; death and injury; violence; suicide; assault and anti-social behaviours. This is why addressing the harm of alcohol is such an important issue for our community to address.

The harm that alcohol causes across New Zealand is also a significant issue for the country and as with Hawke's Bay the harm that alcohol causes within the community is pervasive. National statistics include:

- About four in five (79 per cent) of adults aged 15 years or more drank alcohol in the past year (in 2017/18).
- 21 per cent of New Zealand adults drink at harmful levels.
- In 2017/18, 25 per cent of adults aged 15 years or more who drank alcohol in the past year has a potentially hazardous drinking pattern, with men (32 per cent) more likely to drink hazardously than women (17 per cent).

At a local level there are some tools available to territorial authorities and their respective communities to combat alcohol harm. For example, Local Alcohol Policies (LAPs) are permitted in accordance with the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012. Unfortunately for many LAPs there are significant delays in these becoming operational due to long appeal processes.

There are typically commercial implications for businesses particularly supermarkets and these often result in appeals being lodged. Appeal processes have not allowed for more local input and influence by community members and groups, but have instead allowed larger companies, with more money and resources, to force councils to amend their LAP's reducing the potential impact on harm minimisation.

Of course, local tools available to territorial authorities are also limited by what is permitted within our national laws. We consider that current statutes and their content are not strong enough and need to be strengthened so that alcohol harm within our communities can be more effectively addressed.

The most significant drivers of alcohol-related harm include:

- The low price of alcohol.
- Levels of physical availability.
- Alcohol advertising; promotion and sponsorship.
- The minimum legal purchase age (18).

Therefore this remit seeks a focus on effective national level strategies and interventions that prevent or minimise alcohol-related harm in regards to:

- Pricing and taxing (minimum unit pricing for alcohol).
- Regulating the physical availability.
- Raising the purchase age.
- Restrictions on marketing, advertising and sponsorship.
- Drink driving countermeasures.
- Treatment and early intervention services.

We consider that significant changes in national policy and law that address key issues pertaining to alcohol harm are needed to create significant impact on reducing the harm that alcohol causes both in Hawke's Bay and New Zealand.

3. How the issue relates to objectives in the current Work Programme

Wellington City Council

LGNZ has a priority to work, in partnership with central government, for local areas to develop innovative and place-based approaches for dealing with social issues. While the operation of the Act is not directly listed as one of the social issues covered by the current work programme, the intent of the Act was to allow place-based approaches to the management of alcohol related harm.

Hastings District Council

This remit links to the social policy priority; community safety. Integrate policy positions from *Mobilising the Regions* including: integrated transport planning and decision-making models into the above.

4. What work or action on the issue has been done on it, and the outcome

Wellington City Council

We are actively involved. The Council was proactive in initiating the development of a Local Alcohol Policy. We administer licencing functions under the Act and the DLC reports each year to the Alcohol Regulatory and Licensing Authority on its functions.

We have not directly progressed work on a review at this point as it requires central government leadership with the input of local authorities across New Zealand.

Hastings District Council

The Napier City and Hastings District Councils have a Joint Alcohol Strategy 2017-2022 (JAS) and have started to implement the JAS Action Plan with support from the JAS Reference Group (local stakeholder organisations that also contribute to this strategy). Some actions completed thus far include:

- Removal of alcohol advertising on bus shelters in Hastings and Napier;
- Funding obtained to identify and develop youth-driven alcohol harm prevention projects;
- Creation and distribution of an alcohol network newsletter (bi-monthly) to make the licensing process more accessible to the community;
- A move to notifying liquor licence applications online; and
- Funding obtained to create brand and resources for alcohol free events and alcohol free zones.

Hastings District and Napier City Councils have completed a Provisional Local Alcohol Policy that was notified in July 2016. The Provisional Local Alcohol Policy has been before ARLA as a result of appeals. A position has been negotiated with the appellants. That position has been considered by ARLA and will be notified to the original submitters once ARLA is satisfied with the final wording. If no one seeks to appeal the revised version it will become the adopted Local Alcohol Policy.

5. Suggested course of action envisaged

Wellington City Council

That LGNZ would, on behalf of its member councils, form a working group to work with central agencies to review the effectiveness of the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012.

Hastings District Council

- Actively monitor opportunities to submit to central government with respect to review of statutes and regulations that relate to alcohol.
- Prepare submissions to central government review processes that relate to the key drivers of alcohol harm as outlined in this remit.
- Write to and meet with the Minister of Justice and officials to promote changes to laws and regulations that will address the key drivers of alcohol harm.
- Create a national action plan to reduce harm caused by alcohol.
- Engage and support councils nationwide to implement strategies, policies and actions that are aimed at reducing alcohol-related harm. This could include delivering workshops; providing statistics and information on the harm alcohol causes and developing templates for policies and strategies that can be easily implemented.

17 Greenhouse gases

Remit: Wellington City Council asks that LGNZ members collectively adopt the position that government should revise the Resource Management Act 1991 to adequately consider the impact of greenhouse gases when making decisions under that law and to ensure that the Resource Management Act 1991 is consistent with the Zero Carbon Bill.

Proposed by: Wellington City Council

Supported by: Metro Sector

Background information and research

1. Nature of the issue

The purpose of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) is to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources.

The Act seeks to enable people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural well-being and for their health and safety while:

- Sustaining the potential of natural and physical resources (excluding minerals) to meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations;
- Safeguarding the life-supporting capacity of air, water, soil, and ecosystems; and
- Avoiding, remedying, or mitigating any adverse effects of activities on the environment.

Under the RMA, most decisions are decentralised to local and regional levels to enables public participation in decision-making.

The emissions trading scheme is a national framework. Because of this, there is a disconnection between decisions taken under the RMA and the emission of greenhouse gases. Emissions are not consistently contemplated when decisions are taken; there appears to be a gap, however the Council currently doesn't have a formal position on this.

2. Background to its being raised

Wellington is proposing a substantial change in urban form and transportation in order to accommodate anticipated growth and to meet community expectations around carbon emissions. Planning for this growth has highlighted the regulatory gap described above.

3. How the issue relates to objectives in the current Work Programme

In planning for growth the Council is setting out to develop a future Wellington that is low carbon and resilient. Decisions will be taken under the RMA, yet the need to reduce carbon emissions is not currently a requirement under our key planning legislation.

4. What work or action on the issue has been done on it, and the outcome

The Council has developed a draft plan, Te Atakura – First to Zero, that would establish the Council's advocacy position in favour of significantly boosted consideration of emissions in the RMA. This draft was released for consultation on 15 April 2019 and is to be considered for adoption on 22 June 2019.

5. Suggested course of action envisaged

The Minister for the Environment is aware of the gap, and has publicly stated:

"The Government intends to undertake a comprehensive review of the resource management system (Stage 2), which is expected to begin this year."

"Cabinet has already noted my intention to consider RMA changes relating to climate change (both mitigation and adaptation) within the scope of this review."

Local government will have an opportunity to advocate for the inclusion of climate change effects through this process.

This remit asks councils to work together in engaging with government to amend the RMA to require decision makers to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

18 Climate Change – funding policy framework

Remit: That LGNZ recommends to government that they establish an independent expert group to develop a new policy framework for adapting to climate change impacts as recommended by the Climate Change Adaptation Technical Working Group (CCATWG). This new expert group would be supported by a secretariat and stakeholder advisory group. [updated 29 May 2019]

Proposed by: Greater Wellington Regional Council

Supported by: Regional Sector

Background information and research

1. Nature of the issue

New Zealand will need a new policy framework to enable effective, efficient and equitable long-term adaptation to the many challenges posed by climate change. Any such framework must be comprehensive, fit for purpose, and facilitate flexible and dynamic responses.

While there is broad agreement that the current policy framework for climate change adaptation, and especially sea level rise, is inadequate, there has been little attention given to securing a consensus among the stakeholders on the core features of a new framework.

Some small initiatives have been taken by a few local councils and academics towards the formulation of a new framework.

There are a large number of separate, yet interconnected issues that require investigation in parallel or in sequence. It is very likely to take several years to formulate a new, well-designed policy framework, followed by the drafting and enactment of legislative reforms, before the process of implementation can begin. Given the amount of work that is involved and that climate change impacts are already making themselves felt, it is important that this process is started without further delay.

2. Background to its being raised

Sea level rise constitutes a particularly serious challenge due to irreversibility of the near-term impacts. Already many low-lying coastal communities around New Zealand are facing a growing threat to their homes and livelihoods, public infrastructure and private businesses. This and other impacts on human and natural systems related to more intense rainfall, heat, wind, and pathogens and disease vectors, will increase and become disruptive. They will increase the financial burden on the state at all levels and create inequities across society.

For further discussion of the issues and options for developing a new policy framework, from which the proposed remit was derived, see the discussion paper by Jonathan Boston (VUW) and Judy Lawrence (VUW), dated 4 February 2019.

3. What work or action on the issue has been done on it, and the outcome

A recent report by LGNZ found an estimated $14 billion of local government assets are at risk from climate change impacts. It has called on central government to create a 'National Climate Change Adaptation Fund'. It has also recently published a legal opinion by Jack Hodder QC regarding the potential for local government to be litigated in relation to its actions or inaction in relation to climate change. A key risk raised by Mr Hodder's report was the absence of national climate change adaptation guidance (or framework) in New Zealand, which in effect is leaving it to the courts to decide how to remedy climate change related harms. This will be an uncertain and inefficient means of doing so.

The Government has received the recommendations of the CCATWG, but is yet to act upon them. The CCATWG recommendation to the Government (quoted below) was to set up a specialist group to define funding arrangements for funding adaptation.

"We recommend that a specialist group of practitioners and experts undertake this action (formulate a new policy framework for adaptation funding). These should be drawn from central and local government, iwi/hapū, sectors such as banking, insurance, and infrastructure; and have expertise in climate change, planning and law, public finance, capital markets, infrastructure financing, and risk management. The group should be serviced by a secretariat with officials across relevant public sector and local government agencies and include significant public engagement."

4. Suggested course of action envisaged

That LGNZ issue a news release explaining the content of the remit, and that they engage with central government directly (in face to face meetings) to discuss the setting up of an independent expert group to progress the development of a new policy framework for adapting to climate change impacts.

19 Road safety

Remit:

1. That LGNZ acknowledges that the New Zealand Transport Agency's (NZTA's), Code of Practice for Temporary Traffic Management (CoPTTM) is a comprehensive and robust document, and that NZTA ensures the CoPTTM system is regularly reviewed, refined and updated. However, in light of the recent road worker fatalities LGNZ requests NZTA, in partnership with Road Controlling Authorities (RCAs);
    a. Review afresh its Code of Practice for Temporary Traffic Management (CoPTTM} to satisfy themselves that;
        i. The document provides sufficient guidelines and procedures to ensure approaching traffic are given every possible opportunity to become aware of the worksite ahead and to respond appropriately and in a timely manner.
    b. Review its CoPTTM Training System to ensure;
        i. Trainers are sufficiently qualified and adequately covering the training syllabus.
        ii. Site Traffic Management Supervisors (STMS's) and Traffic Controllers (TC's) are only certified when they can demonstrate competence in the application of CoPTTM.
        ii. A robust refresher programme is in place to ensure those in charge of Traffic Management on worksites remain current in the required competencies.
    c. Review its Site Auditing requirements to ensure the traffic management at worksites is independently audited at a sufficient frequency to ensure compliance, and that a significantly robust system is put in place to enable enforcement of compliance.
2. That LGNZ takes steps to remind its members of their duties with respect to their role as Road Controlling Authorities including;
    a. Appointing and sufficiently training and resourcing a Traffic Management Co-ordinator to ensure their obligations under the Health and Safety Work Act 2015, with respect to traffic management, are being met.
    b. Adequately resourcing and undertaking audits of road work sites to ensure compliance with CoPTTM.

Proposed by: Whakatāne District Council

Supported by: Dunedin City Council

Wairoa District Council

Hamilton City Council

Kawerau District Council

Tauranga City Council

Background information and research

1. Nature of the issue

Four road workers have been killed on New Zealand roads this calendar year, and we need to ask ourselves, are we doing all that we can to ensure those working on our roads are safe from harm.

There is an increasing level of public discontent with the level of discipline around traffic management being maintained on roadwork sites by contractors, particularly on unattended sites, where all too often the temporary traffic management on site does not seem appropriate, or to adequately inform motorists of the need for the restrictions, or is left in place for too long.

2. Background to its being raised

Frameworks for the safe management of roadworks have been in place for over two decades now, and during this time they have evolved and improved to keep up with the changing risks in the workplace environment.

The current framework is the New Zealand Transport Agency's Code of Practice for Temporary Traffic Management, fourth edition 2018 (CoPTTM).

This is a comprehensive document that applies a risk based approach to temporary traffic management, based on a road's classification and intensity of use, and the nature of works required to be undertaken on the road.

It is closely aligned to the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, recognising the statutory duty of all those involved with activities on or adjacent to the road, to systematically identify any hazards, and if a hazard is identified, to take all reasonably practical steps to ensure no person is harmed.

It includes steps to eliminate risks to health and safety and if it is not reasonably practicable, to minimise risks to health and safety by implementing risk control measures in accordance with Health and Safety at Work (General risk and Workplace Management) Regulations 2015.

CoPTTM also includes a risk matrix to help determine what the appropriate temporary speed limit is that should be applied to a worksite, whether attended or unattended. It further contains procedures for undertaking safety audits and reviews of worksites, including the ability to close down worksites that are identified as unsafe following an audit. There are no financial penalties for non-compliance, although there are a range of other penalties that can be imposed, including the issue of a notice of non-conformance to individuals or companies, and a 'three strikes' system whereby the issue of three non-conformances within a 12 month period results in sanctions being imposed. These can include:

- Removal of any prequalification status.
- Reduction of quality scores assigned in tender evaluations.
- Forwarding of non-conformance to the appropriate standards organisation which may affect the company's 1S09000 registration.
- Denial of access to the road network for a period of time.
- Requirement for the company to have someone else provide their TTM.
- Staff retraining for CoPTTM warrants.

In principle there would seem to be sufficient processes in place to ensure that traffic management on road worksites was appropriate and adequately provided for the safety of workers on site, the general public, and passing traffic.

However, this year has seen four road workers killed whilst working on our roads.

There is also a growing level of discontent from motorists regarding the appropriateness of signs that are left out on unattended sites.

Often these signs are perceived to be (any combination of) unnecessary, poorly located, incorrectly advising the condition of the road ahead, having an inappropriate speed limit, or being left out too long.

3. How the issue relates to objectives in the current Work Programme

Local Government New Zealand has five policies in place to help achieve their sector vision: Local democracy powering community and national success.

Policy priority one is Infrastructure, which focuses on water, transport and built infrastructure. The transport statement states that a national policy framework is needed to achieve five outcomes. One outcome is 'a safe system, increasingly free of death and serious injury'.

This remit is aligned to this priority outcome as it is focused on reducing safety risks, death and serious injury in locations where road works are being undertaken.

4. What work or action on the issue has been done on it, and the outcome

The Whakatāne District Council has been working proactively with NZTA and its local contractors to review its own traffic management requirements, the level of compliance with those requirements, and the adequacy of its auditing processes and frequencies.

There has been positive engagement with NZTA and the local contracting sector on this matter.

The process has identified improvements that could be effected by both the Council and its contractors. A plan is being developed to socialise the outcomes with NZTA and other RCA's, and this remit forms part of that plan.

NZTA is also responding to the recent deaths by initiating immediate temporary changes to pertinent traffic management plans, and considering permanent changes through its standard CoPTTM review process.

There is currently no national initiative to require local government RCA's to review their practices in response to these deaths.

5. Suggested course of action envisaged

- Support NZTA's initiative to review CoPTTM in light of the recent fatalities.
- Encourage NZTA to work closely with RCA's to ensure the CoPTTM review also covers local road Temporary Traffic Management.
- Strongly encourage RCA's to work with NZTA, perhaps through the RCA Forum, on a review of local road Temporary Traffic Management.
- Strongly encourage RCA's to adopt with urgency, any local road CoPTTM
- Improvements that arise from the review.

20 Mobility scooter safety

Remit: That LGNZ requests that government investigate the introduction of strengthened rules to govern the safe use of mobility scooters, particularly in relation to speed limits and registration.

Proposed by: Whanganui District Council

Supported by: Zone Three

Background information and research

1. Nature of the issue

The following issues have been identified:

a. There is no opportunity to enforce a speed limit for mobility scooters, despite the fact that the top speeds of these devices can reach 40kmh.

b. Mobility scooters are used too frequently on the road, even when a suitable footpath is available.

c. There is no requirement for a mobility scooter user to have a license or any previous driving experience.

d. There are no health related restrictions on who can operate a mobility scooter.

e. There is no ability to track mobility scooters as no registration or Warrant of Fitness (WoF) is required.

A supplementary issue is also acknowledged:

- There is no restriction in terms of who can use a mobility scooter. For example, in some states of Australia mobility scooters can only be used by a person with an injury, disability or medical condition which means they are unable to walk or have difficulty walking. People who do not have difficulty walking are not permitted to use them.

2. Background to its being raised

Establishing the number of injuries and fatalities involving mobility scooter users can be difficult to isolate and this has been identified as an issue nationwide. However, coronial data shows that at least 20 people have died while using mobility scooters in New Zealand.

Given the considerable lag between a death occurring and a coronial case on that death being closed, the actual number may be significantly higher. Notably NZTA reports that: "mobility scooters… have been involved with a number of fatalities (at least 20 in 2014-2015)."

For the period 2008-2012 the Ministry of Transport recorded eight fatalities and 141 injuries of mobility scooter users. NZTA records 12 fatalities, 19 serious injuries and 81 less serious injuries for the period 2009-2014. These figures do not include fatalities or injuries to persons other than the mobility scooter user.

It has been acknowledged by those working in this field that there have been a 'surprising' number of injury crashes involving mobility scooters over the last five years, including fatalities. More work on clarifying the extent of this problem is required and there has been general agreement nationwide from the region's road safety co-ordinators, and other agencies such as NZTA and Age Concern, that mobility scooter safety is an emerging concern. This is the case throughout the country and is reiterated by both large and small centres, in urban areas and rural regions.

Some of the issues raised include:

- Mobility scooters being driven on the road, at speed, with low visibility (eg without a flag) and like a motor vehicle (as opposed to like a pedestrian as is required).
- No accountability around vulnerable elderly users, particularly those who have lost their licence. There is no established avenue to ascertain whether there are issues around dementia or other chronic conditions which could have an impact on their ability to use these safely.
- No accountability around the purchase of mobility scooters, both in terms of being fit for use and training for safe handling. This is particularly the case when they are bought off the internet, eg there is no opportunity to ensure that the right scooter has been purchased for the user's level of ability and that they are shown how to drive it according to the regulations.
- No ongoing monitoring of use, particularly in the case of declining health.
- No restrictions on the speed that mobility scooters can reach or the size of mobility scooters. With an increase in larger model mobility scooters being imported, there is less room for scooters to pass one another, or to pass other pedestrians. This leads to a greater likelihood of one or more of the footpath users needing to use the road rather than the footpath. Larger mobility scooters also require larger areas to turn. Given the size of many footpaths in New Zealand, this increases the risk that the user will enter the roadway at an angle and roll the mobility scooter, resulting in serious injury or death.

Some centres have also identified an issue with the increasing prevalence and size of mobility scooters adding load to the footpaths. Furthermore, the contrast between New Zealand Post's work on safety assurances with the use of Paxster vehicles on the footpath, and the lack of oversight over larger sized mobility scooters being used in a similar (but unmonitored) way has been drawn.

However, it is also important to note the significant role that mobility scooters play in granting senior people their independence. Any measures taken to address this remit's concerns must balance this benefit with the need to ensure safety for users and other pedestrians.

3. New or confirming existing policy

The remit would strengthen existing central government policy. However, new legislation would be required to put in place an appropriate registration programme, both for mobility scooter users and for the mobility scooters.

4. How the issue relates to objectives in the current Work Programme

Transport safety issues are not referred to specifically in the current LGNZ work programme. However, ensuring we have safe systems, increasingly free of death and serious injury and addressing the needs of an ageing population are each included under one of the five policy priorities (Infrastructure and Social, respectively).

5. What work or action on the issue has been done on it, and the outcome

This is an emerging issue and is acknowledged as such by those with an interest and involvement in road safety at both the local and regional level. Although discussions are underway about working with the Safe and Sustainable Association of Aotearoa/New Zealand (SASTA) and Trafinz on these concerns so that this can be addressed with the NZTA, it is understood that this work has not yet commenced.

The Marlborough Road Safety Mobility Scooter User Group has undertaken some useful research in this area. They have canvassed users in relation to training needs, safety, registration, injuries, facilities and the footpath network.

Although not all suggestions were supported, this survey did identify some relevant ideas and safety concerns, eg 71 per cent of respondents had seen a mobility scooter being used in an unsafe manner on the footpath or road, 19 per cent had been injured by a mobility scooter as a pedestrian and 78 per cent said that they or someone they knew has had a 'near miss'.

Some ideas raised include focusing on licensing/registering drivers rather than the mobility scooters themselves, ensuring that any registration costs were low to ensure affordability, making mobility scooters easier to hear and introducing a speed limit.

6. Any existing relevant legislation, policy or practice

NZTA has the responsibility, via government, for mobility scooters in New Zealand and has a booklet available, titled *Ready to Ride - Keeping safe on your mobility scooter.* This is based on section 11 of the Land Transport (Road Use) Rule 2004.

The following provisions exist – it is recommended that these be expanded upon and strengthened:

- Speed limits: Current New Zealand law says "A driver of a mobility device or wheeled recreational device on a footpath;
    a. Must operate the device in a careful and considerate manner; and
    b. Must not operate the device at a speed that constitutes a hazard to other footpath users."
- Road usage: Current New Zealand law says;
    a. A driver must not drive a mobility device on any portion of a roadway if it is practicable to drive on a footpath.
    b. A pedestrian or driver of a mobility device or a wheeled recreational device using the roadway must remain as near as practicable to the edge of the roadway.
- Monitoring and registration: Current New Zealand law does not require users to have a driver licence or any form of medical approval to operate a mobility scooter and no warrant of fitness or registration is needed.

Further, current law does not require the use of any personal protective equipment such as helmets, despite these devices being capable of reaching similar speeds to mopeds and higher speeds than many bicycle users travel at.

This is particularly problematic given Canadian research that showed, of their sample group of mobility scooter users, 38 per cent had hearing impairments, 34 per cent had vision impairments, 19 per cent had memory impairments and 17 per cent had balance impairments. The study also found that 80 per cent of the mobility scooter users took four or more medications daily.

The *Ready to Ride* guidelines clearly spell out that mobility scooter users could be fined if they are found to be riding their scooter: "… carelessly, inconsiderately or at a dangerous speed. The fine may be higher if you do any of these things more than once. " Furthermore, if a mobility scooter user causes a crash where someone is killed or hurt then they could be charged with "careless or inconsiderate use of a motor vehicle". This brings penalties ranging from a severe fine to a prison sentence. However, these do not provide clear definitions or rules to inform a user's decisions.

7. Suggested course of action envisaged

<u>Speed limits</u>

It is recommended that the approach taken in some Australian States, including Victoria be adopted. This states that mobility scooters: "must have a maximum capable speed of 10km per hour on level ground and a maximum unladen mass of 110kg".

Road usage

It is recommended that New Zealand Police be resourced to enforce the law. Local and regional councils throughout the country, as well as NZTA, road safety action groups and other key agencies, have highlighted serious concerns about mobility scooters riding on the road when a footpath is available, as well as riding on the road as if they are a motor vehicle.

Monitoring and registration

It is recommended that legislation is changed to require all mobility scooters to be registered and display a licence plate, with minimal or no cost imposed, to ensure compliance. It is further recommended that the legislation set a maximum power assisted speed and size for mobility scooters.

21 Museums and galleries

Remit: That central government funding be made available on an annual basis for museums and galleries operated by territorial authorities with nationally significant collections.

Proposed by: Whanganui District Council

Supported by: Zone Three

Background information and research

3. Nature of the issue

The following issues have been identified:

- There is currently no central government funding for daily operating costs for museums and galleries operated by territorial authorities.
- Public museums and galleries often house nationally significant collections and taonga but are supported largely by their local ratepayers, often from a limited funding pool.
- These facilities attract national and international visitors and service far more than the local area from which their funding is drawn.
- Local authorities are severely challenged to adequately support the annual running costs required for these key cultural facilities due to the financial impost on ratepayers.
- Support for the retention of these facilities in smaller regional centres, outside the larger cities, is important in terms of cultural accessibility and in keeping our provincial communities viable.

4. Background to its being raised

Regional museums and galleries are important to the cultural makeup of this country. They are recognised as critical hubs for communities and visitors and play a role that extends far beyond the display of images and artefacts:

- They occupy a dynamic position in our national cultural life, encouraging us to think about our place in the world.
- They stimulate discussion and debate. This enhances participation, creativity, community capacity and a sense of place.

- They generate economic activity; they are a driver of tourism and create jobs and vibrancy.
- They contribute to key aspects of our community and national cultural identity; the nature of our bicultural society and other multicultural influences means that museums and galleries will act as an increasingly important link in reflecting and understanding the diversity of our communities.
- They build social cohesion, creativity and leisure opportunities. They contribute to civic development and provide a focal point for gathering and interaction; acting as a key social destination.
- They foster enrichment. Arts and culture are 'good for you'. Having access to events and exhibitions is important, and this might be even more so in provincial centres.

Despite this, there is limited funding available, particularly for operating costs. This raises concerns about the ongoing ability of territorial authorities to:

- Provide adequate, appropriate and safe storage methods. Climate control and professional and timely care or repair of our treasures requires adequate funding to ensure the longevity of many of our special collection items (for example, paintings or heritage artefacts such as Māori cloaks).
- Deliver the right display conditions. Without the right climate control, security and display methods, the public's access to view these collections is severely limited. Instead of enhancing the visibility of, and connection to, our key collection pieces locally, nationally and internationally, this access is restricted by inadequate funds for exhibition. This is exacerbated by the limitations of funding at the local ratepayer level.
- Preserving our stories. The collections available at public museums and galleries are not only often nationally significant but also reveal important aspects of our local identity. They are an education resource (both formally through school programmes and informally) and are a drawcard for tourism. Maintaining these collections retains our storytelling abilities, supports our unique identities and contributes to economic and social development.

This is supported by the following background information:

- Some collections are over 100 years old and need specialised climate control and storage facilities. Paint, canvas, fabric and fibres have unique requirements to ensure their preservation and longevity. The cost of doing so is huge and is a burden that many local communities cannot sustain. However, despite this, they are solely responsible for this care.
- Some grants are available, on application, to deliver education programmes for school children. However, this funding is very limited and requires additional subsidisation by schools. As a result, not all children are gaining equitable access to our museums and galleries.
- Limited grants are also available, on application, for storage and building upgrades, as well as for one-off restoration projects. However, there are no regular, reliable funds available to meet the significant and necessary costs of just running these institutions.

- Currently only the Auckland War Memorial Museum and Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa receive an ongoing proportion of operating costs.

As an example, the Sarjeant Gallery in Whanganui has an annual operating budget of $2.285 million and the Whanganui Regional Museum a budget of $1.085 million. The value of their collections is $30 million across each institution, with their collections considered to be some of the best in New Zealand. Yet they are funded almost solely from the local Whanganui district ratepayer base. This is not sustainable if we are to make the most of New Zealand's nationally significant collections and ensure their preservation for the future.

An example of public museums and art galleries currently operated by territorial authorities:

Institution	Permanent collection?
Sarjeant Gallery - Whanganui	✓
Whanganui Regional Museum	✓
Auckland Art Gallery	✓
Whangarei Art Museum	✓
Te Tuhi Center for the Arts, Manukau City	x
Waikato Museum	✓
Rotorua Museum of Art & History	✓
Tauranga Art Gallery	✓
Whakatane Museum & Art Gallery	✓
Govett Brewster Gallery/Len Lye Centre – New Plymouth	✓
Percy Thompson Gallery – Stratford	x
Tairawhiti Museum – Gisborne	✓
Hawke's Bay Museum and Art Gallery – Napier	✓
Aratoi Wairarapa Museum of Art & History – Masterton	✓
City Gallery – Wellington	x
The New Dowse – Lower Hutt	✓
Millennium Art Gallery – Blenheim	✓
Suter Art Gallery – Nelson	✓
Christchurch Art Gallery	✓
Coca – Centre for Contemporary Art – Christchurch	✓
Aigantighe Art Gallery – Timaru	✓
Forrester Gallery – Oamaru	✓
Dunedin Public Art Gallery	✓
Southland Museum and Art Gallery – Invercargill	✓
Anderson Park Art Gallery – Invercargill	✓
Eastern Southland Gallery – Gore	✓

5. New or confirming existing policy

The remit would require a policy shift by central government to provide funding for operating costs based on a set of clear assessment criteria.

6. How the issue relates to objectives in the current Work Programme

The LGNZ work programme includes tourism as a focus area and addresses concerns about funding in relation to key facilities and amenities:

"Without more equitable forms of funding there is a risk that visitors will lack the appropriate range of local amenities they need to have a positive experience."

This is framed by the following statement:

"The visitor industry is now New Zealand's largest export industry however the speed of its growth is putting many of New Zealand's smaller communities under pressure. It is a problem created by the way in which councils are funded as new facilities will be paid for out of property taxes while visitor expenditure, in the form of increased GST and income tax, benefits central rather than local government."

7. What work or action on the issues has been done on it, and the outcome

Although there was work completed on a central government funding model for the 'national collection' in the 1990's (that being, the collection held by all public museums and galleries in New Zealand) this did not progress. The United Kingdom has a centrally funded system for museums and galleries.

8. Any existing relevant legislation, policy or practice

- Auckland War Memorial Museum Act 1996.
- Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa Act 1992.

9. Suggest course of action envisaged

That central government funding be made available on an annual basis for museums and galleries operated by territorial authorities with nationally significant collections.

This would be in the form of an annual allocation for operating costs based on specific criteria to ensure the maintenance, preservation and development of collections with relevance beyond the local setting. This would provide the surety of a reliable income stream and could be set to a specified limit, eg 10 per cent of annual operating costs.

Of particular interest would be those collections of national importance where the benefit of protection and enhancement would make a substantial contribution to New Zealand's creative sector as well as our national cultural identity.

Priority funding would be given to museums and galleries which hold permanent New Zealand collections, rather than being solely exhibition galleries. Funding could also be based on the size and type of collection. This recognises the added burden of storage, care and maintenance for collections of a significant size and importance.

22 Resource Management Act

Remit: That the selection of all independent commissioners for Resource Management Act hearings be centralised to improve independence and enhance the quality of decisions.

Proposed by: Whanganui District Council

Supported by: Zone Three

Background information and research

1. Nature of the issue

The following issues with the current system have been identified:

- There is potential for corruption and undue influence.
- There is limited ability for newer commissioners to obtain experience.
- There is opportunity for enhanced effectiveness and more robust decision-making.

2. Background to its being raised

The Resource Management Act (RMA) contains provisions for the appointment of independent commissioners to sit on panels to hear RMA matters, for example, resource consent applications, notices of requirement and District and Regional Plan Reviews, including plan changes (s39B).

Commissioners must be accredited to sit on RMA hearing panels and the Minister for the Environment must approve the qualification for accreditation. The certification process is called "Making Good Decisions" and is delivered on behalf of the Ministry.

The Ministry for the Environment (MfE) website sets out the areas covered by the accreditation and recertification processes and has a register of qualified commissioners.

Although this system provides opportunity, in theory, for panel composition based on a balanced range of factors to ensure impartiality and relevant breadth of experience – in practice this is not the case. Instead, selection can be influenced by:

- Paid relationships. For example, commissioners being held on retainer.
- Manipulation of focus areas. For example, panels being 'stacked' to increase the likelihood of support or sympathy for particular issues.
- Existing connections. For example, the same commissioners being selected by the same councils, leaving little room for newer certificate holders and leading to questions of true independence.

As a result, the current system is open to both real and perceived issues of fairness based on concerns about:

- The appropriateness of an ongoing financial arrangement for retained availability, as well as the ability of this relationship to really remain independent and impartial. For example, would an 'unfavourable' decision jeopardise the financial benefit for a commissioner in this position?
- A balance of experience and expertise on the panel when many of the same commissioners, with similar backgrounds (planners, lawyers, elected members) are used on a consistent basis.
- Missed opportunities to provide practical experience to a broader spread of certificate holders in a more even way (rather than the same familiar options being selected).
- The ability to achieve genuine impartiality when commissioners can be picked based on prior relationships and knowledge of their position (and therefore likely decisions) on particular issues.
- An absence of local and external collaboration on decisions – missing important opportunities to upskill lesser experienced commissioners and provide the right mix of local versus external perspectives to equally inform good decision-making.
- A lack of standardisation in fee structures throughout the country, potentially leading to 'cherry-picking' of hearings.
- Poor Māori representation on hearing panels in areas where co-management legislation does not yet apply.

There is also no process for receiving or addressing complaints about commissioner conduct.

3. New or confirming existing policy

The remit would require amendment to the RMA and the development of a centralised and independently managed appointment process to allocate commissioners in a systematic and fair manner. This would be supported by regulations which would set out the steps to be followed.

Such provisions are already contained in legislation such as the Waikato-Tainui Raupatu Claims (Waikato River) Settlement Act 2010 (s 25 and s28).

4. How the issue relates to objectives in the current Work Programme

The work programme notes that 'major reform' of the RMA is required. It does not, however, specifically relate to the recommendations of this remit.

5. What work or action on the issue has been done on it, and the outcome

No work has been undertaken specifically on this. However, the proposed model recommends use of the Victorian State Government approach: https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/panels-and-committees/panels-and-committees

In addition, the New Zealand Environment Court uses a mixed model approach, with the Judge as chair and two or more court appointed commissioners. These commissioners have a varied background (across planning, ecology, landscape architecture, civil engineering, Tikanga Māori etc) and have all completed the "LEADR" mediation programme to assist the Court in mediated resolutions of court appeals. Many have also undertaken the "Making Good Decisions" programme.

6. Suggested course of action envisaged

That the selection of all accredited commissioners for RMA hearings be centralised and independently managed by the Ministry for the Environment.

The new process could follow the Victorian State Government example. In essence this involves making an initial hearing panel application online, followed by a formal letter of request. A panel is then appointed by the Minister (or a delegate) in accordance with the specific details of the particular issue, eg the complexity of the topic, the number of submissions received or the special expertise required. This enables administrative 'filtering' to sort panellists according to their suitability across a spectrum of hearing complexities. For example, smaller and less controversial issues would be resourced differently to more difficult topics. This would also ensure a tailored mix of expertise and backgrounds – enabling greater Māori representation, a balance of newer and more experienced commissioners and a spread of local and external knowledge.

In Victoria the pool of available commissioners is managed by an 'Office of Planning Panels' acting as a conduit between panels and interested parties to "ensure an independent and transparent process is upheld".

If MfE took this on it would also be expected to manage the contracts, oversee the effectiveness of the process, receive and adjudicate on any complaints about commissioner conduct and regulate the fee structure. It would also deliver administrative support for the process (although where hearings are cost recoverable from applicants then this would be managed accordingly). MfE could also maintain the register of accredited commissioners and chairs and ensure that it remained up to date, with sufficient information provided to ensure the effective appointment of panels.

23 Mayor decision to appoint Deputy Mayor

Remit: That LGNZ request the Government to amend S.41A of the LGA2002 to give Mayors the same powers to appoint a deputy mayor as held by the Mayor of Auckland.

Proposed by: Invercargill District Council and Whanganui District Council [updated 29 May 2019]

Supported by: Provincial Sector

Background information and research

1. Nature of the issue

Since 2013 mayors have had the power to determine who their deputy mayor should be, however a mayor's choice of deputy can be overturned by a majority vote of councillors. Not only has this caused confusion the fact that councils can over turn a mayor's choice undermines the original intent of the legislation.

2. Background to its being raised

The 2012 LGA 2002 Amendment Act introduced Section 41A which recognised mayors' leadership role and gave mayors the authority to appoint their deputy as well as committee chairs. The select committee amended the original bill to provide councils with an ability to reverse a mayor's decision. Not only did that change make a nonsense of the original intent it has also undermined the credibility of the legislation in the eyes of citizens who generally expect a mayor to be able to choose who their deputy will be, given the importance of that working relationship.

3. How the issue relates to objectives in the current Work Programme

The problems mayors face with implementation of section 41A is not currently on the LGNZ work programme.

4. Any existing relevant legislation, policy or practice

The Government is re-drafting the Local Government Amendment Bill 2 which is expected to be given its second reading later this year. The Bill could provide a vehicle to amend S.41A in order to strengthen mayors' ability to appoint their deputies without the risk of that decision being reversed.

24 Beauty industry

Remit: That LGNZ calls on the Government to develop and implement national guidelines, policy or regulations to achieve national consistency for the largely unregulated 'health and beauty clinic' industry.

Proposed by: Whangarei District Council

Supported by: Selwyn District Council

Kawerau District Council

Dunedin City Council

Rangitikei District Council

Far North District Council

Background information and research

1. Nature of the issue

Over recent years, the 'health and beauty clinic' industry has seen tremendous growth and continues to expand rapidly. Unfortunately, there is no national legislation or guidance to regulate this industry.

The Health Act 1956 is currently the only legislative tool at the disposal of local authorities to deal with concerns and complaints. However, the powers under the Act are very limited, and do not relate specifically to quality and community safety.

Several councils have developed their own Bylaws to deal with the potential risks that this industry poses to its clientele, with varying degrees of success, but by large the industry remains unregulated. By contrast, national regulations to regulate the hairdressing industry have existed since the 1980's. It is considered that the 'health and beauty clinic' industry faces much higher risks and challenges.

2. Background to its being raised

Nationally, as well as locally, Environmental Health Practitioners are dealing with an ever-increasing number of complaints about this industry and the fallout from botched procedures, as well as infections. Whilst, practitioners can address some of these concerns under the Health Act 1956, it is felt that specific legislation or guidance is the only way to regulate this industry and achieve national consistency.

In the absence of national legislation, territorial authorities such as the Whangarei District Council are unable to regulate the industry, except through the development of a specific Bylaw. The development of Bylaws is an expensive and time consuming process and the cost of that process and any complaint investigation, outside the Bylaw process, falls solely on ratepayers whilst creation of Bylaws can mitigate risk at local level, they do not result in national consistency.

3. New or confirming existing policy

New policy.

4. How the issue relates to objectives in the current Work Programme

The issue aligns to the LGNZ Three Year Business Plan (2019/20 – 2021/22), that recognises quality and community safety as a key social issue, with social issues being one of the five big issues for New Zealand councils. Specifically, the commitment to "work alongside central government and iwi to address social issues and needs in our communities, including a rapidly growing and an ageing population, inequality, housing (including social housing) supply and quality and community safety."

5. What work or action on the issue has been done on it, and the outcome

Aside from some council's developing their own Bylaws, as far as the Whangarei District Council is aware, central government has no plan to develop legislation or guidance for this sector.

Notably, as New Zealand-wide complaints regarding the industry continue to rise and the serious risks associated with the industry continue to be better understood a national approach is needed to make any substantive progress on regulating the 'health and beauty clinic' industry in New Zealand.

6. Any existing relevant legislation, policy or practice

As described above, the Health Act 1956 is currently the only legislative tool at the disposal of local authorities to deal with concerns and complaints. However, the powers under the Act are very limited, and do not relate specifically to quality and community safety.

7. Suggested course of action envisaged

That LGNZ calls on the Government to develop and implement national guidelines, policy or regulations to achieve national consistency for the largely unregulated 'health and beauty clinic' industry.

It is also suggested that LGNZ engage directly with relevant ministers and ministries to ensure local government has an appropriate role in the development of nationally consistent legislation or guidelines to address the challenges the industry brings.

Remits not going to AGM

The remit Screening Committee has referred the following remits to the National Council of LGNZ for action, rather than to the Annual General Meeting for consideration. The Remit Screening Committee's role is to ensure that remits referred to the AGM are relevant, significant in nature and require agreement from the membership. In general, proposed remits that are already LGNZ policy, are already on the LGNZ work programme or technical in nature will be referred directly to the National Council for their action.

1. Earthquake strengthening – tax relief

Remit: That LGNZ lobby central government to provide tax relief for buildings owners for the compulsory earthquake strengthening of their buildings either by way of reinstating depreciation or some other tax relief for earthquake compliance costs.

Proposed by: Horowhenua District Council

Supported by: Zone Three

Recommendation: That the remit is referred to National Council for action

2. Benchmark Programme

Remit: That LGNZ investigate and implement an infrastructure delivery benchmark programme, including working with the Department of Internal Affairs to improve the Non-Financial Performance Measures Rules 2013 to be more meaningful measures of infrastructure service delivery.

Proposed by: New Plymouth District Council

Supported by: Central Hawkes Bay District Council; Otorohanga District Council; South Taranaki District Council; Stratford District Council; Thames-Coromandel District Council; Waitomo District Council; Wellington City Council; Whanganui District Council

Recommendation: That the remit is referred to the National Council for action

3. On-line voting

Remit: That LGNZ advocates to the Government for it to provide financial support for the Local Government on-line voting trial.

Proposed by: Palmerston North City Council

Supported by: Metro Sector

Recommendation: That the remit is referred to the National Council for action

4. E-waste

Remit: That LGNZ advocates to the Government to introduce a mandatory product stewardship programme for e-waste.

Proposed by: Palmerston North City Council

Supported by: Metro Sector

Recommendation: That the remit is referred to the National Council for action

5. Tourism Industry Aotearoa

Remit: That LGNZ actively consider the Tourism Industry Aotearoa Local Government Funding Model to Support Regional Tourism Growth.

Proposed by: Ruapehu District Council

Supported by: Palmerston North City Council; Horizons Regional Council: New Plymouth District Council; Rangitikei District Council; Stratford District Council

Recommendation: That the remit is referred to the National Council for action