

Submission on Nelson City Council Draft Annual Plan 2017/18

18 April 2016

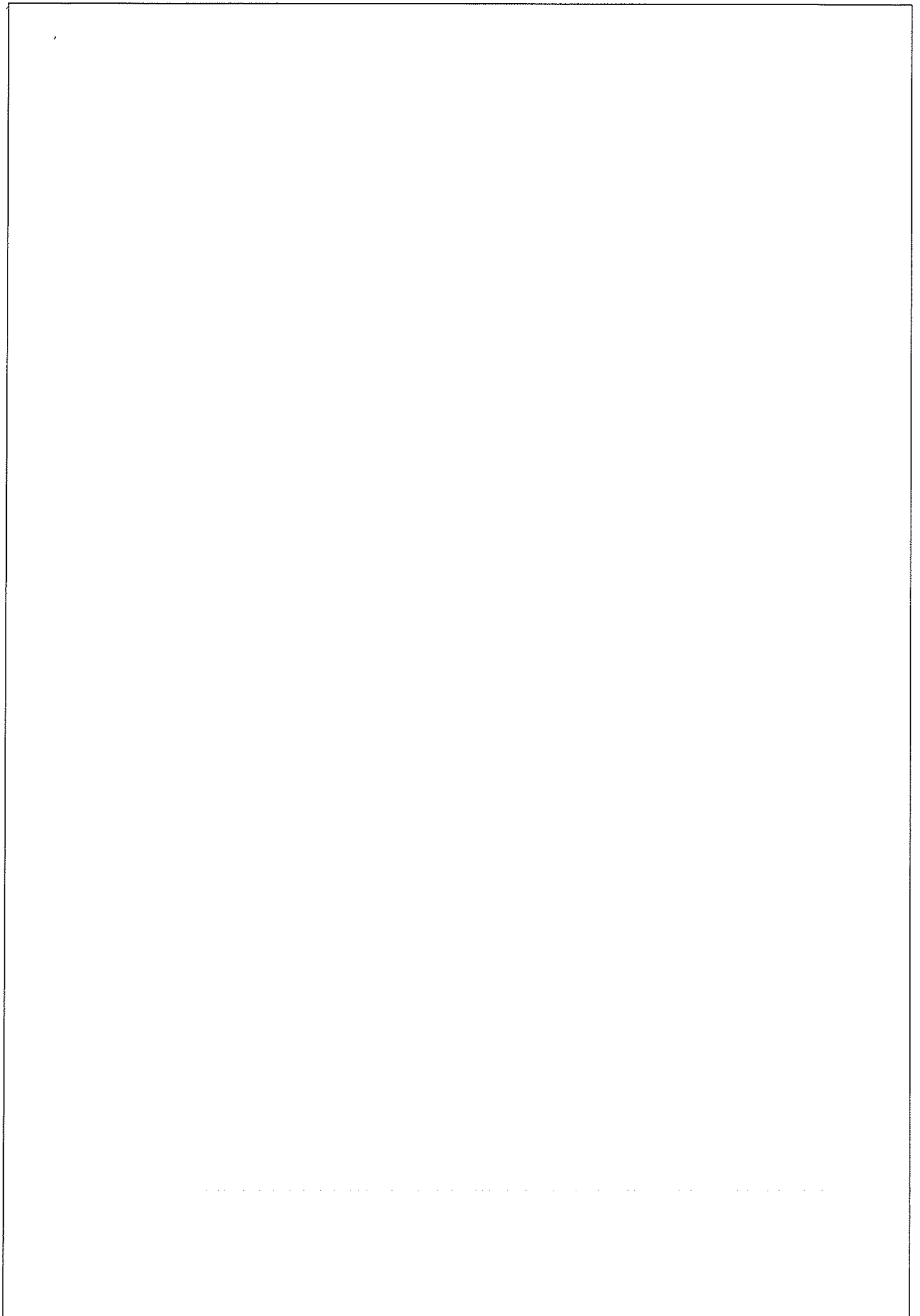
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Introduction

1. Nelson Marlborough Health (Nelson Marlborough District Health Board) (NMH) is a key organisation involved in the health and wellbeing of the people within Te Tau Ihu. NMH appreciates the opportunity to comment from a public health perspective on the Nelson City Council (NCC) Draft Annual Plan 2017/18.
2. NMH makes this submission in recognition of its responsibilities to improve, promote and protect the health of people and communities under the New Zealand Public Health and Disability Act 2000 and the Health Act 1956.
3. This submission sets out particular matters of interest and concern to NMH including around smokefree environments, healthy drink options (Tap into Water), vulnerable children, alcohol harm reduction, community resilience, transport and public safety.

Smokefree environments

4. As previously expressed through a submission on the NCC Draft Annual Plan 2016/17, NMH believes that making the CBD a smokefree environment will assist the CBD enhancement project goals of enhancing amenity values and encouraging activity, and will also improve public safety. To reiterate evidence from that submission, extending smokefree areas:
 - does not harm business^{1,2}
 - can reduce the impact of cigarette-related litter in outdoor areas, resulting in reduced cleaning costs, fire risk and environmental impacts³
 - is generally supported by the public⁴
 - reduces the risk of adverse health effects from second-hand smoke exposure, de-normalises smoking especially around children,⁴ and encourages smokers to quit.²
5. NMH notes that enhancements in Church Street have been identified as a beneficial project in the Draft Annual Plan for 2017/18. NMH understands that the project is proposed to enhance al fresco dining along Church Street and make the area more pedestrian friendly.
6. NMH continues to recommend that the streets and public spaces of Nelson's CBD are transformed into smokefree environments as part of the CBD enhancement project. NMH also recommends this to be complimented and strengthened by ensuring that all outdoor dining

¹ Loomis BR, Shafer PR, van Hasselt M. 2013. *The economic impact of smoke-free laws on restaurants and bars in 9 states*. Preventing Chronic Disease 10:120327

² World Health Organization. 2015. *Tobacco*. Fact sheet No 339. Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe

³ Cancer Society of New Zealand and Health Sponsorship Council. 2008. *Smokefree councils implementation kit: A guide for local health promoters*. Wellington: Cancer Society of New Zealand and Health Sponsorship Council

⁴ Health Promotion Agency. 2013. *Acceptability of extended smokefree areas and smokefree cars*. Wellington: Health Promotion Agency

spaces, like those proposed along Church Street, are smokefree as a condition of any licensing requirements.

Tap into Water

7. As NCC will be aware, NMH recently promoted 'Tap into Water', an initiative based on the simple yet powerful fact that water is the best drink available. This campaign successfully aided the implementation of water drinking initiatives in schools, workplaces and sports and recreation organisations, and helped reduce the consumption of junk drinks (e.g. fizzy drinks, sports drinks, flavoured milks and fruit juices).
8. NMH is continuing to build on this good work through supporting the creation of healthy drink environments. This includes encouraging schools and sports organisations to join the Sweet Enough Water Only programme and adopt water and plain milk only guidelines.
9. While NMH commends NCC on being a frontrunner in adopting a Sugar Sweetened Beverages Policy, NMH considers there is a real opportunity for this policy to be updated in 2017/18 to a water and plain milk only policy. This would reflect current evidence that fruit juices and artificially sweetened beverages ('diet drinks') are not healthy drink options.⁵ It would also better align with the principles in which the current NCC policy is based on.⁶
10. In relation to the proposed variations set out in the NCC Draft Annual Plan, NMH recommends NCC to consider the installation of drinking water fountains as a part of the central city enhancement project, noting that Church Street is proposed to be transformed into an active public space during 2017/18.
11. Lastly, NMH supports earlier replacement of the water treatment plant membranes to enable the continued provision of good quality drinking water to Nelson City.

Vulnerable children

12. Supporting vulnerable children is a key priority for New Zealand. It is also identified as an area where we all need to work together and share the responsibility.⁷
13. NMH strongly supports NCC implementing policy, programmes or services that can have a positive influence on the health and wellbeing outcomes of children, and in particular vulnerable children. This includes the following projects set out in the NCC Annual Plan for 2017/18:
 - Expansion of the woodburner behaviour change programme targeted at improving how people operate their woodburners. As acknowledged in NMH's submission on the NCC

⁵ Nelson Marlborough District Health Board. Position Statement on Sugar Sweetened Beverages

⁶ Nelson City Council. Sugar Sweetened Beverages Policy.

⁷ Oranga Tamariki Ministry for Vulnerable Children. Working with Children: Children's Teams.
<https://www.mvcot.govt.nz/working-with-children/childrens-teams/>

Woodburner Plan Change, Airsheds A and B1 which have poorer winter air quality also contain some of Nelson's most socially deprived areas.

- New community housing management requirements aimed at ensuring tenants are safely and comfortably housed. NMH notes that the health effects of cold homes falls disproportionately on those of lower socio-economic status, those in rental housing, and young people and infants in particular.⁸ Additionally, the burden of unintentional injury or death of New Zealand children, the majority of which happens in the home, is greatest amongst the most deprived.⁹
 - Projects that encourage children to exercise in a safe environment including the Maitai Valley Road Shared Path, Maitai Shared Path to Anzac Park, mountain biking hub and tracks (if able to construct a grade suitable for children and families), and new pedestrian refuge to ensure a strong connection between the Stoke Greenmeadows Community Centre and the Stoke CBD.
 - Earlier construction of the Nightingale Library Memorial refurbishment and community hub development (brought forward from 2021/22). NMH notes that the library is situated in Tahunanui, one of Nelson's most socially deprived areas.
14. NMH notes that the NCC Draft Annual Plan provides resourcing requirements for giving effect to the National Policy Statement – Urban Development Capacity. NMH acknowledges that a separate process will be undertaken for this in the future which will include consultation. In providing enough land for new housing, NMH trusts that NCC will give proper consideration to opportunities for supporting affordable housing within both new and existing developments.

Alcohol harm reduction

15. There is a growing recognition of alcohol-related harm and subsequent costs to individuals, communities and the health system. According to regional results from the 2011-2014 New Zealand Health Survey, 11% of Nelson Marlborough residents are hazardous drinkers.
16. While NCC has made good progress in making a Local Alcohol Policy (LAP), NMDHB recommends NCC to commit to a work programme in making this policy operative. NMH notes with interest that the NCC Draft Annual Plan sets aside resources to allow development of the proposed freedom camping bylaw to be completed and considers that the same level of commitment should be given to the LAP.

⁸ Nelson Marlborough District Health Board. Position Statement on Warm Homes and Clean Heating.

⁹ Growing Up in New Zealand. 2014. Growing Up in New Zealand Policy Brief. Keeping our children injury-free: Household safety evidence from Growing Up in New Zealand. Auckland: Growing Up in New Zealand.

Community resilience

17. New Zealand is predicted to experience increased rates of extreme weather events, heightened pressures on freshwater resources, an increased susceptibility to human and agricultural diseases and pathogens, greater fire risks, and sea level rise as a result of climate change.¹⁰ These risks are additional to those associated with natural hazards such as earthquakes, and other possible causes of damage to community infrastructure.
18. NMH strongly supports NCC building community resilience in being able to withstand, adapt to or recover from adversity. This includes the following projects set out in the NCC Annual Plan for 2017/18:
 - Stormwater upgrade from Main Road Stoke to the sea as part of the Saxton Creek upgrade (brought forward from 2022/23). NMH understands that this has been a problem area for flooding in recent years.
 - Identification of risks to the wastewater and water supply networks from natural hazards.
19. While NMH supports the above natural hazard risk assessment, it considers it important that NCC ensures that this work is complimented by contingency planning to manage any risks identified.

Transport

20. A well functioning transport network is vital for connecting people to health services, jobs, education, child care, outdoor recreation and social interaction.
21. The NCC Draft Annual Plan notes that the Stoke Bus Loop has had very poor patronage. Accordingly, this service is proposed to be reduced. NCC is also to carry out a review of all bus services, including those in Stoke, through the development of the Nelson Regional Public Transport Plan in 2017/18.
22. NMH recommends that the bus service review looks at possible opportunities and barriers to patronage including integration between public transport, walking and cycling networks; and accessibility.
23. The NCC Annual Plan also proposes that funding be made available to undertake projects resulting from the Hill Street/Stoke foothills study. Recommendations from this study, which is looking at transport network improvements needed to prepare for residential growth in the area, are to be made this year. NMH considers it important that active transport options (such as walking and cycling) are developed as a result of this project.

¹⁰ The Royal Society of New Zealand. 2016. Climate change implications for New Zealand. Wellington: The Royal Society of New Zealand

Public safety

24. Crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) are best practice principles applied to ensure that urban areas are designed effectively to reduce the incidence and fear of crime. Ensuring areas are well lit is one of the key elements of CPTED principles.
25. NMH supports the proposed conversion of Nelson's streetlights to LED lighting, noting that the Draft Annual Plan proposes that initial work towards this bigger, city wide project commences in 2017/18.

Conclusion

26. NMH thanks the NCC for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Annual Plan 2017/18.
27. NMH believes that many of the variations to the Long Term Plan 2015-25, as set out in the Draft Annual Plan, will benefit community health and wellbeing as discussed in this submission.
28. However, NMH considers that there are some further initiatives that NCC can implement to result in greater community health and wellbeing outcomes. This includes making the streets and public spaces of the Nelson CBD smokefree environments, updating the NCC Sugar Sweetened Beverages Policy to a water and plain milk only policy, and committing to a work programme to make the draft Local Alcohol Policy operative. NMH would like to offer its assistance in working with NCC on these matters.
29. NMH looks forward to continuing to work in partnership with NCC on activities that will be of direct benefit to the wellbeing and health of the community, and encourages NCC's continued active commitment to leading and investing in social development of our community.
30. NMH **does not wish to be heard** in support of its submission.

Yours sincerely



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