

Marlborough District Council

Draft Annual Plan 2020-2021

4 May 2020

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Submitter details

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 o te Waka a Maui. NMH appreciates the opportunity to comment from a public health perspective on the Marlborough District Council's Draft Annual Plan.
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.

General Comments

4. NMH is pleased to see that Marlborough District Council has factored the impact of COVID-19 on the community in terms of its budget decisions. The impact of COVID-19 will be far reaching and will affect people's wellbeing for some time. COVID-19 has demonstrated how quickly change can occur when government and community work together and act on the advice of scientists. Another lesson from the COVID-19 crisis is that early action is essential. These lessons could be used in relation to addressing the longer-term risks of climate change, COVID-19 economic packages must dovetail with sustainable options that lead to a zero-carbon economy. The current response to COVID-19 could encourage people to commute and travel less, reduce household waste, and rely more on local supply chains. The local and central government response to COVID-19 will determine how we look after the wellbeing of New Zealanders. Just as society has fundamentally changed to mitigate COVID-19, consideration must also be given to how we respond quickly to climate change.
5. NMH encourages MDC to consider signing up to the C40 Good Food Cities Declaration. The purpose of this declaration is for local councils to work with communities on creating policies that make healthy, delicious and low-carbon food affordable and accessible for all along with reducing food loss and wasted food¹. NMH would support MDC signing this declaration given the commitment to aligning food procurement to planetary health guidelines, supporting in increase healthy plant based food consumption and reducing food loss and waste. NMH would like to work with MDC on the action points of the declaration

¹ https://www.c40.org/press_releases/good-food-cities

Specific Comments

Waste

6. NMH supports the expansion of kerbside recycling collection to include Renwick. Renwick residents have been without recycling facilities since December 2019. It is noted that kerbside recycling collection will be installed in July 2021. NMH recommends that this date is brought forward as there is no alternative recycling options for Renwick residents in the meantime. Whilst residents are able to use the Resource Recovery Centre in Blenheim, it is unlikely that the 255 tonnes of recyclable materials that were collected will now be diverted to Blenheim, instead a larger proportion could be diverted to landfill instead. This does not align with the goals of the New Zealand Waste Strategy to reduce the harmful effects of waste and improve the efficiency of resource use.²

Smokefree environments:

7. NMH congratulates MDC's commitment to Smokefree 2025 Aotearoa and its Smokefree Position Statement.³ However NMH recommends that MDC strengthens its position on Smokefree by adopting a Smokefree Policy which includes a definitive action plan which covers which locations that MDC will make smokefree. NMH recommends that this Smokefree policy bans smoking from:
- council events
 - the principal entrances and exits of Council buildings and facilities, carparks and bus stops,
 - shared public spaces
 - alfresco dining areas,
 - beaches
 - council housing
8. Numerous councils have adopted these policies over the last two years and NMH is currently working closely with Nelson City Council to develop a Smokefree Outdoor Policy^{4,5}.
9. Reducing the prevalence of smoking and de-normalising smoking behaviour is one way the Council can improve the health and wellbeing of Marlborough communities. There is an appetite for this type of policy for Marlborough, the results of the Fresh Air Project, 96% of people surveyed in the Nelson/Tasman trial supported smokefree outdoor dining

² <https://www.mfe.govt.nz/waste/waste-strategy-and-legislation/new-zealand-waste-strategy>

³ <https://www.smokefree.org.nz/smoking-its-effects/health-effects>

⁴ <https://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/plans-projects-policies-reports-bylaws/our-policies/Pages/smokefree-policy.aspx>

⁵ <https://www.smokefree.org.nz/smokefree-resources/maps-of-nz-councils-smokefree-outdoor-policies-and-spaces>

areas. Cigarette butts account for 78% of all littered items in New Zealand.⁶ Cigarette butts are potential sources of heavy metal environmental contamination and have the potential to cause acute and chronic harm to various organisms.⁷ Furthermore, restrictions in outdoor smoking can reduce fire risk. Scion Rural Fire Research⁸ shows that Marlborough will experience elevated fire danger as a result of climate change.

10. For these reasons, NMH recommends that MDC work in partnership with NMH to develop a smokefree outdoor policy that delivers healthier outcomes from Marlborough residents.

Water supply:

11. NMH supports the upgrade of the Renwick, Havelock, Riverlands and Wairau Valley treatment plants to achieve compliance with the Drinking Water Standards for NZ.
12. NMH notes Council's intention to provide point-of-entry treatment for rural households not served by the Seddon water treatment plant and recognises that clarity is needed from the Ministry of Health (or the new drinking water Regulator) on the criteria for those devices.
13. NMH supports the investigation of metering all connections in Picton to help with demand management and delay the need for a third source of raw water.
14. NMH also supports the upgrade of the Essons Valley, Picton, water treatment plant to address taste and odour issues associated with algae.

Sewage treatment

15. NMH supports the reticulation of sewage for the St Andrews, Blenheim community to avoid unacceptable public health risk from on-site septic tanks.
16. NMH supports upgrades to the Havelock and Seddon sewage treatment plants and on-going repair of earthquake damaged reticulation in Blenheim and Picton in particular.

Emergency Management

17. NMH supports the co-funding a Te Tauihu Pouārahi position to work alongside Iwi, Marlborough and Nelson/Tasman Emergency Management and deliver mutual benefits to Iwi and the wider community.

⁶ <https://www.knzb.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/KNZB-Litter-behaviour-report-DRAFT-0.3-Released-3.4.18.pdf>

⁷ Slaughter, E. Gersbery, R., Watanabe, K., (2011) Toxicity of cigarette butts, and their chemical components, to marine and freshwater fish. Tobacco Control, 2011 May 20 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3088407/>

⁸ https://www.scionresearch.com/_data/assets/pdf_file/0019/63901/48389-FutureFireDanger.pdf

Conclusion

18. NMH thanks the Marlborough District Council for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Annual Plan.
19. NMH believes that many of the variations to the Long Term Plan 2018-18, as set out in the Draft Annual Plan, will benefit community health and wellbeing as discussed in this submission.
20. NMH **wishes to be heard** in support of its submission.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'P' followed by a long horizontal stroke that ends in a small loop.

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