

Notice is hereby given that an ordinary meeting of the Horowhenua District Community Wellbeing Committee will be held on:

Date: Wednesday 25 February 2026
Time: 10:00 am
Meeting Room: Council Chambers
Venue: 126-148 Oxford St
Levin

Community Wellbeing Committee

OPEN AGENDA

MEMBERSHIP

Chairperson Councillor Jo Mason

Councillors Cr Katrina Mitchell-Kouttab

Members

Amarjit Maxwell	Neville Heihei
Beth Purcell	Paul McMillian
Dr Betty-Lou Iwikau	Rawinia Nikora-Townsend
Brianna Tekii	Rebecca Kinloch
Di Rump	Scott Harvey
Jacqui Moynihan	Sheryll Hoera
Jill Topia	Sose Annadale
Joanne Parker	Troy O'Carroll
Kylie Turuwhenua-Tapsell	Network reporesetatives from:
Lee Welch	• Access and Inclusion
Leigh McMeeken	• Education Horowhenua
Maggie Regan	• Older Persons
Mandy Fryer	• Youth Services
Michael Fletcher	

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Horowhenua District Council Service Centre, 126 Oxford Street, Levin

Note: The reports contained within this agenda are for consideration and should not be construed as Council policy unless and until adopted. Should Members require further information relating to any reports, please contact the Chief Executive Officer or the Chairperson.

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Karakia

Whakataka te hau ki te uru	Cease the winds from the west
Whakataka te hau ki te tonga	Cease the winds from the south
Kia mākinakina ki uta	Let the breeze blow over the land
Kia mātaratara ki tai	Let the breeze blow over the ocean
E hī ake ana te atakura	Let the red-tipped dawn come with a sharpened air.
He tio, he huka, he hau hū	A touch of frost, a promise of a glorious day.
Tīhei mauri ora!	

1 Apologies

2 Late Items

To consider, and if thought fit, to pass a resolution to permit the Council to consider any further items which do not appear on the Agenda of this meeting and/or the meeting to be held with the public excluded.

Such resolution is required to be made pursuant to Section 46A(7) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, and the Chairperson must advise:

- (i) The reason why the item was not on the Agenda, and
- (ii) The reason why the discussion of this item cannot be delayed until a subsequent meeting.

3 Declarations of Interest

Members are reminded of their obligation to declare any conflicts of interest they might have in respect of the items on this Agenda.

4 Confirmation of Minutes

This is the first meeting of the triennium therefore there are no minutes to confirm.

File No.: 26/89

5.1 Horowhenua Trust - Project Lift

Author(s)	Mark Hammond Community Facilities and Services Manager Tumu Hanga Tukuora Hapori, Ratonga Hapori
Approved by	Mark Hammond Community Facilities and Services Manager Tumu Hanga Tukuora Hapori, Ratonga Hapori

TE PŪTAKE | PURPOSE

1. A presentation from the Horowhenua Trust on Project Lift

File No.: 26/18

6.1 Community Wellbeing Network Report

Author(s)	Emma Gowan Community Development Adviser Kaitohutohu Tautāwhi Hapori
Approved by	Mark Hammond Community Facilities and Services Manager Tumu Hanga Tukuora Hapori, Ratonga Hapori
	Brent Harvey Group Manager - Community Experience & Services Tumu Rangapū, Wheako Hapori, Ratonga

PURPOSE | TE PŪTAKE

1. The purpose of the Community Wellbeing Network Report is to discuss and highlight grassroots issues, ideas, and or concerns present within the community and identified by Council's Community Networks.
2. The reports aim to:
 - 2.1. Outline the focus and activities of the community networks; and
 - 2.2. Note that, while prepared by Council Officers, the report will be presented by a representative of each network.

Delivering everyday

This matter relates to Delivering everyday

While navigating a period of significant change, we will continue to deliver our services to our community effectively, efficiently, and reliably, maintaining strong business-as-usual performance as we implement our Council priorities.

RECOMMENDATION | NGĀ TAUNAKITANGA

- A. That Report 26/18 Community Wellbeing Network Report be received and noted.

BACKGROUND | HE KŌRERO TŪĀPAPA

3. Horowhenua District Council, through its Community Development function and as outlined in the Community Wellbeing Strategy, facilitates and coordinates a number of community networks.
4. This is a standard standing item and report presented at each Community Wellbeing Committee meeting and provides an initial step within the Community Wellbeing Strategy structure to collectively discuss, share and collaborate.
5. While the Community Wellbeing Committee has not met since August 2025 due to local government elections and the holiday period, the networks were not subject to the same rules and regulations and in most cases have continued to meet during this time.
6. This report covers the reporting period from October 2025 to February 2026, in line with Council's quarterly reporting requirements.
7. Additionally, for the benefit of the Committee, the following table sets out the schedule of meetings for the networks for 2026 for your information.

Network	Chair	2026 Meeting Dates						
Access & Inclusion	Cr Mike Barker	10 Feb	14 April	9 June	11 Aug	13 Oct	8 Dec	
Education Horowhenua	Patrick Rennell	19 Feb	21 May	20 Aug	12 Nov			
Older Person's Network	Mayor Bernie Wanden	12 Feb	9 April	11 June	13 Aug	8 Oct	10 Dec	
Youth Services	Cr Allan Young	19 Feb	21 May	18 June	20 Aug	15 Oct	17 Dec	
Youth Voice	<i>Not applicable</i>	11 Mar	14 May	15 June	11 Aug	24 Sep	12 Nov	10 Dec
Horowhenua Former Refugee Support Committee	Rotating Chair	10 Feb	14 April	9 June	11 Aug	13 Oct	8 Dec	

DISCUSSION | HE MATAPAKINGA

Access and Inclusion Network

8. The Access and Inclusion Network met on 7 October 2025.
9. The Network discussed broadening its focus beyond disability to include wider diversity, such as the rainbow community and those people in our community impacted by mental health.
10. There was interest from the Network in forming a sub-group to plan and deliver a co-designed diversity workshop in 2026.
11. Digital inclusion was identified as a priority, with on-going workshops planned in 2026, particularly in relation to Council's enhanced online community directory.
12. Additionally, the Community Wellbeing Strategy identifies a Connected Community as a priority, with improved digital connectivity playing a key role in reducing digital exclusion. This demonstrates strong strategic alignment between the Network and the Strategy.

Youth Services Network

13. The Youth Services Network met on 23 October 2025 at MASH Trust.
14. The network received a presentation from Sarah Parkinson (Road Safety Education) on the Ryda Program.
15. The Ryda Program is a not-for-profit road safety education initiative targeting young people aged 16 to 18 years old, including high school students and those in alternative education settings. The programme aims to reduce road trauma by equipping young drivers and passengers with knowledge, skills, and strategies to make safer choices on the road.
16. RYDA promotes a whole-school approach by encouraging the integration of road safety education into the curriculum. Pre-workshop activities, follow-up online modules, teacher resources, and NZQA unit standards (Level 2 and Level 3) support ongoing learning. Unit standards will be offered free to schools in 2026 to encourage uptake.
17. The Network also received a tour of the MASH Trust Levin building, including the Green Room and the Sensory Room, showcasing some of the facilities available to people with disabilities in our community.
18. Finally, the Network received brief updates from sector organisations in attendance, providing an overview of current activities as well as any issues or barriers being experienced.

Youth Voice

19. Youth Voice activities were slower than normal during the final quarter due to temporarily reduced capacity within the Council's Community Development Team. Despite this, members came together for an end-of-year celebration to acknowledge achievements and farewell outgoing Youth Voice members who were completing school or transitioning to university and moving outside of the District.
20. A recruitment drive for new members will be prioritised in the first quarter of 2026, followed by the development of a comprehensive programme focused on the needs and priorities of young people in our community.

Older Persons Network

21. The Older Persons Network met on 30 October 2025.
22. The annual Age on the Go Expo was held on 10 October 2025 and was the largest occurrence of this event to date, featuring 72 stalls (an increase of 14 stalls from 2024). The network noted that while there had been some online discussion regarding stall costs, strong stallholder numbers indicate that cost was not a barrier to participation from local services and organisations.
23. Overall, participants at Age on the Go enjoyed the event and welcomed its return. Despite wet weather, attendance remained steady throughout the day
24. The Horowhenua District Council, in conjunction with the Older Persons Network, made an application to the Office for Seniors Age Friendly Communities Grant to produce three videos supporting "Aging in Place". The application was unfortunately not successful, however the panel did acknowledge the comprehensiveness of the application and concept.
25. The Network received brief updates from sector organisations in attendance, outlining current activities and issues or barriers experienced.

Education Horowhenua

26. Education Horowhenua met on 16 October 2025.
27. Attendance data for term two showed a significant and unexplained decrease of 300 students. Following investigation with Education Counts, the Government portal responsible to publish this information, the network were advised that not all schools had submitted their data on time.
28. The network discussed ongoing challenges in engaging students and whānau, with a shift in focus towards early intervention (targeting ages 8–12) and whānau support.
29. Recent contract renewals will enable the employment of four full-time attendance coordinators for Horowhenua, with an increased focus on younger students and family engagement.
30. The next meeting for Education Horowhenua was scheduled for 20 November 2025 but did not take place after consultation with the Chair due to the increased work load, being the end of the year.
31. The first meeting of Education Horowhenua for 2026 is scheduled for 19 February 2026. This meeting will prioritise three to four strategic focus areas for education in the district, to be tracked and reviewed regularly. The aim is to shift network meetings from reactive problem-solving to proactive, goal-oriented planning, supporting measurable improvements.
32. It was noted that the Horowhenua Trust applied for funding from the Social Investment Agency, with the district shortlisted as one of 16 applicants out of 187 submissions. The Horowhenua Trust's application has since been successful and will receive funding for Project Lift Horowhenua. Project Lift Horowhenua is a transformational behaviour change

programme supporting some of the district's most challenged children through a joined-up community system that restores learning, belonging and wellbeing.

33. For the Committee's reference, Council Officers are of the view that there is an alignment between the role of the Community Wellbeing Committee and Project Lift. This is discussed by way of the Direction of Travel Report as per the Committee's agenda for consideration at this meeting.

Horowhenua Former Refugee Support Committee

34. The Horowhenua Former Refugee Support Committee met on 8 December 2025.
35. In addition to the existing Committee members, the meeting was attended by four former refugee community members who had responded to the Committee's expression of interest (EOI) to become members of the Committee, representing the views and voices of the former refugee community.
36. While the Committee was initially seeking to appoint one or two representatives, it agreed that all four candidates had valuable contributions to make and that, collectively, they reflected the diversity the committee was seeking. This included a balance of male and female representation, youth voice and both Colombian and Venezuelan perspectives.
37. Through the EOI process, the former refugees identified areas where additional support would help them participate with confidence and fully contribute to committee discussions. These include:
- 37.1. Tailored training and orientation sessions will be provided with each of the organisations represented on the Committee.
 - 37.2. Leadership development.
38. The new members will attend their first Committee meeting on 10 February 2026.

All Network End of Year Celebration

39. All networks came together on 11 December to reflect on the year, celebrate their collective achievements, and enjoy some festive treats. It was also an opportunity for Mayor Bernie to thank and acknowledge the incredible mahi and time that network members give to the community.

Confirmation of statutory compliance

In accordance with sections 76 – 79 of the Local Government Act 2002, this report is approved as:

- a. containing sufficient information about the options and their advantages and disadvantages, bearing in mind the significance of the decisions; and,
- b. is based on adequate knowledge about, and adequate consideration of, the views and preferences of affected and interested parties bearing in mind the significance of the decision.

ATTACHMENTS | NGĀ TĀPIRINGA KŌRERO

There are no appendices for this report

File No.: 26/77

6.2 Community Wellbeing Dashboard Report

Author(s)	Emma Gowan Community Development Adviser Kaitohutohu Tautāwhi Hapori
Approved by	Mark Hammond Community Facilities and Services Manager Tumu Hanga Tukuora Hapori, Ratonga Hapori
	Brent Harvey Group Manager - Community Experience & Services Tumu Rangapū, Wheako Hapori, Ratonga

PURPOSE | TE PŪTAKE

1. The purpose of the Community Wellbeing Dashboard is to provide the Community with a visual dashboard that presents data and analysis, while also assisting in tracking the priority areas of the Community Wellbeing Strategy

This matter relates to Delivering everyday

While navigating a period of significant change, we will continue to deliver our services to our community effectively, efficiently, and reliably, maintaining strong business-as-usual performance as we implement our Council priorities.

RECOMMENDATION | NGĀ TAUNAKITANGA

- A. That Report 26/77 Community Wellbeing Dashboard Report be received and noted.

BACKGROUND | HE KŌRERO TŪĀPAPA

2. The purpose of this report is to provide context and additional commentary to accompany the latest edition of the Community Wellbeing Dashboard, which is attached to this report. At a high level, the report aims to:
 - provide a high-level view of what the community is currently experiencing from a community wellbeing perspective
 - support the active monitoring of trends that may require the Committee to pivot, realign its focus, enable action, and/or influence change
 - provide an opportunity for the Committee to identify priority discussions and presentations to support further action and work planning
3. Community Wellbeing Dashboards have been developed by Council Officers since November 2024, with each iteration available on the Council's website.
4. The Committee should note that monthly housing and social welfare update for December 2025 has been postponed by two weeks due to a data processing delay from Ministry of Social Development.

DISCUSSION | HE MATAPAKINGA

Income, Social Welfare and Beneficiary Support

5. At a local level, at the end of September 2025, 4,458 people were receiving a main benefit. This was up 201 when compared to September 2024. Equating to an increase of 4.7%.

6. For broader context, when looking at a national view, at the end of September 2025, 410,328 people were receiving a main benefit. This was up 19,104 when compared to September 2024. This equates to an increase of 4.8% and therefore, Horowhenua is on a similar trajectory when compared at a national level.
7. Regional Distribution of Jobseeker Support – between September 2024 and September 2025, the proportion of the working age population receiving Jobseeker Support increased in most regions. The largest percentage point increase was in Central (0.7 percentage points).
8. Regional Distribution of Sole Parent Support – between September 2024 and September 2025, the proportion of the working-age population receiving Sole Parent Support remained the same or increased slightly in most regions. The largest percentage point increase was Central (0.2 percentage points). Again, not significant changes.
9. The source of this data is directly from the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) website and both the Committee and Officers are aware of a regular lag in reporting. Previously the representative from MSD has been able to provide a more up to date data set for the Committee when present.

Community Safety

10. The following data has been sourced from *Crime Stats NZ* who use meshblocks to compare their data. A meshblock is a defined geographic area, which can vary in size from part of a city block to a large area of rural land.
11. Overall Safety Trends – most suburbs show decreasing crime trends over the last three months, with the exception of Foxton Beach (+25%) and Levin Central (+15.5%) who saw increases.
12. Meshblocks like Foxton South, Queenwood, and Playford Park saw the largest declines (over 50%).
13. Levin Central stands out with 755 crimes (reported victimisations), ranking 3rd highest in the region. This mesh block has a safety score of 5/100 indicates.
14. Ōhau-Manakau recorded only 27 crimes, ranking 130th out of 143, and is among what appears to be the safest suburbs based off the data, with a safety score of 67/100.
15. At the Older Persons Network meeting held 5 January, it was reported that between 20 December 2025 and 20 January 2026, a total of 224 family harm episodes were reported across the Horowhenua and Ōtaki districts. Of these, nine victims were aged 65 and over.

Growth and Population

16. Electronic card, such as eftpos and credit card consumer spending in Horowhenua District as measured by 'Marketview', decreased by 1.7 percent over the year and up until to September 2025, compared to a year earlier. For comparison, New Zealand experienced a 0.8 decrease.
17. Horowhenua's highest annual consumer spending peaked in 2024, totalling \$458 million.
18. National overview – Consumer spending increased slightly in the most recent quarter, marking the first quarterly increase since mid-2024. However, total spending over the year to September remained 0.8% lower than the previous year. Annual inflation rose in the September quarter and is now at the upper end of the Reserve Bank's 1–3% target range. Quarterly spending was 0.6% higher than the same quarter in 2025; however, higher inflation has limited real growth. While mortgage rates have eased over the past year, household expenditure patterns remain cautious amid ongoing cost pressures.
19. The source of this data is directly from the 'Infometrics' website

Health and Wellbeing

20. Significant decline in regular cigarette smoking
 - 20.1. Horowhenua decreased from 18.7% (2018) to 12% (2023), representing a reduction of 6.7 percentage points. While more up-to-date data is not yet available, if the average rate of decline were to continue, the rate could be approximately 8% by 2026. This is indicative only and based on a simple continuation of the previous trend.
 - 20.2. New Zealand: decreased from 13.2% to 7.7%, representing a reduction of 5.5%.
 - 20.3. Overall, smoking rates are declining both locally and nationally. However, Horowhenua continues to have a higher smoking prevalence than the national average.
21. Increase in ex-smokers of cigarettes
 - 21.1. Horowhenua: increased from 28.1% to 33.1%.
 - 21.2. New Zealand: increased from 22% to 25%.
 - 21.3. Overall, smoking rates continue to decline, with more people reporting that they have quit smoking. This aligns with the reduction in regular smoking prevalence. However, data later in the report shows an increase in vaping rates, suggesting that some individuals may be shifting from smoking to vaping.
22. Slight increase in people who have never smoked cigarettes
 - 22.1. Horowhenua: 53.2% to 54.9%.
 - 22.2. New Zealand: 64.8% to 67.4%.
 - 22.3. Horowhenua has a lower proportion of never-smokers than the national average. While improving, the gap remains significant at around 12%.
23. Rapid rise in vaping (National data)
 - 23.1. Although Horowhenua specific vaping data is not provided, national trends show that:
 - 23.2. Daily vaping: 2.6% (2018) to 9.8% (2023) to 11.7% (2025).
 - 23.3. Monthly vaping: 3.9% (2018) to 12% (2023) to 13.8% (2025).
 - 23.4. Tried vaping: 18.7% (2018) to 25% (2023) to 30.2% (2025)
24. Levin alone has 31 different locations selling vaping products, including seven specialised vape stores and 24 dairies or service stations.
25. The source of this data is directly from *Statistics NZ* and *Public Health Communication Centre Aotearoa*.

Housing

26. Horowhenua Housing Register – the data displayed on the dashboard highlights the number of applications on the Housing Register as of 30 September 2025. The housing register contains 156 applicants not currently in public housing who have been assessed as eligible and who are ready to be matched to a suitable property or arrangement. Since June 2025 (the last reported numbers to the Committee), compared to September 2025 there has been an increase of 9 applicants.
27. As mentioned, locally, there were 156 applicants on the Housing Register as of September 2025, an increase of 16.1 percent from September 2024.
28. From a national perspective, there were 19,431 applicants on the Housing Register as of September 2025, a decrease of 11.5 percent from September 2024.
29. Horowhenua Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants – the dashboard provides a breakdown of the number of households in emergency housing at the end of September

2025. This grant is available to people who cannot remain in their usual place of residence, if any, and do not have access to other accommodation which is adequate for them or their family's needs. Since June 2025 (the last reported numbers to the Committee), while the number of applicants remain unchanged at nine applicants, the number of grant applications that have been received has increased by three, resulting in an increase of total amount granted of \$49,075.

30. The source of this data is directly from *Ministry of Social Development*.

Education / Youth Employment

31. Locally, 43.2 percent of Horowhenua students attended school more than 90 percent of the time in Term 3, 2025.
32. Nationally, 50.3 percent of students met the criteria for regular attendance (present more than 90 percent of the term) for Term 3, 2025.
33. At the time of writing this report, only provisional data for Term 4, 2025 has been released, showing that nationally 57.3 percent of students attended school more than 90 percent of the time.
34. The latest NEET (not in education, employment or training) rates for Horowhenua show that on average 18.7 percent of people aged 15-24 are not in employment, education or training.

Confirmation of statutory compliance

In accordance with sections 76 – 79 of the Local Government Act 2002, this report is approved as:

- a. containing sufficient information about the options and their advantages and disadvantages, bearing in mind the significance of the decisions; and,
- b. is based on adequate knowledge about, and adequate consideration of, the views and preferences of affected and interested parties bearing in mind the significance of the decision.

ATTACHMENTS | NGĀ TĀPIRINGA KŌRERO

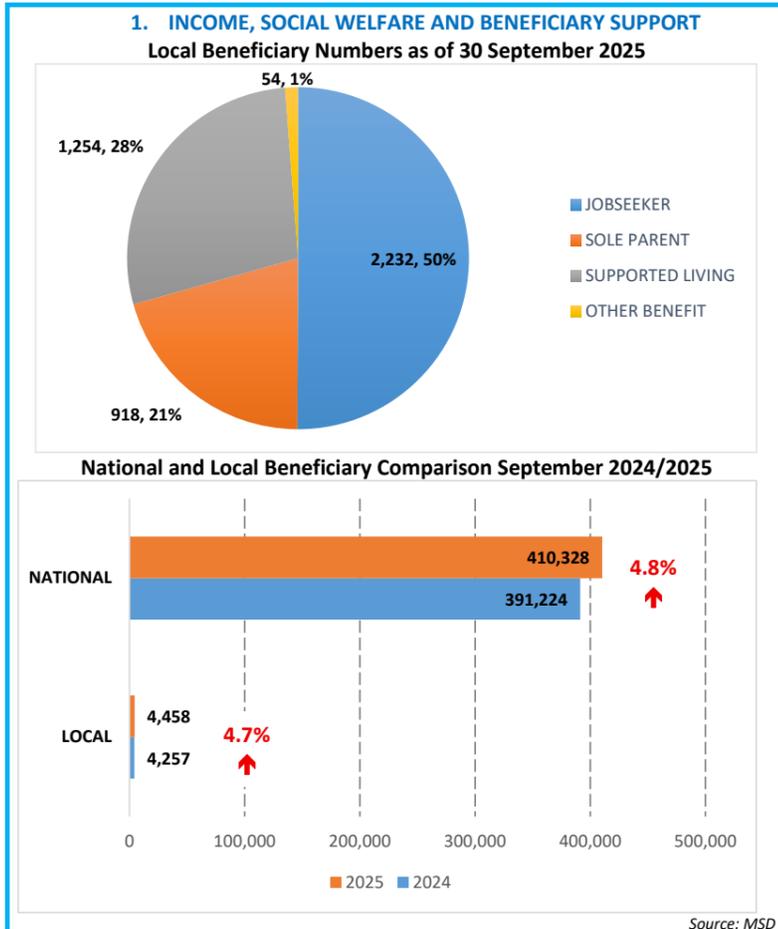
No.	Title	Page
A1	CWC Dashboard - February 2026	19

Community Wellbeing Dashboard | February 2026



POINTS OF INTEREST:

1. National and local beneficiary numbers increased by 4.8% and 4.7% respectively.
2. During the last three months, nearly all suburbs in the Horowhenua District saw a decrease in crime rate.
3. Consumer spending in Horowhenua decreased by 1.7% in September 2025.
4. Overall, Horowhenua cigarette smoking rates are declining, but vaping is increasing on a national level.
5. Number of people on Horowhenua Housing Register increased by nine.
6. Locally, 43.2% of students met the criteria for regular attendance (present for more than 90% of the term) for term 1, 2025.



2. COMMUNITY SAFETY

Horowhenua District Crime Stats for past 12 months

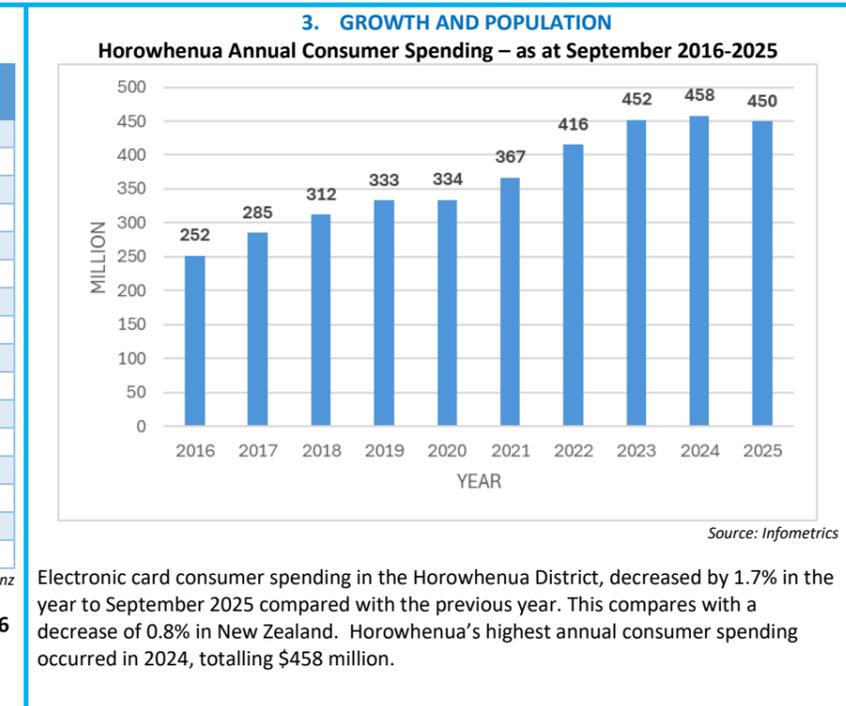
Suburb	Safety Score	Total Crimes (past 12 months)	Trent (last 3 months)	Regional Rank
Donnelly Park	40	44	↓ 35.7%	#63 / 143
Fairfield	59	38	↓ 18.2%	#90 / 143
Foxton Beach	52	59	↑ 25.0%	#76 / 143
Foxton North	19	97	→ 0.0%	#24 / 143
Foxton South	22	119	↓ 58.3%	#23 / 143
Kere Kere	20	18	→ 0.0%	#110 / 143
Kimberley	22	20	↓ 42.9%	#48 / 143
Levin Central	5	755	↑ 15.5%	#3 / 143
Makomako	28	77	↓ 13.6%	#33 / 143
Ōhau-Manakau	67	27	↓ 14.3%	#130 / 143
Playford Park	14	72	↓ 52.4%	#54 / 143
Queenwood	17	107	↓ 61.8%	#39 / 143
Shannon	38	45	↓ 14.3%	#72 / 143
Taitoko	25	85	↓ 24.1%	#47 / 143
Waiopahu	20	75	↓ 38.1%	#40 / 143
Waitāre	42	57	↓ 29.4%	#93 / 143

Source: Crimestats.co.nz

Horowhenua Family Harm Statistics from 20 December 2025 to 20 January 2026

Number of Episodes across Horowhenua and Ōtaki
224

Source: HALT



4. HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Smoking Behaviour (≥15 years old) – Horowhenua and New Zealand

Category	Horowhenua		New Zealand		2025
	2018	2023	2018	2023	
Regular Smoker	18.7%	12% ↓	13.2%	7.7%	
Ex-smoker	28.1%	33.1% ↑	22%	25%	
Never smoked	53.2%	54.9% ↑	64.8%	67.4%	
Daily Vaping			2.6%	9.8%	11.7% ↑
Tried Vaping (1+)			18.7%	25%	30.2% ↑
Vaping monthly			3.9%	12%	13.8% ↑

Source: Statistics NZ & Public Health Communication Centre Aotearoa

5. HOUSING

Horowhenua Housing Register as of 30 September 2025

June 2025	September 2025	Change
147	156	9 ↑

Source: MSD

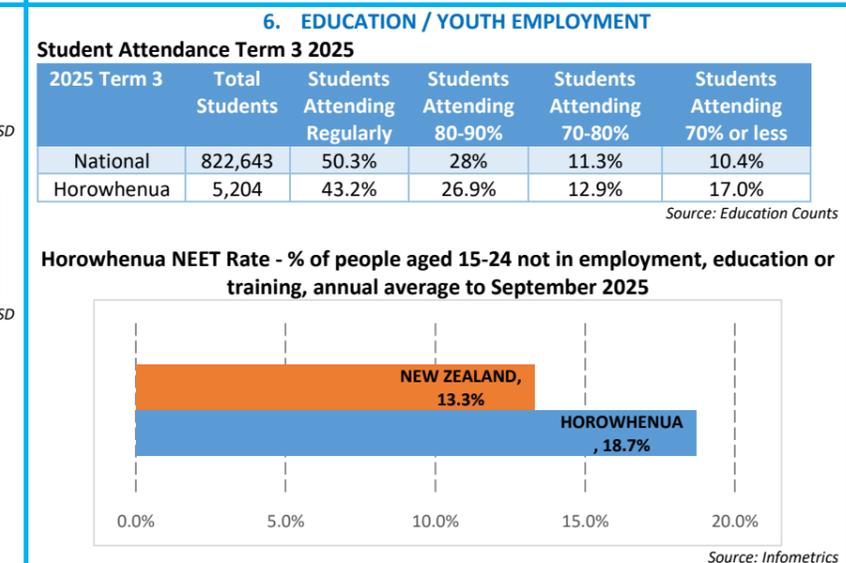
Horowhenua Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant as of September 2025

	June 2025	September 2025	Change
Number of Grants	36	39	3 ↑
Number of Applicants	9	9	0 →
Total Amount Granted	\$44,720	\$49,075	\$4,355 ↑

Source: MSD

Locally: There were 156 applicants on the Housing Register as of 30 September 2025, a decrease of 16.1% percent from 30 September 2024.

Nationally: There were 19,431 applicants on the Housing Register as of 30 September 2025, a decrease of 11.5% percent from 30 September 2024.



File No.: 26/14

6.3 Community Wellbeing Strategy Monitoring Report

Author(s)	Emma Gowan Community Development Adviser Kaitohutohu Tautāwhi Hapori
Approved by	Mark Hammond Community Facilities and Services Manager Tumu Hanga Tukuora Hapori, Ratonga Hapori
	Brent Harvey Group Manager - Community Experience & Services Tumu Rangapū, Wheako Hapori, Ratonga

PURPOSE | TE PŪTAKE

1. The purpose of the Community Wellbeing Strategy Monitoring Report is to highlight progress made against the Community Wellbeing Strategy and Action Plan.
2. The report also provides an opportunity for the Committee to discuss and raise any concerns or identify the need to reprioritise the focus of the Committee's work programme.

This matter relates to Delivering everyday

While navigating a period of significant change, we will continue to deliver our services to our community effectively, efficiently, and reliably, maintaining strong business-as-usual performance as we implement our Council priorities.

RECOMMENDATION | NGĀ TAUNAKITANGA

- A. That Report 26/14 Community Wellbeing Strategy Monitoring Report be received and noted.

BACKGROUND | HE KŌRERO TŪĀPAPA

3. This report is prepared for each Community Wellbeing Committee meeting and serves the following purposes:
 - To highlight the progress being made on the Community Wellbeing Strategy Action Plan, or alternatively to identify any areas of concern or reductions in progress.
 - To keep both the Council and the Committee accountable for the roles they play in supporting community wellbeing.
 - To highlight work occurring across all areas of Council business that contributes to the success of the Strategy and overall community wellbeing.
 - To identify community-led initiatives that are also contributing to the delivery of the Action Plan.
4. The Community Wellbeing Committee has not met since August 2025, as meetings paused during the local government election period.
5. This monitoring report covers the reporting period from October to December 2025, in line with Council's quarterly reporting requirements.
6. The following table sets out the schedule of meetings for the networks for 2026.

2026 Meeting Dates				
Community Wellbeing Committee	25 February	27 May	26 August	18 November

DISCUSSION | HE MATAPAKINGA

7. The Monitoring Report has been designed in two parts and focuses on monitoring year two actions of the Community Wellbeing Strategy Action Plan.
8. The first part highlights the current actions underway and provides further details on how they align with the Strategy, including timeframes, funding, lead responsibility, and current status.
9. For the purpose of this report, and for the benefit of Committee members, at each meeting where an item is flagged as 'completed', Officers will report on that item. In subsequent meetings, those items will be removed and, if required, placed back into the work plan.
10. The second part is the work programme, which sets out the actions and work streams for the next three years, noting that these may change when necessary and guidance from the Committee is welcomed.

Community Wellbeing Strategy Action Plan Progress

Cultural | Te Ahurea

11. On 8 November 2025, the community came together to celebrate Diwali, the "Festival of Lights," recognising and celebrating the cultural diversity that contributes to a vibrant and inclusive Horowhenua. Now well established in the annual events calendar, the Diwali celebration provides an important opportunity for cultural expression, learning, and connection across communities. Supported by funding from the Ministry for Ethnic Communities, the event created a welcoming space for people of all backgrounds to come together, strengthening cross-cultural understanding and reinforcing the community's commitment to celebrating culture as a cornerstone of community wellbeing.
12. The annual Christmas Parade and Carnival were held on 6 December 2025, celebrating a shared community tradition that brings people together across generations. As a long-standing cultural event, the parade reflects the importance of collective celebration, creativity, and local identity within Horowhenua. With colourful floats, festive music, community groups, and Santa bringing the streets alive, the event provided an inclusive, family-friendly opportunity for whānau to connect, celebrate, and participate in a tradition that continues to strengthen community pride and belonging.
13. The Urupā Maintenance Fund, administered and funded by Council, provides financial support to Horowhenua urupā to support the ongoing kaitiakitanga of urupā for hapū and whānau. The fund recognises the cultural significance of these spaces and aims to provide greater funding certainty for marae and those responsible for their care. This is the second year the fund has been open for applications, with the 2026 funding round opening on 1 February.

Connected Community | He Hapori Tūhonohono

14. The annual Haunted Library event at Te Takeretanga o Kura-hau-pō provided a strong opportunity to connect people into the library in a welcoming and creative way. With around 400 people attending, the event attracted many community members who may not regularly engage with library services, helping to reduce barriers and build familiarity with the space. Events such as this play an important role in strengthening community connection by creating positive first (or renewed) experiences with the library, which can lead to increased use of other services and programmes over time. The strong turnout reflects the value of

family-friendly, inclusive events that bring people together and support a more connected community.

15. Planning is underway for Neighbours Day on 23 May 2026 led by Neighbourhood Support, an annual initiative that encourages people to connect with those around them and helps strengthen a sense of belonging within neighbourhoods.
16. During the last quarter, Te Takeretanga o Kura-hau-pō received external funding to ensure Digi-Coaches were available at the library each day to provide one-on-one support, guidance, and basic digital skills training for community members who needed help navigating technology. This initiative created opportunities for people of all ages to build their confidence and capability in accessing the digital world and staying connected.
17. In November, the Civic and Youth Excellence Awards returned to Te Takeretanga o Kura-hau-pō, bringing the community together to recognise and celebrate those who make a meaningful contribution to life in Horowhenua. Hosted by Mayor Bernie, the evening acknowledged three Civic Honour recipients, four Certificates of Recognition recipients, and 15 Youth Excellence Scholarship recipients. Recognising individuals in this way plays an important role in strengthening connected communities by valuing service, celebrating leadership, and reinforcing a culture of contribution. By acknowledging those who step forward to support others, the awards help foster a sense of belonging, pride, and shared responsibility across the district.

Health And Wellbeing | Te Hauora Me Te Oranga Tonutanga

18. The first round of Climate Action Funding was allocated to the Horowhenua Mana Kai Network to support a Mara Kai Specialist role focused on strengthening three mara kai sites across the district. Early progress includes support provided to Hinemoa House with the planting of 20 fruit trees and five native plants. By increasing access to fresh, healthy food and strengthening local food resilience, this initiative contributes to improved physical, social, and environmental wellbeing outcomes for the community
19. 10 October 2025 saw the delivery of the Annual Age on the Go Expo. This event brought together a wide range of services, organisations and programmes available across Horowhenua to support older residents and enhance their wellbeing. This year's expo saw record participation, with 72 stallholders in attendance, the highest number we've had at Age on the Go. The expo also attracted the attention of Hon. Casey Costello, Minister for Seniors, who expressed her admiration for Council's commitment to hosting Age on the Go each year. She noted that initiatives like this help make Horowhenua a place that values its older people and enables everyone to participate fully in community life.
20. On 21 November 2025, Muaupoko Tribal Authority, in conjunction with community partners, held the first Horowhenua Hauora Expo at the Horowhenua Events Centre. This whānau-friendly event brought together clinical and non-clinical health service providers, professionals, and organisations. Free health checks for all ages were also provided.

Sense of Place and Belonging | Te Noho Pūmau Horowhenua

21. During August to October, two members of our former refugee community took the opportunity to become Local Election Ambassadors. Coming from countries where voting was not always safe or fair, the pair understood the deep-rooted hesitation and mistrust around the election process. Their mission was clear: build trust, share knowledge, and empower. They held multiple information sessions, made home visits to those unable to attend and helped to register over 60 former refugees to vote in New Zealand for the very first time, giving many a strong sense of belonging.
22. During October, Green Flag judging took place at Driscoll Reserve and Te Awahou Riverside Cultural Park as part of maintaining Green Flag status for Horowhenua's green spaces. These awards play an important role in reinforcing community pride and a strong sense of place by recognising parks that are well maintained, clean, safe, and welcoming.

Being part of the Green Flag programme signals to residents and visitors alike that these spaces are valued, cared for, and central to community life. Horowhenua proudly holds six of New Zealand's 23 Green Flag Award parks, placing the district within a global network of more than 2,600 awarded parks across 17 countries.

23. In mid-October, the first Mayor's Taskforce for Jobs Café was hosted at the Youth Space, marking the launch of a new initiative designed to strengthen connections and creating a sense of place and belonging for local job seekers. Job seekers can connect, ask questions, and explore available job options all within an information and welcoming setting. It was also great to see some of the young people staying on in the youth space beyond the Job Café session to continue making connections with each other and join in activities at the Youth Space.
24. Wednesday Night Youth Programme activities in the Youth Space at Te Takeretanga o Kura- hau-pō kicked back into gear during the last quarter, with the Chill Zone sessions drawing young people keen for a relaxed mid-week hangout. The focus was on board games and gaming, giving rangatahi a chance to unwind, connect with friends, and try out a mix of classics and new favourites. To ensure Foxton rangatahi are part of the action, these Chill Zone sessions will now pop up at Te Awahou Nieuwe Stroom every fourth Wednesday. The goal is to create a regular, welcoming space for rangatahi to come together, have fun and build confidence through low-pressure, social activities.
25. On the 3 December 2025, members of the Access and Inclusion Network hosted International Day of Persons with Disabilities. Now in its third year, this free community event is all about inclusion and creating communities where everyone belongs, is valued and can participate fully. Activities include, crafts, a sensory room, dance and movement and a sausage sizzle.

Housing | Ngā Whare

26. The Vulnerable Housing Working Group is currently reviewing the resource developed last year that outlines the social support services available to community members who are displaced, as some of the information is now out of date. Once finalised, additional copies will be printed.
27. The Vulnerable Housing Working Group continues to discuss and investigate what options are available to create a safe space for displaced or homeless members of our community.

Environment, Community Resilience and Preparedness | Te Taiao, Te Hapori Te Emanawaroa me te Takatūnga

28. During October, 20 volunteers participated in the final Clean Up Week activity, collecting approximately one tonne of rubbish from areas north and south of the Hokio Stream. This work supports environmental health while reinforcing community resilience through active participation and kaitiaki of local environments.
29. Council had the pleasure of supporting Green Week by providing prizes for local high school students who took part in a range of environmental-themed competitions. The event celebrated the creativity and passion of young people who are actively thinking about sustainability and the future of our environment. As part of the event, Council's Solid Waste Team delivered a short presentation on career pathways in the environmental sector, highlighting the many ways young people can get involved, from training opportunities to future roles within Council. It was a great opportunity to showcase the variety of environmental disciplines Council works across and to encourage students to consider careers that make a positive difference in their community.
30. On the 30 December 2025 severe winds caused widespread power outages across Horowhenua, with thousands of properties without power. Numerous fallen trees and broken large branches were reported, resulting in local road closures and hazardous driving conditions. Council staff and contractors actively supported response efforts in critical

infrastructure, communications, logistics and welfare needs. Following the weather event, the Mayoral Relief Fund was stood up. A total of 53 applications were received, with \$13,314 being allocated for immediate needs such as food, insurance excess and tree removal. The event has highlighted the need to further educate the community about emergency preparedness.

Community Safety | Te Haumarutanga o Te Hapori

31. Council officers are working with the Horowhenua Community Camera Trust to develop an information page on the Council website that addresses frequently asked questions about Horowhenua's CCTV cameras. This will include details on how the cameras are used, who monitors them, and what kind of data is collected, as well as a list of camera locations. The information page is aimed at ensuring our community feels informed and safe.
32. Online scams continue to increase, presenting an ongoing risk to community safety. In response, the team at Te Takeretanga o Kura-hau-pō regularly delivers Staying Safe Online sessions, including a course held in December. These sessions are designed to build digital awareness and confidence, helping people recognise common scams and understand how to protect themselves online. By supporting community members to feel informed and safe in digital spaces, this work strengthens overall community safety alongside efforts to keep people safe in physical environments.

Additional Highlights Contributing to the Community Wellbeing Strategy and Action Plan

33. The following highlights from across all Horowhenua District Council business units have contributed to the strategy's overall community wellbeing priorities during the last three months, but not specifically prescribed in the Action Plan:
34. During October, two members of the Council's Rates Team spent a week at both Speldhurst and Rosewood Retirement Villages, assisting older members of the community with processing rate rebate applications and refunds.
35. On the 19 November the first ever Council Expo was held at Te Takeretanga o Kura-hau-pō and showcased the mahi that happens across all of Council. This new event was all about bringing Council to life, highlighting, demonstrating and celebrating the many services, projects, and teams that keep our district running smoothly and connected. There was a morning session for newly elected members to meet the team and learn about more what Council does, then a public session from 10am – 2pm where members of the public could participate and ask questions.
36. The week of 1 December 2025 saw Council partner with MoreFM for Pack the Bus 2025. This marked the third year of Council being involved in Pack the Bus. In a time when things are tough for so many, our Horowhenua community once again stepped up in the most incredible way and the bus is packed to the brim and overflowing with toys and non-perishable food items. The food donations received an extra boost from the Horowhenua Kāpiti Business Collective who donated \$1,000.

Confirmation of statutory compliance

In accordance with sections 76 – 79 of the Local Government Act 2002, this report is approved as:

- a. containing sufficient information about the options and their advantages and disadvantages, bearing in mind the significance of the decisions; and,
- b. is based on adequate knowledge about, and adequate consideration of, the views and preferences of affected and interested parties bearing in mind the significance of the decision.

ATTACHMENTS | NGĀ TĀPIRINGA KŌRERO

No.	Title	Page
A	Community Wellbeing Strategy Monitoring Report - February 2026	27

Year Two Community Wellbeing Strategy Monitoring Report – as of February 2026

This report highlights the progress made against the Community Wellbeing Action Plan and keeps Council accountable for the role that it plays when it comes to community wellbeing. Additionally, this report will highlight work happening across all of council business that is contributing to the success of this strategy and overall community wellbeing. This is by no means an exhaustive list of all the actions Council is undertaking.

Actions Currently Underway

Priority Area	Activity/Action	Timeframe	Funding Source	Activity/Action Leader	Due Date	Story/notes	Status
Culture	Continue to offer a variety of events and activities that appeal to different age groups and cultural backgrounds and incorporate elements from various cultures into events to celebrate diversity and promote understanding.	On-going	Existing HDC Budget	Council	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diwali Festival of Lights Christmas parade and carnival 	Partially Completed
Culture	Partner with community groups to establish and hold an annual multicultural event to showcase our diverse and vibrant community.	Annually	Existing HDC Budget HDC Community Grants & Funding / External Grant	Community Led Action/Activity	TBC	No date yet set or planned.	Completed
Culture	Continue the Matariki Programme to celebrate Matariki.	Annually	Existing HDC Budget	Council	July 2026	Planning for 2026 events underway	Underway
Culture	Incorporate te reo Māori when delivering Aquatics swim school programme.	Year 1	Existing HDC Budget	Council	On-going	Partially completed, more work to do.	Road Block
Connected Community	Continue to provide support that helps build the community's capacity and capability by delivering a training programme.	On-going	Existing HDC Budget	Council	On-going	Community Development Team underway with planning community capacity and capability programme for 2026.	Underway
Connected Community	Continue to provide opportunities for our older demographic to upskill in their ability to access the digital world.	On-going	Existing HDC Budget	Council	On-going	Digital drop-in sessions held bi-weekly at Te Takeretanga o Kura-hau-pō. Upcoming events also include a staying safe online information session and eLibrary discovery session.	Underway
Connected Community	Initiate a campaign that highlights our people, telling the story of their connection to our rohe. Visualising that our people are proud to come from Horowhenua.	Annually	Existing HDC Budget	Council	Annually	No date yet set or campaign planned.	Not started
Connected Community	Undertake a review of all community-led initiatives and programmes that are currently being offered with a view of streamlining those opportunities and therefore removes and doubling up of services.	Year 1 & 2	External Grant	Community-Led by Volunteer Central with support from HDC	On-going	Volunteer Central has received funding for this review and is underway incorporating, Horowhenua, Tararua, Palmerston North, Manawatū. Review is called "Stretching the Oily Rag".	Underway
Connected Community	Promoting equity and fairness by removing barriers for people to participate by offering training opportunities to our community organisations.	Annually	Existing HDC Budget	Community-Led	Annually	Community Development Team underway with working with community organisations to establish what training opportunities could be provided during 2026.	Underway
Connected Community	Actively promote Neighbours Day and facilitate small community initiatives and events such as 'over the fence cuppa' events.	Annually	Existing HDC Budget	Council / Community-Led	May 2026	Planning underway for 2026 Neighbours' Day event.	Underway
Connected Community	Investigate funding (both capital and operational) opportunities to enable the community to purchase a community bus that would transport children and young people around the region to access greater educational outcomes.	Year 1 (deferred to Year 2)	Corporate/Commercial Sponsorship / External Grant	Council	On-going	Relies on Corporate/Commercial Sponsorship and external grant/s to achieve.	Not started
Connected Community	Leverage and advocate for greater community outcomes from the construction of Ō2NL.	Year 1 and Year 2	Existing HDC Budget	Council	On-going	Construction of Ō2NL began Q3 2025. CWC to receive a presentation on Ō2NL during 2026.	Underway
Health & Wellbeing	Investigate what options are available to both the Council and our partners in creating better access to healthy kai for our community.	Year 1 & 2	Existing HDC Budget / External Grant	Council	On-going	Horowhenua Mana Kai Network established. Funding received for pilot programme.	Underway
Health & Wellbeing	Implement a Play, Active Recreation and Sport Strategy – aimed at getting more people in our communities moving, active and healthy for life.	Year 2	Existing HDC Budget	Council	July 2026	Working Group to be established during Q1 of 2026.	Not started
Sense of place and belonging	Maintain Green Flag status for our green spaces.	On-going	Existing HDC Budget	Council	October 2025	Green Flag Status Maintained.	Completed
Sense of place and belonging	Implement the Welcoming Communities Strategy.	Year 1	External Grant	Council / Welcoming Communities Committee	31 May 2026	Strategy in draft form, more work to do.	Partially Completed
Sense of place and belonging	Ensure that programming in the Youth Space reflects what our rangatahi are telling us and meets their interests and needs.	On-going	Existing HDC Budget	Community-led	On-going	Youth Space Holiday Programme delivered over Christmas/New Year break.	Completed
Housing	Create a resource that outlines what social support services are available for those members of our community who are displaced.	On-going	Existing HDC Budget	Council	March 2026	Resource currently waiting on feedback from Vulnerable Housing Collective.	Underway
Housing	Investigate what options Council has to create a safe space for displaced or homeless members of our community, working alongside our community partners.	Year 1	Existing HDC Budget / External Grant	Council	December 2026	Vulnerable Housing Collective discussed at first meeting in 2026 and continue to investigate options.	Underway
Environment, Community Resilience & Preparedness	Give effect to Horowhenua's Climate Action Plan.	Year 2	Existing HDC Budget	Council	On-going	Annual Plan 2026/2027 consideration.	Partially Completed
Community Safety	Maintain and build relationships with key safety agencies by holding a bi-annual community safety forum with the Mayor and Council.	Bi-Annual				First bi-annual safety meeting to take place during Q1.	Underway

Community Wellbeing Strategy and Action Plan Work Programme

Priority Area	Q3 (Jan – March 26)	Q4 (April – June 26)	Q1 (July – Sept 26)	Q2 (October – Dec 26)	On-going	Year 2	Year 3
Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote Urupā fund. Incorporate te reo Māori when delivering our Aquatics swim school programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate te reo Māori when delivering our Aquatics swim school programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue the Matariki Programme to celebrate Matariki. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold an annual multicultural event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to offer a variety of events and activities that appeal to different age groups and cultural backgrounds and incorporate elements from various cultures into events to celebrate diversity and promote understanding. 		
Connected Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively promote Neighbours Day and facilitate small community initiatives like 'Over the Fence Cuppa' events – month of March. Promote equity and fairness by removing participation barriers and offering training opportunities to our community organisations Continue to provide support that helps build the community's capacity and capability by delivering a training programme. Continue to provide opportunities for our older demographic to upskill in their ability to access the digital world. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a review of all community-led initiatives and programs to streamline opportunities and eliminate duplicate services. Continue to provide support that helps build the community's capacity and capability by delivering a training programme. Continue to provide opportunities for our older demographic to upskill in their ability to access the digital world. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a review of all community-led initiatives and programs to streamline opportunities and eliminate duplicate services. Continue to provide support that helps build the community's capacity and capability by delivering a training programme. Continue to provide opportunities for our older demographic to upskill in their ability to access the digital world. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a review of all community-led initiatives and programs to streamline opportunities and eliminate duplicate services. Initiate a campaign highlighting our people and their connection to our rohe, showcasing their pride in coming from Horowhenua. Continue to provide support that helps build the community's capacity and capability by delivering a training programme. Continue to provide opportunities for our older demographic to upskill in their ability to access the digital world. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to provide support that helps build the community's capacity and capability by delivering a training programme. We aim to create inclusive communication materials that represent our community's diversity and ensure accessibility for all residents, including those facing digital exclusion. Continue providing opportunities for our older demographic to enhance their digital skills. Develop new methods to keep our community informed about roading changes, ensuring accessibility and clarity regarding impacts such as road works or closures. We'll partner with Waka Kotahi to keep our community and residents updated during the Ō2NL project, with open communication channels. As members of the Horowhenua Transport Services Governance Group, we will continue planning public transportation with Horizons District Council in a leading role. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a review of all community-led initiatives and programs to streamline opportunities and eliminate duplicate services. Advocate for enhanced community outcomes from the Ō2NL construction. Explore funding opportunities for a community bus to enhance educational access for children and young people across the region. 	
Health and Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish Community Wellbeing Dashboard on the HDC website following CWC meeting. Implement a Play, Active Recreation and Sport Strategy – aimed at getting more people in our communities moving, active and healthy for life. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a Play, Active Recreation and Sport Strategy – aimed at getting more people in our communities moving, active and healthy for life. Publish Community Wellbeing Dashboard on the HDC website following CWC meeting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish Community Wellbeing Dashboard on the HDC website following CWC meeting. Review Wellbeing Section on the website to keep current 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver the Age on the Go Expo. Work with community partners to provide a Health and Wellbeing Expo before winter to promote physical and mental health. Publish Community Wellbeing Dashboard on the HDC website following CWC meeting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to implement and grow the companion card initiative. Continue to produce the Community Wellbeing Dashboard that monitors key statistical indicators that support the key priority areas within the Strategy. Keep the Community Wellbeing Section on the Council website up to date. Continue to promote the companion card. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a Play, Active Recreation and Sport Strategy – aimed at getting more people in our communities moving, active and healthy for life. 	

Priority Area	Q3 (Jan – March 25)	Q4 (April – June 25)	Q1 (July – Sept 24)	Q2 (October – Dec 25)	On-going	Year 2	Year 3
Sense of Place and Belonging				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain Green Flag status. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain Green Flag status. Collaborate with communities on placemaking projects for positive impact. Ensure that Council events are accessible to people of all ages and abilities. Ensure Youth Space programming reflects rangatahi feedback, meeting their interests and needs. Ensure community facilities offer programs that build community skills and increase capability. 		
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council has to create a safe space for displaced or homeless members of our community, working alongside our community partners. Create a resource that outlines what social support services are available for those members of our community who are displaced. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support and enable affordable housing choices through the District Plan and Housing Action Plan. Through the Horowhenua Operative District Plan, enable accessible housing opportunities with essential services, such as mixed-use development in urban centres. Continue exploring affordable housing options, including family flat development, through the Affordable Housing Framework. 		
Environment, Community Resilience and Preparedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnering with community stakeholders and our Parks and Property Team, host at least four events (1 per quarter) enhancing the ecology of our open spaces, such as community planting and rubbish collection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate community training sessions on emergency preparedness and resilience building. Partnering with community stakeholders and our Parks and Property Team, host at least four events (1 per quarter) enhancing the ecology of our open spaces, such as community planting and rubbish collection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote well insulated homes, green energy and sustainable water use. Partnering with community stakeholders and our Parks and Property Team, host at least four events (1 per quarter) enhancing the ecology of our open spaces, such as community planting and rubbish collection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate community training sessions on emergency preparedness and resilience building. Partnering with community stakeholders and our Parks and Property Team, host at least four events (1 per quarter) enhancing the ecology of our open spaces, such as community planting and rubbish collection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work in partnership with Horizons Regional Council on the Joint Climate Action Plan and the Wellington Leadership Committee to understand environmental vulnerability and coordination of response. Incorporate nature-based solutions through green and blue infrastructure to mitigate climate impacts, and monitor sustainable nature presence in Horowhenua. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give effect to Horowhenua's Climate Action Plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with regional partners advocate for the establishment of public transport within urban environments.
Community Safety	Maintain and strengthen relationships with key safety agencies through bi-annual community safety forums with the Mayor and Council.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain and strengthen relationships with key safety agencies through bi-annual community safety forums with the Mayor and Council 	Maintain and strengthen relationships with key safety agencies through bi-annual community safety forums with the Mayor and Council Support and enable the delivery of community safety initiatives through Horowhenua District Council's contracted services – year 1 reporting due and year 2 payments for services to be made.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand our Kaitiaki program within Community Facilities to increase community presence and engagement. 	

File No.: 26/90

6.4 Direction of Travel

Author(s)	Julia Atkins Community Development Team Lead Kaihautū Tautāwhi Hapori
Approved by	Mark Hammond Community Facilities and Services Manager Tumu Hanga Tukuora Hapori, Ratonga Hapori
	Brent Harvey Group Manager - Community Experience & Services Tumu Rangapū, Wheako Hapori, Ratonga

PURPOSE | TE PŪTAKE

1. This report is to provide the Community Wellbeing Committee with some considerations for further focus to complement the work the Committee has been doing to meet the Community Wellbeing Strategy priorities and the Action Plan tasks. Essentially, the Committee identifying its own direction of travel. These considerations have been generated from the topics discussed at the Community Wellbeing Committee over the last couple of years and the associated reports and data from those meetings. The intention is to bring together the Committee members' collective knowledge to influence change within the community by way of the Council or Government for the benefit of Horowhenua

This matter relates to Delivering everyday

While navigating a period of significant change, we will continue to deliver our services to our community effectively, efficiently, and reliably, maintaining strong business-as-usual performance as we implement our Council priorities.

DELEGATION OR AUTHORITY TO ACT | TE MANA WHAKATAU I NGĀ KAWENGA

2. The Community Wellbeing Committee have the delegation to consider this matter as per it's Terms of Reference and additionally, Horowhenua District Council's Community Wellbeing Strategy.

SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT | HE AROMATAWAI MATUA

This matter is assessed as not significant.

RECOMMENDATION | NGĀ TAUNAKITANGA

- A. That the Community Wellbeing Committee identifies the following areas of focus for 2026 in a bid to help with the direction of the Committee and therefore enabling wellbeing outcomes for the Horowhenua community.
 - A.1. 2026 focus areas: Connected Community; Emergency Preparedness; Health; Employment; Homelessness and Vulnerable Housing.

BACKGROUND | HE KŌRERO TŪĀPAPA

3. Over the past 18 months, the Committee has had a strong focus on collating community wellbeing data and reports associated with the Community Wellbeing Strategy for members to consider and discuss. The information provided by Officers relates to the wellbeing of Horowhenua residents and aligns with the seven priority areas in the Community Wellbeing Strategy, He Hapori Pakari, Strong Communities, as adopted by Council in June 2024.
4. This information, collaboration and resulting dashboards with specific data are now streamlined and are standing items for the Committee and are considered at each meeting.

As there have now been a number of reports, Council Officers collating the information have been able to identify and draw out trends that could be an area of focus for the Committee.

5. These areas of focus are to serve as an opportunity for the Community Wellbeing Committee to improve the wellbeing of Horowhenua residents by using their combined influence to have a measurable impact on the focus area.
6. For example, in past years, the Youth Services Network have presented to the Community Wellbeing Committee on vaping and the “epidemic” that was affecting young people in our community. This resulted in representatives presenting to Council to influence Council’s review of the 2017 Smokefree Environment Policy. The outcome was an updated Smokefree and Vapefree Environment Policy that was adopted by Council in 2022.
7. A current example could be in the health space. The Committee has seen in local water testing results that there has been a significant increase in methamphetamine in Horowhenua. Depending on what the next testing results demonstrate, the Committee may decide to act. This could look like writing to the Minister of Health to request funding to support investment in drug rehabilitation programs for the rohe.
8. Officers have used the following data sources to identify these themes:
 - 8.1. Metrics from agencies (population data, people in emergency housing, job seeker beneficiaries, Emergency Department admissions, Practice Plus access, community safety and crime etc)
 - 8.2. Reports from Community Networks: Education Horowhenua, Access and Inclusion, Older Persons, and Youth Services.
 - 8.3. Community meetings: Horowhenua Former Refugee Support Committee, Vulnerable Housing Working Group, Horowhenua Mana Kai.
9. What Council Officers are seeing on the ground in our facilities and from our relationships in the community and with our agency partners.

DISCUSSION | HE MATAPAKINGA

10. As a Committee, there is an opportunity to move from analysing the data to using it to lead discussions, reprioritisation and advocacy. The Committee can begin to look at the implications of the data and the emerging risks it presents.
11. The solution could take the form of a letter to a Minister, a small campaign or event, or another form of advocacy. It could be as simple as everyone in the Committee posting on social media about the same thing at the same time to increase the reach of a particular kaupapa. It could look like raising a matter up to Council for their consideration – taking grassroots issues up to significant decision making as outlined in the Strategy and reporting model for the Committee.
12. As per the information already referenced in the background section of this report, there are five possible themes Council Officers have identified over the last year:
 - Connected Community;
 - Emergency Preparedness;
 - Health;
 - Employment;
 - Homelessness and Vulnerable Housing.
13. For each of the theme tables that follow, Officers have included a section titled “Potential Committee role.” This section provides examples of the types of roles the Committee could take in response to one or two current community issues, informed by available data and previous discussions at Committee or Network level. These examples are intended to

support discussion rather than direct decision-making. The Committee's role in each area will ultimately depend on how members consider the issue, the evaluation undertaken, and what the Committee determines to be the most effective way to provide support.

Connected Community

14. Across all wellbeing focus areas identified in the Community Wellbeing Strategy, community connection consistently emerges as a common theme. A connected community relates to how people access and engage with both physical and digital spaces and includes:
- Digital exclusion, including limited digital confidence or lack of access to devices, which disproportionately impacts older people.
 - Reliance on free or public access to Wi-Fi or internet services to stay connected.
 - Physical limitations preventing access to services, facilities, community centres.
 - Limited transport options, including access to public transport, impacting people's ability to participate in community life.
 - Services at capacity and not able to take on new clients, customers or patients.

What we're seeing	Known local solutions	Potential Committee role
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in online scams affecting older people • Increasing social isolation and loneliness amongst young people and older adults. • Services at capacity and unable to take on new clients or patients <p>Significant delays for people accessing health and other essential services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community-led programming and workshops • Free internet access and Wi-Fi at facilities • Various transport services (Companion Car – Foxton, Total Mobility, Horowhenua Health Shuttle, Bus loop) • Social Investment Fund - Project Lift 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify services that are missing at a local level and where the Committee could advocate for, or support implementation through members' respective organisations. • Support, promote, and help strengthen the work of The Horowhenua Trust and Project Lift through advocacy and alignment. • Help align efforts across organisations to reduce duplication and strengthen collective impact in addressing connection and access issues. • Support trialling new or place-based solutions where existing approaches are not meeting local needs.

Emergency Preparedness

15. There has been an increase in the frequency and severity of weather-related events across the country, a trend that is expected to continue. Locally, a storm in late December caused

significant damage to many homes, with many households without power for at least 24 hours. Events such as this highlight the importance of ongoing preparedness at both an individual and agency level. While Council and partner organisations play an important role in response and recovery, it is critical that households and communities are prepared to be self-sufficient during emergencies and understand the steps they can take to be ready.

What we're seeing	Known local solutions	Potential Committee role
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase in the frequency and impact of weather-related events nationally, with this trend expected to continue. • A growing number of incidents requiring welfare support, including traffic disruptions, emergency services cordons, access to basic needs and extended power outages. • Low levels of preparedness at the household level, increasing reliance on Council, Government agencies and partner organisations during emergency events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horowhenua Local Welfare Group, led by Council and attended by community organisations and partner agencies. • Shannon & Tokomaru Community Civil Defence Response Groups, supporting local-level response and coordination. • Local Welfare Plan, guiding welfare response and recovery activities during emergencies. • Mayoral Relief Fund, providing short-term financial assistance to affected households. • Council's appointed Local Controller for emergency responses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Champion and promote individual and household emergency preparedness across the district within our respective organisations. • Support continued cross-agency alignment on emergency welfare and response planning. A potential standing item for the Committee. • Encourage member organisations to clarify and communicate their roles before, during, and after emergency events, carrying on the work started in 2024. • Participate in, scenario-based emergency response exercises to build shared understanding and confidence. • Encourage and support the Local Welfare Group to prioritise and programme work associated with emergency preparedness.

Health

16. Health-related pressures have been a recurring theme at Community Wellbeing Committee meetings over the past year, supported by both local insight and data. Increasing demand at the emergency and urgent care level is placing sustained pressure on health services. Locally, this is reflected in services operating at capacity, significant wait times for appointments, and ongoing challenges in filling health practitioner vacancies. In response,

several local initiatives have been established to help relieve pressure on Palmerston North Hospital and support access to care closer to home.

What we're seeing	Known local solutions	Potential Committee role
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in Emergency Department presentations from Horowhenua. • General practices operating at capacity and in some cases, not enrolling new patients. • Increasing use of the Health Shuttle to Palmerston North. • St John services operating at or near capacity. • In 2024, there was a significant increase in methamphetamine detected in Horowhenua's water supply. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iwi and Māori health providers supporting whānau access to timely, culturally appropriate healthcare. • Practice Plus providing access to online GP consultations. • Shannon Health Hub, supporting access to local health services. • Some cross-agency coordination to support early intervention and reduce escalation to urgent care. • Transport services supporting access to regional health facilities. • Te Pūtahi Ora opened October 2025 and includes a GP, radiology, pharmacy and physiotherapy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for improved access to primary and preventative health services based on local data and lived experience. • Champion early intervention and community-based health initiatives that reduce pressure on emergency and urgent care services. • Support community programmes that build connection and participation, helping people stay active, informed, and engaged with preventative health services.

Employment

17. Employment conditions remain challenging, with unemployment reaching 5.4%, the highest level in a decade (Radio New Zealand, 4 February 2026). The current economic environment has reduced the number of available jobs, disproportionately impacting young people and unskilled job seekers who are competing for roles against more experienced workers displaced from other sectors.

What we're seeing	Known local solutions	Potential Committee role
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current economic climate contributing to higher levels of unemployment. • Fewer job opportunities available, with increased competition for roles. • Youth unemployment in Horowhenua remaining disproportionately high, with 18.7% of young people not in employment, education, or training, compared with the national 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of employment and work-readiness programmes supporting people into work. • The Ō2NL (Ōtaki to North Levin) development creating new jobs and supporting local employment opportunities. • A shift in approach to better understand what the business need is, including building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support alignment between education, training providers, employers, and employment programmes. • Through employment programmes, promote pathways that build employability, including work readiness, digital skills, and soft skills. • Continue to maintain oversight of

<p>average of 13.3% (Infometrics).</p>	<p>relationships between employers and employment initiatives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The role of Education Horowhenua and Youth Services as Networks. 	<p>employment and youth NEET trends to inform future Community Wellbeing priorities and advocacy opportunities.</p>
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Homelessness and vulnerable housing

18. There are indications of increased homelessness and rough sleeping across the district. Understanding the scale of the issue is challenging, as people living in temporary or insecure housing are not always reflected in available data. A local working group has been established to improve understanding of the local context and support coordinated responses.

What we're seeing	Known local solutions	Potential Committee role
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indications of increased homelessness and rough sleeping across the district. Local providers report rising requests for emergency or transitional housing support A need for coordination across agencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community-led Vulnerable Housing Working Group, supporting coordination and shared problem-solving. Legacy Housing and social housing providers, whilst limited, offer accommodation and support. Emergency and transitional housing services operating within the district. Cross-agency collaboration focused on prevention, support, and long-term housing outcomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support coordination and alignment across agencies working in the housing and homelessness space. Continue to provide a forum for sharing insights, data, and lived experience to build a clearer picture of local need. Receive updates and findings from the Vulnerable Housing Working Group to inform future priorities.

Options | Ngā Kōwhiringa

19. Council Officers have presented five themes for the Committee to consider and prioritise for the year ahead. There is the opportunity to focus each meeting on the different themes.
20. The primary risk associated with this strategic approach is that themes outside those identified may receive less direct focus from the Committee. However, these issues will continue to be monitored through dashboards, network reports, and regular updates from Committee members. Identifying these themes does not restrict any members of the Committee to raise or reprioritise other issues or themes throughout the year.
21. The Committee may wish to agree on its priority focus themes for the year. With four meetings scheduled in 2026, progressing all five themes in depth may be ambitious and could limit the Committee's ability to meaningfully explore each area. To support this,

Officers can provide a progress report at the third meeting to assess capacity against the work programme and recommend any adjustments to priorities.

Options Ngā Kōwhiringa	Benefits Ngā Whiwhinga	Risks Ngā Mōrearea
<p>Option A (recommended)</p> <p>The Committee adopts these five themes to focus on over the four meetings of 2026.</p>	<p>Horowhenua residents benefit from the Committee's collective knowledge to bring solutions to welfare trends.</p> <p>The Committee continues its monitoring role while interpreting the trends and steering towards solutions.</p>	<p>The Committee may not manage all five themes in the four meetings. However, that is not to say other work will be done outside of the Committee such as through partner agencies or community-led initiatives.</p>
<p>Option B</p> <p>The Committee votes on less than five themes to focus on over the four meetings of 2026.</p>	<p>Horowhenua residents benefit from the Committees collective knowledge to bring solutions to welfare trends.</p> <p>The Committee continues its monitoring role while interpreting the trends and steering towards solutions.</p>	<p>Some focus areas may not be prioritised by the Committee, which carries a risk that these issues receive less direct attention. However, this does not mean work will not continue in these areas, as activity will still occur through partner agencies and community-led initiatives.</p>
<p>Option C (status quo)</p> <p>The Committee continues its monitoring role without focusing in on any particular wellbeing theme.</p>	<p>The Committee continues to have oversight of the welfare trends and issues facing Horowhenua residents.</p>	<p>Without a clear focus and direction, there is a risk that the Committee may not fully capitalise on the progress made to date, which could impact members' perceived value of attending meetings.</p>

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCING | TE TAHUA PŪTEA ME NGĀ RAUEMI

22. There are no direct financial or resourcing matters arising from the Committee setting their direction of travel. Existing budgets and resourcing associated with the Committee will continue as per normal.

POLICY IMPACT | NGĀ PĀTANGA I NGĀ KAUPAPA HERE

23. There are no policy implications or matters to consider. Whilst the Committee may determine to identify some areas of focus, that doesn't detract from Council's Community Wellbeing Strategy and the Committees Terms of Reference as the primary strategic direction and policy.

COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT | TE WHAKAWHITI PĀRONGO ME TE MAHI

Communicating with our Community | Te Whakawhiti Pārongo ki te Hapori

24. If the Committee confirms priority focus areas as outlined in this report, Officers recommend that, as work progresses, key initiatives or successes are highlighted through media advisories or Council social media channels.

NEXT STEPS | HEI MAHI

25. If the Committee were to identify any key areas of focus, Officers will update the work programme to reflect the agreed focus areas.
26. Relevant dashboards, reports, and updates will be aligned to the selected themes.
27. Officers will work with partners and networks to support progress in these areas.
28. A progress update will be provided at the third Committee meeting to assess capacity and progress.
29. If the Committee chooses not to adopt focus areas at this time, the Committee will continue to receive regular dashboard reporting and updates across all wellbeing areas. Additionally, Officers will continue to monitor emerging trends and issues and bring matters of significance back to the Committee as required.<Insert text>

Confirmation of statutory compliance

In accordance with sections 76 – 79 of the Local Government Act 2002, this report is approved as:

- a. containing sufficient information about the options and their advantages and disadvantages, bearing in mind the significance of the decisions; and,
- b. is based on adequate knowledge about, and adequate consideration of, the views and preferences of affected and interested parties bearing in mind the significance of the decision.

ATTACHMENTS | NGĀ TĀPIRINGA KŌRERO

There are no appendices for this report