

6. Smokefree Sports Parks, Playgrounds and Neighbourhood Parks

Reporting Officer: Paul McDonald (Parks and Recreation Manager)

Date: 21 July 2010

Vision, Mission and Values

Council states a community outcome of a community which is healthy and educated. Smoking is proven to negatively affect health.

Local Government Act 2002 – The Four Well-Beings

Cultural: *Smoking and the effects of passive smoking has a negative effect on the culture of Whangarei residents, the parks targeted are often busy with children.*

Economic: *Smoking has a high economic cost to the health system, and Whangarei contributes to this.*

Environmental: *The parks environment for children is expected to be clean and green.*

Social: *Smoking is becoming a key social health concern.*

Smokefree Signage in Parks

Councils around New Zealand are adopting educative smokefree policies for their parks supported by the national Smokefree initiative. Feedback from those Councils has been very positive. Currently in Whangarei District Smokefree messages are encouraged and signs provided at Toll Stadium, Kensington Athletics, Kensington Hockey, Kensington Netball, and Kensington Stadium.

Prior to the 2009 Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) Smokefree Co-ordinators had sought Councillors' and sporting codes' feedback on the proposed policy, and received positive feedback. A petition from several hundred school children was presented to the Deputy Mayor requesting Kensington Park be made smokefree.

During the 2009 LTCCP process Council received a submission in favour of it implementing an educative smokefree policy for sportsgrounds, playgrounds and recreational reserves from Bridget Rowse on behalf of Northland District Health Board Public and Population Health Unit, Cancer Society Northland, Ngati Hine Health Trust, Manaia PHO, Sport Northland, Kia Ora Ngatiwai, Plunket Northland and Asthma Society Northland. This submission is attached.

Staff and Elected Members have since been in discussion with interested parties to advance a smokefree policy for Council-owned parks and playgrounds. The current proposal is to install signs at play areas and sports fields initially, followed by neighbourhood parks. These signs will be provided by Northland District Health Board.

Proposed Council-Owned Sports Parks, Playgrounds and Neighbourhood Parks – Smokefree Policy

PURPOSE

Whangarei District Council will be proactive and demonstrate leadership by promoting a smokefree lifestyle as being desirable in Whangarei. Council will send a positive message that our children's health and the environment should be protected from the effects of smoking.

Supplementary Agenda No 1

The proposed policy is:

1. That Council-owned playgrounds, sports fields, and neighbourhood reserves be promoted as smokefree areas through signage and publicity.
2. That the policy be educational.
3. That the Council-Owned Sports Parks, Playgrounds and Neighbourhood Parks – Smokefree Policy may be superseded by a management plan approved under the Reserves Act 1977.

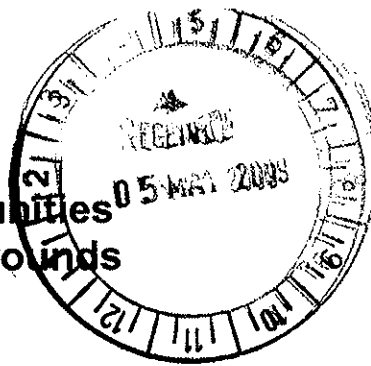
Recommendation

1. That the information be received.
2. That the "Council-Owned Sports Parks, Playgrounds and Neighbourhood – Smokefree Policy" be adopted.

Attachments:

1. [Original Submission LTCCP 2009 - NDHB Smokefree](#)
2. [Images of Proposed Signage](#)
3. [June 2010/Letters of Support](#)

DOC ID



Received
Customer Services
- 5 MAY 2009
Whangarei
District Council

Healthier Whangarei Communities Smokefree Parks and Playgrounds

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document is a submission to the Whangarei District Council (WDC) on behalf of Northland DHB Public & Population Health Unit, Cancer Society Northland, Ngati Hine Health Trust, Manaia PHO, Sport Northland, Ki a Ora Ngatiwai, Plunket Northland and Asthma Society Northland.

This submission requests council implement an *educative* Smokefree policy for all recreational reserves, playgrounds and sports grounds within the Whangarei District.

In short we believe such a policy would help:

- to provide positive smokefree role models to our young people,
- reduce the visibility of smoking behaviour our young people are exposed to, further de-normalise smoking, making it seem less than usual activity,
- reduce youth smoking initiation,
- provide supportive environments to non-smokers and those attempting to quit smoking,
- reduce the environmental impact of unsightly litter, cigarette butts and packets,
- reduce the risk of fire.

The Smokefree policy would be an *educational policy* rather than an enforcement policy, achieved through appropriate signage and community education based publicity to encourage people to refrain from smoking in these areas.

The adoption of this policy by WDC is a perfect example of the benefits of collaborative activity between local government and the health sector. Public recreational reserves, playgrounds and sports grounds are part of the council's main role within our community, making them smokefree is a simple but effective way of actively contributing to the health and wellbeing of our community – particularly the wellbeing of our children and young people.

A smokefree policy for all recreational reserves, playgrounds and sports grounds contributes towards a number of WDC Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) Community Outcomes. Healthy parks, means healthy people all part of Whangarei "*the ultimate living environment*".

We recommend that Whangarei District Council implement an *educative* Smokefree policy for all recreational reserves, playgrounds and sports grounds within the Whangarei District over a 2-year period.

REASONS FOR A SMOKEFREE PUBLIC PLACES POLICY

Smoking is the greatest single preventable cause of death in New Zealand, it is estimated that tobacco causes around 5,000 deaths in New Zealand every year, through both active smoking and second-hand smoke¹. The prevalence of regular smokers in Northland over the

¹ Ministry of Health (2006). *Tobacco trends 2006: Monitoring tobacco use in New Zealand*. Wellington: Ministry of Health.



age of 15-years old is 25.7%, compared with 20.7% nationally². Expanding smoke-free areas is a way in which we can further de-normalise smoking by:

- reducing visibility of smoking behaviour which contributes to smoking initiation,
- promoting healthy smokefree lifestyles, reinforces smokefree lifestyles as the norm,
- reducing smoking in the presence of children provides positive role modeling behaviour. The more frequently young people observe smoking behaviour, the more socially acceptable they perceive it to be³.
- supports former smokers to remain smokefree,

Dealing with smoking in New Zealand

According to a recent Ministry of Health report New Zealanders are embracing a smokefree lifestyle, with nine out of ten supporting the right to live and work in a smokefree environment.⁴ 96.5 % of people believe it's no longer okay to smoke around children⁵.

Smoking and young people

Attention is increasingly turning to the impact on future smoking behaviour of children and the effects of young people seeing people around them smoke. The prevalence of smoking among 14-15 year old youth in Northland is 26.8% compared to 20% nationally⁶. We know, that children tend to copy what they observe and are influenced by the normality and extent of smoking around them.^{7,8,9} Normative values play an important role in youth smoking, young people perceive that many more people smoke than actually do, and are likely to influence individual smoking behaviour.¹⁰ Smokefree recreational reserves, playgrounds and sports grounds would reduce the exposure of children and young people to smoking and therefore their perception that smoking is a 'normal' behaviour.¹¹

WHAT BENEFIT TO WHANGAREI DISTRICT COUNCIL?

A Smokefree policy for recreational reserves, playgrounds and sports grounds will reduce the impact that smoking has on community health and wellbeing. It:

- promotes the Whangarei District residents as a clean and healthy community and environment.
- would reduce health inequalities, cultural losses and the drain on the economy,
- would reduce the threat to environmental wellbeing.
- actively contributes to the health and wellbeing of our community – particularly the wellbeing of our children and young people.
- is a collaborative activity between local government and the health sector.
- strengthens relationship between local government and the health sector.

² Ministry of Health. 2007. *Smoking Prevalence Rates, Census 2006*. Wellington: Public Health Intelligence, Ministry of Health.
³ Alesci NL, Forseter JL, Blaine T. 2003. Smoking visibility, perceived acceptability, and frequency in various locations among youth ad adults. *Preventative Medicine* 36(3): 272-81.
⁴ University of Otago, University of Auckland and the Health Sponsorship Council in *After the Smoke Has Cleared: Evaluation of the Impact of a New Smokefree Law*.
⁵ Smokes 2007, Smoking Outdoors in a kids environment: A pilot Study: Evaluating the Upper Hutt City Council Smokefree Parks Policy, University of Otago, Wellington School of Medicine.
⁶ Paynter J. 2008. *National Year 10 ASH Snapshot Survey, 1999 – 2007: Trends in tobacco use by students aged 14-15 years*. Action on Smoking & Health, Health Sponsorship Council, Ministry of Health.
⁷ Kobus K. Peers and adolescent smoking. *Addiction* 2003;98(suppl 1):37-55.
⁸ Tyas SL, Pederson LL. Psychosocial factors related to adolescent smoking: a critical review of the literature. *Tob Control* 1998;7:409-20.
⁹ Wakefield M, Chaloupka F, Kaufman N, Orleans C, Barker D, Ruel E. Effect of restrictions on smoking at home, at school, and in public places on teenage smoking: cross sectional study. *BMJ* 2000;321:333-7.
¹⁰ McDuff I. 2007. *2006 HSC Year 10 In-depth Survey: Report of Top-line Results*. Health Sponsorship Council
¹¹ Alesci NL, Forseter JL, Blaine T. 2003. Smoking visibility, perceived acceptability, and frequency in various locations among youth ad adults. *Preventative Medicine* 36(3): 272-81.



Most of all, a Smokefree policy is about protecting children and young people from the effects of smoking by de-normalising smoking.

How will the policy work?

The policy should be about *education* and empowerment. Signage and publicity will be positive and encourage the public to maintain a clean, healthy environment in areas that are primarily used by young people for sporting and recreation activities. The signage will be positive and ask the public not to smoke in council-owned areas such as recreational reserves, playgrounds and sports grounds.

The policy could also ensure that activities or events run or supported by the Council are 100% smokefree.

Will the policy need to be enforced?

It is important that the policy is seen as *educative* rather than punitive. An *educative* policy rather than a legislative means ownership of the policy rests with the community. Experience of smokefree policies in other councils recreational reserves, playgrounds and sports grounds, so far have been that the public is quick to comply. Smokers are generally very considerate, and will smoke outside smokefree areas.

Signage would suggest in a positive manner that people refrain from smoking and in so doing encourage good role modelling. Should someone smoke in a smokefree area, other users of the space will be empowered by the policy to ask them to move away from the smokefree area. This is not about punishing smokers, rather it is about role modelling and protecting our children.

COMMUNITY OUTCOMES

Local Councils have statutory powers under a number of acts that relate to public health. The Health Act 1956 states that it is the duty of every territorial authority, 'to improve, promote and protect public health within its district'. One of the key purposes of Local Council is to "promote the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of communities" Policies designed to expand smoke-free areas are an example of a practical way that councils can contribute to this. The Local Government Act 2002 specifically states that councils can change policies for the purpose of 'protecting, promoting and maintaining public health and safety'. In addition, Part 1: Section 20 of the Smoke-free Environments Act 1990 specifies that local authorities can provide 'greater protection from tobacco smoke than is provided'.

We believe that a smokefree policy for recreational reserves, playgrounds and sports grounds fits with a number of WDC Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) Community Outcomes with specific focus on:

A community which is healthy and educated.

- Encouraging people to take more actions towards their own wellbeing,
- Facilitates health education and awareness,

The adoption of a Smokefree policy by WDC is a perfect example of the benefits of collaborative activity between local government and the health sector. Public recreational reserves, playgrounds and sports grounds are part of the council's main role within our community, making them smokefree is a simple but effective way of actively contributing to



NORTHLAND DISTRICT HEALTH BOARD

Te Pōwhiri Hauārua ā Rōhe O Te Tai Tokerau



the health and wellbeing of our community – particularly the wellbeing of our children and young people.

What has been done elsewhere

Over 23 local authorities in New Zealand have implemented smokefree policies in recreational reserves, playgrounds and sports grounds, including Kaipara District Council with smokefree playgrounds (Refer Appendix 1).

Smokefree initiatives have been adopted around recreational areas like recreational reserves, playgrounds and sports grounds, swimming pools and walkways in places like South Taranaki, Upper Hutt (Refer Appendix 2), Invercargill, Manukau, Waitemata, Ashburton, Gisborne, Wanganui, Rotorua, Napier, New Plymouth, Central Hawkes Bay, to name a few. Many other councils are considering following suit.

In many cases, these smokefree policies have been successful. Authorities have reported a constantly high level of public compliance, and very little resistance.

Whangarei already has successful smokefree environments with Northland Hockey Stadium, Netball Northland, the Whangarei Aquatic Centre, and until its recent demolition, the Okara Park Grandstand. Whangarei children are already playing on smokefree grounds within their schools.

Community Consultation and Support

Consultation with the Whangarei community has determined a substantial level of support. A 2009 survey of Whangarei public revealed that 76% support Smokefree recreational reserves, playgrounds and sports grounds. 81% of Whangarei sports codes surveyed supported Smokefree recreational reserves, playgrounds and sports grounds, while 19% supported a smokefree policy with designated smoking areas. (Refer Appendix 3).

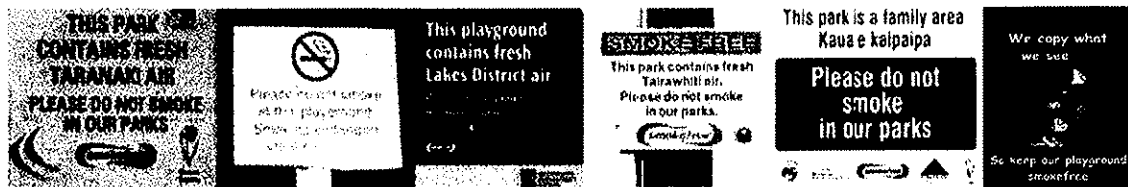
World Smokefree Day 2008 saw students from 5 Whangarei High Schools present a submission to Deputy Mayor Kahu Sutherland requesting Kensington Park to become smokefree, a petition containing 535 signatures and 81 letters of support from sporting codes, the community, and other key stakeholders of Kensington Park (Refer Appendix 4). At the 2008 National Maori Netball Tournament, 78 of 79 people surveyed supported smokefree sports facilities (Refer Appendix 5).

SIGNAGE AND OTHER COSTS

Over 23 councils around New Zealand have implemented smokefree public places policies in recreational reserves, playgrounds and sports grounds and have stressed the importance of good signage. While people may hear about the smokefree policy via media and other publicity, they will need to be reminded by clear, visible and attractive signage on site. Signage should be prominent so people at recreational reserves, playgrounds and sports grounds are well aware of the policy. Smokefree signage also empowers others in the community by giving them something to point out when asking people to stop smoking in recreational reserves, playgrounds and sports grounds.

We suggest signs be erected at all entrances to Whangarei recreational reserves, playgrounds and sports grounds. There will be some costs involved, but we believe these will not be significant compared with the health benefits gained.





We have met with WDC Parks Manager and discussed the most cost effective way to fund signage, by incorporating it into your existing sign management and maintenance budget.

Northland DHB and HSC are able to provide a significant number "Smokefree at all times" and "Auahi kore ngā wā katoa" rectangular green metal 800 x 200mm signs that could be used as signage for secondary entrances and additional signage for larger parks, reserves, playgrounds and sports grounds creating greater visibility of the smokefree message.

The media is a very powerful tool that can help raise awareness and promote WDC smokefree policy. Funding for media will be funded from project partners.



MEASURES

A Smokefree policy for recreational reserves, playgrounds and sports grounds contributes towards creating a *community which is healthy and educated, encouraging people to take more actions towards their own wellbeing, and facilitates health education and awareness.*

To measure if we have achieved this LTCCP Outcome Northland DHB and Cancer Society will undertake a Pre-Implementation Survey (Refer Appendix 6) and will collect and count all cigarette butts from a number of Whangarei recreational reserves, playgrounds and sports grounds prior to the implementation of the smokefree policy allowing us to establish some measurable baseline data.

6-months and/or 12-months after the implementation of the smokefree policy a Post-Evaluation Survey (Refer Appendix 7) and cigarette butt collection and count would be completed from the same Whangarei recreational reserves, playgrounds and sports grounds. These results will be compared to the baseline data to measure if there has been a change in smoking behaviour.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that WDC adopt a tiered smokefree policy to all Whangarei recreational reserves, playgrounds and sports grounds, to be implemented over a 2-year period:

1. All council owned recreational reserves, playgrounds and sports grounds are declared smokefree.
2. The policy is *educational* as opposed to punitive in seeking compliance.
3. The WDC use signage and media to educate and seek public support of the policy prior to and during the initial introduction period.

We thank you for your time and wish to be heard in support of this submission.

Bridget Rowse & Jim Callaghan

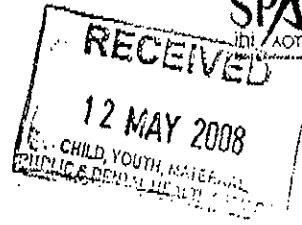






SPORT NORTHLAND

www.sportnorthland.co.nz
sportnorth@sportnorth.co.nz
More Northlanders Active



28 April 2008

The Mayor
Whangarei District Council
Private Bag 9023
WHANGAREI

COPY FOR YOUR
INFORMATION

THANKS TO
-SB
SPARC

Dear Sir

TOWARDS A SMOKEFREE KENSINGTON PARK

I am writing in support of the recommendation that Whangarei District Council (WDC) considers implementing an *educative* smoke-free policy for the whole of Kensington Park.

Our council plays a vital role in creating healthy public places that aligns with the WDC vision of creating a community that enjoys and treasures its natural and cultural values, a community that is healthy and educated - creating the ultimate living environment.

Smoking is the greatest single preventable cause of death and illness in New Zealand and accounts for 4,700 deaths each year. There is a high level of public support (96.5 %) for smokefree public places. 73% of New Zealanders with young children support the expansion of smokefree areas to outdoor areas that children use.

Many local authorities in New Zealand have successfully implemented smokefree policies for public places, including sports stadiums and grounds. AMI Stadium in Christchurch, Westpac Stadium in Wellington and Eden Park and Mt Smart Stadium in Auckland are significant examples. The Northland Hockey Stadium, ASB Leisure Centre and the netball pavilion are all smokefree sporting facilities located on Kensington Park, and Whangarei children are already playing sports on smokefree sports grounds within their schools.

A smoke-free policy for the whole of Kensington Park will provide smokefree role models for children and show them that smoking is not a 'normal' or acceptable behaviour. Where policies have been implemented in other areas in New Zealand, there has been no need for enforcement, as the focus has been on *public education*.

Dudley & Dennis Signs
Fullers Bay of Islands
Genesis Energy
Ken New Zealand Ltd
McBreen Jenkins
Mizone Sports Water
Pacific Motor Group
Pipeworks Northland
P Energy Ltd

Mr New Zealand
cs
Jrier Post
Milltechnology
Sen-i Northland
off Oliver Print
n Red
dio Network
Lowells Collision Repair
ettlers Hotel
arts
utors
Non-ll Advocate
rica Minolta Northland
nited Carriers

n Foundation
ord Sports Trust
Southern Trust
IZ Community Trust

North District Council
para District Council
Whangarei District Council
orth Tec
SPA
SSA



A smoke-free policy for the whole of Kensington Park creates a healthy environment and sends a strong message to the community that 'smoking and sport don't mix'.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Brent Eastwood', written over a horizontal line.

Brent Eastwood
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Similar letters of support were received from:

- Netball North
- Marist Sports Club
- Whangarei Junior Development Basketball Association
- Northland Hockey Association Inc
- Northland Cricket Association
- Northland Table Tennis Association
- Athletics Whangarei
- United Soccer 1
- CEO, Northland District Health Board
- Cancer Society Northland
- Royal New Zealand Plunket Society (Inc.)
- Health Promotion Advisor, Manaia Health
- Northland Hairdressing Training Centre
- Avonmore Tertiary Academy
- People Potential
- Youth Transition Services