

Sustainability Strategy

Whangārei Takiwa AROHATIA!

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Our Sustainability Strategy

PURPOSE

This is a sustainability strategy for Whangarei District Council (Council). The purpose of the Strategy is to set a decision-making framework and identify actions which will:

- align and coordinate actions across Council;
- improve behaviour and decision making in relation to climate change mitigation and sustainability across all areas of our operations;
- build on work programmes already underway and take new actions in a transitional manner within timeframes that maintain motivation;
- make us more efficient in the use of resources;
- show leadership and share information with our community on climate change mitigation and sustainable practices;
- help us prepare for the changes in the national climate change and waste programmes.

The intention is for this strategy to look at sustainability holistically. Acknowledging climate change is a serious environmental issue, mitigation is a key component of this strategy. The initial actions focus on raising awareness and then reducing our climate change impact.

PLANNING CONTEXT

This strategy is a non-statutory document that is designed to fit with and complement key strategies such as the Transport Strategy, Walking and Cycling Strategy, Waste Minimisation Plan and the Blue/ Green Network Strategy, direct implementation tools such as Asset Management Plans (AMPs) and inform the Long Term Plan.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

Council needs to be able to adapt and this strategy will be a living document to enable that. It is expected that this strategy will be reviewed annually to account for improvements in the information Council holds, the inclusion of more specific actions resulting from initial audits, international climate change commitments and developments in the nation's climate change programme. More substantial reviews will be undertaken every three years to support the development of the Long Term Plan.

Current challenges for the organisation

LIMITED KNOWLEDGE BASE

We have an incomplete picture of how Council uses resources and the organisation's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions footprint. We are inconsistent in considering factors such as how, or from where, resources are sourced and the social and environmental impact of product development. Council has an energy management system called eBench that is capable of tracking, analysing and reporting on the environmental impact of the organisations use of resources and the GHG footprint. Currently, only fuel consumption and electricity use is tracked in eBench while other common indicators such as gas, water, air miles, waste or recycling volumes and embedded energy in materials we use, are not. We have limited information to measure our current performance or our future emissions which needs to be a consideration for infrastructure investments, for example.

CREDIBLE TARGETS AND ACTIONS

To be most effective in reducing emissions, our actions should focus on the areas that will make the biggest impact which should be guided by knowledge of our current performance. Reliable and comprehensive information is needed to set relevant and achievable targets accompanied by an appropriate action plan. A common experience of local government in Australia is that the targets of emissions reduction, renewable energy and energy efficiency projects, were not met. A key lesson being that targets need to consider a council's ability to reduce emissions and the support of management and executive level staff to commit to meeting them.¹

RESOURCING

Staff acknowledge the value of a sustainability strategy and actions. There is a gap in terms of who will take the lead in researching and collating data and importantly, coordinating the delivery of the actions.

CHANGES IN THE NATIONAL PROGRAMMES FOR CLIMATE CHANGE AND WASTE

We are developing this strategy as the national programmes for both climate change and waste develop. There are some unknowns. For climate change mitigation for example, this includes the targets and reporting processes emitters will be required to follow. The commitments by successive governments to international agreements, most recently, the Paris Agreement and the intention of our Government to move toward a low emissions and climate resilient economy provides sufficient certainty that we will be better equipped to respond to future legislative requirements such as emissions reporting. In terms of waste, the Government's programme looks to tackle waste by considering options to better manage waste going into landfills, improving the gathering of data on waste and options to expand product stewardship schemes. By understanding our internal waste management practices, we can contribute to the national data collection and development of incentives for improved waste practices

¹ https://www.ipwea.org/blogs/intouch/2018/04/04/setting-emissions-reduction-targets-weve-been-doin

Local Government Context

Local and regional councils across New Zealand are recognising their responsibilities to reduce their GHG emissions and importantly, are taking action. Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) undertook a stocktake of emissions reduction approaches by local government across New Zealand. The survey responses demonstrate that significant work is underway in councils across the country to contribute to emissions reductions. The stocktake can be read here:

http://www.lgnz.co.nz/assets/Uploads/Stocktake-ofemissions-reduction-actions.pdf

WHERE DOES WHANGAREI DISTRICT COUNCIL FIT?

Whangarei District Council is ideally placed to make a meaningful contribution towards greater sustainability and reducing the GHG dependency of our organisation. Council is a large employer, consumer, customer, major owner of assets and a major energy user in a growing district with a unique natural environment. Across the country, there has been an increase in organisations including local authorities acknowledging their responsibility to reduce their contribution to GHG emissions and to act more sustainably. There is also an understanding that organisations will be responsible for the GHG emissions they produce. Corporate sustainability and climate change policies are common place in both the public and private sector because:

- they are recognised as responses to concerns around how an organisation can positively impact on wider social, environmental, economic and cultural outcomes;
- the strategies are an effective tool to deliver greater efficiency in how an organisation operates;
- they are tools contributing to meeting New Zealand's international climate change commitments;
- global efforts to reduce GHG emissions are increasing the focus on the policy approach to achieve this.

A summary of the great things that Whangarei District Council is already doing can be found in Appendix 1 of this strategy.

Benefits of a sustainable approach

For Whangarei District Council, this Strategy will deliver the following benefits:

LEADERSHIP

Council gets its own house in order, providing leadership to the community and empowering staff. Through this strategy, thought leaders, staff and the Strategic Leadership Team are encouraged to step up and show the way. We can demonstrate our commitment to global efforts to reduce climate change. Our decision-making and our staff behaviour reflects our vision and objectives. We are better placed for broader climate change discussions with our community.

COORDINATION

The strategy coordinates existing and future initiatives to reduce our emissions and make conscientious purchasing decisions and ensures we are putting our resources into the areas where we will see greatest impact. We can time actions in a transitional manner to reduce the likelihood of abrupt change. It also has a strong relationship to the direction set in other strategy and policy documents such as the Walking and Cycling Strategy, the Whangarei Waste Minimisation Plan, the Procurement Policy and the future Climate Change Adaptation Strategy. The Procurement Policy is of particular note as procurement is a significant activity for Council which has far reaching implications on the ability for staff to make good decisions and the organisation to meet its targets. The following Principles and Key Considerations included within the Procurement Policy align with and support this strategy:

- Thinking strategically and acting as one organisation
- Sustainability
- Encouraging local supply
- The value of relationships
- Ethical business practices

CONSISTENCY

The strategy will deliver a framework to ensure sustainability and climate change mitigation is considered consistently across all our decision making and can be given effect to by relevant strategies, plans and actions.

PARTNERSHIP

To deliver the outcomes of this strategy will require partnership and collaboration with our community. The knowledge and expertise which resides in our local hapu, iwi, business sector and community groups can assist in driving this strategy.

EFFICIENCY AND RISK

Council will be:

- informed and aware of the impacts of our organisation;
- more adaptable to meet its existing and future legislative obligations on climate change mitigation and waste management;
- · less exposed to rising energy, fuel and travel costs;
- better placed to phase out unsustainable practices before they become an issue of public concern and before the market changes.





Starting position

Council has some information about the organisation's energy and resource use and GHG emissions profile . However, the picture is incomplete. Council needs better knowledge of our current position and where opportunities lie in relation to Council functions to be certain of how the organisation is performing and can perform. By building our knowledge base we can make informed decisions. For example, with a detailed understanding of the GHG emissions of different Council functions, we can undertake a detailed cost-benefit analysis of the investments required to reduce Council emissions as a whole. If we are to decrease emissions across the organisation, a clear policy position needs to be taken by Council so that the investments in lowemissions technology can be made now, to allow for a gradual reduction of emissions over time.

Using eBench we are tracking 66 vehicles (petrol and diesel) with individual fuel information covering from 1 January 2017 to present. We have approximately 462 electricity meters, some data beginning in 2008 but full and complete data from 1 January 2009 at each meter that is loaded to e-Bench.



Council vision

To be a vibrant, attractive and thriving District.

Where is this Strategy taking us?

Council is a carbon neutral organisation which operates in a sustainable way.

Useful links

http://report.ipcc.ch/sr15/pdf/sr15_spm_ final.pdf

http://www.mfe.govt.nz/node/16597

http://www.mfe.govt.nz/node/16596

http://www.mfe.govt.nz/news-events/15000submissions-zero-carbon-bill-consultationpublicly-released

http://www.mfe.govt.nz/climate-change/weall-have-role-play/what-you-can-do-o

http://www.lgnz.co.nz/assets/Uploads/Draftsector-position-on-mitigation.pdf

http://www.lgnz.co.nz/assets/Uploads/ Climate-Change-A3-LGNZ4.pdf

http://www.lgnz.co.nz/assets/ Uploads/46628-LGNZ-Summary-of-Emission-Reduction-7-Proof-FINAL.pdf

https://www.westpac.co.nz/who-we-are/ sustainability-and-community/looking-afterour-environment/climate-change/climatechange-impact-report/

https://www.nzgbc.org.nz/ Story?Action=View&Story_id=275

http://www.mfe.govt.nz/climate-change/weall-have-role-play/what-you-can-do-o

Strategy outcomes

1. Awareness

Council has a clear understanding of the resources it uses including origin, quantity and lifecycle as well as the opportunities to reduce emissions and environmental impact.

2. Decision-making

Council will act to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve sustainability outcomes across all areas of operations.

Council decision-making will be guided by the principles of analyse, audit, improve and monitor; good governance; buy smarter; reduction and waste less.

3. Leadership and Engagement

Council shows leadership and shares its knowledge and learnings with the community.

4. Capacity

Council has the appropriate knowledge and resource to deliver its actions.

5. Efficiency

Council is resource efficient and practices the wise management of resources.

How will we get there?

There are two key methods for delivering this strategy:

DECISION-MAKING

The following framework should be used to guide decision-making across all of Council:

Audit, analyse, improve, monitor – the origin and consumption of the resources Council uses and identifying areas and opportunities for improvements.

Good governance – lead, promote and integrate environmental sustainability into the operations of Council.

Buy smarter – investments in low-emissions technology to allow for a gradual reduction of emissions over time. Achieve value for money on a whole-of-life basis and reduce environmental and social impacts through responsible and ethical procurement practices. We support local supply.

Reduction – in Council's organisational GHG emissions/carbon footprint. Exercise efficient and effective management of resource consumption across Council facilities. Make behavioural change easy.

Waste less – reduce waste and maximise opportunities for resource recovery through Council operations and use of renewable resources.

ACTION PLAN

This strategy is action orientated. Its outcomes and objectives will be delivered through an Action Plan. Each action supports a high-level cost benefit analysis. Further detailed analysis may be required as these projects are further developed. Known financial savings from operating more sustainably can be the greatest motivation for implementing sustainability strategies for some organisations.² Most actions are new and may require additional resourcing. This resource will be sought through future Annual and Long Term Plans as well as through central government funding initiatives.

The Action Plan focuses on:

- getting resources into the right areas that will help educate staff, analyse, coordinate and deliver;
- learning more about the organisation, how we use resources and the origin of the resource;
- identifying targets and focussing resources based on opportunity areas;
- embedding sustainability and climate change as a decision-making criteria across Council functions;
- · enabling behavioural change.

2 Personal communications with CSO of the Northland District Health Board.



Action Plan summary table

This is a summary of the key actions in this strategy. The actions cut across our business and include a mix of planning and information gathering tasks as well as more tangible operational projects. This a living document, as we find out more about how our organisation operates we redefine and re-prioritise these actions.

	Р	lanning	g		C	Outcom	e	
Action Summary	Short 2018-21	Medium 2021- 24	Long 2024-27	Awareness	Decision making	Leadership & Engagement	Capacity	Efficiency
Employ a Corporate Sustainability Officer								
Establish sustainability champions within Council								
Develop emissions inventory								
Undertake an audit of energy and water use								
Undertake an audit of our internal waste including hazardous waste and recycling								
Develop an energy and water use management programme								
Introduce energy and water saving devices where identified through audits and management programmes								
Include sustainable design and energy and water saving measures in upgrades to or new Council buildings								
Develop a waste management programme to avoid creating waste and reduce waste to landfill								
Zero waste events								
Promote sustainable travel options through a Green Travel Plan								
Develop a remote working policy								
Introduce sustainable procurement practices								
Introduce sustainable and ethically sourced materials, reduced emissions and waste outcomes in contractor management								
Direct Council's superannuation provider and any other investment portfolios to reduce funds exposure to fossil fuel reserves and carbon emissions.								
Reduce food miles and energy that goes into food production								
Reuse of material from demolition work for new builds / rebuilds.								
Proactive communication								
Promote sustainability through Council activities								
Participate and show leadership in climate change / sustainability networks and programmes								

Detailed Action Plan

1.0 RESOURCING:

We need staff within Council to undertake the data gathering, research and analysis required to understand our resource use and emissions profile; identify appropriate targets; coordinate internal action and lead specific components of this work.

1.1 Employ a Corporate Sustainability Officer

A Corporate Sustainability Officer (CSO) is an emerging position among many organisations. This position and associated teams help handle the complexities of becoming a 'green' organisation and recognise the potential financial savings to be gained. CSO positions are a vital part of research and implementation. While the organisation needs to take accountability and responsibility, the CSOs lead the way. Equivalent positions in some organisations have grown into teams. The Northland District Health Board (NDHB) has employed a CSO recognising the financial savings other DHBs have made. This position is not only about having the education and technical knowledge in sustainability but being able to lead and affect change. There is interest and support for the establishment of this position; it's seen as a valuable and influential part of the action plan. A CSO position in Council would include the following responsibilities:

- lead the research into our resource sourcing and use across Council's functions and the audit of GHG emissions in the delivery of our functions;
- support departments with identifying their consumption and emissions targets and lead the development of the organisation's targets;
- recommend suitable accreditation programmes for the organisation;
- · advocacy to central government;
- lead the review and further development of the strategy and action plan;
- guide key departments through procurement opportunities and expectations;
- be the key point of contact for the community regarding sustainability and climate change mitigation and lead proactive communication and education;
- investigate central government funding available for actions.

Who Leads?	Benefit	Cost
Corporate	Funding available Energy and water savings Leadership Coordination Innovation Knowledge Manage expectations	Neutral – based on savings from reduced resources used. Depending on savings made, the position could be cost positive.
Timeframe	Priority	Outcome
Short (underway)	High	1,2,3,4,5

1.2 Establish sustainability champions within Council

Sustainability champions in Council support the CSO by:

- promoting all aspects of this policy at a grassroots level;
- supporting behavioural change staff;
- providing advice on the relevance and appropriateness of sustainability targets.

Who Leads?	Benefit	Cost
Office of the Chief Executive	Leadership	Staff time
	Coordination	
	Innovation	
	Knowledge	
	Manage expectations	
Timeframe	Priority	Outcome
Short	High	1,2,3,4,5



2.0 LEARN, ANALYSE, COORDINATE AND DELIVER

Ahead of setting targets, Council needs to better understand:

- how resources are selected, sourced and used across all our functions;
- what our sources of emissions are;
- what investments we have made or will make that will alter our emissions profile in the future.

This will make sure we are best placed to put forward meaningful and achievable targets. Reducing emissions, energy and water use, and using renewable energy sources are outcomes in iwi and hapū environmental management plans.

2.1 Develop emissions inventory

Use the inventory as baseline to guide our performance. Assess carbon emissions including planned and future emissions that will result from scheduled infrastructure renewals and asset upgrades. Measure and report annually. Identify opportunities for reducing and off-setting emissions.



Who Leads?	Benefit	Cost
Corporate	Knowledge	Cost of monitoring and recording
Infrastructure	Identify opportunities	Staff time
	Build momentum through	Cost of accreditation programme
	relationships	Manage expectations
	Funding available	Cost of renewable infrastructure
	Share learnings	
	International recognition	
	Access to efficient and credible measurement, recording and monitoring programmes	
	Greater resilience to rising energy supply costs and concerns about availability	
	Carbon offsetting	
Timeframe	Priority	Outcome
Short – and ongoing	High	1,2, 3, 4, 5

2.2 Undertake an audit of energy and water use

Cutting energy and water use lifts Council's environmental performance. Reducing operating costs frees up capital for other areas such as investment in low emissions technology. According to EECA, companies with energy management programmes generally achieve far greater savings than those without, because they review and manage energy use across the whole organisation, on an ongoing basis. This enables the wise management of ratepayer's funds. Additionally, energy efficiency is one of the most cost-effective ways to reduce the organisation's carbon footprint. Switching to renewable energy can help to reduce emissions even further. Christchurch City Council has recently set itself a target of becoming net carbon neutral by 2030 and this year achieved Energy-Mark Gold certification and CEMARS certification which demonstrates its energy management and greenhouse gas management work.

This action will include:

 undertaking an energy audit of Council buildings, facilities and infrastructure assets to identify opportunities to reduce consumption, opt for products with lower embedded energy or move to low emissions technology;



• apply for funding through EECA to support the audit, review and monitoring of energy use as well as developing energy plans.

Who Leads?	Benefit	Cost
Corporate	Knowledge	Cost of monitoring and recording
Infrastructure	Identify opportunities	Staff time
	Build momentum through	Cost of accreditation programme
	relationships	Manage expectations
	Funding available	Cost of renewable infrastructure
	Share learnings	
	International recognition	
	Access to efficient and credible measurement, recording and monitoring programmes	
	Greater resilience to rising energy supply costs & concerns about availability	
	Carbon offsetting	
Timeframe	Priority	Outcome
Short – and ongoing	High	1, 2, 3, 4

2.3 Undertake an audit of our internal waste including hazardous waste and recycling

The Whangarei Waste Minimisation Plan (WWMP) aims toward zero waste to landfill and recognises waste as a resource. The WWMP acknowledges that simple actions like buying what you need, reusing as much as you can and composting garden waste really make a difference. This strategy puts Council in a position to operate in accordance with the outcomes we promote. Waste minimisation is consistent with protecting cultural values of tangata whenua. At the moment, there is a lack of information and tools to assess how Council is performing but from a staff perspective, the organisation can do better. Many national businesses with a local presence have comprehensive waste management and recycling systems in place. Countdown operates a waste management system where some material is recovered and recycled (paper and cardboard), organic material (food waste) is diverted to animal feed with only residual waste disposed of at local landfill. Foodstuffs (New World and Pak n Save), the Warehouse and Fonterra all operate similar systems and Council can too. This involves:

undertaking corporate waste audits to identify opportunities and problem areas.

Note: These actions work together with the Procurement policy and the procurement actions within this document in particular the cleaning contract implementation.

Who Leads?	Benefit	Cost
Corporate	Knowledge	Staff time
Infrastructure	Relevant targets	Accreditation costs
	Share learnings	Exposure to criticism
Timeframe	Priority	Outcome
Short-and ongoing	High	1,2,3,4



2.4 Develop an energy and water use management programme

Following the audit from Action 2.2:

- investigate subscribing to environmental programmes, tools and certification for implementation by the organisation such as CEMARS (Certified Emissions Measurement And Reduction Scheme) and Enviromark certification;
- set targets for reduction of energy and water use and monitor and report annually on targets through the Annual Report process;
- work with energy companies and power distributors to understand how the market and industry are evolving, particularly with the New Zealand Energy Strategy 2011-2021 in mind. This will guide the infrastructure and power use set up that the organisation establishes influencing power savings, financial savings and energy security;
- investigate reduction and off-setting options as Council progresses toward carbon neutral operations. Off-setting options can be coordinated with other Council functions such as the Council open space and recreation operations and streetscape revitalisation projects. There is the

potential for urban adaptations of Government's Permanent Forest Sink Initiative (PFSI) to complement the Blue/ Green Network Strategy actions. Council could also take advantage of carbon credits for the planting of native species in appropriate locations. The Government want to plant one billion trees over 10 years (100 million trees per year over 10 years) to support achieving national

climate change commitments. The Northland climate supports faster tree growth than other regions meaning trees in Northland can sequester carbon quicker. There is the potential for Council to collaborate with central government and meet national, regional and local goals around carbon sequestration, food production and regional economic growth.

Who Leads?	Benefit	Cost
Corporate	Energy and water savings	Cost of monitoring and recording
Infrastructure	Lower running costs	Staff time
	Lower environmental impact	Cost of accreditation programme
	Carbon off-setting	Manage expectations
	Carbon sequestration	Cost of seedlings purchased (if any)
	Funding available	
	International recognition	
	Access to efficient and credible measurement, recording and monitoring programmes	
	Greater resilience to rising energy supply costs and concerns about availability	
	Economic development	
Timeframe	Priority	Outcome
Short – ongoing	High	1,2, 3, 4, 5

2.5 Introduce energy and water saving devices where identified through audits and management programmes

- Replace existing infrastructure and appliances with energy efficient models at the end of their lifespans.
- Switch to energy efficient lighting in Councilowned buildings.
- Implement water saving devices and methods

where appropriate, including the installation of rain water tanks or the use of treated water to irrigate open space areas, public spaces, and streetscape planting.

• Support the Water Services department in their programme to prioritise network repairs which reduce leaks in District infrastructure.

Who Leads?	Benefit	Cost
Corporate	Energy and water savings	Cost of fixtures and fittings
Infrastructure	Lower running costs	
	Lower environmental impact	
	Organisational satisfaction	
Timeframe	Priority	Outcome
Medium (underway)	High	1,2,3,4, 5



2.6 Include sustainable design and energy and water saving measures in upgrades to, or building of new, Council buildings

According to the New Zealand Energy Strategy 2011-21, energy efficient commercial building design and building materials offer major opportunities for energy savings over a building's life. Council's 'One Building' project presents a massive opportunity to demonstrate leadership in this area and make long term energy and water savings. NDHB's new building may be constructed around the same time which opens other opportunities around coordination and purchasing power. This action should involve the following:

- investigating environmental performance accreditation for new Council buildings;
- investigating Green Roof options for existing and new buildings owned by Council;
- the choice of construction material should depend on its benefits and performance over its life cycle

 assets should aim to use materials with lower embodied energy³
- ensuring use of energy-efficient, water re-use and water saving devices and sustainable materials in upgrades to all Council-owned property;

- remove the need for refrigerants⁴ in new buildings;
- apply for funding through EECA for the cost of getting expert advice on the design and construction of public buildings;
- when building new facilities for the organisation, design multi-functional, adaptable buildings enabling the co-location of other Council functions;
- investigate investing in renewable energy infrastructure for in-house power consumption including the charging of the electric vehicle fleet. Northland Regional Council (NRC) has installed solar panels on the roof of its Water Street building generating more power than the building consumes. The national target by 2025 is for 90 percent of electricity to be generated from renewable sources.
- Our networks and relationships established through Action 5.0 will help guide these projects.

Who Leads?	Benefit	Cost
Corporate	Energy and water savings	Potential higher cost at outlay of 0%
Infrastructure	Lower running costs Lower environmental impact Greater productivity Higher return of investments Funding and support available	- 20% However, there are national examples of sustainable buildings that have been constructed at comparative costs to standard buildings Manage expectations
	Adaptable buildings Greater resilience to rising energy supply costs and concerns about availability Leadership Better working environment Greater staff wellbeing	Cost of renewable infrastructure Cost of accreditation
Timeframe	Priority	Outcome
Medium	High	1,2,3,4,5

³ Embodied energy is the energy consumed by all of the processes associated with the production of the material

⁴ A refrigerant is a chemical used in cooling systems for mechanical devices such as refrigerators, walk-in freezers, or air conditioners.

2.7 Develop a waste management programme to avoid creating waste and reduce waste to landfill

- Investigate subscribing to environmental programmes, tools and certification that audits waste practices such as Ecostar.
- Set targets for waste reduction and increased recycling and monitor and report annually on targets through the Annual Report process included in Action 2.3.
- Use the procurement process to ensure our suppliers and contractors are working to support these targets.
- Encourage Council tenants to improve waste practices. Some tenants have high customer volumes increasing the scale of change possible.
- Prioritise purchasing products of recycled content including paper, toilet paper and serviettes.
- Commit to reducing the amount of non-recyclable and non-biodegradable material used by Council, including the use of number 5 plastics, polystyrene cups, packaging materials etc.
- Where plastic purchases are necessary, choose options from recycled plastic products. Air New Zealand have committed to removing 14 single use plastic items from their supply chain over the next 12 months.
- Encourage staff to use reusable containers and cups when buying food and drinks locally - offering staff travel mugs at induction or to purchase

at cost price. This initiative could also have an economic development component. Reducing single cup use is a key initiative within the CitySwitch Green Office Program in Australia.

- Collect and use our food waste. This may include food waste systems in staff areas such as a worm farm, bokashi bins or composting.
- Investigate food waste options at public facing Council buildings including i-sites, libraries etc.
- Make recycling easier for staff replace individual staff office bins with full recycling options in shared office spaces.
- Provide a battery collection point in Libraries and Council office buildings.
- Investigate recycling options at public facing Council buildings including i-sites, libraries etc.
- Upcycle old uniforms.
- Use less paper by:
 - monitoring printing use across the business to assess which areas use the most paper
 - encouraging soft copy distribution of documentation
 - supporting staff to work remotely and in a paperless manner by providing tools such as tablets or laptops. This action connects with Action 2.10 to develop a remote working policy.

Who Leads?	Benefit	Cost
Corporate	Waste disposal and catering savings	Cost of monitoring and recording
Infrastructure	Rent savings Lower environmental impacts Credible monitoring tools Organisational satisfaction Leadership Lower impact on cultural values Financial savings to staff with reduced prices for coffee Reuse of material for organisational functions Providing clothing to those in need	Staff time Cost of accreditation programme Manage expectations Greater demand on IT mechanisms
Timeframe	Priority	Outcome
Short - ongoing	High	1,2,3,4,5

2.8 Zero waste events

Council has a relationship and is sometimes a partner with the organisers of regular Whangarei events such as the Growers Market and the Night Food Market. This means Council is well placed to start conversations and identify shared values with the event organisers; and may be able to offer resources or facilitate change towards zero waste events. More detailed steps within this action include:

- investigating ways to reduce the GHG and waste profile of our corporate events;
- using reusable or biodegradable cutlery;
- On-site sorting of waste at events. This infrastructure is already supplied by a local provider and can be hired to event organisers;

- strengthen the relationship with Food Rescue Northland and other similar organisations to collect and distribute excess food that is safe to eat;
- require waste minimisation strategies in event management plans for activities using Council facilities and land starting with Council internal events;
- through the role as the consenting authority and owner of public spaces, influence more sustainable outcomes by permit or land use applicants;
- sponsoring a 'Greenest Street' Award.

Who Leads?	Benefit	Cost
Venues and Events	Energy and water savings	Staff time
Social Club	Lower environmental impact	Cost of recycling systems
	Feeding those in need	Possible costs of collection and
	Reduced waste	disposal processes
	Reduce rubbish disposal costs (off site)	Potential costs for amendment to contractor sourcing policy
	Relationship building	
	Positive publicity	
	Leadership	
Timeframe	Priority	Outcome
Short (on-going)	High	1,2,3,5



2.9 Promote sustainable travel options through a Green Travel Plan

Within New Zealand, transport is the second largest contributor of emissions and is one of the largest and fastest growing sources of emissions. The transport system is dominated by private road transport. Compared to other developed countries, vehicle ownership rates are high, public transport use is low, and the vehicle fleet is old with poor fuel economy. Rapid population growth, along with a decline in prices for fossil-fuel vehicles, has been associated with a rapidly expanding light-vehicle fleet.

Reducing transport-related emissions is an outcome sought in iwi and hapū environmental management plans. Transport is also a sector where loweremissions alternatives to fossil-fuel vehicles are both available (eg, public transport, active transport, trains) and emerging (eg, electric and other lowemission vehicles), and where there is scope to improve the efficiency of vehicle use.

Council is making incremental changes impacting daily operations. Opportunities identified in this section aim to further reduce transport emissions and transport costs related to staff commuting and transport modes used while at work.

Addressing sustainable staff transport initiatives including:

- walking;
- cycling;
- ride sharing: a ride sharing system could be a 'quick win' in this action. Simply providing the platform for staff to connect with other employees commuting or wider commuters, could kick start this. There are existing platforms such as Chariot which offer both personal and corporate ride sharing. Council could adopt an existing platform or create a simple new one;



- electric vehicles: EVs offer promising opportunities for New Zealand, but uptake faces several barriers such as high prices relative to fossilfuel vehicles, anxiety about their limited travel range, and poor public understanding of their benefits. This action could include enabling staff to use the EVs overnight or during the weekend to educate them in their use. Council could facilitate discounted prices for staff wanting to purchase EVs. Whangarei was recently recognised as the 'most EV friendly city in New Zealand' – it would be great to capitalise on this profile and maintain our leadership in this area;
- support for car-sharing initiatives such as YooGo.

Who Leads?	Benefit	Cost
Corporate	Lower environmental impact	Staff time
Infrastructure	Lower cumulative carbon footprint	
C.E's Office: People & Capability.	Greater living affordability for staff	
	Less pressure on roads	
	Less demand for parking	
	Greater staff wellbeing	
Timeframe	Priority	Outcome
Short – ongoing	High	1,2,3,4,5

2.10 Develop a remote working policy

The nature of some staff roles means they can be working from varied locations while still needing access to the tools and information that support their work. It is vital to Council operations and staff productivity that the organisation enables this way of working and recognises that the formal workplace might not be the most sustainable location in some instances. This intention must not compromise the well-being and life balance of staff by expecting staff to be available for Council business in unreasonable circumstances. Support staff to work remotely and in a paper less manner by providing tools such as tablets or laptops. This action connects with Action 2.7 to minimise paper use across the organisation.

Who Leads?	Benefit	Cost
C.E's Office: People and Capability	Greater productivity	Manage expectations
	Greater staff wellbeing	Costs of improved IT capability
Timeframe	Priority	Outcome
Medium	Medium	1,2,3,4,5



3.0 PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

Council is a large-scale purchaser in Whangarei being a local authority with one of the largest employee populations in the District. Accordingly, our choices and actions matter. Every product has an environmental impact. Council can use its purchasing power to positively influence the supply chain, encourage a circular economy and make significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. Sustainable procurement means reviewing the items and services Council buys regularly, selecting ones with lower environmental and social impact and only buying what we need.



Our procurement practices can save money, improve

employee wellbeing, and improve environmental credentials. Sustainability champions working together across Council will collectively build knowledge of the needs and functions of different departments. Central Government's procurement reform provides one important lever to support public sector agencies in making energy efficient choices in the purchase and lease of energy efficient products.

We have the opportunity to support locally produced goods and local suppliers of services as a key way to grow the local economy and reduce GHG emissions. Ethical purchasing is also a key consideration. Ensuring that the products we buy, invest in or services we need are ethically based and support initiatives such as Fairtrade.

3.1 Introduce sustainable procurement practices

- Ensure the Procurement Policy includes sustainability and reducing greenhouse gas emissions as decision-making criteria. These guidelines should also refer to the outcomes of audits in Actions 2.2 and 2.3.
- The principles of analyse, audit, improve and monitor; good governance; buy smarter; reduction and waste less guide decision making within Council.
- Prioritise electric vehicle procurement and transition to an electric fleet (where practicable).

- Use power companies creating electricity through renewable energy.
- Use lower impact cleaning products where appropriate.
- Use cleaning companies that use lower impact cleaning products across Council functions from office locations to the cleaning of fleet cars.
- Consider materials with low embedded energy for construction and infrastructure.
- Consider ethical procurement decision to support Fairtrade.

Who Leads?	Benefit	Cost
Corporate	Lower environmental impact	Relationships
	Lower cumulative carbon footprint	Staff time
	Reduced waste	
Timeframe	Priority	Outcome
Review underway - Short	High	1,2,3,4,5

3.2 Introduce sustainable and ethically sourced materials, reduced emissions and waste outcomes in contractor management

- Encourage an approach to tenders and procurement that has non-price attributes related to reduced GHG emissions and sustainability.
 We will advise our contractors that we are encouraging this approach to be included in tenders and contract documents. This could include: creating a supplier code of conduct that includes sustainability measures and ethically sourced materials and outline the best practice behaviours we expect from suppliers.
- Ensure that levels of service are clearly specified and monitored in relation to corporate cleaning contracts. For example, emptying of recycling bins, introduction of compostable rubbish bags.
- Encourage the services operating out of Council owned buildings such as the Library café and i-Site centres to reward sustainable customer behaviour such as bringing their own cup or travel mugs etc.
- Use relationships to positively influence tenants and business operators toward behaviours that reduce their GHG emissions and improve waste management outcomes.

Who Leads?	Benefit	Cost
Corporate	Lower environmental impact	Relationships
	Lower cumulative carbon footprint	Staff time
	Reduced waste	Potential costs for amendment to
	Knowledge	contractor sourcing policy
	Leadership	Manage expectations
Timeframe	Priority	Outcome
Medium	High	2,3,4,5

3.3 Direct Council's Superannuation provider and any other investment portfolios to reduce funds exposure to fossil fuel reserves and carbon emissions

Who Leads?	Benefit	Cost
Corporate	Leadership	Relationships
	Lower environmental impact	Staff time
	Lower cumulative carbon footprint	Manage expectations
	Staff wellbeing	
	Organisational satisfaction	
Timeframe	Priority	Outcome
Long	Medium	3,4

3.4 Reduce food miles and energy that goes into food production

Of the seven sector clusters researched by Project Drawdown⁵, the Food Sector was identified as being capable of generating the greatest reduction of carbon dioxide. As explained by Manaaki Whenua, Landcare Research, there is a significant body of research exploring the links between food production, transport, energy use and emissions. Many studies underline the worldwide trend of increasing volumes of food being transported longer distances, with obvious consequences in increased energy use and emissions (particularly CO₂) and higher vulnerability of the food-supply chain. The longer the distance food travels, the higher the level of food-processing and packaging required generating greater emissions. Other environmental impacts identified include: loss of land and agricultural biodiversity, and greater use of chemicals required in food transit and storage.

- prioritise purchasing locally grown and produced whole foods and food products
- use menus with an emphasis on locally produced and plant based foods for Council events.

Who Leads?	Benefit	Cost
Corporate	Energy, water and financial savings	Staff time
	Lower running costs	Foods not available seasonally
	Lower environmental impact	Potentially limited supplies
	Strengthen local economy	Less support for the economies of
	Healthier food	developing nations
	Organisational satisfaction	
Timeframe	Priority	Outcome
Medium	Medium	1,2,3,4,5

3.5 Reuse of material from demolition work for new builds and rebuilds.

Reuse construction material and fittings where possible in Council driven construction projects. Reducing construction waste has been identified as game changing in terms of improving sustainable practice. The Central Rail Link (CRL) project in Auckland is striving for zero waste to landfill which is an exciting challenge as construction and demolition waste represents a significant portion of waste to landfill. The CRL is a major project from which Council and the NDHB could refer to for guidance particularly around procurement and tendering processes. Both organisations will be embarking on major build projects in the next 10 years.

Who Leads?	Benefit	Cost
Corporate	Lower cumulative carbon footprint	Possible costs of collection, storage
Infrastructure	Lower waste	and disposal processes
	Lower environmental impact from sourcing material	Potential costs for amendment to contractor sourcing policy
	Financial savings	
Timeframe	Priority	Outcome
Medium	High	1,2,3,4,5

⁵ https://www.drawdown.org/

4.0 COMMUNICATION

Proactive communication that promotes climate change mitigation and sustainable behaviour, including through Council activities and events.

4.1 Proactive communication

Staff will be made aware of Council's sustainability and emissions reduction commitments and the benefits of our actions. Staff will be supported by:

- making training opportunities and events available to relevant staff, particularly group and activity managers of major GHG-emitting activities;
- improving accessibility and timeliness of data delivery to relevant staff;
- reporting of emissions via formal performance monitoring systems;

- providing training on Council's sustainability principles as part of an induction programme for all new staff;
- intranet articles about certification, reduction targets and successful emission-reduction actions.

The community will be made aware of Council's emission reduction commitment and actions by:

- making emission inventories and management and reduction plans available on Council's website;
- sharing our journey in communication channels such as regular updates on the website, social media, newspaper and radio slots.

Who Leads?	Benefit	Cost
Corporate	Manage expectations	Manage expectations
	Coordination	Staff time
	Knowledge	
	Share learnings	
	Organisational satisfaction	
	Structured supported approach that builds awareness as work progresses	
Timeframe	Priority	Outcome
Short	High	3,4



4.2 Promote sustainability through Council activities

- Include a food producing and community garden element to open space areas. Wellington City Council teamed up with the Sustainability Trust to enable the planting and care of fruit trees in public places, schools and childcare centres to provide easy access to fresh healthy fruit. The partnership was intended to overcome barriers that hamper the planting and care of fruit trees in public places.
- Promote a 'green' book of the month at libraries supported by free demonstrations and presentations or workshops.

- Promote reusable library bags.
- Include sustainability information, including climate change mitigation on Council's public website.
- Offer biodegradable dog litter bags with registrations.
- Promote walking meetings and walking to meetings.
- Support physical activity and rehabilitation for staff.

Who Leads?	Benefit	Cost
All	Leadership Feeding those in need Reduced food waste Greater staff wellbeing Lower environmental impact Marketing opportunity	Depends of the activities implemented Manage expectations Staff time Possible costs of collection and disposal processes
Timeframe	Priority	Outcome
Medium	Low	3,4,5

5.0 NETWORKS AND PARTNERSHIPS

5.1 Participate and show leadership in climate change and sustainability networks and programmes

Create an integrated and co-ordinated approach to Council's membership in environmental networks and programmes such as Keep NZ Beautiful and Whangarei Fairtrade District. These networks could also be at a central or local government level and include corporate networks such as the Northland Sustainability Network or the Green Building Network. Council can work with key industry players, creating opportunities through current environmental issues such as energy generation through wood waste residue (from the forest logging operations), dairy effluent and other animal farming operations.

Who Leads?	Benefit	Cost
Corporate	Leadership	Staff time
	Coordination	
	Innovation	
	Knowledge	
	Access to standardised methodologies; quantification tools	
	International learning	
	Structured supported approach that builds awareness as work progresses	
Timeframe	Priority	Outcome
Short and ongoing	Medium	3,4

IMPLEMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

- The Chief Executive will ensure that all staff are aware of and understand their responsibilities under this strategy.
- Council will maintain an organisational culture and systems that protect and enhance natural resources and promote progress toward sustainability.
- Council will support the activities of nominated 'sustainability champions' – members of staff with a strong interest in, and enthusiasm for, sustainability outcomes. Their role within Council will include promoting all aspects of this policy at a grass-roots level.
- Council will seek to identify best practice when undertaking sustainable management under the Resource Management Act 1991, and when promoting sustainability under the Local Government Act 2002 and other legislation.
- Council will maintain processes, as described in related Action Plans, by which elected members and managers are kept informed of activities occurring under the umbrella of this Strategy.
- Council will work in a partnering way with other agencies, community groups and tangata whenua to achieve the aims of this Strategy.
- Council will promote sustainable practices amongst suppliers, contractors, Council Controlled Organisations and other partners.
- Council will recognise, celebrate and reward achievement, in order to promote a more sustainable organisation.
- Funding and resourcing needs will inform the development of the Annual and Long Term Plans to make sure the organisation has the capacity to undertake the Action Plan, apply the decision making framework in day to day operations and meet its vision.

REPORTING

Progress on implementing this strategy will be included in Council's Annual Report and in developing the Long Term Plan. Reporting will note current performance based on available information.



Appendix 1: How is Council currently doing?

The Action Plan coordinates existing initiatives to promote sustainability within Council. It is encouraging that there is already a lot happening. Simple but effective actions include at desk paper recycling; food waste bins and recycling bins in some office lunch rooms; multi-use Central Library building development; re-useable library bags; and passive solar heating in some areas of Botanica Whangarei. Below are the stories of some of the initiatives underway.

INTRODUCING ELECTRIC VEHICLES TO THE FLEET

In April 2017 Council passed a notice of motion which included moving to adopt an 'electric first' vehicle policy. Since then a vehicle procurement policy and vehicle replacement programme has been developed. The policy and programme are designed to ensure the Council transitions the fleet to EVs over time, while ensuring all vehicles are fit for purpose and maintained in an efficient operating condition, having regard to the overall lifetime cost of ownership. In all circumstances, an EV or electric/ hybrid vehicle is the preferred option, provided other requirements are met. Staff have partnered with Northland Regional Council to develop funding applications to the Low Emission Vehicle Contestable Fund. To date, Northpower have provided much of the assistance with infrastructure for EVs in Whangarei.

At the time of writing, Council has four EVs. With the most recent arrival of three EVs, three petrol vehicles were disposed of from the fleet. Three new fast charging EV chargers were installed in Walton Plaza. The research and actions in this area by the Business Support team are very positive. Efficient and low emissions transport is one of the three priority areas identified in the New Zealand Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy 2017-22 (NZEECS).

FAIRTRADE DISTRICT

In 2017 Whangarei District Council was awarded certification by Fairtrade Association of Australia and New Zealand recognising it as one of four Fairtrade councils in New Zealand and the first Fairtrade District in New Zealand.

ENERGY AUDITING AND OFF-SETTING

Water services have some records of the carbon footprint from plant operation across the District. The carbon footprint has also been informally assessed against the off-setting credits provided by forestry on Council-owned land in water catchments. While there are limitations in the available records this exercise shows there is already an awareness of the opportunities for off-setting.

ENERGY MANAGEMENT SERVICES & SOFTWARE

ENERGY TS⁶ is a Wellington based firm assisting Council with energy management consulting, energy auditing, energy contract procurement, power factor analysis, tariff reviews and carbon emission reporting. As part of the contract with ENERGY TS, a limited number of Council staff currently receive monthly reporting outlining energy usage, costs, CO₂ emissions, and water usage. Council has access and use of the two ENERGY TS software platforms, e-Bench® and e-Calc[™]. e-Bench helps users manage and reduce their energy use, carbon emissions and water usage. e-Calc helps users quantify the payback of energy, water and waste initiatives.

Feedback from staff recognises the potential of the system to support the organisation's efforts to reduce climate change and carbon. However, staff feel the system is not being used to its full potential and that a person or team should be trained to learn the tools and maximise the benefits..

Internal It is acknowledged by EECA that Council is off to a good start having a system like e-Bench within our toolkit.

SHIFTS FROM FLUORESCENT TO LED LIGHTING

Where possible the Business Support team have switched office lights from fluorescent to LED. This has mainly been a market led improvement rather than a sustainability measure but is positive nonetheless.

OFFICE FURNITURE REUSE

Business Support actively repairs and refurbishes office furniture where feasible. This minimises unnecessary waste.

WASTE WATER INFRASTRUCTURE COORDINATION

The Waste and Drainage Team have improved the operational potential of the network when upgrading some parts of the pipe network. For example, by laying pipes to enable treated water to be disposed via land as opposed to water. In doing so, the network has better capability and raises the quality of environmental and cultural outcomes. Such as, cleansing treated waste water through Papatuanuku is a preferred method to tiaki, care, for our environment over discharges to water.

KIOREROA WASTE WATER TREATMENT PLANT

A biogas generator was recently installed at the Kioreroa waste water treatment plant. The biogas generator has been operating for just under 12 months and is fuelled by the methane produced by microbes that digest organic waste. Prior to its installation, the methane produced needed to be 'flared', or burned to get rid of it. This flaring process released methane and heat into the atmosphere which are both negative outcomes. Now, the gas is used to produce 70 kw of electricity at 30-40% efficiency with the remainder heating the plant boilers via a heat exchange unit. A further 50-80 kw of heat is produced from this process. Energy providers say the biogas generator is saving the collective grid so much power that contributions to the installation of another biogas generator have been offered. The energy savings to the grid have also been the catalyst for discussions around the installation of an EV charging station on Kioreroa Road. This aligns with the NZEECS which identifies renewable and efficient use of process heat as a priority area.

LANDFILL

Decomposing material within the Puwera landfill generates gas. The gas is able to be captured and used for energy. Council and Northland Waste (jointventure partners in the landfill) are assessing options to sell the gas for energy or to use it for Council operations. Both options are positive. Puwera landfill gas generation could be developed as a model for other landfills.

Council is a joint owner of the Puwera landfill. By retaining part ownership, Council has a strong influence over waste management practices.

PROCUREMENT

Procurement is a key method of positively impacting the sustainability outcomes of the organisation. The Procurement Policy was adopted in October 2018. The policy includes new principles such as sustainability and encouraging local supply and key considerations such as ethical business

WASTE WATER DISPOSAL – SAVING POTABLE WATER

Treated wastewater from the Kioreroa waste water treatment plan has been used to water plants sold at the neighbouring Alter-Natives plant store. The store operators were formerly using potable water for their plants. Now, the operators pay Council a fee for the water supplied which includes nutrients benefitting the plants. This experimental arrangement saves precious drinking water, reduces the volume of treated wastewater being discharged to water ways and has financial benefits for both the plant store operators and Council.

ISSP – BACK SCANNING AND A DAY FORWARD INITIATIVES

Historic and current day paper records of Council business are now being scanned and retained as digital copies. This improves the security and accessibility of Council files and reduces the physical space needed to store archived files. The project, known as A Day Forward, began in early 2018 and will reduce the generation of paper based records. Online application forms that can be manipulated easily are an example of reducing paper copies being generated.

CEMETERY SPRAY REDUCTION

Spray is a key method of weed control in the Whangarei cemeteries. Staff have achieved Green Flag accreditation for reducing weed spray dependency by planting low growing grasses and perennials. Three other open space locations in Whangarei have Green Flag accreditation.

REGIONAL NETWORKING

The Northland Sustainability Network is comprised of representatives from organisations across the region such as the Northland District Health Board (DHB), NRC, and the Loop Bicycle operators. It supports the sharing of sustainability learnings with each other and helps build regional momentum.







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