

Draft Annual Plan 2022 Submission

To the Wellington City Council

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May 2022

Wellington City Youth Council

Te Rūnanga Taiohi o te Kaunihera o Pōneke

We wish to appear in person to support our submission.

Contact person:

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Introduction

1. The Wellington City Youth Council (Youth Council) welcomes the opportunity to submit on the Annual Plan.
2. The submission by Youth Council on the Annual Plan will address the following topics:
 - a. The future of Pōneke's City Housing
 - b. The future of the Southern Landfill.

Main Messages

The future of City Housing

- The Youth Council **appreciates** that the current city housing model is financially unsustainable, risking unaffordable rents for tenants and costs for Council.
- Youth Council **agrees** with the Council's preferred option to have a housing provider that's owned as a trust. We support the option primarily because a CHP would be able to access Income Rent Related Subsidies which will make a positive difference for some of the most vulnerable Wellingtonians, but we also have also suggested some important aspects of any CHP model.

The future of Southern Landfill

- Youth Council **supports** the piggyback option as its preferred option for waste management.
- Youth Council believes this is the best option available currently for environmental outcomes until a national waste management plan is implemented, opening opportunities for further waste minimisation and exploration of incineration or other options.

The Future of City Housing

3. The Youth Council welcomes WCC's prioritisation of City Housing in the Annual Plan. We see City Housing as an important mechanism to meaningfully support lower-income Wellingtonians to meet rising accommodation costs.
4. Youth Council is particularly concerned that young people living in City Housing are charged affordable rent and are provided safe and hygienic living conditions, and that more people

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are supported by social housing as soon as possible. This requires a financially sustainable housing model.

5. Youth Council endorses WCC's preferred option (B) as the best balance of priorities: because -

- a. enabling access to the Income-Related Rent Subsidy (IRRS) is a valuable outcome of option B as the saved money can be used to maintain, upgrade, and expand social housing
 - b. maintaining ownership and some influence through appointments and funding allocations retains a degree of democratic control and alignment of the CHP with public/Council priorities.
6. However, it is important that democratic accountability and support for tenants is maintained and strengthened under a CHP model in a way that is easily navigated by tenants.
7. The Youth Council acknowledges the complexity of the issue, but has concerns about the other options. Specifically,
- a. Not establishing a CHP would risk unnecessary financial burden on WCC in the absence of an extension of the IRRS to Council-operated housing which would, in turn, hinder WCC's ability to maintain, upgrade, and expand social housing.
 - b. dividing maintenance responsibilities under a partnership model with a CHP would likely be challenging for tenants to navigate and potentially be inefficient
 - c. fully transferring ownership could risk other fiscal calls on WCC that are important to young Wellingtonians, such as housing and transport infrastructure.
8. Youth Council also impresses the urgency of other housing-related reforms to make housing more affordable across the board so that more people can afford private rental accommodation or homeownership.

The Future of the Southern Landfill

9. Youth Council supports the Council's preferred option of a new landfill on top of the current landfill.

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10. The issue of where to put our waste is complex. Youth Council employs an environment-focused approach when considering which approach is best for the future of the Southern Landfill.
11. Youth Council supports this option because
- once a sludge minimisation facility is in place, waste minimisation can be properly focussed on in alignment with Te Atakura and the regional Waste Management and Minimisation Plan,
 - an incineration plant would require a minimum tonnage of waste, going against waste minimisation goals,
 - sending waste to another facility outside the city would result in higher emissions from transport and does not sit well with us owning the waste we produce as a city,
 - this will maintain the current self-sustaining model,
 - Until the Central Government has a nationwide plan for waste disposal and minimisation, this is the best interim option for Wellington.

Other Matters

Overdue library charges

12. The Youth Council is very supportive of the proposed removal of library overdue fees. We believe there are significant benefits young people gain from use of library goods and services and that the accumulation of library fees can be a significant barrier to future engagement with libraries.

Encroachment fees

13. The Youth Council does not have a clear position on the proposed increase of encroachment fees due to the complex nature of the issue. We are wary of the potential for further rate increases to contribute to rent increases, but also of the potential for encroachment fee increases to do the same, particularly for some rental apartments with balconies.

14. Youth Council wishes to speak to our submission in person if this can be accommodated.

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