**WDC Long Term Plan 2018–2028**

**Public Consultation**

Smokefree Outdoor Public Spaces

Whangarei District Council could use Smokefree to develop a point of difference to grow our district by being responsive to community needs/wants with regard to smoking.

WDC could take a leadership role in Whangarei District being Smokefree by 2025. In application, this will mean:

* Less than five percent of Whangarei District’s population will be current smokers.
* Public spaces in Whangarei District will be Smoke-free for communities to better enjoy
* Our District’s children will be free from exposure to tobacco and tobacco use.
* Tobacco will be difficult to sell and supply.

**Background**

Central Government has committed to a goal of New Zealand becoming smokefree by 2025; this means a smoking population of less than 5%. Whangarei District Council (WDC) along with a number of other councils have already committed to the Smokefree 2025 Vision.

Tobacco use is the leading cause of **preventable** death and disease in New Zealand, accounting for around 4,300 to 4,700 deaths per year.[[1]](#footnote-1) [[2]](#footnote-2) [[3]](#footnote-3) When the deaths caused from exposure to second-hand smoke are included, this estimate increases to around 5,000 deaths per year.[[4]](#footnote-4) [[5]](#footnote-5)

Second-hand smoke is also a serious, and often under-estimated, public health issue, especially for children.[[6]](#footnote-6)

Expanding smokefree areas is a vitally important way of de-normalising smoking, protecting our children and promoting healthy lifestyles.

Northland experiences a higher burden from smoking than the rest of New Zealand. The prevalence of smokers in Northland is 19.1% (compared with 15.1% for NZ). 33.93% of Northland Māori smoke regularly and 15.6% of non-Maori[[7]](#footnote-7). Northland has a higher prevalence of ex-smokers and a lower proportion of never smokers than the rest of NZ.

Smoking in Northland is related to 25% of all deaths (47% of all Māori deaths, and 18% of non-Māori deaths). Smoking related hospitalisations in Northland (1,161 per 100,000 hospitalisations) are 1.5 times higher than the national rate.

Whangarei District Council successfully introduced an educative Smokefree policy for its playgrounds and sports grounds in 2010 followed by its parks in 2011. All Whangarei Bus Shelters and the Rose Street transport hub became smokefree in February 2014. Other key city spaces such as the Aquatic Centre, Te Manawa The Hub Information Centre, the I-site at Tarewa Park, Central City Car Park, Clapham’s Clocks, Quarry Gardens and Kiwi North are also smokefree. For a number of year’s council’s 165 pensioners flats have informally been made Smokefree as new tenants move in.

Council considered a report on ‘Smokefree 2025’ in August 2014. This report looked at the levels of involvement this Council and other councils have had in this initiative. The report found that while slightly fragmented, WDC’s approach to Smokefree 2025 was consistent with many other councils across NZ.

In October 2015, an updated ‘Smokefree 2025’ report was presented to Council. At this meeting, Council resolved, “staff draft a district-wide Smokefree policy that will include existing Smokefree policies and further reinforce Council’s contribution toward a smoke-free Whangarei by 2025”. [[8]](#footnote-8)

At a council briefing on February 2016[[9]](#footnote-9),[[10]](#footnote-10), it was decided to engage with the community on the proposed smokefree policy options – Option 1 being the status quo, Option 2 the next step on the journey and Option 3 the ‘aspirational’ goal. Staff would bring a further report back to a briefing before putting taking to Council for consideration.[[11]](#footnote-11)

Northland District Health Board and Cancer Society Northland undertook consultation with Whangarei community was undertaken by way of a survey online and in-person in June 2016, the survey was again carried out with the Whangarei community as part of the WDC LTP pre-engagement process. Below are the combined results.

**Results**

Over 1500 Whangarei residents responded showing wide support for increased smokefree outdoor public spaces. The 2016 results was reflected the 2017.

Whangarei community was also given the option of providing feedback via postcards that were placed alongside drop boxes at a number of Whangarei venues. Whangarei residents had the option of ticking the option(s) they supported and could return the postcard to the drop box or mail it directly to WDC, see results below.

**Summary**

In summary consultation with the Whangarei community has shown wide spread support for increased smokefree outdoor public spaces to be included in the Whangarei District Council Long Term Plan 2018-2028.

1. Peto R, Lopez AD, Boreham J, et al. 2006. *Mortality from smoking in developed countries 1950-2000.* Second edition. www.ctsu.ox.ac.uk/~tobacco/, retrieved 24 June 2009.  [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Public Health Intelligence. 2002. *Tobacco Facts May 2002 (Public Health Intelligence Occasional Report no 2).* Wellington: Ministry of Health [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Ibid, 2 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Ministry of Health. 2004. Looking upstream: Causes of death cross-classified by risk and condition, New Zealand 1997. Wellington: Ministry of Health. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Tobias M, Turley M. 2005. Causes of death classified by risk and condition, New Zealand 1997. Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health, 29, 5-12.  [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Ministry of Health (2004). Looking Upstream: Causes of death cross-classified by risk and condition New Zealand 1997, Public Health Intelligence Occasional Bulletin Number 20, November 2004 (revised). See http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/wpg\_Index/Publications-Looking+Upstream. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. http://www.stats.govt.nz/Census/2013-census.aspx [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. http://www.wdc.govt.nz/YourCouncil/CouncilMeetings/Documents/2016/Whangarei-District-Council-Briefing-Programme-2016-02-25.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. <http://www.wdc.govt.nz/YourCouncil/CouncilMeetings/Documents/2016/Whangarei-District-Council-Briefing-Programme-2016-02-25.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. <http://www.wdc.govt.nz/YourCouncil/CouncilMeetings/Documents/2016/Whangarei-District-Council-Briefing-Minutes-2016-02-25.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. http://www.wdc.govt.nz/YourCouncil/CouncilMeetings/Documents/2016/Whangarei-District-Council-Briefing-Minutes-2016-02-25.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-11)