
Submission to PNCC Draft Annual Budget Consultation 2023-24.

To: Palmerston North City Council

Contact Details:


Organisation: Manawatū Food Action Network; a collective of Environment Network Manawatū.
Contact Person: Helen King.
Address for service: 145 Cuba St, Palmerston North 4410
Phone: (06) 355 0126
Email: @enm.org.nz.

Overview: A submission expressing the need for the development of a city-wide Food Resilience and Food Security Policy to be included in the 2023-24 budget.

Background:

Environment Network Manawatū (ENM) is the environment hub for the Manawatū Region with the key purpose of facilitating and enabling communication, cooperation, and increasing collective action amongst its member groups and the wider community. ENM provides leadership by underpinning, fostering, and encouraging environmental initiatives in the region and our 65 plus current member groups are from throughout the Manawatū River Catchment with interests including biodiversity regeneration, freshwater management, citizen science, food security and resilience, sustainable living, alternative energies, and active transport. The network is organised into two collective focus areas: Manawatū Food Action Network and Manawatū River Source to Sea.

Manawatū Food Action Network (MFAN) is a collective of social service and environmental organisations (and other community stakeholders) working together to increase collaboration, education and awareness around issues of food security, food resilience and food localisation. Currently MFAN's main focus is preparation and implementation of a strategy to improve Kai Security in the 4412 postcode of Palmerston North.



ENM's constitutional purposes are to:

- coordinate and communicate the efforts of the member groups to enhance the local environment:
 - actively protect, maintain, restore and enhance the environment of the Manawatū;
 - promote ideas to the wider community to encourage them to participate in environmental projects;
 - develop concerted long-term plans of action to enhance the environment and actively progress the implementation of these plans;
 - encourage the provision of “green” areas for passive recreation;
 - work together to identify, initiate, support, implement and maintain environmental projects that benefit the wider community;
 - initiate, develop, implement and participate in environmental education.
- Act as a central point of access to environmental information.
- Advocate for ecological sustainability and matters of agreed environmental significance.
- Work in partnership with iwi to recognise kaitiakitanga and environmental aims and objectives in common.
- Liaise with similar organisations elsewhere in Aotearoa New Zealand and around the world as appropriate to source and share ideas for environmental projects and issues.

Submission:

In 2022 we submitted and talked to council around the need for the development of a City-Wide Food Resilience Policy. The purpose of this was to more fully enable the work highlighted in the 4412 Kai Resilience Strategy to be broadened to encompass the whole city and lay the foundations for the city to implement this policy in the future. We understood there was a resolution made by council to so complete this work. Recent communications have informed us that there was an oversight in the inclusion of this in the Draft Annual Budget for 2023-24 (as Council resolved for it to be). We are aware that elected members are also being made aware of the omission.

We strongly encourage the Council to include the development of a City-Wide Food Resilience Policy to be included in the final budget, as per their previous decision.

Over the last 12 months food resilience and security have become and even greater issue for people in our rohe. This is due to increases in cost of living and disruptions to local food supply chains linked to climate related events in Auckland, Northland and Hawkes Bay. The urgent, imperative development of City-Wide Food Resilience Policy that aims to mitigate food insecurity would allow widespread recognition of this as a pertinent, pressing issue. It will also enable corresponding actions and initiatives linked to MFAN and other food resilience focused organisations to be executed with increased speed and ease.

As per our last submission we stress that:

- The right to food is a human right. It protects the right of all human beings to live in dignity, free from hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition. The right to food is not about charity, but about ensuring that all people have the capacity to feed themselves in

dignity. As such, having a policy around food resilience that can speak to and support this right is of utmost importance.

- Food resilience stems from the ability of communities to produce their own food, and as such is dependent on appropriate land for this production. PNCC are kaitiaki over much of the land within this city and are, to an extent, able to regulate land use. Given the power PNCC have, it is appropriate they have a policy in place to ensure that its' citizens can take an active part in growing their own food if they so wish.
- Palmerston North is a city that boasts a wide range of food-related industries, hosts a university with a centre on food research, and is surrounded by fertile land that produces food. Having a policy on food resilience would be a good fit with our regions status as a “food basket”.
- As an organisation that works alongside and supports other organisations helping the most vulnerable in our communities, we know the additional stresses that food insecurity is having on those whose lives are already heavily stressed. Food insecurity is a growing problem and one that has numerous detrimental flow-on effects for those individuals it directly affects, and the wider communities within our city. Having a policy in place to support programs that help move communities from food insecurity to food resilience and beyond is a social investment in these communities that will contribute to a safe future for our city and all its citizens.

