**ENM submission PNCC budget - draft Annual Plan 2020-21**

**Tell us what you think - budget 20-21**

We support strengthening and renewing waste and stormwater systems as this is core essential Council work. We support extending walkway networks as ongoing works.

Other Observations:

* Small City Big Benefits vision will need to be recalibrated post-Covid19, within local constraints and opportunities. As a regional freight hub, and major producer and processor of food, this region will be well placed. We know that we have enough food and that distribution is the issue. A plan around food availability, production and distribution which includes the whole community would be very useful. We know that the large local volunteer sector have relevant experience, and are keen to participate in this space.
* Repercussions from Covid19 highlight the need for an EcoCentre as a place where ideas can be distilled and education and training in all things environmental could be centred. An additional benefit would be wellbeing improvement of people, in being able to be more self-sufficient and empowered. Our member groups have the relevant skills. There will also be opportunities for small businesses to be seeded from skills learned. Example of this are in growing seedlings or as with a Supergrans sewing student who has been selling her wares online.
* Post Covid19 some assistance from Council would be useful to coordinate volunteers for pest trapping, and also Council could assist with accessing the Waste Minimisation Fund and Predator Free 2050 Government funding. This sort of help could move the sector forward, if we have a commonly understood plan. We believe that great progress could be made, at a time when we expect there will be increasing numbers of volunteers.

**Changes from year 3 of the 10-Year Plan**

1. **Nature Calls – deciding on the best practical option for the treatment of our wastewater**

**Cost overruns:** As long as costs are explained and proven to be essential to the best decision being made, we believe they will be accepted by the public at large. We reiterate from last year’s submission, that we are keen to work with Council to help “get the word out”, and to facilitate opportunities for dialogue about options with the environmental and wider community, within the limits of our own resourcing constraints (we have just 1.3 EFT paid staff members). We are in particular keen to see more discussion around topics such as:

* reducing wastewater at source
* turning “waste” water into a resource

1. **Council’s Organizational Changes**

We see these as a window of opportunity for the Council to update its “Fit for Purpose” analysis in these changing times.

* The resilience of the community should be the City’s cornerstone. Hence encouraging volunteering, and the training and organising of volunteers, need to be prioritised.
* We believe that Council should employ or co-opt a person with knowledge in climate mitigation to assist with the development of the Low Carbon Roadmap (programme 1526) of the Ten-year Plan. Together with this person should be an expert in communication and motivation, to help bring on board business and community at large. Presently there is a gap between Council and its vision becoming a reality for the community.
* Staff to facilitate community forums about resilience, how they view it as of now, and opportunities for improvement, would be useful to ascertain just where the City stands in this regard.
* While the Council has improved its environmental footprint, the City as a whole needs direction towards better practices for a Sustainable future. This needs to be led by qualified Council staff.

**$500,000 debt repayment**

This may need to be reconsidered in view of the Covid19 situation. Otherwise the principle is good.

**What should we be considering for upcoming 10 year plan?**

**Resilience:** Many of the activities undertaken by the community sector contribute to a reduction of carbon emissions. For example, planting trees for biodiversity/water quality purposes also creates a carbon sink; advocacy for measures to improve cycling infrastructure and safety ultimately reduces the burning of fossil fuels; teaching people how to grow their own food reduces food miles and encourages home composting; reducing the amount of food waste going to landfill reduces methane emissions; education in permaculture principles helps communities to be generally more sustainable and resilient; the re-use economy (for example op-shops) reduces waste and emissions associated with production and transportation. There are many opportunities for employment in this sphere. Action is required across the country, and we submit that by putting this goal into action, PNCC has the opportunity to demonstrate real leadership within local government.

Council budgeted $85,000 in 2019-20 for a “Low carbon roadmap development” (programme 1526). We strongly supported this action by PNCC; The IPCC Report released October 2018 warned at that time that the world had just twelve years to try to limit global warming to 1.5oC, to avoid catastrophic environmental breakdown.

Now that we have Senior Staff oversight of the Low Carbon Roadmap, we recommend that:

* Council employs/co-opts or promotes a person or persons with a high level of knowledge about climate change and its mitigation to assist with the process of developing the Low carbon roadmap. As well as this person, we need an expert in communication and motivation, to help communicate with business and community at large, in working through the challenges ahead.
* That Council invites and supports the wider community to participate in the development of this action plan. It is important that all sectors of the community are invited – this should include businesses generally, schools, tertiary educational institutions, youth in general, health and aged care sectors, the community sector (social, arts, environmental and sport), both urban and rural. It is important that the process is not rushed and involves extensive pre-consultation phases as well as a more formal consultation to finalise. One option would be to create a panel that would include representatives from across society as well as experts in the field of climate change mitigation. An example of this working well was the Lido redevelopment.
* We request that Council provides information and data on climate change and carbon reduction on its website to enable members of the community to see what actions Council is already doing in this space, what the numbers are and how they are tracking over time.

**Further budgetary considerations:**

In light of the above points, we would expect the suggested processes to be adequately budgeted for.

We also suggest that Council increases its operational budget to enable it to bring to the leadership team the necessary expertise in sustainability generally, and in climate change and its mitigation.

Looking forward, there will also need to be sufficient budget for ongoing implementation of the plan (including engagement, monitoring and updates).