

Open Meeting

To	Huntly Community Board
From	Tony Whittaker General Manager Strategy & Support
Date	12 March 2018
Chief Executive Approved	Y
Reference #	GOV0505 / 1910639
Report Title	Huntly Community Facility Consultation

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Katrina Langlands and Denise Lamb have reviewed and approved the Huntly Community Facility Consultation Document (see attached) and timeframes (see below). These are presented for the Huntly Community Board's information.

Huntly Hall	Key dates
First round of engagement opens	25 April
First round of engagement closes	25 May
Workshop to present and discuss feedback	25 June [week of]
Report to Strategy & Finance to approve consultation	22 August
Second round of consultation opens	29 August
Second round of consultation closes	01 October
Report to Strategy & Finance to recommend decision	28 November
Report to Council for decision	10 December

2. RECOMMENDATION

THAT the report from the **General Manager Strategy & Support** be received.

3. ATTACHMENTS

Huntly Community Facility Consultation Document

13 March 2018

DO YOU WANT A COUNCIL-OWNED COMMUNITY FACILITY?

Dear Sir/Madam

We want to find out if you want, and would use, a Council-owned community facility in Huntly.

STORY SO FAR

We sent you a letter in July last year asking for your feedback about the future of the Huntly Memorial Hall, which has been unable to be used since 2015.

Five options were presented and 438 responses were received. From the feedback, 309 (71%) of respondents chose an option that would have seen the removal of the hall, with no impact on the current community facilities targeted rate of \$42.

Of those, 147 respondents wanted to see the hall removed and the area landscaped to incorporate memorial items; 87 preferred the hall to be removed, the land sold and memorial items rehomed; and 75 were in favour of the hall being repurposed via a commercial partnership.

On the other hand, 125 respondents (28%) opted to retain the hall in one form or another. Of those, 101 people wanted to see the current hall refurbished and 24 wanted the hall removed and a new community facility built. These options would have resulted in an increase in the community facilities targeted rate.

Four people (1%) gave feedback without selecting an option.

SITUATION HAS CHANGED

Since that consultation, things have changed somewhat. The other Council-owned facility in town, the Huntly Civic Centre, has been earmarked for use by the Waikato Coalfields Museum.

This means there would be no Council-owned community facility available in Huntly if the Memorial Hall is not refurbished and is removed.

It has also emerged that a local community group is interested in refurbishing the Huntly Memorial Hall to an acceptable standard for it to be used. This may be a staged development over some years but it is their belief that they can bring the hall to a usable standard at a lower cost than what was initially envisaged by Council consultants.

ARE THERE ALTERNATIVES?

There are a number of other community-owned facilities in Huntly that are available for public use. The details of these can be found at www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/huntlyhall.

The closest Council-owned facilities to Huntly are the Taupiri Soldiers and Settlers Hall (8km) and Ohinewai Hall (8km).

We acknowledge the Huntly Memorial Hall has been around for a long time and many in the town have a sentimental attachment to the building. The reality is that before its closure in 2015 only five groups booked the hall on a regular weekly basis, resulting in a usage rate of seven hours a week.

On average there were three one-off bookings a year.

But, even though the hall was not well used before it was closed in 2015, it does not mean that Council is against the refurbishment of the hall.

We basically need a guide from the community, who will be potentially using a community facility in Huntly, to help us decide if it would be money well spent.

WHAT'S IT GOING TO COST ME?

There may be financial implications to you if the Huntly Memorial Hall is refurbished, though Council will make every effort to keep costs at a minimum. This may involve collaborating with a community group to undertake some of the work required.

You currently pay an annual community facilities targeted rate of \$42 – the portion allocated to the hall and Civic Centre is \$26, and \$16 is used for the Huntly Aquatic Centre.

Money you have been paying for the hall, even while it has not been in use, is in a reserve fund which is used to fund depreciation and maintenance costs.

There is not enough money currently available to pay for all the refurbishment costs at once.

Again, to minimise any potential targeted rate increase to Huntly ratepayers, a staged refurbishment of the hall over some years could be considered.

Any increase in a community facilities targeted rate that could result from the refurbishment of the Huntly Memorial Hall would be added to the current targeted rate. In the event the hall could be upgraded for \$900,000, the additional targeted rate would be approximately \$26. This would mean the community facilities targeted rate would total \$68 (including the \$42 already being paid).

If there is an increase needed we will come back to you for further feedback.

NOW WHAT?

So, after taking all of the above into consideration, we need to go back to the very crux of the matter before we move forward.

Our question to you is simple:

Do you want, and would you use, a Council-owned community facility in Huntly?

Would you be prepared to pay an additional amount each year to enable the community to have a refurbished Memorial Hall?

HAVE YOUR SAY

We encourage you to let us know by filling in and returning the feedback form included with this letter or by any of the methods below:

Online: www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/huntlyhall

Email: consult@waidc.govt.nz

Post: Return the enclosed feedback form to:
Waikato District Council
Attn: Corporate Planner
Private Bag 544

Feedback must be received by **25 May 2018**.

Want to know more?

If you would like any further information please go to www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/huntlyhall, contact us on 0800 492 452 or email donna.rawlings@waidc.govt.nz

Yours faithfully

Donna Rawlings
Projects Team Leader