



HURUNUI DISTRICT COUNCIL STRATEGY

ONE HURUNUI - GROWTH - COMMUNICATION - FINANCES - RELATIONSHIPS

JULY 2017

Introduction

This Council Strategic Direction (the Strategy) encapsulates the aspirations of elected Hurunui District Council members for the future of the Hurunui District. It defines the thinking that will drive Council's plans and actions at both Council and Committee level.

The Strategy has been developed through discussions and workshops with the Council before it was finalised. It should be reviewed on a triennial basis following election of a new Council to ensure that it fits with the views of elected members.

Nothing in the Strategy should be interpreted in a way that conflicts with legislation relating to the functioning of Hurunui District Council, nor with formal plans, policies and resolutions of the Hurunui District Council. Rather the Strategy should be thought of as describing the 'tone' or 'spirit' of the Council as it goes about its functions.

Council profile

Hurunui District Council is a Territorial Authority as defined in Schedule 2 of the Local Government Act 2002. The act defines the purpose of local government at s10(1) as:

- *to enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of, communities; and*
- *to meet the current and future needs of communities for good-quality local infrastructure, local public services, and performance of regulatory functions in a way that is most cost-effective for households and businesses.*

The act further defines good quality at s10(2) as:

*In this Act, **good-quality**, in relation to local infrastructure, local public services, and performance of regulatory functions, means infrastructure, services, and performance that are—*

- *efficient; and*
- *effective; and*
- *appropriate to present and anticipated future circumstances.*

Finally the act defines core services at s11A as:

In performing its role, a local authority must have particular regard to the contribution that the following core services make to its communities:

- *network infrastructure*
- *public transport services*
- *solid waste collection and disposal*
- *the avoidance or mitigation of natural hazards*
- *libraries, museums, reserves, recreational facilities, and other community infrastructure.*

The Hurunui District Council is committed to meeting the purpose of the act and delivering good quality core services to stakeholders in the Hurunui district.

Our mission:

To promote the well-being of Hurunui residents, businesses, visitors and environment by providing planning, infrastructure and services that are efficient, effective and appropriate to our Hurunui community.

Our vision:

Hurunui is a contented and prosperous community.¹

Stakeholders:

Ratepayers and residents, businesses and business associations, visitors, Maori, NZ government and agencies, staff.

Background:

The Hurunui District Council with its small rating base (of around 7,500 rateable properties), has an ongoing challenge to fund and provide services and facilities that enable people in our many settlements and villages to lead good quality lives, at an affordable cost.

Whereas the Council is proud of the District's self-reliance and cohesive communities, there are obvious advantages in working with others to avoid unnecessary duplication. Where practical, it is desirable to remain alert to areas where joint and complementary effort can benefit from synergies and cross-fertilization. The intent is to capture the best of being practical and effective by being local and where appropriate combine with others to gain the benefits of scale and diversity.

The Council regularly advocates to government and other organisations for improvements to the Hurunui and the wider Canterbury area. The Council is party to a triennial agreement with all of the local authorities in Canterbury.² This agreement is to work collaboratively and in good faith for the good governance and success of our districts, cities and the Canterbury Region. This agreement is a commitment to work together where doing so is cost effective, and to find solutions to common issues, and to share initiatives that will improve the region. The purpose is to drive efficiencies and better provide for the needs of our communities through providing good quality local infrastructure, local public services and high performance of our regulatory functions.

There are a number of areas where we work with our neighbouring local authorities for efficiency and effectiveness reasons, such as:

- contributing to a shared vision for Canterbury
- developing and implementing the Canterbury Regional Economic Development Strategy
- continuing to implement the Canterbury Water Management Strategy (through the Hurunui-Waiapu Water Zone Committee)
- integrated transport planning for Canterbury
- developing a programme for effective and efficient delivery of services, infrastructure and regulatory functions across Canterbury
- implementing a collaborative planning and decision making process and integrated resource management planning
- planning response and resilience to civil defence and emergency management and natural hazard risk management

Opportunities:

This strategy is based on five high-level and enduring opportunities.

¹ Prosperous in this context refers to people, health, assets, programmes, education, volunteerism and the attributes that contribute toward a good life.

1. **Strengthen Hurunui's identity:** Support communities to realise their aspirations through the delivery of infrastructure and services equitably across the Hurunui district. The Hurunui District is an amalgam of smaller historical districts with strong local identity. While recognising and supporting the local history and identity of the district, it is also important that the Hurunui district works together if it is to be successful in the future. This is the 'one Hurunui' approach.
2. **Facilitate appropriate growth:** Grow the district to attract people, businesses, services and tourists. Hurunui needs sustainable growth to support and maintain its current and future infrastructure and service needs. However, we are committed to growth that maintains the rural character of the larger Hurunui District and the individual flavour of our various townships.
3. **Improve our communication:** Increase our communication to tell our stories; make it easy for people to find information and navigate through our systems; inform and educate our communities about the Council's function, purpose and intent; and promote the district. We need to talk more about the Hurunui and get others talking about the Hurunui as a great place to live, to do business and to visit. We have a good story to tell but need to take regular and sustained action to put this in front of both local and national communities.
4. **Shape our finances to support Hurunui's future:** Shape our overall financial strategy to support Council's long term objectives and plans in an affordable and sustainable manner. Reduce and use debt effectively. Develop an overall finance strategy which understands the contribution of the Hanmer Springs Thermal Pools and Spa (HSTPS) and how this supports the Council financially.
5. **Build strong relationships:** Build strong, productive relationships with Ngai Tahu and other key stakeholders. Building and maintaining good long-term relationships with our stakeholder groups fosters better understanding and facilitates consultation and change when it becomes necessary. Contentious issues rarely foster good relationships but a good relationship can allow parties to successfully work through those same issues.

Focus Areas:

The opportunities expressed above lead into the five **Focus Areas** the Council has identified which are of concern to them. They are described below to express the specific areas of concern to focus on and have shaped the Council's strategic direction.

² The local authorities in Canterbury include Ashburton, Christchurch City, Kaikoura, Mackenzie, Selwyn, Timaru, Waimakariri, Waimate, Waitaki and Environment Canterbury.

1. One Hurunui

One Hurunui: Support communities to realise their aspirations through connecting people and the delivery of infrastructure and services across the Hurunui district.			
Encourage rural and urban communities to connect and support each other	Deliver services and facilities that are affordable, of a good standard, and enable people to live full lives	Welcome and encourage newcomers to fully participate in the community and connect with services	Develop towns so that they are attractive and appealing
<p>Summary of elected members aspirations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embrace a 'one Hurunui' feel while also appreciating rural/urban differences • Make our towns more attractive and appealing • Retain rural small town feeling • Achieve affordable, improved water to standard across the district • Encourage and recognise volunteerism • Welcome people to the district • Encourage and support communities to deliver their ambitions and dreams • Support the work being done to connect communities and people in the district (current example is the <i>Together Hurunui</i> project) • Progress efforts for environmental stability and achieving environmental standards • Secure public access to treasured sites (example: Heritage forest) 			

2. Growth

Growth: Develop and promote the district to attract people, families, businesses, services and tourists.			
Plan for a sustainable population that enables Hurunui to flourish and prosper	Attract more business and capital investment and employment opportunities	Grow tourism to increase Hurunui as a preferred destination (through the Tourism Board)	Plan for infrastructure that supports growth and communities
<p>Summary of elected members aspirations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate services into the district • Reduce obstacles for businesses; make it easy for people to do business with the council and to live here • Match infrastructure to growth and encourage people to come • Manage growth strategically • Have good facilities which encourage people to come (e.g. cycle and walkways) • Recognise the importance of tourism to the Hurunui • Aim for all shops in the district to be utilised and busy • Utilise the Queen Mary Historic Hospital buildings 			

3. Communication

Communication: Increase our communication to tell our stories, inform and educate, and promote the district.			
Promote the Hurunui and the Council through telling our stories	Get into the community to talk to people to raise mutual awareness and understanding	Improve our website and information platforms to be user friendly, easy to navigate and current	Develop a communication strategy to support open engagement with our communities
<p>Summary of elected members aspirations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell our stories and information using multimedia channels including face to face • Communicate proactively, frequently, consistently, in a timely and professional manner • Promote the district • Educate people about local government and what we do • Improve our website with relevant, up to date information that is easy to find • Have regular sessions and discussions with communities to discuss issues, increase knowledge and mutual understanding • Have data bases that talk to each other with customer information • Manage events and event promotion through a one stop shop 			

4. Finances

Finances: Our financial strategy supports Council's strategic direction and the sustainable, affordable delivery of services and facilities.			
Ensure financial policies and strategy provide communities with good, affordable infrastructure and services	Reflect prudent financial, debt and risk management in financial policies and the financial strategy	Recognise the importance of the HSTPS to the financial wellbeing of the Hurunui	Strengthen the financial literacy of council, staff and committees
<p>Summary of elected members aspirations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage and reduce debt • Provide affordable infrastructure and services • Ensure the financial strategy supports Council's strategy and plans • Nurture the importance of HSTPS to the district and to offset debt • Create efficiencies to reduce the opportunity for wastage or double ups 			

5. Relationships

Relationships: Build strong, productive relationships with our communities, Ngai Tahu and other key stakeholders.			
Rebuild our relationship and strengthen trust with Maori	Deepen our relationships with stakeholders for better outcomes and solutions	Strengthen trust and understanding with local communities	Advocate to government and other organisations on behalf of our communities
<p>Summary of elected members aspirations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rebuild our relationships with Te Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga, Te Rūnanga o Kaikōura, Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu; strengthen our connection with Ngai Tahu leaders • Strengthen productive, professional, working relationships between elected members and the management team • Advocate and speak for our communities interest on central government imposed legislation and regulations • Respect and be in touch with our communities • Nurture relationships with overseas sister district/s • Be engaged and visible with our communities • Encourage mutually beneficial relationships with other local authorities 			

Goals and targets to support focus areas

The Council has a number of Initiatives and targets to maximise opportunities and support the Council's focus areas in line with the strategic direction. Goals are outlined in the table below.

Goals

Goals				
One Hurunui	Growth	Communication	Finances	Relationships
<p>Townships are well maintained</p> <p>Communities all have equal opportunity to access services and amenities</p> <p>Drinking water compliance to be met across the district by 2025</p> <p>Newcomers to the Hurunui are welcomed</p> <p>Rural and urban divide reduces</p> <p>Council supports and encourages community aspirations</p>	<p>Tourism Strategy managed by the Hurunui Tourism Board grows tourism in the District</p> <p>District's population does not fall below Statistic NZ's growth predictions</p> <p>The number of families living in Hurunui increases (rather than single workers making up the majority of growth)</p> <p>No empty shops or buildings through being unable to sell</p> <p>Business confidence is high</p>	<p>Increased communication / consultation events per township per year</p> <p>Hurunui communities are better informed about the Council</p> <p>People talk about the Council positively</p> <p>People have confidence in the Council and staff</p> <p>Council's website and information portals are easy to use and provide consistent, up to date, user friendly information</p>	<p>Financial strategy supports Council's direction</p> <p>Debt remains within Council debt limits annually</p> <p>HSTPS profit increases in accordance to predictions</p> <p>Rate revenue increases annually</p>	<p>MOU with Ngai Tahu renewed</p> <p>Council regularly advocates on behalf of its communities</p> <p>Council and management proactively discuss and resolve emerging issues</p> <p>Regular stakeholder meetings are established to improve relationships</p>

Outcomes

The following statements express the desired outcomes from the initiatives and associated work programme that will be implemented to support the Focus Areas.

Hurunui is known as a great place to live: People want to live in the Hurunui district and see viable business opportunities for them. The townships have good, complimentary services, are attractive, and communities clearly take pride in their surroundings. Urban and rural communities across the district inter-rely on each other and consider the Hurunui to be 'their' community. People are satisfied that the rates they pay are fair and provide appropriate services.

Hurunui has a thriving population, prosperous businesses and successful tourism industry: The future of Hurunui is prosperous with townships either growing or maintaining their population. Business confidence is high and there are ongoing opportunities for service providers to fulfil the needs for the increasing number of tourists visiting the Hurunui. Properties – commercial and residential – are sought after and occupancy rates are high.

Communities value their council and trust decisions made: People are able to access Council information easily when and as it is relevant to them. Through frequent and consistent messaging, people will be more aware of what the Council does and trust the information that is provided. Good quality communication is two way with the Council (elected and staff) seeking to understand the needs of the people. People are using personal digital devices in increasingly sophisticated ways and expect that goods and services are easily accessible through any digital device, and are quickly available. Increasingly, people expect to 'consume' public services in the same way, and to the same standard, as when transacting with a bank or an Internet-based retailer.

Through fiscal financial management, infrastructure and services are affordable and support current and future communities: Growth in population and tourism generates more revenue for investment into modern and future proofing infrastructure. The demand for services has grown and is largely met through private business. Debt management is sustainable within the financial strategy while at the same time, providing for appropriate services and infrastructure.

Complex problems are solved and innovative solutions are adopted: Good productive relationships will be developed and maintained with Ngai Tahu and key stakeholders. This will lead to increased trust and understanding with the ability to collectively come together to find solutions to problems. Innovations will present the district with greater opportunities to enhance quality of life through the willingness and preparedness of parties working together in an open and honest environment.

Values

Values are the principles that guide our actions and particularly our actions with our stakeholders. They ensure that the way in which we pursue our vision and mission is consistent with who we are.

The following values are taken from the Code of Conduct Policy adopted by Council on 13 November 2014.

- **Public interest.** Members are to serve only the interests of the district as a whole and not to improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any one person.
- **Honesty and integrity.** Members are not to place themselves in situations where their honesty and integrity may be questioned, nor behave improperly, and on all occasions, are to avoid the appearance of such behaviour.
- **Objectivity.** Members are to make decisions on merit including making appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits. Elected members' (once elected) primary duty is to the interests of the entire district, not the ward that elected them.
- **Accountability.** Members are accountable to the public for their actions and the manner in which they carry out their responsibilities, and are to cooperate fully and honestly with the scrutiny appropriate to their particular office.
- **Openness.** Members are to be as open as possible about their actions and those of the Council, and should be prepared to justify their actions.
- **Personal judgment.** Members can and will take account of the views of others, but should reach their own conclusions on the issues before them, and act in accordance with those conclusions.
- **Respect for others.** Members are to promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person and by treating people with respect, regardless of their race, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or disability. They should respect the impartiality and integrity of the Council staff.

- **Duty to uphold the law.** Members will uphold the law, and on all occasions, act in accordance with the trust the public places in them.
- **Stewardship.** Members must ensure that the Council uses resources prudently and for lawful purposes, and that the Council maintains sufficient resources to meet its statutory obligations. Leadership. Members should promote and support these proposals by example, and should always endeavour to act in the best interests of the community.

STRATEGY MAP

MISSION

To promote the well-being of Hurunui people, businesses, visitors and environment by providing planning, infrastructure and services that are efficient, effective and appropriate to our Hurunui community.

VISION

Hurunui is a contented and prosperous community.

STAKEHOLDERS

Ratepayers
and
residents

Businesses
and business
associations

Visitors
and
tourists

Government
agencies and
organisations

Staff
and
contractors

OPPORTUNITIES

Strengthen
Hurunui's
identity

Facilitate
appropriate
growth

Improve
our
communication

Shape our
finances to
support our
future

Build
strong
relationships

FOCUS AREAS

One Hurunui

Growth

Communications

Finances

Relationships

OUTCOMES

Hurunui is
known as a
great place
to live

Hurunui has
a thriving
population,
prosperous
businesses and
successful
tourism industry

Communities
value their
council and
trust decisions
made

Through fiscal
financial
management,
infrastructure
and services are
affordable and support
current and future
communities

Complex
problems are
solved and
innovative
solutions are
adopted

VALUES

Serve the public interest | Honesty and integrity | Objectivity | Accountability | Openness
Personal judgement | Respect for others | Duty to uphold the law | Stewardship