

# HURUNUI DISTRICT COUNCIL

## POLICY

### PUBLIC TOILET POLICY



**Approved:** 21 December 2017 by Council

**Replaces:** Public Toilet Strategy 1998

**Review date:**

---

#### **Reasons for policy**

The Hurunui District Council provides and maintains a number of public toilet facilities throughout its District. These provide convenient facilities for those visiting the District, as well as residents travelling within the District, and for the local community. They contribute towards the District being a desirable and safe place to live, and improve the desirability of the District as a good place to do business, to live and to visit.

---

#### *Scope*

This policy applies to public toilet facilities that are managed by the Council and are available for use by the public. It applies to toilet facilities that may be owned by other parties but are currently managed by the Council and available for use by the public, until such time as any arrangement between the owners and the Council is ended.

The policy does not apply to:

- toilets that are part of a building that is owned by the Council, and where the toilets are managed as part of that building and only available to the public when the building is open (for example, toilets within Hurunui District Council offices, libraries and services centres, or within domain buildings);
- toilets on Council-owned land but which are leased and the toilet facilities are managed as part of the lease (for example, leased camping grounds).

The policy applies to existing public toilet facilities within the Hurunui District, and provides direction in relation to establishment of additional toilet facilities.

As a policy, it details 'what' the Council's approach to these facilities is, including in terms of funding and maintenance, but leaves the 'how' and 'when' this will be achieved to separate asset and maintenance plans.

This policy replaces the previous 1998 Public Toilet Strategy.

---

---

*Specific objectives*

The objective of this policy is to provide policy direction on the management of public toilet facilities within the Hurunui District. The policy aims to:

- Take a consistent district-wide approach to the funding of maintenance of public toilets
- Group public toilets into three classes for the purpose of setting maintenance standards
- Provide guidance about what matters should be considered when making decisions about the construction of new public toilets, including funding of these
- Align with Council's Freedom Camping Bylaw
- Provide flexibility to Council officers to deviate from the policy where unforeseen circumstances justify doing so

---

**Maintenance**

**Policy 1: To maintain public toilet facilities at their original level**

*General*

Reasons:

*This policy makes it clear that it is the Council's intention to maintain existing public toilet to their original levels.*

---

*Funding*

**Policy 2: To fund the maintenance of public toilets from the general rate, except where the toilets are self-funded**

Reasons:

*The provision of toilet facilities throughout the District provide a 'public good' which contribute towards the reputation of the district to visitors and residents alike. While some toilet facilities will be used more by visitors to the District, and others will be used more by locals, it is difficult to gauge this accurately and to target funding in relation to this. Some facilities will also be used more frequently, while others may be used less frequently but are necessary to ensure that appropriate facilities are available. Trying to identify who 'benefits' from any given facility, and targeting funding towards this, would be difficult and likely to create an overly complicated administrative burden.*

*The policy includes an exception to funding all toilets from the general rate, where any existing public toilet facility is self-funded, for example the Hurunui Mouth toilet facilities, where cleaning is funded by revenue gathered from camping fees. This is in recognition that where there are existing funding arrangements that minimise ratepayer funding, they should be retained.*

---

---

Cleaning

**Policy 3: The levels of service for cleaning public toilet facilities will be targeted towards what is appropriate for the type of facility. The categories that will generally be used to establish the appropriate levels of service for cleaning are:**

<b>CATEGORY 1</b>	<b>High use toilets, predominantly used by visitors and the travelling public. Toilets are usually the reason for stopping. Includes any toilets adjoining areas designated for freedom camping or other high use activities. This category includes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Public toilets located on State Highway or District Arterial routes</li><li>• Public toilets that are within sites designated for freedom camping</li><li>• Public toilets with high use e.g. Jollies Pass Road adjacent to mountain and walking tracks and Amuri Ave toilets beside the Hanmer Springs Thermal Pools and Spa (HSTPS)</li></ul>
<b>CATEGORY 2</b>	<b>Lower use toilets, predominantly used by local visitors. Toilets are not usually the reason for stopping, but are used by those stopping to use adjacent facilities, such as sports reserves.</b>
<b>CATEGORY 3</b>	<b>Variable use local toilets, predominantly used by local visitors. Toilets are not used very often during the off-season, but have an increased usage by visitors on a seasonal basis.</b>

Reasons:

*The specific requirements relating to cleaning will be detailed in the Council's asset management and maintenance plans. The categories outlined above provide direction for different levels of service to be targeted to each category. This ensures a consistent approach is taken to similar facilities, which allows for efficient administration, while acknowledging that there may be exceptions. This policy and the categories outlined should be considered by Council officers when establishing and renewing cleaning contracts.*

---

Security

**Policy 4: To address any safety or security issues that arise, ensuring that any measures undertaken are targeted and reflect the scale and nature of the issue**

Reasons:

*It is important that toilets are safe and secure. Where circumstances arise that compromise safety and security, steps should be taken to address this. This*

---

---

*may include the use of security cameras, and in certain circumstances lockable gates. However, the steps taken should be commensurate with the scale and nature of the issue.*

---

**Future planning**

*Upgrading*

**Policy 5: To consider upgrading of existing toilets where one or more of the following applies:**

- **The facilities are no longer fit-for-purpose**
- **The volume of visitors changes**
- **Continual maintenance costs justify the upgrade**
- **It is required as a result of vandalism**
- **There are strong aesthetic reasons**
- **It is necessary to address security concerns**

*Reasons:*

*Over time, and depending on circumstances, upgrades may be required to public toilet facilities. This policy aims to identify various circumstances where such upgrades may be appropriate. This can help guide planning for such upgrades through the Council's Long Term Plan.*

---

*New Public Toilets*

**Policy 6: To consider the provision of new toilets on a case-by-case basis, including through the submission process, having taken into account the following matters:**

- **The evidence for whether there is a need for an additional public toilet;**
- **The extent to which there is public support for the provision of the additional public toilet;**
- **The location proposed for the toilet and in particular, its proximity to other public toilets;**
- **Whether any external funding can be obtained.**

*Reasons:*

*This policy aims to provide guidance about what matters should be considered when the Council makes decisions about whether to construct new public toilet facilities. These matters acknowledge that the decision should be made based on the evidence of the need for any new facility, including the level of community support. This should also take into account the location of any proposed facility, including in relation to other facilities, and how the construction is to be funded. As such, the policy is intended to ensure that an appropriate balance is struck between costs and needs. Any decision on whether and when a new public toilet should be constructed will be made through the Council's Long Term Plan process, guided by consideration of the matters identified in this policy.*

---

Funding new public  
toilets

---

**Policy 7: To consider the funding for the construction of new public toilets on a case-by-case basis, taking into account:**

- **Whether the local community supports the provision of new toilets**
- **To what extent the additional toilets are required to serve a local need, district-wide, or wider public need**
- **The existing distribution of toilets amongst the ward within which the toilet will be located**
- **Any funding obtained, or likely to be obtained from another source, including through a public-private partnership.**

**Policy 8: To explore opportunities for external funding**

Reasons:

*It is considered appropriate to retain the discretion to consider the funding of new public toilets on a case-by-case basis. This is because there are various factors that are likely to influence whether or not full or partial funding from the general rate is appropriate in any particular circumstance. For example, where there are a number of toilets already provided within one ward, but there is local community support for an additional facility, and the facility will predominantly serve the local community base, a higher level of funding from the amenity rate will be appropriate. Conversely, a higher or full proportion of general rate funding will be more appropriate for an additional facility provided predominantly for travellers on a high traffic route and at a distance from other facilities.*

*Policy 2 also recognises that the opportunity may arise to co-fund a new public toilet in conjunction with, for example, a commercial premise. If such opportunity arises, it should be considered on its merits as if managed appropriately, this may benefit both ratepayers through reducing capital costs and the commercial premise through attracting greater business. Similarly, there may be opportunities to obtain funding for capital costs through other sources such as grants from the New Zealand Transport Agency. Policy 3 makes it clear that such external funding opportunities must be explored, to minimise, where possible, the impact on ratepayers.*

---

General Design  
Principles

**Policy 9: Toilets will be designed in a way that considers their on-going maintenance, ease of cleaning, safety, security and accessibility**

Reasons:

*It is important that the facilities provided are safe, convenient, accessible, and ongoing maintenance costs are minimised.*

---

---

**Policy 10: The standard design for public toilets will be considered in the first instance, but innovative design opportunities will also be encouraged, taking into account the costs and opportunities associated with this**

Reasons:

*Historically, public toilet facilities in the Hurunui District have used a standard design which means they are easy to recognise. This design is functional, practicable and cost effective, and in most cases will be appropriate for new facilities. However, alternate designs may be appropriate, for example design aspects that provide cost savings such as solar panels/solar water heating. In addition, as well as providing essential facilities, public toilets can also be designed as a feature in their own right, for example as a tourist landmark. The opportunity for alternate designs should be considered, taking into account financial implications (both positive and negative).*

**Temporary provisions**

---

**Policy 11: To allow Council officers to temporarily re-categorise any public toilet where circumstances have changed and re-categorisation is more appropriate**

Reasons:

*Changes in circumstances can result in public toilets being used more frequently than is usual, justifying a change in their categorisation for a fixed period. For example, if a road is closed and traffic is diverted past a low-use toilet, resulting in more frequent use and justifying a higher level of service for cleaning and other maintenance. Similarly, if one toilet is damaged within a township, it may result in another one being used more frequently. The policy allows for discretion to be used in these types of circumstances, as to where a temporary increase in levels of service is justified.*

**Policy 12: To allow Council officers to restrict access to toilets temporarily where required due to circumstances**

Reasons:

*There are times where it is appropriate, particularly for public health and safety, for a public toilet to be closed. This will include both planned closures, for example where upgrades are being undertaken to a public toilet that require the facility to be closed until the upgrade is completed, and unforeseen circumstances, for example where the facilities have been damaged and it is not considered safe to allow the public to use the facilities. In circumstances where access restrictions are considered necessary, the time the facility is unavailable will be limited to as short a time as possible.*

---

END OF POLICY