

Fees and Charges 2022/23 Community Engagement Outcome

Introduction

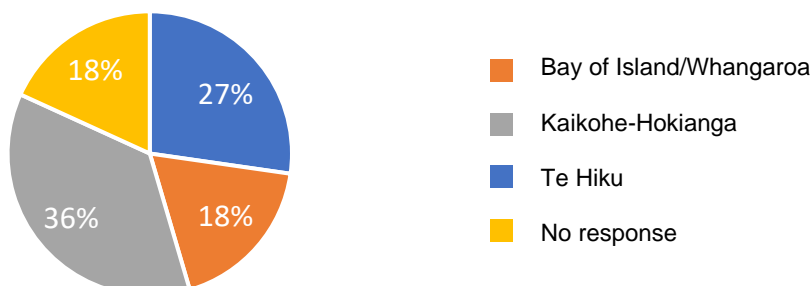
As part of the Fees and Charges (F&C) review, alterations were proposed to the resource consent payment process and adjustments made to some fees. Any changes to resource consent fees must be consulted on following the Special Consultative Procedure prescribed by the LGA.

We also sought community feedback on a few other fees that we would like to adjust either by more than inflation or remove. These include animal impound fees, the removal of menacing/dangerous un-neutered dog category and cemetery fees.

Engagement

Consultation commenced on the 1 March to the 4 April. 11 submissions were received, 10 via the 'have your say' page on the FNDC website and one directly through the submission email inbox. No submitters requested a hearing.

Percentage of submission by ward



Engagement analysis

Resources consents proposed amendments

Do you support the proposed adjustments to the instalment fee charged on receipt of the following resource consent applications? The total cost of the application will not increase, just the percentage of the total required as an instalment.	Submissions received		
	Y	N	N/A
Simple land use	2	5	4
Subdivisions	3	3	5
Combined subdivision/land use	2	5	4
NES plantation forestry	4	1	6
Limited notification as listed	3	2	6
Public notification as listed	3	2	6
Total	18	18	30

Do you support the introduction of up-front payments (an instalment against the estimated total cost) charged on receipt of the following Resource Consent applications? The total cost of the application will not increase.	Submissions received		
	Y	N	N/A
Subdivision 9+ lots discharge to land	5	2	4
Subdivision 9+ lots updating of cross lease flats plans	5	2	4
Combined land use / discharge	4	3	4
NES for contaminated soil :	4	3	4
Total	18	10	16

Do you support the proposal to convert the following fees to instalments? This means that when the total cost of the application is calculated there may be a final invoice, depending on the complexity and expert input required.	Submissions received		
	Y	N	N/A
Creation of a right of way (s348, Local Government Act)	6	-	5
Approval of survey plan (s223, Local Government Act)	4	1	6
Consent notice (s221, Local Government Act)	5	1	5
Completion certificate (s222, Local Government Act)	4	1	6
Approval of documents required prior to s223 and s224	3	2	6
Total	22	5	28

Comments

- *Don't raise the fees and charges, hire LBP qualified inspectors to streamline the process¹.*
- *We are looking to better efficiency in RC processing, not an increase in fees to cover the inefficient way RCs are currently being processed by FNDC*
- *Please correct the document where you ref the fees for simple land use². This should be \$1204 rather than \$1933. We do not support an increase for simple land use consents to \$2700. For combined subdivision land use applications, most of the time the land use component is a simple internal setback breach or earthworks. Since you are introducing different options for subdivision could you not have a separate fee that you add onto those subdivisions where land use consent/RMA or a variation is required? I cant find approvals and certificates which include deemed permitted boundary activities, 223, 224c etc charges in the document. Can these please be included³.*
- *What is s223 & 4?⁴*
- *I am surprised that the estimated cost of processing a simple land use application initially costs more than a subdivision. Considering one would think the increased requirement for infrastructure design and impact one would expect this application would be more complex therefore require more time input. You stated at the beginning of your proposed fees and charges an increase a figure of 2.3%. The increase in a simple land use, (single zone rule breach) is \$1,204 proposed \$2,700 increase \$1,496 this is significantly over your 2.3%. This seems excessive comparative to a subdivision, can you please explain why and what increases the complexity of a simple single zone breach⁵.*
- *The simple land use fee should be higher, these applications are often not simple due to being poorly prepared by unqualified persons and take more time to process than anticipated by applicants.*
- *I can only support an amendment that reduces costs and complexity. This current system is corrupted, needlessly complex, and open to abuse.*

¹ LBP is a licensed building practitioner – not pertaining to Resource Consents – LBP cannot be involved.

² Corrected in schedule - 3 March 2022

³ These fees are not being changed as part of the process.

⁴ These are certifications to complete a sub-division process.

⁵ Additional breaches and/or requiring input from technical staff.

Animal management / impound fees

	Submissions received		
	Y	N	N/A
Do you support the proposal to remove the category for registering menacing and/or dangerous dogs that are not neutered?	4	1	6
Do you support adding a separate category for the registration fee for classified dangerous dogs only to comply with the Dog Control Act (at 150% of the registration fee of normal dog registrations) and remove menacing dogs from this category?	5	1	5
Do you support the removal of the after-hours impounding fee to simplify the impound fees?	5	-	6
Do you support an increase in the charge for the daily handling of dogs in our animal shelters from \$7.70 to \$15 per day?	5	1	5
Total	19	3	22

Comments

- I have a lost dog, the council take my money, but have not found my dog. She may have been shot, maybe by a farmer, what is the collection and notification process? She may have been stolen; she may be in a dog fighting ring. What is the councils responsibility? She is registered, she was in care whilst I assisted my daughter thru a c-cession. What is the council's duty of care for the registered dog?*
- Council should not be involved in this area.*

Cemetery fees

	Submissions received		
	Y	N	N/A
Do you support an adjustment to burial plot fees?	1	5	5
Do you support the adjustments for interment and surcharges?	2	5	4
Do you support the introduction of the special circumstance charge?	3	4	4
Do you support the listed amendments to fees for ash burials?	1	5	5
Total	7	19	18

Comments

- Surely people can die without council wanting more of their money. Remember a lot of cemeteries have been gifted to the people of N.Z.*
- In this survey the costs have not been listed the survey is in complete. E.g. how long is the plot leased for, what are the processes when next of kin can't be determined?*
- Any increase in fees for the cost associated with burial will have an adverse impact on some of the least financially able members of our community. Culturally our Maori and Pacific Island communities choose burial over cremation. However as fees increase they are being pushed into making choices that is not ideal for them from a cultural perspective due to the costs associated with burial. As Cemeteries are part of the community in perpetuity why would an increase in land values have any impact on the cost of burial in an established cemetery.*

Staff recommendation

That the fee amendments pertaining to Resources Consents and animal management be changed as proposed. Feedback on cemetery fees indicates a public preference for further analysis, so in light of this we recommend cemetery fees remaining as inflationary adjustment only pending further discussion.

Post consultation additional amendments

1. Bylaw review

Part of the bylaw review has identified the need to make amendments to the current schedule. This includes removing some of the fees from the Bylaw enforcement section to the certificate and licenses section.

2. Library fees

The removal of the children and teen fines led to a 74% increase in youth book borrowing over the first year, with lost book rates remaining static; we anticipate that removing fines for adults will have the same impact, and that library use will grow across the district.

- The library team have identified a plan to make savings in budgets to account for the reduced takings from fines over the long term
- The 5-year average of library fines collected from 2016 to 2021 was \$25,840, with a trend down from \$32,273 in 2016 to \$21,500 in 2021
- Public Libraries of New Zealand (PLNZ) have set all public libraries a target of eliminating library fines by the beginning of the next LTP cycle to improve access to books for all New Zealanders.
- Whangarei District Council have removed their library fines this financial year, as have a number of other councils, including Christchurch, Auckland, Porirua, Waikato and Wairarapa.

3. Environmental Health (EH) fees

The inclusion of some of the changes to the EH fees was omitted from the consultation, however, the impact of the changes are beneficial to the user, with the calculation being based on the average, the customer now knows what the full charge will be. In most cases, the EH fees have been lowered as a result of the wrong hourly rate figure being used.

Additional new fees for failure to attend a scheduled verification and amendments to registration, allows for charges for EH officers time for rescheduling/processing.

Customers will also be able to benefit from the ability to complete a National Programme which is less complex and requires less processing time.

The following table outlines all the changes:

Fee type	New/ change	Why the change?	Current (per hour)	Proposed total
Alcohol licensing				
Advertising of an alcohol application	New	Average time to load application is 0.5 hours	\$95.00	\$47.50
Temporary License fee (set by legislation)	New	Applicant can apply for a temporary licence for alternative premises where the licensed premises are unfit for the sale of alcohol	-	\$296.70
Food Control Plan (FCP)				
Template FCP - change of fee for registration	New	Incorrect hourly rate 2 hours at \$155.00 (actual time required)	\$180.00	\$310.00
Renewal of registration (annual renewal)	Change	Incorrect hourly rate 1.5 hours at \$155.00 (actual time required)	\$180.00	\$232.50
Additional processing time	Change	Incorrect hourly rate	\$180.00	\$155.00
Registration amendment	Change	Incorrect hourly rate	\$180.00	\$155.00
FCP verification fixed fee	Change	Incorrect hourly rate 3.5 hours at \$155.00 (actual time required) (including travel, verification and report)	\$180.00	\$542.50
Failure to attend scheduled verification	New	There is no provision currently to charge for rescheduling verification	-	\$155.00

		when a customer cancels due to not being organised/forgets etc		
Compliance and monitoring fee	Change	Incorrect hourly rate	\$180.00	\$155.00
Registration amendment	New	There is currently no provision to charge for amendments to registrations. This is a regular request and need the ability to charge.	-	\$155.00
National Programme (NP) – new section to be added				
NP registration	New	A NP section for food verifications has not been included in past schedules. Customers have been paying the Food Control Plan charge. NP verifications take significantly less processing time and are less complex. 1 hour processing time + 1 hour administration	-	\$250.00
NP verification fixed fee	New	2.5 hours of verification activities including travel, verification and report.	-	\$387.50
NP renewal (renewal required every 2 years)	New	Administration rate @ \$95.00 1.5 hours processing time	-	\$142.50
Additional processing time	Change	Incorrect hourly rate	\$180.00	\$155.00
Registration amendment	New	There is currently no provision to charge for amendments to registrations. This is a regular request and need the ability to charge.	-	\$155.00