

## 1. Submissions relating to key issues





The Consultation Document outlined three key proposals:

- Housing for the elderly
- Enable sustainable economic development
- Fairer and simpler rates.

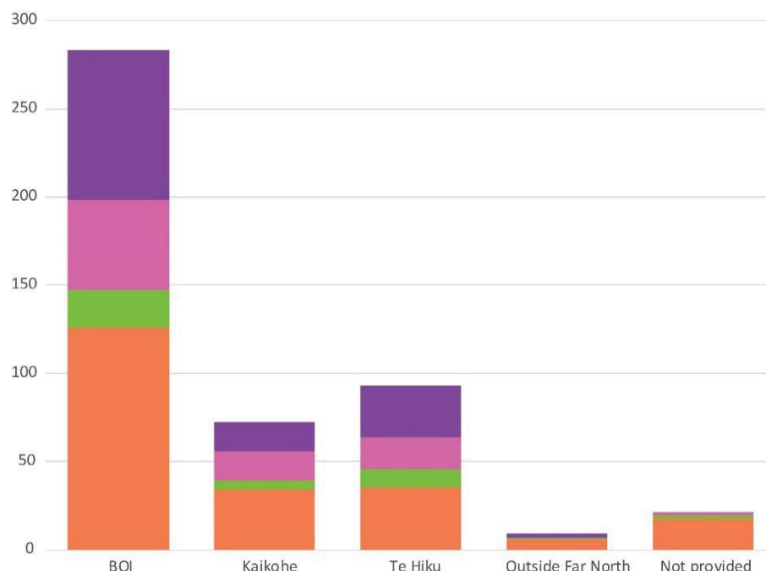
This section of the report analyses feedback on these proposals and provides a staff recommendation for Council to consider when deliberating the item.

### 1.1. Housing for the Elderly

Council proposed divesting its Housing for the Elderly portfolio to one or more registered community housing providers (CHP) with strict requirements to protect existing tenant arrangements and maintain or increase the number of units available in the District over time.

Respondents:			
BOI-Whangaroa ward		283	
Kaikohe-Hokianga ward		72	
Te Hiku ward		93	
Outside Far North		9	
Not provided		21	
Total submitters		478	
Responses:			
	1. We continue to own and maintain the units.	218	47%
	2. We continue to own the units, but the management would be outsourced to another party.	40	8%
	3. We continue to own the units but form a partnership with an existing registered community housing provider to manage and maintain the units on Council's behalf.	88	18%
	4. Council fully transition its Housing for the Elderly units to another party or parties with strict requirements such as protection of existing tenant arrangements and the number of units is maintained or increased over time. <b>This was the preferred option.</b>	132	28%
Total		478	100%

## Feedback by location



### Key comments:

- Council should not be responsible for social housing; a third party could manage the portfolio more effectively
- Hand the responsibility for social housing back to central government
- Good idea to divest but make sure the process is transparent and that current and future tenants' rights are protected
- Council ownership ensures financial control - privatising relinquishes control
- Leave as is but fix the portfolio so they are fit for purpose and good quality, accessible, dry and warm
- Partner with Ngāti Hine Health Trust, Te Rūnanga o Te Rarawa and other iwi/hapū entities
- Council (i.e. ratepayers) should maintain some ownership
- Partner only with those already operating in the social housing area.

### Staff comment:

While almost half of submitters think Council should continue to own, maintain, and manage the 147 units, comments indicate this is because of a perception that privatising relinquishes control, and tenants' rights will be unprotected if ownership is no longer with ratepayers.

In contrast, a similar number felt that Council should either partner with, or divest to, a third-party social housing provider.

What comes across clearly in commentary is that whatever decision is made, our district's most vulnerable citizens must continue to have access to affordable and sustainable social housing now and in the future. Council agrees, and it was for this reason the proposal to divest the assets to one or more community housing provider (CHP) was developed. CHPs are accredited and regulated by central government to ensure they meet specific performance standards.

It is expected that an accredited social housing provider can:

- Operate a much more financially viable and sustainable service than Council
- Provide wrap-around support services for vulnerable tenants that Council is not resourced to provide

- Optimise central government funding for the future development of the portfolio
- Grow the housing assets for the benefit of the Far North and its vulnerable citizens.

Staff recommend that Council commence a thorough and transparent process of discussing divestment with interested parties, with a view to transitioning over the next three years. In the meantime, a programme of maintenance and renewals would be carried out so that the new owner receives assets in reasonable condition. The sale of the units will only progress if Council is confident it will be in the best interests of tenants and the wider community in the long run.

**Staff recommendation(s):**

1.1a) That Council instructs the Chief Executive Officer to commence the process of identifying one or more Community Housing Providers to purchase Far North District Council's Housing for the Elderly assets.

## 1.2. Enable sustainable economic development



Council proposed becoming a shareholder of Northland Inc, the region's economic development agency. The proposal includes an annual contribution to the Investment and Growth Reserve (IGR) to fund Northland Inc's operations and support wider regional economic development. Contributions are:

2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27+
\$82,000	\$169,000	\$246,000	\$335,000	\$413,000	\$500,000

**Respondents:**

BOI-Whangaroa ward	280
Kaikohe-Hokianga ward	68
Te Hiku ward	91
Outside Far North	11
Not provided	29
<b>Total submitters</b>	<b>479</b>

**Responses:**

	<b>Option 1</b> We don't become a shareholder and don't contribute any additional funds	274	57%
	<b>Option 2</b> We do become a shareholder and contribute to the wider Investment and Growth Reserve Fund.	205	43%
	<b>Total submissions</b>	<b>479</b>	<b>100%</b>