Strategic Approach for Hurunui Community Facilities

Following two public meetings late in 2022 advising the costs to earthquake strengthen the Hawarden and Waikari Halls to 34% and ensure they are fit for purpose, the Hurunui Community Committee sought a Feasibility Study to provide guidance about the best way forward. Halls users were consulted, resulting in the December 2023 Feasibility Study Report recommending that the the United Rugby Clubrooms be upgraded as a multi-use community centre and that both halls be decommissioned. However, the costings for the design proposed in this plan were unaffordable

The Hurunui Community Committee engaged Boyd Chamberlain, Architectural Draftsperson, and Chris Carthy, Quantity Surveyor (QS), to meet with stakeholders and develop a costed set of plans for the clubrooms upgrade that are more affordable. Three options were presented to HCC on 3 July; a preferred option was selected and the modifications sought have been completed, cost $1,843,076 + GST.

As the Committee was also keen to look at something for Waikari, plans were sought from Heartland Homes for a modest new build, to meet the needs of young families (to enable use of the Plunket Rooms sale proceeds of $75,000) and to accommodate current and anticipated users. The proposal is to build this on the Waikari Domain, away from the campground area, for a cost of $400,000 + GST.

The Committee will take both plans to the community to seek their feedback through open days at each Hall on 7 September, where updated information will be provided about the costs to ratepayers of keeping, earthquake strengthening and maintaining both Halls, along with the cost to ratepayers of transforming the Hawarden United Rugby Clubrooms into a larger community hub. While a multi-use purpose-built smaller community space in Waikari will meet the needs of the local Play Group, and gatherings of up to 40 people for handcrafts, training, meetings and other social contact, as well as to access health and personal support services. Details about the open day will be advertised separately.

Assets that could be sold, with proceeds used towards the cost of Amenities (with Council approval):

- RSA Building in Hawarden: this would require the Reserve status to be revoked (underway)
  Note: While the Toy Library have agreed that the Waikari Scout Den would meet their requirements, the Play Group who currently use this would need to be accommodated elsewhere
- Waikari Hall, sitting on Council-owned freehold title: can be either sold 'as is'; or post demolition

Other factors to be considered:

- The Committee acknowledges that the United Rugby clubrooms is jointly owned by the United Rugby Club, the Hawarden Squash Club, while the Council owns the kitchen and the Reserve land it sits on. Ownership, management and maintenance would need to be reviewed
- In order to ensure warranties are in place, licensed tradespeople need to undertake any upgrade or new build work. However, some aspects can be undertaken by volunteers, overseen by the QS
- Facilities funding will be applied for, although this is likely to only partially cover a new build or renovation cost and typically funders require 33% of the required funding to already be secured
- The Committee also envisages other strategies being explored e.g. fundraising and sponsorship
- If a portion of the funding for upgrading or building a new facility requires Council debt repaid by Council rates, a formal 'special consultative procedure' is required to consult all residents first
- There are only 845 ratepayers in the Hurunui rating area. The Committee acknowledges it is a difficult time to be asking ratepayers to consider community facilities to suit our current needs and to anticipate those of future generations – a staged approach may be required.

Please feel free to approach Committee members if you want more information: Peter Black (Chair), Ben Cassidy, Rod McKay, Alan McKnight, Mel Ruck, Rob Topp, Jeff Walker, Brona Youngman, Millie Jane McIlraith, William Munster, Cr Karen Armstrong, Mayor Marie Black.