

## Briefing Paper: Update on Te Puāwaitanga Operationalising

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### Ngā whāinga | Purpose

To provide an update to elected members on matters relating to operationalising Te Puāwaitanga.

### Horopaki | Context

Staff have been working on operationalising the Te Puāwaitanga sports hub with a view to it being open for play in 2025.

A briefing paper dated 26 June 2024 was provided to elected members detailing the status of the works on site, and what was needed to progress this to being operational. In addition, a workshop was held with elected members on 3 September 2024.

Monthly operational updates are occurring. These involve the sports codes (rugby league, football, cricket and gymnastics), Sport Northland, and elected members (consisting of Kahika, Kōwhai, ward councillors and community board members from the Bay of Islands-Whangaroa Board).

The site is of high interest to the public and the sports codes.

### Ngā kōrerorero | Discussion

Staff have been working with the sports codes on usage needs and a booking system, along with long term maintenance requirements to be put in place. Questions arose from the most recent operational update to the sports codes about the loading of fields. This has a direct effect on the usage of the fields. The sports hub consists of two sand turf fields with couch grass, two soil turf fields with couch grass, and one training field.

Staff have investigated the loading point further and have received advice from the turf specialist as set out below.

**As a preliminary point, all of the below is reliant on a successful grow-in of the turf occurring over the coming months and largely dependent on the weather.**

- **At what stage will Council know when the fields will be ready for use?**

Estimated for end of February 2025 - This is highly dependent on the weather and will be reviewed again in mid-December.

- **What loading/usage of the fields can Council expect long term?**

- Sand fields – 25hrs/week                      - Soil Fields – 15hrs/week

The sand fields should be able to tolerate more play, due to the better drainage properties. The soil fields have the risk of surface damage if played on when too wet or there is standing water on the surface. The training field, which is a soil field planted with rye grass, does not have additional drainage which limits its use in wet weather.

- **What loading is expected from the fields for the first 12 months once the fields have grown-in?**

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- Sand fields – 10hrs/week
  - Soil Fields – 7hrs/week

The above is based on the recommendation from the turf specialist to allow for less use in the first 12 months.

**In summary Council needs to carefully manage the usage in the first 12 months.** The couch needs to mature enough so that a series of underground rhizomes develop which help stabilise the surface and provide the turf recovery from damage.

## E whai ake nei | Next Steps

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Staff will be corresponding further with the sports codes to advise them of these restrictions on usage and continue to work with them on booking needs for 2025.

The monthly operational updates will continue as scheduled.

## Ngā tāpiritanga | Attachments

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