

# Ngā pārongo hou

## Latest council news

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## Candidate videos pull 'vote local' into focus

Local election candidates will be able to tell communities who they are and what they stand for during short video clips to be published on the FNDC website.

All FNDC candidates are being offered an opportunity to record 90-second clips by council staff who will ensure that each candidate answers the same three questions – who they are and what roles they are standing for, their top priorities for council and the district, and the biggest challenge facing the district.

All Northland councils – Northland Regional Council, and Whangārei, Kaipara and Far North district councils – are providing candidates with a filming opportunity to make it easier for voters to make well-informed decisions when completing voting forms.

The videos will complement traditional candidate handbooks included with voting papers. These feature a photo and statement from each candidate.

The candidate videos will be published from Monday 1 September on the council's *Speak Up and Vote* webpage and is one of several initiatives to improve voter turnout. In 2022, just 41 per cent of those enrolled cast a vote in the Far North local elections.

To encourage higher participation in this year's election, six mobile units are fuelling up to run the



Providing candidate videos is one of several initiatives to make it easier for voters to make well-informed decisions and improve voter turnout.

Mobile Ballot Box Tour, seven days a week from Wednesday 10 September to Friday 10 October. A full schedule of tour stops will be available soon.

Hosting 'Vote Day' events is another way for communities to encourage participation, as is hosting

a 'meet the candidates' event. Please contact us at [elections@fndc.govt.nz](mailto:elections@fndc.govt.nz) with any questions.

For the full story go to [fndc.govt.nz](https://fndc.govt.nz)

### FNDC strong in benchmarking



FNDC's AA credit rating reflects its prudent financial management.

The Department of Internal Affairs released new benchmarking data on the performance of councils across Aotearoa New Zealand last month.

It grouped FNDC in the *Small metro and large provincial* category with 20 other councils of a similar make up. FNDC Group Manager – Corporate Services, Charlie Billington, noted that the council's AA credit rating in the report demonstrated that the council continues to maintain robust financial management, with substantial borrowing headroom.

FNDC serves one of New Zealand's largest districts with a higher-than-average population within its category, meaning it must maintain extensive infrastructure – roads, water, and waste networks – over a large and mostly rural region. This leads to higher delivery costs compared to more compact urban councils. Despite this, the report shows FNDC has achieved balanced budgets demonstrating prudent financial management.

### Who should pay for FN growth?



Our website has details on how development charges will be applied.

To meet the needs of the Far North's increasing population, our infrastructure needs to grow with it. To help meet the costs of growth, the council is proposing to reintroduce charges under a Utu Whakawhanake – Development Contributions Policy. Right now, most of the cost of upgrading infrastructure such as water, wastewater, stormwater and roading falls to ratepayers. Previously, developers contributed to the cost of building and upgrading infrastructure needed for growth. In 2015, that policy was updated to remove the charges.

Growth is not only about large-scale developments like housing subdivisions and commercial centres. It can also include smaller developments, such as a whānau building their first home, adding a sleep-out, or converting a garage into a flat.

We want to hear what you think about development contributions and whether the draft policy is fair. Consultation closes on Sunday 31 August 2025.

### NWaste picks up kerbside recycling



Northland Waste already picks up recycling in the upper Far North.

Northland Waste has stepped in to take over user-pays kerbside recycling services in and around the Bay of Islands. The company is working on a smooth transfer of the collection service, following the withdrawal of Waste Management's service.

Northland Waste has launched a new kerbside recycling crate service in the Mid North. The crate collection offers yearly, 6-monthly and monthly payment options for customers. Full information about this service can be found on the Northland Waste website. You can sign up for the service online.

Collection days for the new recycling service will align with Northland Waste's current rubbish collection days. As part of this local initiative, the company will collect recycling tags and bags with Waste Management branding until Sunday 31 August.

Any queries about the kerbside recycling collection should be directed to Northland Waste, which is Northland owned and operated.

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