

Kaipara Libraries Strategic Plan

Meeting: Council Briefing
Date of meeting: 4 August 2021
Reporting officer: Lisa Salter, Library Manager

Purpose | Ngā whāinga

This briefing is to inform elected members of the work to develop a forward plan and strategy for library development over the next ten years. The briefing will update elected members on the changing nature and role of public libraries and their contribution to community well-being. This briefing will provide an opportunity for elected members to feed into the Kaipara Libraries Strategic Plan that is being developed.

Context | Horopaki

The role of public libraries has changed as the look and dynamics of communities have changed and the role of technology in everyday life evolves. Libraries are no longer just a place to get books out or do research. They are now also a community space where the community can gather for social or educational reasons, and access or use technology.

We have engaged Sue Sutherland of Sue Sutherland Consulting and her associate John Truesdale to work with us on this strategy. Sue Sutherland is an experienced library professional, with an impressive record in local and central government and libraries both in New Zealand and Australia. John Truesdale is a digital learning and libraries specialist with experience across a range of different sectors and industries.

Sue and John will present at the briefing and will provide an overview of the changes happening in Libraries in New Zealand and overseas, with examples from similar local authorities as well as the benefits for individuals and communities. This information will help to shape the Kaipara Libraries Strategic Plan. The timing of this feeds in well with the Council having made the decision in the 2021–31 Long Term Plan to fund the further development of libraries around the district to provide a library service that is relevant and fit for purpose.

Several drivers make this the ideal time to develop this strategic plan:

- The New Zealand Library Partnership Programme (NZLPP) provided by central government as part of Covid recovery. This \$58 million dollar fund has enabled public libraries, their local councils, and other similar institutions to implement new digital and community initiatives to support jobs in libraries and for librarians to support individuals in the community with digital upskilling and other programmes around reading, skills development and Mātauranga Māori. The significant fund over four years is tangible recognition of the importance that central government places on public libraries. Kaipara Libraries have employed two NZLPP staff until June 2022, which allows us to provide increased services to the community and volunteer libraries.
- The changes proposed for local government that could result in an increase in the importance of social, environmental, and cultural infrastructure and services.
- The proposal to develop a new library in Mangawhai and the pace of the changing demographics in that area compel a comprehensive investigation and plan for Kaipara Library development.
- The proposal to establish a trust to fund a larger library in Dargaville requires consultative planning and research into future community needs that align with Council's aspirations.

Discussion | Ngā kōrerorero

A plan is needed to ensure that the direction for Kaipara libraries is clear, focused, and resources can be allocated in the most effective way.

Progress was made in the LTP regarding the development of libraries in the Kaipara. To best plan future library services, we are seeking feedback on what you think needs to go into the Strategy.

Elected members will have an opportunity to discuss the most important areas and opportunities to be considered and any constraints or barriers that we need to be aware of.

Next steps | E whaiake nei

- Understanding the environment – it is vital that the focus is on meeting the local needs of the Kaipara District
- Consultation with stakeholders and communities
- Development of a first draft of the strategy
- Feedback from Council and staff on the draft
- Report finalised in late November 2021