

Council

Meeting of 06 May 2026

Business Unit: Community
Date Created: 28 April 2026

Awahuri Forest Kitchener Park Trust Nine Month Report 2025/2026 for the period ending 31 March 2026

Purpose Te Aronga o te Pūrongo

To present for consideration the Awahuri Forest Kitchener Park Trust's nine-month report for the period ending 31 March 2026.

Recommendations Ngā Tūtohunga

That the Council receives the Awahuri Forest Kitchener Park Trust's nine-month chairs and financial reports for the period ending 31 March 2026.

Report prepared by:
Karyn Crawley
Community Operations Advisor

Approved for submission by:
Lyn Daly
General Manager - Community

1. **Background** Ngā Kōrero o Muri

- 1.1 The Awahuri Forest Kitchener Park Trust (AFKPT) is a Council Controlled Organisation (CCO). A CCO is any organisation in which one or more local authorities own or control 50% or more of the voting rights or have the right to appoint 50% or more of the directors of the organisation.
- 1.2 The Council is required by the LGA to regularly undertake performance monitoring of its CCOs. Council is required to evaluate:
- The contribution of each CCO to the Council's objectives for the CCO;
 - The desired results set out in the SOI; and
 - The overall aims and outcomes of the Council based on the six-month reports.
- 1.3 A half-yearly report must be delivered to shareholders within two months after the end of the first half of each financial year, however the half-yearly report was delayed and is now presented as a nine-month report.
- 1.4 This report outlines the AFKPT performance against the expectations and targets / outputs set in the Statement of Intent 2025-2026. For reference, the SOI document can be viewed at the following link - [Council Organisations | Manawatū District Council](#).

2. **Strategic Fit** Te Tautika ki te Rautaki

- 2.1 AFKPT assists in the ecological restoration, management and enhancement of the land contributing to Council's strategic priority "*an environment to be proud of*".

3. **Discussion and Options Considered** Ngā Matapakinga me ngā Kōwhiringa i Wānangahia

- 3.1 Council approved the following five expectations for AFKPT that formed the Statement of Intent 2025 - 2026:
- Expectation 1. Maintain the forest / park, within the existing boundary, as an area of unspoilt nature (scenic reserve) for the benefit of the community and visitors.
 - Expectation 2. Actively pursue third-party funding opportunities for forest / park investment (to invest in the activities within the forest / park and development of the forest / park).
 - Expectation 3. Plan to develop further walking and cycling tracks within the forest / park to connect to the "loop track concept" described in Council's Walking & Cycling Strategy.

- Expectation 4. Minimise future flooding impacts to the forest / park through appropriate design and planting.
- Expectation 5. Make the forest / park available for educational opportunities to increase awareness and extend knowledge.

3.2 AFKPT has reported against these expectations in the nine-monthly Chairs Report to 31 March 2026 (ref: [Appendix 1](#)) and the nine-monthly Financial Report to 31 March 2026 (ref: [Appendix 2](#)). Note this report includes reports from the previous Chair, Bessie Nicholls, from July – December 2025 and newly appointed Chair, Jo Morris, from January – March 2026. Of note is:

- The targets and outputs to achieve the performance target expectations are on track or in progress.
- A number of third-party funding grants have either ended or due to end that supported the planting and development of the park and forest. An application for a new grant has been made but the outcome is not known at the time of the report.
- The biodiversity emphasis for the nine-month period has been on reducing pest seedling infestations such as an infestation amongst the new planting in the Awahuri wetlands paddock, which has been cleared. Some infestations result from neighbouring land - for example, in more recent months, Old Man's Beard seedlings have been emerging in the forest from the nearby Hensen's Bush block.
- A determined approach to lobby nationally for Phragmites Karka to be classified as a pest plant and funded eradication across New Zealand continued with involvement of the Ombudsman, a presentation at the national biosecurity conference and an article produced by Professor Barry Scott. This has culminated in increased national and regional council focus and, as a result, the co-ordination role of recording and ensuring new infestations is moving from AFKPT to Horizons and other national bodies.
- The financial reporting shows a net balance of -\$14,103 for the nine-month period to 31 March 2026 against a budget of -\$20,156 for this period. This is largely due to timing with claiming the biodiversity grants and Horizons Plant Care grant.

3.3 Members of the Trust will be present at the 6 May 2026 meeting to speak to the report.

4. Risk Assessment Te Arotake Tūraru

4.1 Not applicable.

5. Engagement Te Whakapānga

Significance of Decision

5.1 The Council's Significance and Engagement Policy is not triggered by matters discussed in this report. No stakeholder engagement is required.

Māori and Cultural Engagement

5.2 There are no known cultural considerations associated with the matters addressed in this report. No specific engagement with Māori or other ethnicity groups is necessary.

Community Engagement

5.3 There is no community engagement required for the matters addressed in this report.

6. Operational Implications Ngā Pānga Whakahaere

6.1 The nine-month report will be published on Council's website for a period of seven years.

7. Financial Implications Ngā Pānga Ahumoni

7.1 AFKPT receives an operational grant from MDC that is paid in four instalments throughout the year. The grant for FY 2026 is \$148,380 + GST.

7.2 A pro-rata honorarium is paid annually at the end of financial year up to the value of \$6,000.

7.3 In addition to AFKPT investment, Council continues its investment in the park and forest through approved Long-term Plan and Asset Management Plan budgeted projects. For example, \$326,000 is budgeted for FY 2026 for a range of developments including additional boardwalks, boardwalk seating, signage upgrades, and track development.

7.4 There are no financial implications with receiving this report.

8. Statutory Requirements Ngā Here ā-Ture

8.1 The Local Government Act 2002, section 66 requires that "During each financial year, the board of a council-controlled organisation must report on the organisation's operations to its shareholders."

9. Next Steps Te Kokenga

9.1 Not applicable

10. Attachments Ngā Āpitihanga

- AFKPT nine-monthly Chairs Report to 31 March 2026
- AFKPT nine-monthly Financial Report to 31 March 2026