

# Statement of proposal



This document sets out Northland Regional Council's draft user fees and charges for the 2021/22 financial year. The User Fees and Charges 2021/22 schedule is where you can find all fees and charges (not rates) that council is authorised to set as a result of various pieces of legislation that it works under (details on these are covered in Part Two of this schedule).

Legislation prescribes specific, and sometimes different, requirements in terms of the process required to set fees and charges. When making a change to any of our fees and charges we take these legislative requirements into consideration and use the appropriate process.

So that an informed decision can be made, council wants to know what you think about the fees and charges we are proposing to change or set. Consultation is a big part of that decision-making process. You can find details on how to have your say at the end of this section.

We update our user fees and charges schedule annually to respond to real time and legislative changes, and to ensure that charges do not become outdated.

We are proposing several amendments and updates to the fees, charges and policy for the 2021/22 year in addition to a 1.5% inflationary increase, which is lower than the 2.2% that was approved as part of the long term plan process in 2018. Amendments and changes are outlined in the tables below:

#### New fees proposed

Section	What's new?	Why?
Table 3.5.5.1 – Scale of annual charges for Moorings and Marina Berths	<p>Increasing the annual navigation safety bylaw fee by \$22.71 (incl GST) per year for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>individual swing, pile and jetty moorings;</li> <li>swing and pile moorings owned by one person or organisation, comprising 10 to 24 moorings</li> </ul>	The increased fee comprises \$11.50 to allow for improved organisation of mooring zones, e.g. positioning of moorings; and \$11.21 to fund the recovery of abandoned boats (this is also partially funded by rates at a split of 35/65 rates/navigation safety bylaw fee)

**Note:** our Long Term Plan 2021-2031 Consultation Document is proposing to fund new marine biosecurity incursion work by way of a region wide rate, however sets out an alternative (not proposed) option, of funding marine biosecurity work by way of a charge on moorings, marina berths and boatsheds. This would equate to a charge of around \$70 per mooring, marina berth or boatshed. To read the Consultation Document, and to have your say, please go to [www.nrc.govt.nz/futureplan](http://www.nrc.govt.nz/futureplan)

#### Amendments and changes proposed to fees, charges and policy

Section	What's new?	Why?
All applicable fees and charges within the schedule	1.5% inflationary increase	This is lower than the 2.2% approved in the Long Term Plan 2018 – 2028, due to re-adjustments made by the national body that sets inflation rates
Section 2.1 – Policy provision of information and technical advice	Changing the amount of free staff time from 30mins to one hour for providing information under the RMA	To be consistent with time charged under the Local Government Official Information Act
Section 2.2.13 – Charges for monitoring regulations	Change heading to 'National Environmental Standards for Plantation Forestry'	To account for changes to Resource Management Act legislation

Section	What's new?	Why?
Section 2.2.14 – National Environmental Standards for Freshwater	Insert new section	To account for change to Resource Management Act legislation (note there is no change to fees/charges as a result of this)
Section 2.3.1 – Monitoring/ inspections of permitted activities	Insert provisions for monitoring permitted activity coastal structures	To account for changes to the Regional Plan rules and to provide certainty for keeping track of these structures
Section 2.3.1.3 – Other permitted activities	Update wording	To provide clarity and to account for change to Resource Management Act legislation
Section 3.2 – Staff charge rates	Addition of category for 'Group manager/ Harbour master'	To better reflect chargeable rates
Section 3.2.1 – Resource consent applications – minimum estimated initial fee	Addition of row for a request to a change to consent holders name	To formalise how we charge for this and to be consistent with transfer of consents
Table 3.5.5.1 – Scale of annual charges for moorings and marina berths	Remove 'Dinghy pulls'	This is now included as miscellaneous structure in table 3.5.5.2
Table 3.5.5.2 – Scale of annual charges for coastal structures	Updating the fee structure by replacing the existing table and notes	To improve the way we charge for coastal structures making it fairer and more equitable, and to allow charging for permitted structures
3.7.3 – Pilotage and shipping navigation and safety services fees (with the exception of 3.7.3 c.(iv))	Increasing all fees by 5%	To cover new initiatives, modelling and increased pilot use.
3.9.1 – Field test charges	Remove sentence under table	No longer needed

### What are the alternatives?

Council needs to consider what mechanisms are appropriate to meet the expenditure needs of the organisation. The charges outlined in this schedule represent the activities where council has considered that the principle of user or beneficiary pays is most appropriate.

The alternative to adopting these fees and charges for the 2021/22 year is to either: cover the cost of these activities through other means of income, which might include increasing rates or diverting income from other activities; or cease undertaking the activities that give rise to the cost, many of which council are required by law to carry out.

Should council consider that this expenditure should continue to be met through the fees and charges in this schedule, there is then an alternative option of not updating fees and charges on an annual basis, and instead letting the fees remain static, or update them on a less regular basis. By not regularly undertaking a review of charges, and updating as necessary, the likelihood of steep increases in charges when reviews are undertaken

is significantly higher. This would also mean that council may not be achieving cost recovery for some activities for a period and could be subsidising activities that are intended to be 'user pays'. Conversely, there may be fees and charges set out in the schedule that council no longer charges, leading to confusion about costs.

Not reviewing and undertaking changes as necessary would mean that the policy and schedule of fees and charges has the potential to become outdated and confusing for users. It is also necessary to update charges and policy in line with legislative amendments.

#### How can I have my say about this schedule?

Council is inviting feedback on the Draft User Fees and Charges 2021/22 in conjunction with the process of developing the Long Term Plan 2021-2031. You can have your say by filling in a feedback form online at [www.nrc.govt.nz/futureplan](http://www.nrc.govt.nz/futureplan) or by emailing [submissions@nrc.govt.nz](mailto:submissions@nrc.govt.nz)

The submission period is open until Friday 16 April 2021.