

Meeting Minutes

Subject Community Liaison Group Meeting (Rotorua Contracted Emergency Housing)

Venue The Arts Village (Studio 2) **Date** 26 June 2024
1240 Hinemaru Street, Rotorua

Chair Rachel Dimery **Time** 6:00 – 7:43pm

Attendees

Will Barris (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development)
Ash Hackett (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development)
Simon Betchetti (NZ Police)
Jenny Peace (Restore Rotorua)
Carolyne Hall (Deputy Chair, Restore Rotorua)
Bryce Smart (Rotovegas Motel)
Jean-Paul Gaston (JP) (RLC)
Dianna Raukawa-Doughty (Community representative)
Kent Breeze (Rydges - Hotels/Tourism representative)
Frank Ma (Malones Motel)
Frank Liu (Ascot Fenton Motel)
Jordon Robertson (Te Pokapū – Te Hau ki te Kainga)

Apologies

Kate Boyd (Emerald Spa Motor Inn)
Colleen Neville (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development)
Trevor Newbrook (Restore Rotorua)

1. Welcome

The chair welcomed everyone. Jordon opened the meeting with a karakia. The chair asked those around the table to introduce themselves.

2. Apologies

Apologies noted.

3. Q&A on contracted emergency housing with Senior Sergeant Simon Betchetti from NZ Police

Senior Sergeant Simon Betchetti introduced himself and advised that he looks after the Rotorua Policing area for the youth, community, family harm, Murupara groups. He advised that in 2019 he was in a different role in the District Command Centre so he has an interesting perspective on then and now. The demand profile is very different from what it was in 2019.

Simon provided two heat maps – 2022 and 2023 – to show the CARD data for the Central Mall area and Fenton St. CARD data is the Police Communications and Resource Deployment database. 2022 shows significant hot areas in Central Mall and Victoria St, and along Fenton St. 2023 still shows hot area in Central Mall and Victoria St, but less along Fenton St.

Kent asked if there was a breakdown of quantum number of incidences in the Fenton St area. Simon said there would be if he went back to the data on what the percentages were based on. He did note that it is markedly different from between 2022 and 2023.

JP advised that NZ Police Area Commander Herby Ngawhika presented at the last Community & District Development meeting on 12 June 2024 on safety in the CBD. He had comparisons between November 2022 to May 2023 and November 2023 to May 2024 that showed reductions in all crime categories in the CBD (violence, dishonesty, drug and anti-social, property damage, and trespass offences). Herby's presentation is attached.

Dianna asked if the heat map went down Fenton St as far as Whakarewarewa. Simon confirmed that it didn't go that far south.

Jenny asked if the map could be produced for 2024. Simon advised that it couldn't be provided at the moment because we'd have a different time period. He did reiterate that, anecdotally, the Police feel that crime has reduced further in 2024.

JP advised that Rotorua has always had a crime issue, going back at least 20 years.

Simon advised that, from his observations, crime against tourists walking around the city is less than 10 years ago.

Carolyne expressed her view that Rotorua had never had issues with crime as bad as it has been since the emergency housing along Fenton St.

4. Feedback on the operation of emergency housing

a. Update on abandoned shopping trolley management and clarification on process (Kent/Jenny)

JP advised RLC had several meetings with key retailers with trolleys. It was agreed that Council fund a trolley collection for three months to quantify how many trolleys were being abandoned, where and whose trolleys they were. Two retailers had not actively engaged with the meeting to explore options. After the trial the retailers were advised of the cost.

The retailers felt their own existing collection options could be expanded or they could work collaboratively together. Pak N Save and Countdown are looking at combining services. RLC also talking to Central Mall regarding stopping trolleys going off site. RLC will wait another couple of months and then follow up again.

5. Update on applications for new resource consents including: (Will/Kent/Jenny/Dianna)

a. Final numbers and how this has been determined

Will advised that on 14 June HUD submitted resource consents to RLC for seven contracted emergency housing (CEH) motels for a further year through to December 2025. Midway Motel, Emerald Spa and Malones Motel have not sought further consents.

As part of the current resource consent conditions HUD had to furnish RLC with an exit strategy for any motels. These were provided on 14 June at the same time as the resource consent applications. The exit strategy focussed on whanau in the motels and those anticipated coming in for the next six months. Whanau in contracted emergency housing are assessed and given a priority rating. Priority 1 - families with children in emergency housing for more than 12 weeks - get fast track status into Kainga Ora (KO) homes. KO has a strong pipeline of building to accommodate the Priority 1.

To work out how many motels were still needed for contracted emergency housing and for how long, HUD modelled when homes would be ready, make up of whanau in emergency housing, estimate of what whanau will still need to be referred to CEH. HUD anticipates that until December 2025 only seven motels would be needed for CEH.

Between now and December 2025 HUD anticipate at least 234 homes will be available for whanau in CEH. KO have a pipeline over the period for 366 homes though not all will be suitable or made available for CEH clients.

To exit CEH by December 2025, at some point HUD would have to stop referrals. Rotorua would need to be equipped with other places that people could go – transitional housing etc.

The motels chosen to apply for new resource consents for a further year were considered by history of compliance, quality of motels, able to accommodate whanau groups of different sizes, amongst other things.

KO pipeline has a lot of houses being delivered late 2024/early 2025. Will signalled that the Apollo and Alpin in Whakarewarewa will be early motels to exit, probably within the first six months of 2025.

HUD are still supporting about 10 families in the Tuscany Motel (non-contracted). This will be exited at the same time as Emerald Spa ie: by December 2024.

Carolyn queried whether people were coming from out of town into EH. Jordon confirmed that Te Pokapū have been triaging everyone for the last three years. No-one from out of Rotorua has been moved into Rotorua and people are sent back to where they come from if they arrive. Jordon stated that no one from out of town had been assisted through Te Pokapū in the last two years.

Will confirmed that HUD were ultimately committed to exiting all motels by December 2025.

Will also advised that HUD are working with Te Pokapū and CEH providers so that families have the best chance of success when they move out of CEH. There are still some logistical issues around furnishing, whiteware etc. through MSD that need to be worked through to

ensure whānau are set up to succeed in their new homes. The CEH providers will continue to provide support to whānau for an initial three month period after they have moved into their new homes.

Jenny commented that she had contributed to the Beca report for the resource consent applications. JP confirmed that, once the resource consent applications have been vetted and officially lodged they would be publicly notified. The Beca report will be available along with all the other documents when notified.

Jenny enquired whether the Community Liaison Group will see the exit plans for the three CEH motels. Will confirmed that, once RLC has vetted the exit plans and they are all complete, they will be distributed to the group. Dianna asked for hard copies at the next meeting.

ACTION:

Will: Provide the exit plans to the Group for the three CEH not seeking further resource consents once vetted by RLC. Hard copies to also be provided at the next Group meeting.

b. Exit strategy for Whakarewarewa

Dianna asked about an exit strategy from Whakarewarewa including a timeline for exiting the three CEH in Whakarewarewa with a deadline of when they all will be exited. She can then take this back to their community. Will agreed to prepare something for Dianna.

ACTION:

Will: Provide an exit strategy for the three motels in Whakarewarewa.

6. Update on the status of all accommodation providers, including how many have reverted to tourism and how this is monitored (Jenny/JP)

JP provided a graph (attached) showing the reduction in motels and families being used/in CEH from September 2022 to May 2024.

JP advised that, when RLC is notified that motels have stopped being used by HUD and MSD, RLC contact the motels and advise the lessees/owners that if they do not go back to tourism and continue to offer tenancies, they will be taken to court.

Two motels have been issued with abatement notices and fines for offering tenancies. If they continue the next step is court proceedings. About 45 motels have a risk matrix where RLC have a watching brief.

Everyone was advised if they spot any motels that look like they are still doing tenancies to please contact the Council. Going into winter with not many tourists is the time that the recidivist motels may start offering tenancies to get through to summer. If anyone has any concerns please contact the Council.

7. Other business

JP tabled a hard copy of the inspection monitoring reports from the last two inspections of the CEH.

8. Next meeting date

It was agreed that the next meeting be around the end of September 2024.

ACTION: Rachel Dimery to confirm venue availability and send meeting invites.

Jordon closed the meeting with a karakia.

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

Action	Person responsible
Provide the exit plans to the Group for the three CEH not seeking further resource consents once vetted by RLC. Hard copies to also be provided at the next Group meeting.	Will Barris
Provide an exit strategy for the three motels in Whakarewarewa.	Will Barris
Confirm venue availability for the next meeting at the end of September 2024 and send meeting invites.	Rachel Dimery