



SocialLink – Tūhono Pāpori is the umbrella peak body for the social and community sector and represents over 1500 organisations and individuals working in the Western Bay of Plenty (WBOP).

SocialLink walks alongside social service providers, community and Māori organisations to build their capability as they deliver services to their communities, as well as advocating for the sector's interests, social justice and equity of opportunity for all people living in the WBOP.

www.sociallink.org.nz

Submission on Tauranga City Council's Draft Annual Plan 2025/26

Thank you for the opportunity to participate. We are making a recommendation on one issue raised in the Draft Annual Plan on **Sustainability and Waste Reducing - charity waivers for removal of illegal dumping.**

Information from TCC Annual Plan Consultation Documents:

- **Charity Shop Waste Disposal Waiver**

Approved charity shops are allocated a disposal waiver amount (in tonnes) per month. Any exceedance of the waiver amount is on charged to the charity at the gate rate set by the Transfer Station operator, Enviro NZwaste Services Limited (ENZSL). (Pg 72 of Tauranga City Council Fees and Charges – Sustainability and Waste).

- **Examples of savings we have considered, and would like feedback on include:**

Sustainability and Waste Reducing two relatively small budgets (charity waivers and illegal dumping), which would save another \$100K. (pg 27 of the consultation document).

We strongly recommend that Tauranga City Council does not remove fee subsidies or waivers for charities disposing of illegally dumped rubbish at the Council's Te Maunga Transfer Station.

We appreciate that TCC must examine closely where it may be able to make savings.

However, the waiver is a very helpful financial support for several charities operating opportunity shops in Tauranga, the proceeds of which contribute to the delivery of much needed local social services. Removing the disposal waiver amount will mean opportunity shops will have less proceeds to go towards delivering services to Tauranga's most disadvantaged.

Dumping of unsaleable goods at opportunity shops is a significant and frequent problem. We talked to staff from several charities running opportunity shops in the Tauranga and Mount Maunganui area about this issue and this is what they said:

"People can't afford to get rid of it themselves and we are a convenient place to dump it. We get broken furniture, unusable electrical goods, old clothing. Tip fees are so expensive for many people."

"We get lots of unwanted goods. We have to clear up unsaleable stuff up to three times a week and remove it to the transfer station ourselves."

"We struggle with it, it's a challenge. The subsidy is a huge help. We do a lot of end-of-life clear-outs, and you have to be sensitive and not be too picky as to what you take, so we do end up taking everything and taking stuff to the transfer station. It can cost us up to \$200 a time to do that."

"Massive problem. We subsidise TCC in getting rid of rubbish for them. Frankly, the subsidy is a drop in the bucket compared to what we have to spend on getting rid of unusable stuff per annum across our shops. And it's not just illegally dumped after hours. Even a carload of donated goods brought to us during the day can be 70% unusable. Many people can't afford the transfer station fees to take stuff themselves, and we don't have an inorganic collection in Tauranga."

In our work with the social and community sector it is clear for-purpose organisations are experiencing considerable demand on their services and uncertain funding environments. Facing additional costs will just add to the already stressed sector.¹

We urge Tauranga City Council to retain the charity shop waste disposal waiver as a small contribution to support charities having to deal with this unwanted and difficult issue. It would be helpful also to explore additional ways this problem can be addressed.

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Chief Executive, SocialLink

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¹ SocialLink Tūhono Pāpori Report of survey for social and community service providers on "What's happening for your organisation regarding funding and service demand?" Western Bay of Plenty Region. October 2024