

Whangamata Club Incorporated

Strategic Plan for adoption at AGM

July 2020

Introduction

The Whangamata Club Incorporated commissioned a 10-year strategic plan to provide direction for the future development of the Club.

The purpose of the strategic plan is to guide the Committee's decision-making around ambitions and planned actions for the Club, and to provide clarity of purpose for members, management and staff.

By 2029...

- We are recognised as the friendliest place in Whangamata with the best range of dining and refreshment options, and a diverse range of opportunities provided for socialising and recreational activities
- We have a modern, welcoming, multi-purpose venue (underpinned by income from boutique conferences and sound local investments)
- Our membership base has grown and we are recognised locally as a family-friendly place to gather
- Our financial strategy provides long term security for the Club

In achieving these four things, we need to ensure:

- existing members are valued and taken care of as we implement changes
- our Club continues to have a friendly and relaxed vibe
- our staff are seen as integral to the success of this plan

Overall ambition for The Whangamata Club Inc

To provide a welcoming and successful community and commercial space supporting social, sporting and recreational activities for its members, residents and visitors to Whangamata

“the friendliest venue in Whangamata”

There are six strategy areas that need to be addressed by the Club within the next ten years to make the transition to becoming a successful (and sustainable) community and commercial space.

Some actions under each of these strategy areas require immediate attention – regardless of the Covid19 pandemic effects – as they are simply good business practice.

Some actions will require investment decisions that cannot realistically be made until financial and asset management planning is undertaken.

By all accounts, the restaurant is an unsung jewel in the crown of the Club and more focused effort should be made to increase its value-add.

All actions require the Committee to think longer term than the current monthly/annual profit/loss approach.

The six strategy areas

1. Taking care of our existing membership base – and aiming to steadily grow it
2. Progressive development of our building and site – to meet a wider range of community and commercial needs
3. Strengthening our relationships and partnerships with the Whangamata community
4. Focusing on long term financial sustainability
5. Ensuring our Club’s governance and management are match-fit to address change and progression
6. Having the best skilled, loyal and friendliest staff team in Whangamata

Action plan for each strategy area

For each strategy area there are priority actions and longer-term actions. These are outlined below.

1. Taking care of our existing membership base – and aiming to steadily grow it

What	Notes
Purchase a modern CRM/contact database for communication and marketing purposes	The membership database is how you identify and connect with members. It needs to be able to classify members (local/non-local, length of membership, age, birthdays

	<p>etc) and carry records of attendance with the Club. This will enable members to be communicated with, marketed to, and surveyed</p> <p><i>These can be bought off the shelf for less than \$5,000</i></p>
Install entry/purchasing scanners	These are used with an electronic card (similar to a supermarket loyalty card) that track entry/exit and purchasing
Establish an advisory committee to develop ideas that will address future entertainment offerings	<p>The advisory committee needs to represent the diversity of the Club</p> <p>It needs to report to the Club Committee every three months with suggestions for management to action</p>
<p>Develop a communication and marketing plan [also under strategic action 3]</p> <p><i>This must include social media options that are updated regularly and monitored</i></p>	This will identify opportunities for communicating to existing and potential members – including ways to ensure existing members are valued and potential members are targeted
Widen the food and refreshment offering	Members would like to see a café that uses the restaurant facilities during the day, and a more family-orientated menu for the evenings. Ideally this would use the existing outside space and have capacity for children
Conduct an annual members' survey in [insert month here] each year	Members need to see that their views are both valued and responded to. The Committee would need to agree to conduct and action the survey annually
Formalise a process enabling sub-clubs [adjuncts] voices to be heard by the Committee – <i>with a view to growing this area of Club membership</i>	This needs to be canvassed with sub-clubs to determine process that meets their needs. This may simply be a survey of sub-club members annually, or may involve the establishment of a formal sub-committee with clear lines of accountability

Hold an annual youth forum convened by a staff representative and including sporting, community and recreational representatives – inviting their feedback and contributions to the future development of the Club	Can be linked to a ‘youth event’ that the Club initiates or hosts
Offer a Youth Membership graduating to full membership over time	This would start with the children of existing members (a loyalty card for fizzy drinks, use of facilities etc) and be offered also to community and recreational users of the Club. This membership would have the aim of ensuring they are providing a source of ongoing membership
Consider introducing a summer membership	New visitors will be coming to Whangamata this summer instead of being able to go overseas. They may not be people who can be signed in by existing members as they may not know them. Capture them with a special summer membership deal from Labour Weekend

2. Progressive development of our building and site – to meet a wider range of community and commercial needs

What	Notes
Establish a building reference group to determine options for development of site <i>This group to include three members of the existing Committee, Club manager and independent advisor to develop scope and TOR</i>	This group will employ a designer to review existing footprint and provide options for future use – including ‘boutique’ conference venue, proposed café, and creation of ‘community’ spaces within the existing footprint for additional recreational activities eg mahjong, book clubs, ‘over 50s ladies exercise classes’ etc
Immediately - set up fully serviced conference room	With projector/screen wifi etc

	Maybe a small fee for use but can be used immediately by locals and marketed more widely for seminars etc
As soon as possible – create more open and welcoming entranceway	Even if this is temporary – link in with bringing in new electronic tags to sign in and out [see strategic action 1]
Provide unique spaces/opportunities designed for younger people and families to be engaged in Club activities	Ideas included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • free wifi • areas where children can play without disturbing older patrons • gaming areas • comfortable conversation spots where members can gather with friends (furniture that does not look like bar tables and chairs) • ‘quiet’ zones
By summer - create an outside space for dining as a matter of priority	Members were very keen that existing space be designated for outdoor dining, relaxing and entertainment
Management to introduce a log where members can provide ideas for maintenance and upkeep. This will be reported on monthly	Members will be invited to provide to the manager their ideas for any areas that require action

3. Strengthening our relationships and partnerships with the Whangamata community

What	Notes
Develop a communication and marketing plan <i>This must include social media options that are updated regularly and monitored</i>	This plan will identify opportunities for relationships with key community and recreational clubs – including sponsorship – see below

Establish formal links to key organisations at governance level	Including the Whangamata Residents and Ratepayers Association and Whangamata Business Association, and TCDC
Host regular meetings of key organisations	Offer to host these meetings in separate, fully serviced conference room [see strategic action 2]
Develop a sponsorship proposal for local sports and recreational groups for 2021 and use this as a template for development of a formal long-term sponsorship policy	Identify at least three local groups that the Club wants to support and action. This can be through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uniforms • financial (a contribution to transport/food costs) • space to meet • signage

4. Focusing on long term financial sustainability

What	Notes
Develop a financial strategy focusing on the longer term (as opposed to current profit/loss approach)	Employ an independent financial advisor to review current status of finances and assets – including looking at new options for financial sustainability such as borrowing, bonds, grants etc
Develop an asset management plan for the Club's portfolio of property and investments	This needs to identify a planned programme of maintenance and major renewals eg roof replacement, window replacement to ensure that the budget programme can manage major maintenance requirements
Develop policies for use (or future development) of rental properties. <i>These policies are currently ambiguous, ad hoc or non-existent.</i>	This follows the financial strategy and may mean bringing in some external expertise to review This is linked to strategic action 5 – audit of current policies

	The value/benefits of these assets need to be more clearly identified, and surety/equity provided for their long-term maintenance and us
Create a strategy for development and growth of existing footprint of the Club (using existing asset values to underpin this development)	This is linked to strategic action 2
As part of the development of the financial strategy – identify new and innovative long-term funding opportunities for the Club and sub-clubs in addition to raffles and sweepstakes	In a Club that draws from a wide cross-section of local and non-local membership, there will be a range of opportunities that are currently not being explored eg bequests, sponsorship, new events

5. Ensuring our Club’s governance and management are match-fit to address change and progression

What	Notes
Committee to undertake an audit of current policies to determine gaps and to address those that are out of date or non-existent	This is to ensure that the current governance and management systems are robust <i>Note: a minute from Committee meeting May 2019 to “develop a policy to support local worthy causes” is yet to be actioned</i>
Develop annual KPIs for governance and management to report against	These need to be annual and reviewed every four months Examples would be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • annual turnover targets • monthly reporting on activity towards each of strategic actions • the manager’s performance plan

Review how people are elected to the Committee	This needs to be canvassed with members – possibly via a survey with options
Identify future risks and mitigations	Undertake a risk-management analysis which is reported to Committee and updated every six months
Review and update Club rules in light of this Strategic Plan and actions	The Club rules are archaic and complicated (as a result of being updated in an ad hoc way)
Publish an annual report for members	Not just a financial report, but a report against governance/management KPIs

6. Have the best skilled, loyal and friendliest staff team in Whangamata

What	Notes
Establish a clearer management structure and lines of accountability	A staff structure chart that shows who reports to who would remove any ambiguity
Share this Strategic Plan with staff and invite their feedback	A good way to ensure that staff appreciate the future plans for the Club and can see their place in supporting the Club's direction
Develop an internal communication plan to enhance team and Club culture	Shift staff and staff working across different disciplines find it tricky to stay on top of key issues. Instituting regular formal staff meetings (with minutes/action points that are circulated to other staff), some form of closed social media app (there are many available) and formal induction processes that include H&S would all be a good first start.
Create an induction process for new staff	<i>Are there any existing staff values or principles about the way we work together?</i>

Establish a system and process for more regular staff appraisals	To support the loyalty and development of staff, they must be regularly appraised in an open and transparent manner
Provide staff learning and training opportunities for progression	Ensure all position descriptions offer some form of development and progression for all positions <i>Note: this may mean reviewing all existing position descriptions</i>
Introduce a staff recognition programme for success	Ask staff to decide what this might look like and the Committee to review these ideas
Staff discounts and benefits	Management to provide a report to the Committee on what this might look like
Staff satisfaction survey	To be completed annually (or every six months) via confidential survey monkey. Results to be assessed by Committee with actions shared with staff <i>Also – formal exit interviews with departing staff to be conducted by manager as well as independent online survey tool</i>

Appendix one – key issues and opportunities

Issues

Big picture

Challenging economic environment across the rest of NZ

No coherent push [yet] for Whangamata to take advantage of what will be a booming domestic travel market

Property

The spaces within the building are a barrier to new commercial and community opportunities

The signage, entrance and access to the building are not at all welcoming [also there is “no ambience”] – “If you do just one thing, then fix the entrance-way”

The buildings are ugly, disjointed and need to present more of a cohesive whole

The only usable outdoor space is limited to smokers

The Club is technologically underwhelming

Place/perceptions

Outside perceptions – the Club is perceived to be a drinking and gaming Club (with some recreational activities such as pool and snooker on offer) – not really welcoming for families and community groups

There is a strong perception that the Club does not give back to the community – and no evidence that would challenge this

The restaurant is siloed, has mixed reviews, and is underutilised

Food menu is lacking in consistent quality offerings – people would like the Club to be a destination food venue

Lack of connectivity between the various sub-clubs [adjuncts] and the Club itself

There is no evidence of strategic partnerships eg with other sports clubs in town

Entertainment is limited and/or not promoted sufficiently [and lack of bands that would appeal to younger people]

Event planning is not proactive *[and there are significant opportunities to link this with additional income streams]*

People

Staff are not engaged in how they can contribute to the Club's success *[although they are loyal and keen and seem committed to do so]*

A reasonable number of existing members like the Club just the way it is. If the Committee wish to realise its ambitions, then they will need to ensure they can enthuse these people about any proposed changes

An aging membership (and Committee) profile

There are no coherent offerings to attract and retain younger clientele, family members, community groups *[but plenty of ideas from members about how this could be done]*

Internal

Gaps:

- a financial strategy
- a property/asset and investment plan
- policies that guide and support Committee decision-making *[not counting the very outdated Club Rules]*
- staff policies and procedures
- communication and promotion/marketing/engagement plans *[which would include establishment of systems and processes]*

Opportunities

Big picture

A significant increase in domestic travel as international tourists are not likely for the next 18 months-2 years

An increase in people who choose to live in Whangamata and work remotely
[now that it has proven to be possible]

Cheap money able to be borrowed for development projects

Potential to address the need for boutique conference and seminar venue

Property

Location, location, location

Valuable real estate and buildings

A large footprint within the existing building

Plenty of outdoor space including the opportunity build up over the existing club building

Place/perceptions

A solid restaurant offering which is completely underutilised

Anecdotally a significant customer base for a café-type offering during the day – especially if there was outside seating

Beach Hop and other/new events (along with being a popular weekend destination) provide a positive “Whangamata” vibe that could generate significantly more sustainable revenue if the Club wanted to channel this more

People

A large and loyal core of members who love their Club [and many who would like it to stay just as it has been for the past 50 years]

Locals and holiday makers each have different things to offer – these differences can be tapped into

Eager community of potential customers who are looking for a place they can relate to

Great staff who care about the Club and its future