

Value For Money Committee — 29 October 2026

Source: <https://aucklandcouncil.resolve.red/portal/meeting/13599>

1. What's tracking or delivered

- Ask Auckland Council (AI-enabled reporting tool) has received over 13,000 problem reports since its 13 April 2026 public launch across seven problem types, with a 99.4 per cent successful submission rate (item 8.1, report p.1).
- Channel shift for Ask Auckland Council reached approximately 16 per cent of reports across the seven reportable problem types as at 30 September 2026, up from 13 per cent in June 2026; graffiti uptake is highest at 46 per cent (item 8.1, report p.1).
- Ask Auckland Council ease-of-use score rose from 56.7 per cent in July 2026 to 61.4 per cent in September 2026, compared with 42 per cent for traditional channels; staff note this improvement is not yet statistically significant (item 8.1, report p.1).
- Over 40 problem types have been simplified into three standard reporting patterns (service delivery, compliance response, hazard response), which staff describe as a significant achievement expected to reduce complexity and enable technology to be built on common principles (item 8.1, report p.5).
- The Resource Consents Group (RCG) has completed 14 small-group stakeholder workshops, filled two fixed-term change roles (RMA Reform Lead and change manager), appointed a Service Delivery and Capability Unit Manager, and commenced 'Planners as Project Managers' training in response to the March 2026 Value for Money Review (item 8.2, report pp.1–2).
- The RCG's weekly dashboard (week ending 27 September 2026) shows 84 per cent of non-notified applications completed within statutory timeframes, with average business days to complete at 20 days over the ten-week period (item 8.2, Att C p.3). 📄 *Record-stated LTP target for FY2024/2025 is 73% of customers satisfied with overall quality of resource consents service delivery. The brief reports that the RCG's new performance measures validate that resource consent performance remains lower than comparable councils, but does not state a current customer satisfaction figure against this specific 73% target.* — Auckland Council Long-term Plan 2024-2034
- Waste services customer satisfaction is 81 per cent — the highest since 2018 — and domestic kerbside refuse disposed to landfill per resident decreased by approximately 13 per cent between FY2018/2019 and FY2023/2024 (item 8.4, report p.1).
- The food scraps service diverted 24,351 tonnes from landfill in FY2024/2025, and the Resource Recovery Network diverted an additional 4,542 tonnes through community recycling centres in FY2024/2025 compared with FY2019/2020 (item 8.4, report p.6). 📄 *Record-stated LTP target for FY2024/25 is 27,000 tonnes of food scraps diverted from landfill per annum; the brief reports 24,351 tonnes diverted in FY2024/2025, which is below that record-stated target for the same period.* — Auckland Council Long-term Plan 2024-2034
- Auckland Council exceeded its FY2025/2026 savings target, achieving \$97.2 million against a target of \$86 million, including \$49.9 million in enduring savings (item 8.8, Att A p.1).
- Western Springs Bowl judicial review was dismissed by the High Court on 31 August 2026; the appeal period has closed with no appeal lodged (item 8.6, Att A p.5).

- Go Media Stadium Mt Smart Gate A essential upgrades, funded through the Long-term Plan 2024–2034, have been completed; the Tātaki Board has approved a 15-year masterplan for the Mt Smart Rarotonga Domain site (item 8.6, Att A p.1). 📖 *Record-stated Annual Plan 2026/27 allocates \$1 million for Go Media Stadium Masterplan capital works in 2026/2027; the brief reports Gate A essential upgrades funded through the Long-term Plan 2024–2034 have been completed and the Tātaki Board has approved a 15-year masterplan, which is consistent with the record-stated capital allocation for masterplan works in the same year.* — Auckland Council Annual Plan 2026/27

2. What's at risk

- Ask Auckland Council is not currently integrated with council's back-end Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, meaning contact centre staff must manually process all reports; this limits productivity gains and prevents customers from receiving reference numbers. Staff note CRM integration is expected to address this but no timeline is stated in the supplied report (item 8.1, report p.3).
- Ask Auckland Council's AI model reached end of support in October 2026; a model upgrade is underway and Google Cloud Platform operating costs are expected to increase slightly as a result, though the magnitude is not quantified in the supplied report (item 8.1, report p.1).
- Ask Auckland Council is currently reliant on specialist vendor support; recruitment delays for in-house capability could prolong this dependency. Expansion to additional problem types remains subject to future funding availability (item 8.1, report p.6).
- The RCG's new performance measures validate that resource consent performance remains lower than comparable councils and that measurable changes have yet to be achieved; staff describe this as the current state as at the time of reporting (item 8.2, report p.1).
- Fast-track resource consent applications are consuming the majority of the Premium Unit's time and drawing other planners, specialists and asset owners away from standard work; staff note the organisation is coping at present but is keeping a close watch on volumes (item 8.2, report p.10).
- Specialist input delays are a significant source of resource consent processing delay; the Attachment D dashboard (28 September 2026) shows 42 Central applications with clocks overdue and still ticking (74 total specialist steps) and 96 Southern applications clock overdue and on hold (140 specialist steps). Staff note data quality issues affect the indicative specialist timeliness data (item 8.2, Att D p.1).
- Inadequate technology resourcing for the RCG presents a risk to achieving review outcomes and a risk of failing to comply with as-yet-unspecified central government requirements; the RCG's digital strategy is still under development (item 8.2, report p.11).
- RMA legislative reforms introduce uncertainty and legal complexity that may worsen resource consent performance in the short term as council and applicants adjust to new statutory provisions (item 8.2, report p.10).
- The sport and recreation review found that the sports field network requires just over \$1 billion in renewals over the next 10 years — the largest renewal requirement across the community facilities portfolio — while sports field use is provided free of charge and actual utilisation is not systematically measured (item 8.3, Att A p.26).
- Sport and recreation annual expenditure is forecast to increase from approximately \$225 million in FY25 to \$248 million in FY30, while revenue recovers less than 10 per cent of costs; net funding requirements are estimated at \$205–\$229 million per annum to FY30. The financial modelling relies on indicative estimates and allocations rather than a fully reconciled accounting view (item 8.3, report p.6).
- Some sport and recreation review recommendations require local board support to implement; where local boards do not support proposed changes, implementation may be delayed, modified or unable to proceed (item 8.3, report p.14).

- Food scraps service participation remains below original expectations (which were based on the assumption of a fortnightly refuse collection that was not adopted), keeping the cost per tonne diverted high and reducing utilisation of existing collection and processing capacity (item 8.4, Att A p.31). 📖 *Record-stated LTP target is for food scraps diverted from landfill to reach 50,000 tonnes per year by 2034, rising from 1,872 tonnes in 2022/2023. The brief-reported FY2024/2025 result of 24,351 tonnes represents approximately 49 per cent of that 2034 target, but the brief also notes participation remains below original expectations due to the fortnightly refuse collection assumption not being adopted, which the record does not address as a condition of the target.* — Auckland Council Long-term Plan 2024-2034
- Waste services inflation-adjusted operating expenditure per resident increased by 35 per cent between FY2017/2018 and FY2023/2024, driven equally by deliberate service expansion (approximately \$37.5 million nominal) and external cost and population pressures (approximately \$37 million nominal); staff note these figures are indicative and should not be added together or reconciled directly with the \$45 million inflation-adjusted increase (item 8.4, report p.6).
- Direct Māori-owned supplier spend within waste services was approximately 0.59 per cent in FY2024/2025, against Auckland Council's longer-term aspiration of 10 per cent of influenceable procurement spend directed to Māori-owned businesses by 2034 (item 8.4, report p.7). 📖 *Record-stated aspiration is for 10 per cent of influenceable procurement spend directed to Māori-owned businesses by 2034; the brief-reported current figure for waste services specifically is approximately 0.59 per cent in FY2024/2025. The record-stated commitment applies across Auckland Council's influenceable procurement broadly, not solely to waste services, so the 0.59 per cent figure reflects one service area's contribution rather than the group-wide position.* — Auckland Council Long-term Plan 2024-2034
- The Eden Park Trust's loan facility with Auckland Council had a drawn balance of \$50.92 million as at 20 September 2026, up from \$48.75 million, with the facility maturing in September 2029. The Trust has indicated it will seek council funding through the Long-term Plan (LTP) but has not yet submitted a proposal (item 8.6, Att A p.2).
- The Te Ara Hura / The Way Forward 2027 full facilities maintenance contract supplier recommendation report remains in progress; a report on the contract delivery model and supplier recommendations is scheduled for the committee in November 2026 (item 8.5, report p.1).

3. What's unmeasured or missing

- The total operational cost saving attributable to Ask Auckland Council's channel shift is not quantified in the supplied report. The report states that broader simplification work is expected to deliver approximately one FTE saving this financial year through attrition, but does not state a dollar value or attribute it solely to Ask Auckland Council. Work to quantify wider operational benefits is described as underway (item 8.1, report p.6).
- No baseline or current performance data for the resource consent quality and consistency measures (QC1–QC5) is provided in the supplied attachments; Attachment B labels these as future initiatives to be prioritised by the new Service Delivery and Capability Unit (item 8.2, Att B p.4).
- Three cost and performance measures for resource consents — average cost per consent (CP4), charges/debt/write-offs (CP6), and number of 357B objections (CP7) — are labelled 'UNDER DEVELOPMENT' in Attachment B and no current data is provided (item 8.2, Att B p.2).
- The sport and recreation review found that council does not routinely have a reliable comprehensive view of total sport and recreation investment across the organisation; the financial figures presented are indicative estimates based on manual analysis and allocations, and the size of any renewal funding gap has not been quantified specifically for sport and recreation (item 8.3, Att A p.20).
- The sport and recreation review found that actual sports field utilisation is not systematically measured; booking data is used as a proxy but does not reflect frequency, intensity or duration of actual use, leaving

council with limited visibility of the relationship between investment, utilisation and outcomes (item 8.3, Att A p.26).

- For most individual waste services, the full value achieved cannot yet be quantified with confidence; the supplied review identifies this gap for inorganics, Community Recycling Centres, illegal dumping, and waste minimisation and behaviour change programmes (item 8.4, Att A pp.7–8).
- The waste review notes that current performance information does not allow system-level outcomes (such as the reduction in kerbside refuse per resident) to be attributed to investment in particular services at a more granular level (item 8.4, Att A p.9).
- The Stadium Network Investment Plan, listed on the forward work programme for the Value for Money Committee and described in the September 2026 stadium memorandum as scheduled for presentation on 29 October 2026, does not appear as a substantive agenda item in the supplied open agenda (item 8.7, Att A p.2; item 8.6, Att A p.1).

4. Questions to ask

- Item 8.1: The ease-of-use score of 61.4 per cent is described as not yet statistically significant and is well below the 80 per cent recorded in pilot testing (which used incentivised participants). What sample size and survey methodology underpin the current score, and when does staff expect the improvement to reach statistical significance?
- Item 8.1: The report states that expansion to additional problem types is subject to future funding, and that a roadmap will be presented at the 26 November 2026 meeting. What is the estimated cost of expanding to the next tranche of problem types, and from which budget would that funding be sought?
- Item 8.2: The report states that the Service Delivery and Capability Unit's formation was delayed because human resources personnel needed to focus on Transport reform. What is the current expected date for the unit to be fully staffed, and how many of the five to seven team member roles remain unfilled?
- Item 8.2: The Anori AI tool for assessing resource consent applications against the Auckland Unitary Plan is described as a pilot scheduled to run for six to nine months, funded from the RCG budget. What is the cost of this pilot, and what decision-making process will determine whether it proceeds to full deployment?
- Item 8.3: The sport and recreation review recommends investigating a regional user charging or cost recovery mechanism for sports fields (initiative 3.4), described as a Year 1 action requiring political decision. What process and timeline does staff envisage for bringing options on user charging to the Governing Body and local boards for consideration?
- Item 8.3: The implementation plan assigns single executive accountability (initiative 5.1) as a Year 1 action for council. Has a General Manager been identified or appointed to this accountability role, or is that appointment still to be made?
- Item 8.4: The waste review notes that proposed reforms to the Waste Minimisation Act 2008 are currently on hold and will not be introduced this parliamentary term. How does this legislative uncertainty affect the timing and design of the upcoming procurement decisions expected from 2027, particularly for kerbside collection contracts due for review in 2030?
- Item 8.4: The report states that separate advice on future food scraps service options has been prepared to inform the Long-term Plan 2027–2037 and is being considered in public-excluded item 10.1. Can staff confirm what public information, if any, will be released alongside the Long-term Plan advice to allow public understanding of the food scraps options being considered?

5. What you're endorsing by accepting

- Item 8.1 — The Committee is asked to note (not approve or adopt) four specific performance findings about Ask Auckland Council: over 13,000 reports submitted, 16 per cent channel shift, approximately nine minutes saved per report, and 61.4 per cent ease-of-use rating. Noting these findings does not approve further investment, expansion to additional problem types, or CRM integration; those remain subject to future funding decisions.
- Item 8.2 — The Committee is asked to: (a) note progress on implementing the resource consent review; (b) agree to create an additional Long-term Plan performance measure — 'elapsed days to complete a consent' (calendar days from lodgement to decision); (c) request monthly written performance reports published on the Auckland Council website; and (d) request a further detailed update in March 2027 covering performance metrics, specialist delay analysis, technology opportunities, professional capability programme, and the impact of RMA reforms. Agreeing to the new Long-term Plan measure (recommendation b) is a substantive decision that would add 'elapsed days' as a statutory measure; the March 2027 report and monthly publications are requests to staff, not approvals of expenditure or policy change.
- Item 8.3 — The Committee is asked to: (a) note the sport and recreation Value for Money Review; (b) note the five strategic opportunities identified; (c) endorse the recommended opportunities to improve value for money and inform the Long-term Plan 2027–2037 and future investment decisions; (d) note that implementation is subject to further assessment and decision-making by appropriate decision-makers before any changes are implemented; and (e) note that staff will develop an implementation plan and report quarterly. Endorsement of the opportunities (recommendation c) does not itself approve expenditure, change service levels, alter local board decision-making responsibilities, or commit to user charging; those require separate future decisions by the Governing Body, local boards or other authorised decision-makers as stated in the report.
- Item 8.4 — The Committee is asked to: (a) note the waste services Value for Money Review; (b) note five further strategic opportunities identified; (c) endorse the recommended opportunities and request the review report be circulated to the Policy, Planning and Development Committee for visibility; (d) note that implementation will be supported by further assessment before implementation decisions are made; and (e) note that staff will report back on progress. Endorsement does not approve additional operating or capital expenditure; the report explicitly states no additional funding is sought. Individual initiatives will require further assessment and, where appropriate, business case development before significant decisions are made.
- Item 8.5 — The Committee is asked to note the status of action decisions since 4 December 2025. Two items remain in progress: the Te Ara Hura / The Way Forward 2027 facilities maintenance contract (supplier recommendation report due November 2026) and improvements to streamline property disposals (update due second quarter of FY2026/2027). Noting this register does not approve or extend any of the listed actions.
- Item 8.6 — The Committee is asked to receive the summary of information circulated, being one memorandum: Stadium Network Update September 2026 (dated 30 September 2026). Receiving this summary is information-only and does not approve any stadium investment or commit funding.
- Item 8.7 — The Committee is asked to receive and review the forward work programme and approve the updated forward work programme. Approving the work programme schedules future items for committee consideration but does not itself approve expenditure or delegate authority for any listed item.
- Item 8.8 — The Committee is asked to receive the achievements summary from the 10 September 2026 meeting and request that achievements from the current meeting be added to the register. This is an information and record-keeping action with no substantive approval effect.
- Item 9.1 — The Committee is asked to agree to exclude the public for items 10.1, 10.2 and 10.3 under section 48(1)(a) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987. This is a procedural resolution; it does not determine the content or outcome of the excluded items.

Coverage

- Analysed: Value For Money Committee — 29 October 2026 — [Source](#)
- Reference plans checked: Auckland Council Long-term Plan 2024-2034 — [Source](#); Auckland Council Annual Plan 2026/27 — [Source](#)
- Prior briefs checked: none checked.