

## Submission on council Annual Plan

Feast Marlborough  
c/o Cathie Bell  
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Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the council's Annual Plan 2022-23.

This submission is prepared by Cathie Bell, a board member of Feast Marlborough. Feast Marlborough is a charitable organisation, dedicated to telling Marlborough's incredible food and beverage story for the benefit of growers, products, food communities and all living in and visiting this bounty-rich region.

Feast Marlborough has a split nature - part of its work is as an events organiser.

It organises the highly-successful Friday Night Feast – which will be held this year on October 7. And it stepped up to organise a series of similar events - Summer Feast - to make up for the loss of the Marlborough Wine and Food Festival last year.

These events are and were organised to ensure an outlet for Marlborough's hospitality businesses, many of which have been hard hit by the impact of COVID-19. They enable the businesses to showcase their produce and highlight the calibre of food and drink production in Marlborough to both locals and visitors, as well as providing some fun and entertainment for locals.

But the other part of Feast Marlborough is just as important - the trust was established to be the consistent and active organisation to tell the Marlborough Food Story and develop the potential of all of our local food family.

The trust has a vision that:

- That locals are genuinely connected to our land and our place, through our food, and that our bounty is both sustainable and sustaining of our community.
- That food and beverage make a tangible difference – both socially, economically, and in the liveability of Marlborough.
- That guests want to experience our bounty and our place, contributing to our success and our story.
- That Marlborough is an inspiration to the rest of Aotearoa as a strong contributor to its rich food story.

As part of that, we are working to collaborate to create and activate a compelling story of the bounty of this unique region, leading to increased opportunities and prosperity for our people and our place.

Feast Marlborough endorses the direction of the Marlborough District Council's draft Annual Plan 2022-23.

We would however ask the council to do more in the area of economic and regional development.

In a submission on the council's draft economic wellbeing strategy, Feast Marlborough points out that the draft strategy fails to recognise the importance of food and its role in all four wellbeings that local authorities are tasked with.

The draft strategy talks of Local Government is tasked with four wellbeings:

- Environmental Wellbeing
- Economic Wellbeing
- Social Wellbeing
- Cultural Wellbeing.

These wellbeings are all inter-connected and through this report the Economic Development team want to draw attention to the inter-connectedness of economic wellbeing with the other wellbeings.

Feast Marlborough endorses that recognition of the interconnectedness of the four wellbeings. However, as we said in that submission, food has vital significance in all four wellbeings.

Food and Fibre (as the council defines the sector in that draft strategy) was not engaged with as part of the preparation of the draft strategy. Despite it being on the council's planning for several years now, it still does not have a Smart+Connected industry group or focus from the council's economic development team.

We appreciate that it is a widespread and fragmented sector with a lot of different moving parts and many different participants, so it is perhaps harder for council staff to engage with than the few participants in the emerging screen industry, for example.

We also appreciate that there are limited staff resources in the council's economic development team and, like many places, these staff have been impacted by COVID.

However, the food sector is an important one to Marlborough, and one that impacts on many other sectors in our local economy. Everyone has to eat! And the sort of food that is widely available impacts both residents' and visitors' wellbeing and views on Marlborough.

In this submission to the council's Annual Plan, we request that the council make a one-off grant of \$15,000 to Feast Marlborough to set up a regional hui on food across the sector in Marlborough, and a subsequent report and action plan for the sector – similar to what might result from a Smart+Connected group.

Agreed reporting measures would be set up beforehand, and milestones agreed for subsequent deadlines and actions.

Feast Marlborough would like to speak with the council on this proposal, and would have Angela Clifford, the ceo of EatNZ, to support our proposal. EatNZ has recently

held a highly successful national hui, looking to build a vibrant, thriving, and sustainable food sector across the country.

Cathie Bell attended this hui in Christchurch and feels there are several initiatives that could be developed in Marlborough.

Feast Marlborough has proved itself as an events organiser and has provided significant economic benefit for the region already, stepping up to ensure any potential losses from the cancellation of major events were mitigated.

We now want to develop the advocacy side of Feast Marlborough, and are offering to reduce the outstanding tasks piling up on the council's limited economic development resources.

Marlborough has many outstanding features and huge potential to develop further. Feast Marlborough looks forward to working with the Marlborough District Council on achieving this.

Yours sincerely,

Nikki de Reeper  
Chair  
Feast Marlborough