

# Easter Sunday Trading

Summary of community engagement 2017



## **Update - September 2017**

Auckland Council's Governing Body used this document and analysis to help decide whether to adopt a policy to allow all shops in either all or parts of Auckland to open for trade on Easter Sunday.

### **Background**

Currently, (under the status quo) only certain shops are legally permitted to open for trade on Easter Sunday, these include:

- service stations
- dairies
- pharmacies
- restaurants and cafes
- take away food shops
- duty free shops
- garden centres
- shops at public transport stations, shows or exhibitions
- certain services (e.g. hairdressers, video rental and real estate agencies)
- shops on Parnell Road under an historic exemption issued in 1989.

The types of shops currently not permitted to open on Easter Sunday include shopping malls, supermarkets and clothing, appliance, homeware, sports and recreation retailers.

The Shop Trading Hours Amendment Act 2016, which amended the Shop Trading Hours Act 1990 (the Act), came into force in August 2016. The Act allows councils to propose a policy to allow all shops to open for trade in either all or parts of a district on Easter Sunday.

On 23 March 2017 (GB/2017/22) Auckland Council's Governing Body agreed to community engagement on the following options, to help determine a response to the Act:

- Option 1 (status quo): retain the status quo, so that only shops currently able to trade on Easter Sunday will continue to be able to do so
- Option 2 (more shops open): adopt a policy that will allow shops in all parts of Auckland to trade on Easter Sunday from 2018.

The findings of community engagement (summarised in this document) and analysis of the potential impacts of a decision on Easter Sunday trading were then provided to the Governing Body.

### **Decision to retain the status quo**

At its meeting on 24 August 2017 the Governing Body considered whether to propose an Easter Sunday trading policy for the Auckland District for public consultation (CP2017/16602).

Councillors voted, by 20 votes to 1, to retain the status quo (GB/2017/91). This means that only those shops currently able to trade on Easter Sunday will be continue to able to do so indefinitely or until such time that Auckland Council decides to revisit this issue.

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's Labour Inspectorate will continue to monitor and enforce the Easter Sunday trading restrictions in the Auckland district.

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# Acknowledgements

Auckland Council extends sincere thanks to the Aucklanders who took the time to share their views on Easter Sunday trading.

## 1 Introduction

This is a summary of community engagement findings on whether or not Auckland Council should adopt a policy to permit more shops in Auckland to open on Easter Sunday.

## 2 Methodology

Community engagement aimed for breadth, depth and a balance of views, with a focus on Māori and Pacific peoples, diverse, hard to reach<sup>1</sup>, and precarious employees<sup>2</sup>.

### 2.1 Surveys

Two surveys were conducted. The first was a Research Survey by Colmar Brunton of a demographically representative sample of 1,600 Aucklanders.

The second was a Public Engagement Survey via a Shape Auckland online feedback form that attracted 2,027 responses<sup>3</sup>. This survey was open to the public (self-selecting) and was also sent to a wide range of stakeholders including:

- Business Improvement Districts
- businesses, business organisations, tourism agencies/businesses (e.g. Chamber of Commerce, Retail NZ, Hospitality NZ, Dragons representing Asian youth)
- sports and leisure organisations, clubs
- Mana Whenua, Mataawaka organisations and Marae
- social and community providers (including Māori and Pacific providers)
- tertiary institutions including student associations and clubs
- older persons organisations
- disability organisations
- faith organisations
- ethnic organisations
- youth / tertiary organisations
- LGBTI organisations.

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<sup>1</sup> Hard to reach groups may face barriers to engagement these may include: Attitudinal barriers (e.g. apathy towards the government, a particular issue, a previous negative experience of engagement, consultation fatigue); lack of confidence, money, knowledge of rights, or a lack of literacy or numeracy skills; mental or physical health issues; physical or intellectual disability; issues related to gender, sexuality, or race; language barriers; age barriers; lack of social support; lack of transport; time constraints; homelessness or without a stable physical location; caring responsibilities work commitments (Source: People who are hard to reach – A guide to engagement, Department of Premier and Cabinet Tasmanian Government, 2014)

<sup>2</sup> Precarious employees are those who fill permanent job needs but are denied permanent employee rights – International Labour Rights Forum <http://www.laborrights.org/issues/precarious-work>

<sup>3</sup> This total included 86 paper based surveys from local board events.

## 2.2 Targeted engagement

Methods to target a range of diverse groups for more direct engagement included:

- key informant interviews with 17 representatives from businesses and business organisations, unions, a Mataawaka social organisation, social service providers, churches, faith groups and ethnic organisations
- a Pacific Leaders Fono with 58 church and community leaders from a range of Pacific ethnicities
- a Pacific Youth Talanoa with 17 Pacific youth and youth leaders
- intercept surveys of 317 people, at the Papatoetoe Night Market, Manukau Institute of Technology, and Māori and Pacific community and whānau gatherings
- interviews with seven Māori and Pacific stakeholders
- an UPsouth<sup>4</sup> callUP asking ‘What do you and your whānau like to do on Easter Sunday?’ received 24 contributions from rangatahi/youth
- engagement with the Rainbow Communities Advisory Panel<sup>5</sup>
- emails and submissions from 50 Aucklanders and businesses/business organisations.

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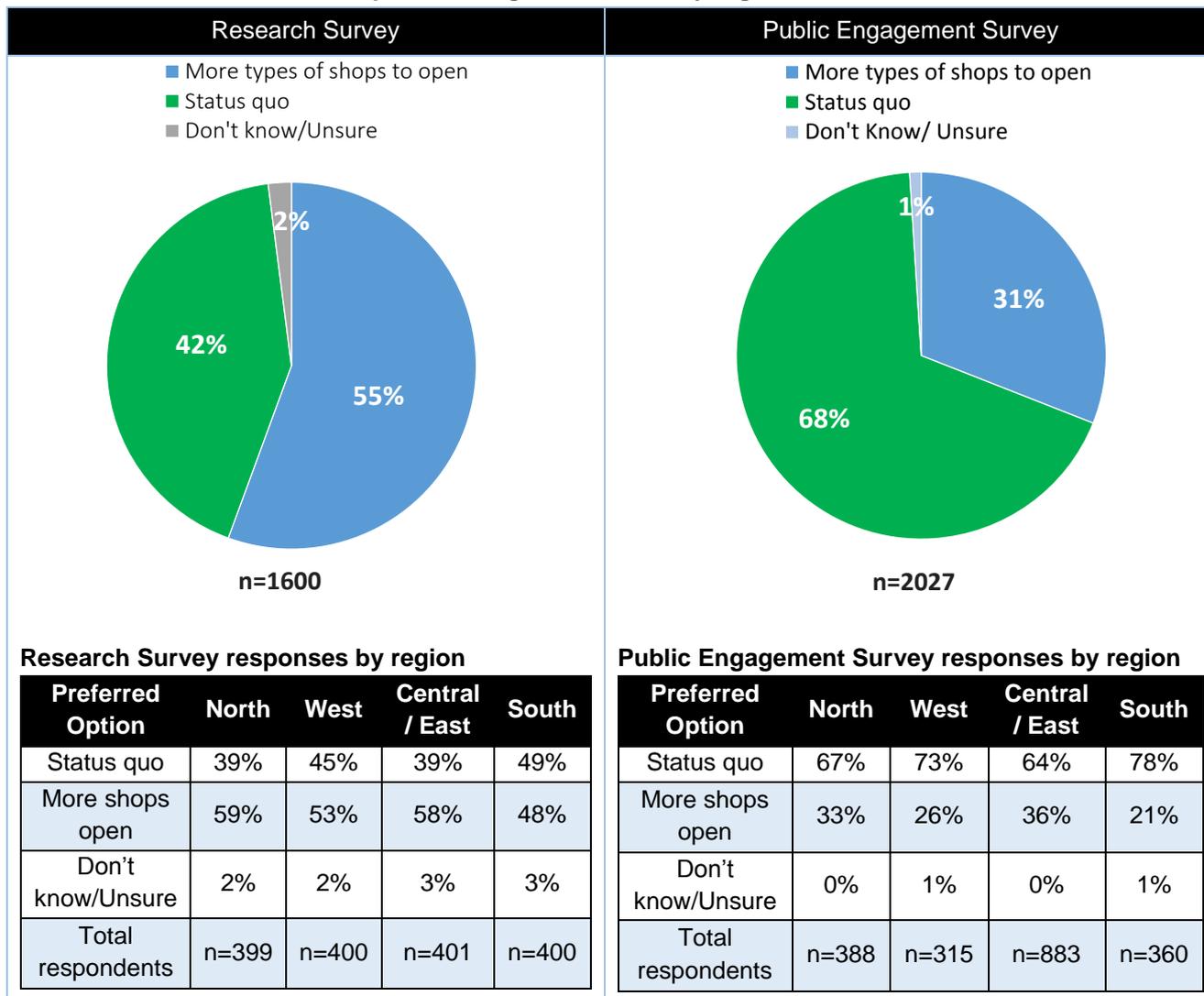
<sup>4</sup> UPsouth is an online space operating as part of the Southern Initiative for South Aucklanders (especially rangatahi/youth) to share their views and input on local issues.

<sup>5</sup> All Advisory Panels were invited to provide feedback in regards to Easter Sunday trading either face to face or via the online survey. Only the Rainbow Communities Advisory Panel chose to engage face to face.

### 3 Surveys

#### 3.1 Preference for status quo vs change

Table 1 Preference for status quo vs change overall and by region



**Table 2 Preference for status quo by local board**

<b>Local board</b>	<b>Research Survey</b>		<b>Public Engagement Survey</b>	
<b>Status quo</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Sample size</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Sample size</b>
Albert-Eden	32%	61	61%	235
Devonport-Takapuna	21%	41	64%	88
Franklin	42%	140	73%	60
Henderson-Massey	44%	171	77%	124
Hibiscus and Bay	41%	115	71%	96
Howick	43%	83	76%	163
Kaipatiki	38%	114	69%	86
Mangere-Otahuhu	49%	42	81%	80
Manurewa	49%	84	77%	123
Maungakiekie-Tamaki	51%	44	64%	138
Orakei	32%	74	61%	130
Otara-Papatoetoe	56%	62	83%	82
Papakura	47%	72	68%	53
Puketapapa	37%	36	72%	60
Rodney	44%	55	59%	15
Upper Harbour	52%	74	74%	43
Waiheke	41%	5	50%	12
Waitakere Ranges	43%	100	70%	77
Waitemata	38%	98	52%	145
Whau	47%	129	72%	114

**Table 3 Preference for more shops open by local board**

<b>Local board</b>	<b>Research Survey</b>		<b>Public Engagement Survey</b>	
<b>More shops open</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Sample size</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Sample size</b>
Albert-Eden	63%	61	38%	235
Devonport-Takapuna	74%	41	36%	88
Franklin	55%	140	25%	60
Henderson-Massey	54%	171	23%	124
Hibiscus and Bay	57%	115	29%	96
Howick	56%	83	24%	163
Kaipatiki	59%	114	31%	86
Mangere-Otahuhu	46%	42	19%	80
Manurewa	49%	84	20%	123
Maungakiekie-Tamaki	45%	44	35%	138
Orakei	65%	74	39%	130
Otara-Papatoetoe	41%	62	15%	82
Papakura	50%	72	32%	53
Puketapapa	63%	36	27%	60
Rodney	56%	55	41%	15
Upper Harbour	48%	74	23%	43
Waiheke	59%	5	50%	12
Waitakere Ranges	56%	100	29%	77
Waitemata	58%	98	48%	145
Whau	50%	129	27%	114

**Table 4 Detailed survey results for those preferring status quo**

Status quo	Research Survey 42% overall, n=672	Public Engagement Survey 68% overall, n=1388
Gender	47% female, 37% male	73% female, 61% male
Age	No significant differences	No significant differences
Works in retail/hospitality	No significant differences	No significant differences
Works on Sunday	No significant differences	-
Ethnicity	Pacific 62%, Asian 32%	Pacific 89%, Asian 61%, Other 61%
Religion	No religion 34%, Christian 52%	-

**Table 5 Detailed survey results for those preferring more shops open**

More shops open	Research Survey 55% overall, n=886	Public Engagement Survey 31% overall, n=625
Gender	49% female, 61% male	25% female, 39% male
Age	60+ 60%	No significant differences
Works in retail/hospitality	No significant differences	No significant differences
Works on Sunday	No significant differences	-
Ethnicity	Pacific 34%, Asian 66%	Pacific 10%, Asian 37%, Other 37%
Religion	No religion 34%, Christian 52%	-

### 3.2 Reasons for preferring the status quo

**Table 6 Most common reasons for preferring status quo**

Reasons for preferring status quo	Research Survey (n=672)	Public Engagement Survey (n=1388)
It's only a couple days a year/No need to shop every day	33%	27%
Gives employees time off	30%	26%
People should spend time with their families	29%	54%
Religious reasons	23%	33%
No need to change things	14%	11%
Make people stop /reflect on important things/time away from shopping	14%	4%
People would be forced / pressured to work	10%	15%
It's a Christian country / part of our heritage	7%	4%
I don't think there should be any trading	5%	8%
Staff should be paid like a stat day	5%	3%
Destroying our values/threaten Christmas/ANZAC next	5%	2%
The essential services are available	3%	4%
Nice to have quiet days, less traffic	2%	3%
Employees/employees should have the choice of trading or not	1%	-
Other	7%	5%
No reason given	2%	9%

**Table 7 Key quotes for preferring status quo**

<b>Research Survey</b>	<b>Public Engagement Survey</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “No compelling reason to change. One day closed is no hardship.”</li> <li>• “I don’t think shops need to be open Easter Sunday, give the staff in retail a day to enjoy with family and friends.”</li> <li>• “The current law allows more people to be with their family and loved ones to either celebrate the day or to just simply be together.”</li> <li>• “Religious reasons and to give shop staff a day off. They work nearly every day of the year.”</li> <li>• “We observe Easter Sunday according to our Christian faith; we can do shopping any other day.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “I believe there are very few holidays for retail staff as it is. Easter is a time for families to be together on a special Christian holiday.”</li> <li>• “There are so few days now when people can spend time with family and friends and "disconnect". Essential supplies/ services are still available and that's enough on these few days.”</li> <li>• “Give the staff a break. Enjoy family time. Shops don't have to be open all the time.”</li> <li>• “It's not all about profit. People need time off with family and friends.”</li> <li>• “It's fairer on employees to have the time off with families.”</li> </ul>

**Table 8 Research Survey sub-groups more likely to provide each reason for preferring status quo**

<b>Reason for preferring the status quo</b>	<b>Sub-group</b>
It's only a couple days a year/No need to shop every day (33% overall)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Females (38%)</li> <li>• 40-59 year olds (40%)</li> <li>• Don't work in retail/hospitality (39%)</li> <li>• NZ European (41%)</li> <li>• No religious affiliation (48%)</li> </ul>
Gives employees time off/a holiday/time to relax (30%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 40-59 year olds (35%)</li> <li>• Don't work in retail/hospitality (34%)</li> <li>• NZ European (38%)</li> <li>• No religious affiliation (38%)</li> </ul>
People should spend the weekend with/focus on their families (29%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Female (33%)</li> <li>• 40-49 year olds (37%)</li> </ul>
Religious reasons/Easter is an important holiday/A day for respect/church (23%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 70+ year olds (35%)</li> <li>• Christian religious affiliation (37%)</li> </ul>
No need to change things/It's working as it is/Doesn't hurt anybody (14%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No significant differences</li> </ul>
Make people stop/reflect/focus on important things/time away from shopping/materialism/commercialism (14%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• no significant differences</li> </ul>
People would be forced/ pressured to work/Unfair for employees (10%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 40-59 year olds (14%)</li> </ul>

### 3.3 Reasons for preferring more shops open on Easter Sunday

Table 9 Most common reasons for preferring more shops open

Reason for preferring more shop open	Research Survey (n=886)	Public Engagement Survey (n=625)
Not everyone is Christian/observes Easter	28%	36%
Retailers/businesses should be allowed to open	22%	20%
People want to shop/eat/drink with their families	17%	6%
Make it equal for all trades	11%	12%
Employees/employees should have the choice	10%	12%
Easter Sunday is not a public holiday/It's like any other day	9%	7%
Good for business	8%	4%
It's outdated move with the times	8%	15%
Its inconvenient/frustrating to have shops closed	7%	9%
Better for tourism/visitors wanting to shop	6%	7%
More things to do	6%	4%
Weekends/days of when we have time to shop	6%	7%
Supermarkets should be open	6%	8%
We should have freedom of choice to shop or not	5%	11%
What's the difference / No reason to be closed	4%	6%
We are a secular country, not a religious country	2%	7%
It's too inconsistent at the moment	2%	4%
Opportunity for employees/employees to earn money	2%	3%
Reduce traffic on Easter days	2%	1%
Other	7%	7%
No reason given	2%	6%
Good for the economy/community	-	3%
One non trading day is enough	-	2%

Table 10 Key quotes for preferring more shops open

Research Survey	Public Engagement Survey
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “We are all not Christian based, in this day and age, it should be up to the individual shop if they open or not.”</li> <li>• “This is the one time of the year that most get time away from work to look after the shopping whether that be for clothing or household appliances, etc.”</li> <li>• “Easter is a Christian celebration. It shouldn't impact society at large. Those in the faith can choose if they partake or not, it shouldn't be enforced.”</li> <li>• “Religion should be kept completely</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Easter Sunday is a Christian religious holiday but not everyone is religious or a Christian so why should they be deprived of activities they wish to do on a Sunday such as going to the mall to shop?”</li> <li>• “Whether a business should be open on any given day should be a decision for the owner and their employees and shouldn't be mandated by council on my or anyone else's behalf.”</li> <li>• “Weekends/holidays are usually the only opportunity for those employed to go shopping. Easter Sunday should not be given any special treatment anyway since it favours the Christian faith. For the same reason that we don't have</li> </ul>

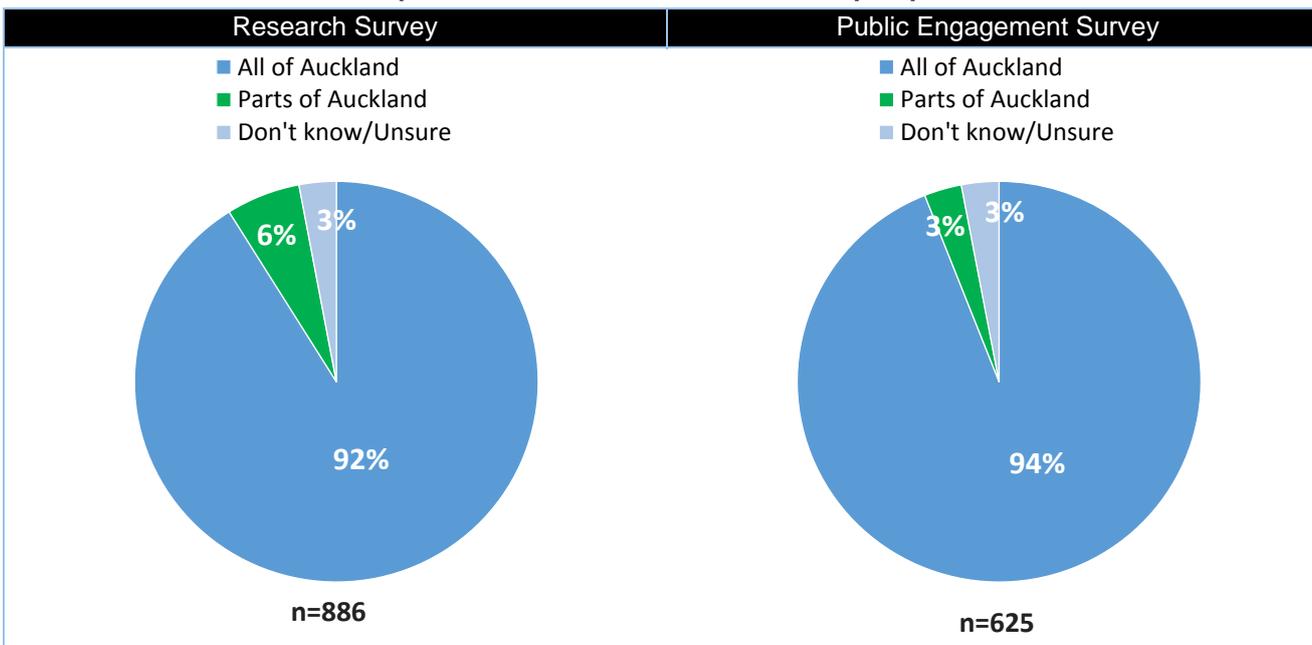
<p>separate from state and commerce. As long as a business is prepared to comply with the Holidays Act, there should be no restriction on when it chooses to operate / trade.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Because it is a good time to go shopping with family.”</li> </ul>	<p>similar restrictions on trade on Muslim celebrations for example so too should we not for this event.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The religious significance does not reflect the diverse population who reside in Auckland. Tourism is missing out. The current law is well outdated.”</li> <li>• “We are a multi-cultural society and as such Easter is not celebrated by all.”</li> </ul>
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**Table 11 Research Survey sub-groups more likely to provide each reason for preferring more shops open**

Reason for preferring more shops open	Sub-group
Not everyone is Christian/observes Easter (28%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NZ European – 33%</li> <li>• No religious affiliation - 37%</li> </ul>
Retailers/businesses should be allowed to open / Should be their choice/decision (22%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't work in retail/hospitality – 24%</li> <li>• NZ Māori – 31%</li> </ul>
People want to shop/eat/drink/go out with their families on the holiday (17%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work in retail/hospitality – 22%</li> <li>• Asian – 26%</li> </ul>
Make it equal for all / Not just some stores/areas/online shops (11%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aged 60 or more – 22%</li> <li>• Don't work in retail/hospitality – 14%</li> <li>• Christian religion – 15%</li> </ul>
Employees/employees should have the choice of working or not (10%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No significant differences</li> </ul>
Easter Sunday is not a public holiday/It's like any other day (9%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No significant differences</li> </ul>

### 3.4 Preference for all or parts of Auckland to have more shop open

**Table 12 Preference for all or parts of Auckland to have more shops open**



### 3.5 Preference for which parts of Auckland

Table 13 Preference for which parts of Auckland

Preference for which parts of Auckland	Research Survey n=51	Public Engagement Survey n=18
Selected malls	28%	-
City/Auckland City	18%	-
CBD	17%	61%
Nonspecific malls	16%	-
Main areas / centres	14%	-
Sylvia Park	13%	-
Tourist spots	10%	-
Manukau	8%	-
Supermarkets/food places	8%	-
Albany	7%	-
Not the CBD	5%	-
West Auckland	4%	6%
Auckland central	3%	17%
Henderson	3%	11%
Ponsonby	3%	11%
Suburbs	3%	6%
The inner suburbs	3%	-
Devonport	2%	-
Other	8%	22%
Saint Heliers	-	22%
Botany	-	11%
Dominion Road	-	6%
Rodney	-	6%
Takapuna	-	6%
Titirangi	-	6%
Waiheke	-	6%
Waimauku	-	6%

## 4 Targeted engagement

### 4.1 Key informant interviews with representatives from key organisations

Council staff undertook 17 key informant interviews with representatives from the following range of organisations during May-early July 2017:

- churches and faith groups
  - Anglican diocese - Bishop
  - Catholic diocese – Executive Secretary – Justice and Peace Commission
  - Interfaith Council -representative from the Bahai faith
  - Family First -Director
- unions
  - First Union
  - Pasefika fono Convenor
  - Retail, Finance & Commerce Divisional Secretary
  - New Zealand Council of trade unions
  - Secretary
  - Vice-President Māori
- businesses and business organisations
- Progressive Enterprises Ltd - General Manager Corporate Affairs - Countdown
- Foodstuffs North Island Ltd – Solicitor
- Auckland Chamber of Commerce – Chief Executive Officer
- Hospitality Association – Advocacy and Policy Manager
- ethnic groups
  - Auckland Multicultural Society - President
  - New Zealand Central Indian Association – President (speaking in personal capacity – not on behalf of organisation)
- Mataawaka
  - Chief Executive - Te Whānau o Waipereira Trust
- social organisations
  - Senior Policy Analyst - Salvation Army Social Policy and Parliamentary Unit – Salvation Army.

The key views of these organisations are summarised by theme overleaf.

## **Important to keep the day for religious observance**

*(Churches, faith groups, social organisations, unions, employees, mataawaka)*

- important for a civil society to protect the faith values of all members
- concerned at ensuring people have time to go to church/observe the Sabbath
- noted the need have a day for religious observance
- noted that New Zealand has a Christian foundation and it was important to continue to acknowledge this through days off
- noted that days like Easter Sunday are important for family togetherness
- highlighted the link between Māori leadership and the faith base which goes back to pre-Christian times
- concerned for ability for employees to be able to have the day to attend church on the Sabbath a key date in the Christian calendar.

## **Need for family / whānau time and relaxation**

*(Unions, employees, Salvation Army, ethnic organisations, Mataawaka, Churches, faith groups)*

- concerned for family and the ability for families to take time out to spend with each other – believe a change could be detrimental to employees and their families
- remembered when shops used to be closed on the weekends and a lot of time was spend together as a family, playing sports etc
- noted that days like Easter Sunday are important for family togetherness
- believed it was important to that the rules of any decision are clearly communicated to stakeholders
- believed the whole of society needs to recalibrate

## **No need for change**

*(churches, faith groups, ethnic organisations)*

- believe the current settings provide a reasonable compromise – with shops selling essentials currently allowed to open
- noted that there are very few days when everything is closed
- people can still go out and eat and there are plenty of things to do in the city.
- day for cultural / other activities important for Māori

*(Unions, employees, Mataawaka organisations, Churches, Māori)*

- highlighted concerns for Māori in terms of the impact of a change for Māori who work in retail who lose a guaranteed day off to spend with their whānau, unveilings, anniversaries etc
- noted that there are many other countries where shops are closed on certain days so tourists / visitors would not find this unusual
- concerned at a loss of 'kotahitanga' (togetherness)
- Easter is an important time for whānau gatherings, marae working bees etc. and these opportunities would be diminished if there were a change to allow more shops to open.

### **Concern for employees' rights and wellbeing**

*(Unions, employees, Salvation Army, ethnic organisations, Mataawaka organisations, Churches, faith groups)*

- concerned for employees potentially losing a guaranteed day off - only 3.5 - change would reduce this to 2.5 days.
- concerned about the ability of employees to use the protections in the Act given the power imbalance between employees and employers
- employees wanted to have a day off when everyone else has a day off
- concerned for the health and wellbeing of employees with fewer guaranteed days off
- employees said that due to peak periods in retail it is often tricky to find a time to take their leave therefore they welcomed the guaranteed days off
- many employees in the same family work in retail, allowing more shops to open could take time away from families wanting to spend the day together
- employees are not paid time and half and do not receive a day in lieu
- the council must seek to balance the rights and freedoms of different groups of the population e.g. some would like to shop but need to balance right to shop with the rights and freedoms of employees
- shop trading hours in NZ are already very liberal when compared internationally
- believe the world is increasingly fast moving and there is a need to keep some days like Easter and Christmas
- concerned at the erosion over time of employees rights including the increasing casualisation of labour and low rates of unionisation
- believed the decision is a case of the haves dictating what will happen for the have nots
- concerned for low paid /vulnerable / insecure employees and the pressure to work

- many clients are under a lot of stress and financial pressure and are working multiple jobs. People need the opportunity to take part in religious, community and family activities, and need rest time
- the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment has highlighted that there has been a high level of non-compliance with employment standards
- seventeen per cent of respondents to Statistics New Zealand's Survey of Working Life (2012) reported not receiving at least one of these minimum employment standards.

### **Business principles – freedom of enterprise and consistency of offering**

*(Chamber of Commerce, Progressive Enterprises, Foodstuffs Ltd, Hospitality Association)*

- this is a principles based decision – about freedom of enterprise
- businesses, not government or the council should decide whether or not to trade - businesses weigh up their own risk and reward
- see it as a positive opportunity for employees as there are strong protections in place for employees who do not wish to work on Easter Sunday
- highlighted that council must make clear to Aucklanders that there are strong protections in the law for employees e.g. protections built into contracts
- a survey undertaken by the Chamber of Commerce of 1,000 of their members showed 40 per cent of those surveyed supported the status quo while 60 per cent said businesses should be allowed to open during Easter
- unlikely to open all of their locations in Auckland but rather strategic sites based on demand
- general support from Foodstuffs members in favour of change - there does seem to be a demand from customers
- Auckland is highly diverse - not just Christian - important that shops can open to respond to demand
- many employees are from diverse backgrounds - not hard to find staff who wish to work in areas where shop trading on Easter Sunday is permitted
- benefit to hospitality businesses if more shops were able to open on Easter e.g. due to greater foot traffic, more people going out to shop who would then eat etc
- we are a modern day society- belief that community is driven by Christian values is wrong
- Auckland is a tourism hub with huge diversity– important to have consistency of offering - availability of retail and hospitality
- simpler and fairer for all parts of Auckland to have shops open

- not advocating for other days to be changed from restricted shopping days
- concerned that more businesses could choose to break the law if a policy was not adopted
- some competitors break the law when other retailers make a conscious decision not to.

## 4.2 Pacific Leaders Fono and Youth Talanoa

A Pacific Leaders fono was held on 6 June 2017. A total of 52 Pacific leaders attended from various ethnic groups, church denominations, and spheres of influence and from across the Auckland region with concentrated Pacific populations:

- Tonga n=21
- Niuean n=4
- Fiji n=1
- Samoa n=21
- Tokelau n=3
- Cook Island n=7
- Tuvalu n=1

Fono participants unanimously supported the status quo.

The Pacific Youth Leaders Talanoa was held on 12 June 2017. A total of 17 people attended comprising of church youth leaders, youth employees and a few youth, from central, south and west Auckland, and from a range of ethnic backgrounds:

- Cook Island n= 5
- Samoan n= 4
- Tongan n= 4
- Niuean n= 4

All but one talanoa participant supported the status quo, and that participant wanted an option for all shops to close.

Key views from both forums are summarised by theme below.

### **Easter Sunday is central to the Christian faith**

Pacific leaders declared Easter Sunday as central to their Christian faith and their identity as Pacific people. This was the single most important reason the youth leaders wanted to keep the status quo.

“Easter Sunday is significant for us as Christians. The Sabbath is of utmost [importance] to all of us. It is the core to Christianity.” (Tongan)

“Easter Sunday is a very special day for us. It is the day our Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead...” (Fijian)

### **Preserving New Zealand’s foundational Christian values**

Pacific leaders and youth leaders also highlighted New Zealand’s history with Christianity as a reason for wanting to maintain the status quo.

“New Zealand is a Christian country. Our laws are based on Christian values – but everything is being pushed, God is being pushed further and further back.”

“It is important for us to be able to hold onto something that we can give to our children and grandchildren, for them to know that Easter Sunday is a special day for us to come together.” (Youth talanoa attendee)

### **Cultural heritage – Pacific cultures are inextricably linked to Christianity**

During the fono and talanoa leaders emphasised how Christianity is a huge part of Pacific culture, to the point that Christianity is seen as the foundation of their culture.

“I was brought up in the Island. [Easter] Sunday was holy, no work, nothing, just to praise God and go to Church.” (Pacific Leaders fono attendee)

“You cannot separate my faith from my culture. It is embedded in there. My values intertwine with my faith. The faith goes with my culture.” (Youth talanoa attendee)

### **Family time – Easter Sunday is a time for togetherness**

The importance of family time and togetherness was another key reason to keep the status quo.

“Easter Sunday is a day of togetherness.” (Pacific leaders fono attendee)

“People appreciate Easter Sunday as time off work. Often Pacific Island families work too hard and don’t have time to for fellowship with family, so it’s not just the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, it’s time to have with families because we’re so busy at work and with our lives, so Easter Sunday for some is a nice time to spend with families.” (Youth talanoa attendee)

### **Pacific Islanders may feel pressured or obliged to work on Easter Sunday**

Pacific leaders and youth leaders raised serious concerns about whether Pacific employees would freely decline to work on Easter Sunday, or whether employees would feel pressured to agree to work Easter Sunday.

“We don’t do well in negotiations in terms of having a voice. In fact, most of the time when it comes to employee/ employers, [Pacific Islanders] trust our employers. But most employers only care about money.” (Pacific Leaders fono attendee)

“It can be hard for people to say, “I don’t want to work” and us as Pacific Islanders aren’t always able to be upfront and might find it hard to say [to employers] why they don’t want to work – because I want to go to Church.” (Youth talanoa attendee)

### **Change is unnecessary – the status quo works**

A strong feeling was that there was nothing wrong with the current situation and therefore there was no need to make any changes.

“The shops that are currently open [on Easter Sunday] offer the basic services people need.” (Pacific leaders forum attendee).

“It’s just a matter of preparation. You know the shops are closing, so get prepared” (Youth talanoa attendee)

### **Concerns for society and future generations – a strong need to preserve core values**

Pacific youth leaders expressed concerns for young people and for the future of society. They believed if more shops were able to open then young people would begin to view Easter Sunday as just a regular day and the true meaning of Easter would be forgotten.

“I think young people will treat it as a normal day... because they like everything fast, convenient. They will probably move away from family time, spend time with friends... This could possibly lead them away from their fellowship within the Church.” (Youth talanoa attendee)

### **Family time**

The importance of family time and togetherness was another reason raised in support of the status quo by both the Pacific leaders and youth leaders.

“Easter Sunday is a time for togetherness” (Pacific leaders fono attendee)

“Close the shops down. Save power. We need a break from commercialism. Look at this as family time. Use this as a time to get our values back.” (Youth talanoa attendee)

### **Difference of opinion**

One youth leader held a different opinion. He argued for equal opportunity for all shop owners to be opened or all shops to be closed rather than to allow the Council to give the privilege to a select few.

“I wish there was an option 3 to have all shops closed... I’m strongly against the idea that some shops stay open and half shops can’t be open” (Youth talanoa attendee)

## **4.3 Key informant interviews with Māori and Pacific community members**

Seven key informant interviews were held with Māori and Pacific community members. Five of the seven informants were in favour of the status quo. Reasons were:

- spending time with whānau
- maintaining tradition and culture
- faith and religious beliefs
- opposition to Easter Sunday commercialism.

The Māori key informants highlighted spending time with whānau as the most significant reason, followed by tradition and culture. However, Pacific key informants highlighted faith and religion as the most important reason, followed by tradition and culture.

The key views of these informants are summarised below by theme.

## **Whānau / Family**

Easter Sunday was strongly expressed amongst the Māori key informants as time for whānau or commonly referred to as whānaungatanga.

“Especially on this marae or any marae, whānau always comes first” (Māori interviewee)

“Easter Sunday is seen as a Family Day, where you either leave Auckland to go to your whānau either up North or down the line and use it as time to catch up as family” (Māori)

“It’s a genuine time to take leave and go and visit and spend time with Family. It’s about whānaungatanga” (Māori interviewee)

“The need to preserve the importance of whānau time” (Pacific interviewee)

## **Tradition and culture**

“Easter is an important date for whānau ... and whānau need to ‘embrace it’ as part of our tradition and culture in NZ” (Māori interviewee)

“From an economic perspective, it could impact the ability of our communities to maintain these traditions of celebrating the reason for Easter Sunday and how families get together to reflect (Pacific). It’s about our whakapapa and whānaungatanga and wish to keep our traditions as is for our community and Marae” (Māori interviewee)

## **Faith and religious beliefs**

“Chose to maintain the status quo due to faith based and cultural rationale” (Pacific interviewee)

“NZ was founded on Christian principles” (Māori interviewee)

“Families, strong ethics and values, Spiritual faith in Jesus” (Pacific interviewee)

## **Opposition to Easter Sunday commercialism**

“Need to remove corporate greed from the equation here. We need to be aware of our rights and beliefs and values and protect them from exploitation in the name of commercial profit” (Pacific interviewee)

The two Māori key informants that preferred to open more shops on Easter Sunday felt that it would be more convenient having more shops available for preparing food for whānau gatherings.

“Either way as thought it would allow for whānau to do their shopping on Sunday and have fresh produce for preparing for the feasts and activities over Sunday and Monday” Māori interviewee.

## **4.4 Intercept surveys**

Intercept surveys targeted Māori and Pacific youth at:

- the Papatoetoe night market on 2 June 2017
- Manukau Institute of Technology’s Manukau campus on 14 June

- opportunistically from various Māori and Pacific community and whānau gatherings between 10 and 19 June 2017.

A total of 317 responses were received, 45 from Māori, 191 from Pacific peoples, 81 from other ethnicities. More than two thirds of the total respondents aged less than 29 years old (63 per cent).

Māori and other ethnic groups preferred more shops open on Easter Sunday (53 and 58 per cent respectively). Conversely, Pacific people showed a stronger preference towards maintaining the status quo (53 per cent).

Amongst those wanting more shops open, the general preference was to apply the new rule to all of Auckland (more than 65 per cent).

Key themes for supporting either option are summarised in Tables 14 and 15.

**Table 14 Key themes supporting the status quo**

	<b>Count</b>
<b>Religious reasons – observe the religious significance of the day</b>	23
<b>People should be given time to spend with their families</b>	9
<b>Keep the status quo it is only one day, there are enough days to trade</b>	7

**Table 15 Key themes supporting more shops being able to open on Easter Sunday**

	<b>Count</b>
<b>Accessibility and or convenience for emergencies, for those who work, last minute shop, for food shopping, shouldn't be a holiday just a normal Sunday for Easter Monday preparation</b>	28
<b>Businesses should have the option to open – cater for the changing population, option to open from midday like Anzac, cater for other religions, shouldn't be penalised</b>	10
<b>Apply to specific parts of Auckland – e.g. City, Botany, Papatoetoe, Mangere, Mangere or other regions</b>	8
<b>Easter is not inclusive of other diverse religions and ethnicities</b>	5
<b>Open for customers</b>	4

## 4.5 UPSouth - Engagement with rangitahi/youth in South Auckland

UPSOUTH is an online platform for Maori, Pacific and diverse youth/rangatahi aged 15-24. The Southern Initiative promotes its use through local schools and community events.

A callUP was put on the UPSOUTH webpage asked 'What do you and your whānau like to do on Easter Sunday?'

Respondents used multiple emotion categories and symbols about how they feel about the topic and text to express their views.

At its close, the callUP received 24 pieces of feedback from 20 participants.

The most used emotion categories were:

- "joy" (57%)

- “peaceful” (21%)
- “freedom”(14%).

The most used symbols were:

- “heart” (25%)
- “people” (22%)
- “food” (19%)
- “house” (12%)
- “world” (9%).

Examples of text responses received are provided below.

### **Funday Sunday**

“Me and my siblings look forward to Easter Sunday as it’s a time where everyone gets to relax for a while and bond together as a family by doing various sightseeing activities. Usually my siblings and I are always cooped up in our room doing school work or playing games and my parents are busy doing late shifts at work, so we unfortunately don't get to spend a lot of quality time together. "fun-day Sunday" as I call it is the best because we all get to spend a whole day together doing fun activities!!”

### **Is Easter really all about chocolate?**

“As I was growing up this became a family tradition. I was never taught the religious side of Easter or what it really meant until I was older and surrounded myself by people that attended church and belonged to a religion. On Easter Sunday I like to spend the day with family and friends that can teach me the real value of Easter and why it is important then I like to spend time with my sibling and carry out family traditions.”

### **Student from MHS**

“Shops that are opened on Easter Sundays shouldn't be opened because people need to learn how to prepare on Saturdays for Sunday. Easter Sundays should be about Family and the real reason for Easter which is the resurrection of Jesus Christ. As for me and my family during Easter we believe that it is a time for us to remember our saviour Jesus Christ and his resurrection, during Easter we spend time as a family and we do things that help us learn more about the reason of Easter.”

### **Not all Christian but it does not matter**

“We are actually Fiji Indians and don't follow Christianity but race does not matter. We actually have BBQ and we have some drinks with my family and enjoy the day to the fullest with my parents and siblings as if it were our own Easter Sunday. So basically it’s just a fun family time.”

## 4.6 Advisory Panels

### 4.6.1 The Rainbow Communities Advisory Panel

Key points made at a workshop discussion by the Rainbow Communities Panel included:

- many people in the LGBTI community may not hold Christian beliefs and this may impact their views on this particular holiday
- many younger people working in retail especially students may welcome an additional day's pay if there was an expansion of Easter Sunday trading
- there has been a shift over time to having more shops open for business e.g. longer hours and more days
- the shift in working conditions including zero hour contracts and similar are putting many service and retail employers under pressure in terms of certainty around guaranteed work hours and income. A decision to expand shop trading on Easter Sunday could be viewed as part of the further reduction of employees' rights
- some LGBTI people will find it hard to stand up to employers if they feel they are pressured to work on Easter Sunday. This is also in the context of many LGBTI people, especially trans people, facing real struggles gaining work experience, work and maintaining employment.

## 4.7 Emails and submissions

### 4.7.1 Emails

A total of 50 emails were received from members of the public. Of these, 46 preferred the status quo, four preferred more shops open on Easter Sunday, and one preferred having fewer shops open. Examples of the responses received are provided below.

- "I consider Easter Sunday should be kept as a status quo. As someone who works every weekend, I wish to observe Easter Sunday. Others like me who work in a sole charge position wouldn't have the option of choosing not to work. Retail employees, especially in Shopping Centres have no opportunity to celebrate Statutory holidays if other staff are unable to cover their shift and exercise their right of having an option of not working. I am certain the public do not suffer any hardship by being unable to shop on one of 3 days where retail outlets re closed."
- "There is NO justification for ANY Council to convert Easter Sunday into a possible normal 'trading day'. To do so would be divisive, very materialistic, create difficulties for hundreds/thousands of people and be historically wrong. Surely every elected Council should respect and retain our historical values and beliefs – not unravel or discard them."
- "I am an Anglican priest. I do not want, however, to impose my Holy Days (holidays) on others. My reasons for opposing Easter Sunday trading are on the grounds of

support for employees and the need to ensure families and individuals are not “forced” into working or being afraid of consequences ( from employer or fellow staff ) agree to work on Easter Sunday. I see this issue as a matter of priorities for society, one priority being to recognising the need for people to have some “rest” and “downtime”.

- “I am a long term resident in Auckland and business owner. Myself, wife and family all believe that Good Friday and Easter Sunday should be remained closed for trading. If you allow opening to be optional it opens the door for other businesses to be pressured to be open and having just a handful of days a year closed is the only time in the year families can be together without the madness of Easter Sales and manic running around.”
- “I think in the modern world it is simply insane that we can't have even a few supermarkets open on Easter Sunday to sell basic food/essentials. I don't really care about the liquor aspect, but human beings in cities need food. Even on Easter Sunday. This is punitive and ridiculous. Even if it is limited hours from Noon-5pm, but if you run out of milk or food and can't feed yourself or your family that is just insane.”

#### **4.7.2 Formal submissions**

One formal submission was received from the Social Welfare Anti-Poverty Committee, Auckland Catholic Diocese Justice and Peace Commission. Key points include:

- civil society needs to protect the faith values of all members and allow them to celebrate their religious traditions
- families are the centre of Society and need respect and valuing
- erosion of family life by only four days a year when there is no retail shopping
- family life will further suffer if the remaining four days of the year when there is no retail shopping are further eroded by allowing trading on Easter Sunday
- for the Māori community, Easter is an important time when they return to the whānau / marae for unveilings and anniversaries
- families need time off to work together
- work/ life balance is important for mental health and fostering family life
- there are only four days per year when full shopping is restricted. Surely 361 days per year to trade are enough for all but essential businesses?
- in other countries around the world not is Easter Sunday non trading day but all Sundays. So why do Aucklanders need it?
- the use of Ester Sunday as a trading day would be seriously detrimental to employees, cultural groups, and families, within our society.

## **5 Further information**

Full copies of the findings from the Representative Survey, Public Engagement Survey, Pacific Leaders Fono, Pacific Youth Talanoa, and intercept surveys are available from Auckland Council on request.

ISBN 978-1-98-852942-4 (Print)

ISBN 978-1-98-852943-1 (PDF)

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This document was prepared by Social Policy and Bylaws, Community and Social Policy, Auckland Council, Chief Planning Office, Auckland Council

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