

WAIROA DISTRICT COUNCIL



LOCAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

2008

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Under the Local Government Act 2002 Wairoa District Council is required to produce a "local governance statement" which in reality is a short, fast guide to our responsibilities and the services we provide. This information can in most instances be accessed in more detail from the council web site: www.wairoadc.govt.nz

The information contained in this statement will be regularly reviewed and updated.

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1.0 FUNCTIONS, RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACTIVITIES

The purpose of the Wairoa District Council is to enable democratic local decision-making to promote the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of the Wairoa District in the present and for the future.

In meeting its purpose the Wairoa District Council has a variety of roles:

- Facilitating solutions to local needs
- Advocacy on behalf of the local community with central government, other local authorities and other agencies
- Development of local resources
- Management of local infrastructure including network infrastructure (e.g. roads, sewage disposal, water, stormwater,) and community infrastructure (libraries, parks and recreational facilities)
- Environmental management
- Planning for the future needs of the local district.

In fulfilling its purpose Wairoa District Council exercises powers and fulfils responsibilities conferred on it by the following legislation:

Airport Authorities Act 1966	Income Tax Act 2007
Animal Welfare Act 1999	Insolvency Act 2006
Animals Law Reform Act 1989	Interpretation Act 1999
Arts Council of New Zealand Toi Aotearoa Act 1994	Kiwisaver Act 2006
Auctioneers Act 1928	Land Act 1948
Biosecurity Act 1993	Land Drainage Act 1908
Building Act 2004	Land Transfer Act 1952
Building Research Levy Act 1969	Land Transport Management Act 2003
Burial and Cremation Act 1964	Libraries and Mechanics' Institute Act 1908
Bylaws Act 1910	Litter Act 1979
Citizenship Act 1977	Local Authorities (Members' Interests) Act 1968
Civil Aviation Act 1990	Local Electoral Act 2001
Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002	Local Government (Rating) Act 2002
Civil List Act 1979	Local Government Act 2002
Climate Change Response Act 2002	Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987
Commerce Act 1986	Machinery Act 1950
Companies Act 1993	Major Events Management Act 2007
Conservation Act 1987	Meat Board Act 2004
Consumer Guarantees Act 1993	Minimum Wage Act 1983
Copyright Act 1994	Municipal Insurance Act 1960
Counties Insurance Empowering Act 1941	National Provident Fund Restructuring Act 1990
Disabled Persons Community Welfare Act 1975	New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990
District Courts Act 1947	New Zealand Geographic Board Act 1946
Dog Control Act 1996	New Zealand Library Association Act 1939
Earthquake Commissions Act 1993	New Zealand Walkways Act 1990
Electoral Finance Act 2007	Noxious Plants Act 1978
Electricity Act 1992	Oaths and Declarations Act 1957
Employment Relations Act 2000	Official Information Act 1982
Energy Companies Act 1992	Ombudsmen Act 1975
Engineers Associates Act 1961	Plumbers and Gasfitters and Drainlayers Act 2006
Epidemic Preparedness Act 2006	Privacy Act 1993
Fencing Act 1978	Property Law Act 2007
Fencing and Swimming Pools Act 1987	Prostitution Reform Act 2003
Financial Reporting Act 1993	Protected Disclosures Act 2003
Fire Services Act 1975	Public Bodies Contracts Act 1959
Food Act 1981	Public Bodies Leases Act 1969
Foreshore and Seabed Act 2004	Public Records Act 2005
Forest and Rural Fires Act 1977	Public Works Act 1981
Gambling Act 2003	Queen Elizabeth the Second National Trust Act 1977
Gas Act 1992	Railways Act 2005
Goods and Services Tax Act 1985	Rates Rebate Act 1973
Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1991	Rating Valuations Act 1998
Health Act 1956	Reserves Act 1977
Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992	Residential Tenancies Act 1986
Higher Salaries Commission Act 1977	Resources Management Act 1991
Historic Places Act 1993	Sale of Liquor Act 1989
Housing Act 1955	Secret Commissions Act 1910
Housing Corporation Act 1974	Securities Act 1978
Human Rights Act 1993	Securities Transfer Act 1991
Impounding Act 1955	Smoke-free Environments Act 1990

Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1941
Sovereign's Birthday Observance Act 1952
Standards Act 1988
Statutes Amendment Acts 1936-1951
Statutory Land Charges Registration Act 1928
Summary Offences Act 1981
Te Ture Whenua Maori Act 1993
Telecommunications Act 2001
Transit New Zealand Act 1989

Transport Act 1962
Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975
Trespass Act 1980
Trustee Act 1956
Unit Titles Act 1972
Unsolicited Electronic Messages Act 2007
Wild Animal Control Act 1977
Wildlife Act 1953

2.0 BYLAWS

Bylaws are used to regulate certain activities monitored and/or managed by Council, allowing warranted officers of Council to respond to local issues, problems, or concerns, in a pre-determined manner.

The primary mandate for Council to make Bylaws is provided under section 145 - General Bylaw-making of power for territorial authorities, of the Local Government Act 2002 (the Act).

Under this section Council has the power to make bylaws for general purposes to:

- Protect the public from nuisance
- Protect, promote and maintain public health & safety
- Minimise the potential for offensive behaviour in public places.

Without limiting the general bylaw-making power, Council may also make bylaws for the specific purposes set out in section 146 of the Act. These are:

- **Regulating the activities and matters described in section 146(a), such as waste management, on-site wastewater disposal systems, trade wastes and solid wastes.** These matters tend to relate to services provided by, or activities which may be regulated by, Council.
- **Managing, regulating against, or protecting from, damage, misuse or loss or preventing use of the land, structures or infrastructure associated with matters described in section 146(b).** These tend to relate to protecting community facilities and the Council's infrastructure from damage.
- **Preventing the spread of fires involving vegetation.** This power is subject to sections 20 to 22 of the Forest and Rural Fires Act 1977 regarding extreme fire hazard and restrictions in fire seasons.

The Local Government Act 2002 requires Council to review all existing bylaws by 01 July 2008. The review of bylaws is on-going, with the development of a consolidated bylaw with Part 1 (Introductory), Part 2 (Land Transport), and Part 3 (Public Safety) being consulted on with the community during 2007, and adopted in November 2007.

Council operates the following bylaws:

Model General Bylaws

NZS 9201: Part 6 – Solid Waste: 1999 (Currently Under Review)

The purpose of this Bylaw is to provide for collection and disposal of refuse.

NZS 9201: Chapter 7 – Water Supply: 1994 (Currently Under Review)

The purpose of this Bylaw is to enable Council as Waste Water Authority, to regulate: the discharge of trade waste to the sewerage system operated by it, and the drainage of waste water from domestic premises into the systems operated by it.

NZS 9231: Fire Prevention: 1971 (Currently Under Review)

This Bylaw relates to the prevention of fire, the protection of persons and property from fire risks, and the provision of adequate first-aid equipment.

Wairoa District Consolidated Bylaws

Part 1 – Introductory Bylaw 2007

The purpose of this bylaw is to, identify and clearly interpret those terms and expressions that are used throughout this Bylaw of Council, and, to outline the serving of orders and notices, powers of delegation and entry, suspension and revocation of licence, permit, consent or approval, removal of works executed contrary to this Bylaw, fees and charges, offences and breaches and penalties for breach of this Bylaw.

Part 2 – Land Transport Bylaw 2007

The purpose of the Land Transport Bylaw 2007 is to provide for the regulation of roads and footpaths within the control of Council by: the setting of speed limits for vehicles, providing requirements for parking and control of vehicular or other traffic, providing requirements for the droving of stock, and, providing requirements for the construction, maintenance and use of vehicle crossings.

Part 3 – Public Safety Bylaw 2007

The purpose of this Bylaw is to ensure that acceptable standards of safety, convenience, visual amenity and civic values are maintained for the well-being of inhabitants and visitors to the district.

Council Bylaws

Urban Fire Prevention Bylaw 1993 (Currently Under Review)

This bylaw relates to the prevention of the spreading of fires involving vegetation inside an urban fire district. The power of this Bylaw is in addition to and not in derogation of Section 183 of the Local Government Act 2002 and is complementary to the provisions of the Forest & Rural Fires Act 1977, and the Forest and Rural Fires Regulations 1979,

3.0 ELECTORAL SYSTEM

Wairoa District Council currently operates its elections under the first past the post electoral system. This form of voting is used in parliamentary elections to elect Members of Parliament to constituency seats. Electors vote by indicating their preferred candidate(s), and the candidate(s) that receives the most votes is declared the winner regardless of the proportion of votes that candidate(s) obtained.

The other option permitted under the Local Electoral Act 2001 is the single transferable vote system (STV). This system is used in district health board elections. Electors rank candidates in order of preference. The number of votes required for a candidate to be elected (called the quota) depends on the number of positions to be filled and the number of valid votes. The necessary number of candidates to fill all vacancies is achieved first by the counting of first preferences then by a transfer of a proportion of votes received by any candidate where the number of votes for that candidate is in excess of the quota, and then by the exclusion of the lowest polling candidates and the transfer of these votes in accordance with voters' second preferences.

Under the Local Electoral Act 2001 the council can resolve to change the electoral system to be used at the next two elections or conduct a binding poll on the question, or electors can demand a binding poll. A poll can be initiated by at least 5 per cent of electors signing a petition demanding that a poll be held.

Once changed, an electoral system must be used for at least the next two triennial general elections, i.e. we cannot change our electoral system for one election and then change back for the next election.

The council's last review of electoral systems was in September 2005. No change was made to council's electoral system for the 2007 elections. Accordingly, either the council could resolve in 2008 to change the system for the 2010 elections or to conduct a poll, or the electors could demand a poll.

4.0 MAORI WARDS AND CONSTITUENCIES

The Local Electoral Act 2001 also gives council the ability to establish separate wards for Maori electors. The council may resolve to create separate Maori wards or conduct a poll on the matter, or the community may demand a poll.

The demand for a poll can be initiated by a petition signed by 5 per cent of electors within the district.

The council last considered whether or not to have separate Maori wards in November 2005. The council decided not to have separate Maori wards for the 2007 elections. Accordingly, either the council could resolve in 2009 to introduce separate Maori wards for the 2010 elections or to conduct a poll, or electors could demand a poll.

5.0 COMMUNITY BOARDS

The Wairoa District Council has no community boards. Community Boards are constituted under section 49 of the Local Government Act 2002 to:

- Represent and act as an advocate for the interests of their community
- Consider and report on any matter referred to it by the council and any issues of interest or concern to the community board
- Make an annual submission to council on expenditure in the community
- Maintain an overview of services provided by the council within the community
- Communicate with community organisations and special interest groups in the community
- Undertake any other responsibilities delegated by the council

Each community board has a chairperson and consists of members elected triennially by the community and an appointed councillor. The board elects its own chairperson at its first meeting after the triennial election.

The council last reviewed the community board structures in the district in August 2003. The council decided not to make any changes. Accordingly, either the council could resolve in 2009 to change these structures for the 2010 elections or to conduct a poll, or electors could demand a poll.

Electors can demand the formation of community boards. This is done by a process similar to the reorganisation process described elsewhere.

6.0 REPRESENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

The council is required to review its representation arrangements at least once every six years. This review must include the following:

- The number of elected members (within the legal requirement to have a minimum of six and a maximum of 30 members, including the Mayor)
- Whether the elected members (other than the Mayor) shall be elected by the entire district, or whether the district will be divided into wards for electoral purposes, or whether there will be a mix of "at large" and "ward" representation
- If election by wards is preferred, then the boundaries and names of those wards and the number of members that will represent each ward
- Whether or not to have separate wards for electors on the Maori roll
- Whether to have community boards and if so how many, their boundaries and membership and whether to subdivide a community for electoral purposes.

The council must follow the procedure set out in the Local Electoral Act 2001 when conducting this review, and also follows guidelines published by the Local Government Commission. The Act gives you the right to make a written submission to the council, and the right to be heard if you wish.

You also have the right to appeal any decisions on the above to the Local Government Commission, which will make a binding decision on the appeal.

Further details on the matters that the council must consider in reviewing its membership and basis of election can be found in the Local Electoral Act 2001.

The council last conducted a review in August 2003. It is not legally required to review representation again until August 2009.

7.0 THE REORGANISATION PROCESS

The Local Government Act 2002 sets out procedures, which must be followed during proposals to:

- Make changes to the boundaries of the district
- Create a new district
- Create a unitary authority
- Transfer a particular function or functions to another council.

The procedures for resolving each type of proposal are slightly different. In general they begin with a proposal either from the local authority, the Minister of Local Government, or by a petition signed by 10 per cent of electors.

Proposals for a boundary alteration or transfer of functions from one local authority to another will be considered by one of the affected local authorities, or by the Local Government Commission if the local authorities refer the proposal to the Commission or if they cannot agree on which of them should deal with matter.

Proposals for the establishment of a new district or the creation of a unitary authority will be dealt with by the Commission. These proposals cannot be implemented without a poll of electors.

Further information on these requirements can be found in the Local Government Act. The Local Government Commission has also prepared guidelines on procedures for local government reorganization.

8.0 ROLES AND CONDUCT

The Mayor and the councillors of the Wairoa District Council have the following roles:

- Setting the policy direction of council
- Monitoring the performance of the council
- Representing the interests of the district (on election all members must make a declaration that they will perform their duties faithfully and impartially, and according to their best skill and judgment in the best interests of the district)
- Employing the Chief Executive (under the Local Government Act the local authority employs the Chief Executive, who in turn employs all other staff on its behalf).

The Mayor is elected by the district as a whole and as one of the elected members shares the same responsibilities as other members of council. In addition the Mayor has the following roles:

- Presiding member at council meetings. The Mayor is responsible for ensuring the orderly conduct of business during meetings (as determined in standing orders).
- Advocate on behalf of the community. This role may involve promoting the community and representing its interests. Such advocacy will be most effective where it is carried out with the knowledge and support of the council.
- Ceremonial head of council.
- Providing leadership and feedback to other elected members on teamwork and chairing committees.

The Deputy Mayor is elected by the members of council at the first meeting of the council. The Deputy Mayor exercises the same roles as other elected members. In addition, if the Mayor is absent or incapacitated, or if the office of Mayor is vacant, then the Deputy Mayor

must perform all of the responsibilities and duties, and may exercise the powers of the Mayor (as summarised above). The Deputy Mayor may be removed from office by resolution of council.

The council may create one or more committees of council. A committee chairperson is responsible for presiding over meetings of the committee, ensuring that the committee acts within the powers delegated by council, and as set out in the council's Delegations Manual. A committee chairperson may be removed from office by resolution of council.

The Chief Executive is appointed by the council in accordance with section 42 and clauses 33 and 34 of Schedule 7 of the Local Government Act 2002. The Chief Executive implements and manages the council's policies and objectives within the budgetary constraints established by the council. Under section 42 of the Local Government Act 2002, the responsibilities of the Chief Executive are:

- Implementing the decisions of the council
- Providing advice to the council and community boards
- Ensuring that all responsibilities, duties and powers delegated to the Chief Executive or to any person employed by the Chief Executive, or imposed or conferred by any Act, regulation or bylaw are properly performed or exercised
- Managing the activities of the council effective and efficiently
- Maintaining systems to enable effective planning and accurate reporting of the financial and service performance of the council
- Providing leadership for the staff of the council
- Employing staff (including negotiation of the terms of employment for the staff).

Elected members have specific obligations as to their conduct in the following legislation:

- Schedule 7 of the Local Government Act 2002, which includes obligations to act as a good employer in respect of the Chief Executive and to abide by the current code of conduct and standing orders
- The Local Authorities (Members' Interests) Act 1968 which regulates the conduct of elected members in situations where there is, or could be, a conflict of interest between their duties as an elected member and their financial interests (either direct or indirect)
- The Secret Commissions Act 1910, which prohibits elected members from accepting gifts or rewards which could be seen to sway them to perform their duties in a particular way
- The Crimes Act 1961 regarding the acceptance of gifts for acting in a certain way and the use of official information for private profit.

All elected members are required to adhere to a code of conduct. Adopting such a code is a requirement of the Local Government Act 2002. Once adopted such a code may only be amended by a 75 per cent or more vote of the council. The code sets out the council's understanding and expectations of how the Mayor and councillors will relate to one another, to staff, to the media and to the general public in the course of their duties. It also covers disclosure of information that is received by or is in the possession of elected members, and contains details of the sanctions that the council may impose if an individual breaches the code. Copies of the full code of conduct may be obtained from the Administration Manager or from the website www.wairoadc.govt.nz

9.0 GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

The council reviews its committee structures after each triennial election. At the last review the council established the following standing committees:

- Resource Management Hearings Committee (Chair: His Worship the Mayor Mr L Probert) – to hear and make decisions on applications arising out of Council's regulatory responsibilities and to determine other related discretionary process matters.
- Maori Committee – tangata whenua perspective on relevant issues before other standing committees and Council.

The Resource Management Hearings Committee meets as required.

Council is currently undertaking a review of Council's Maori Policy. The appointment of representatives to the Maori Committee and the scheduling of meetings will not occur until the review is completed. This Local Governance Statement will be updated following the outcome of that review.

Further details on these committees, including their terms of reference, membership and meeting arrangements can be obtained from the above contacts or from the council website. The Council may, from time to time, establish ad hoc committees to consider a particular issue or issues.

10.0 COUNCIL ORGANISATIONS

The Wairoa District Council is a 100 per cent shareholder in Quality Roading & Services (Wairoa) Ltd (QRS) a council-controlled organisation under the Local Government Act. QRS is a company registered under the Companies Act 1993 to provide physical works services for a profit. QRS has their registered office in Kaimoana Road, Wairoa.

QRS has a chairperson and three other directors – all appointed to serve three year terms by council under its policy on the appointment of directors (copies of which are available from the Administration Manager of Wairoa District Council). The chairperson is elected by members of the board. Under the Companies Act 1993, directors' primary responsibility is to the best interests of QRS. The council cannot lawfully "instruct" the directors.

Council may, however, comment on the statement of intent setting out the objectives QRS has for the coming year. Copies of this statement may be obtained by writing to the Chief Executive of QRS, PO Box 83, Wairoa, or the Finance Manager of the Wairoa District Council.

11.0 CONDUCT OF MEETINGS

The legal requirements for council meetings are set down in the Local Government Act 2002 and the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA).

All council and committee meetings must be open to the public unless there is reason to consider some item "in committee". Although meetings are open to the public, members of the public do not have speaking rights unless prior arrangements are made with council. The LGOIMA contains a list of the circumstances where councils may consider items with the public excluded. (These circumstances generally relate to protection of personal privacy, professionally privileged or commercially sensitive information, and the maintenance of public health, safety and order). The council agenda is a public document, although parts may be withheld if the above circumstances apply.

The Mayor or committee chairperson is responsible for maintaining order at meetings and may, at his or her discretion, order the removal of any member of the public for disorderly conduct, or remove any member of council who does not comply with standing orders.

Minutes of meetings must be kept as evidence of the proceedings of the meeting. These must be made publicly available, subject to the provisions of the LGOIMA.

For an ordinary meeting of council, at least 14 days notice of the time and place of the meeting must be given. Extraordinary meetings generally can be called on 3 working days notice.

During meetings the Mayor and councillors must follow standing orders (a set of procedures for conducting meetings). The council may suspend standing orders by a vote of 75 per cent of the members present. A copy of the Code of Conduct and Standing Orders can be obtained from the Administration Manager or from the Council website www.wairoadc.govt.nz

12.0 CONSULTATION POLICY

The Local Government Act sets out certain consultation principles and a procedure that local authorities must follow when making certain decisions. This procedure, *the special consultative procedure*, is regarded as a minimum process.

The council can and does consult outside of the special consultative procedure. When it is adopting its long-term council community plan, annual plan or district plan it will hold formal meetings with community groups and other interested parties. At these meetings the council will seek views on the matters it considers important and identify issues of concern to the community.

The special consultative procedure consists of the following steps:

- **STEP ONE:** Preparation of a statement of proposal and a summary. The council must prepare a description of the proposed decision or course of action. The statement must be available for distribution throughout the community and must be available for inspection at the council office and may be made available elsewhere. The council also has to prepare a full and fair summary of the proposal, which must be distributed as widely as the council considers being reasonably practicable. That statement must be included on an agenda for a council meeting.
- **STEP TWO:** Public notice. The council must publish a notice in one or more daily newspapers, or in other newspapers of equivalent circulation, of the proposal and of the consultation being undertaken.
- **STEP THREE:** Receive submissions. The council must acknowledge all written submissions and offer submitters a reasonable opportunity to make an oral submission. The council must allow at least one month (from the date of the notice) for submissions.
- **STEP FOUR:** Deliberate in public. All meetings where the council deliberates on the proposal or hears submissions must be open to the public (unless there is some reason to exclude the public under the LGOIMA). All submissions must be made available unless there is reason to withhold them under LGOIMA.
- **STEP FIVE:** Follow up. A copy of the decision and a summary of the reasons must be provided to submitters. There is no prescribed format for such a summary.

By law, the council must follow the special consultative procedure before it:

- Adopts a long-term council community plan (LTCCP) or annual plan
- Amends an LTCCP
- Adopts, revokes, reviews or amends a bylaw
- Changes the mode of delivery for a significant activity (for example from the council to a council-controlled organisation or from a council controlled organisation to a private sector organisation) if that is not provided for in an LTCCP.

The council may be required to use the special consultative procedure under other legislation, and it may use this procedure in other circumstances if it wishes to do so.

A copy of the Consultation Policy can be obtained from the Administration Manager or from the Council website www.wairoadc.govt.nz

13.0 MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES AND RELATIONSHIPS

The Local Government Act 2002 requires council to employ a Chief Executive whose responsibilities are to employ other staff on behalf of the council, implement council decisions and provide advice to the council. Under the Local Government Act the Chief Executive is the only person who may lawfully give instructions to a staff member. Any complaint about individual staff members should therefore be directed to the Chief Executive, rather than the Mayor or councillors.

The Chief Executive is Mr Peter Freeman. Mr Freeman can be reached on 06-8387309 or by email: peter@wairoadc.govt.nz

Council management is organised into four divisions. These are:

- **Administration** – libraries, council secretariat, communications and public information, pensioner housing, emergency management (contact: Mrs TeAroha Cook, Administration Manager, 06-8387309, email: tearoha@wairoadc.govt.nz).
- **Finance** – rates, information technology, land information, property leases (contact Mr Russell Snow, Finance Manager 06-8387309, email: russells@wairoadc.govt.nz).
- **Regulatory Services** – resource consents and the district plan, plant and animal control, health inspection, building inspection, amusement devices, dangerous goods licences (contact: Mr. Freeman on 06-8387309 or by email: peter@wairoadc.govt.nz)
- **Assets and Services** – roads, water, stormwater, sewage, solid waste, reserves maintenance (contact: Mr Neil Cook, Engineering Manager 06-8387309, email: neil@wairoadc.govt.nz).

14.0 EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

The Wairoa District Council provides an employment environment that recognises the principles of equal opportunity in the recruitment, management, training and promotion of its staff.

The Chief Executive Officer ensures that no preference or discrimination is made on the basis of gender, marital and family status, religious or ethical belief, colour, race, ethnic or national origins, health, disability, age, sexual orientation or pregnancy.

Specifically, the Chief Executive Officer ensures that:

- Recruitment and selection procedures accord with EEO principles
- The culture of *The Wairoa District Council* supports an awareness of EEO principles and practice
- Appropriate training and development for managers and staff is provided in relation to EEO
- Family-friendly work practices are provided for where appropriate eg, access to special leave, provision for staff to work at home in circumstances of family difficulties, giving priority to receipt of phone calls from or concerning dependents and taking account of the responsibilities of staff for dependents in workload allocation and management.

15.0 KEY APPROVED PLANNING AND POLICY DOCUMENTS

The key policy and planning documents include:

- Long Term Council Community Plan 2006/2016
- The Annual Plan 2007/2008
- The District Plan
- The Regional Land Transport Plan
- Reserve Management Plans (Pohutukawa)

It is envisaged that as a result of developing the Long Term Council Community Plan new policy and planning documents will be developed covering a range of functions and activities. A number of these will become key documents and they will be added to the above list as well as being made available on the Council web site: www.wairoadc.govt.nz

16.0 PUBLIC ACCESS

The Wairoa District Council administrative offices, which house all staff, are located in Queen Street, Wairoa. The full contact details are:

Wairoa District Council
Coronation Square
Queen Street
P.O Box 54
Wairoa
Ph 06-8387309 / Fax 06-8388874
Web site: www.wairoadc.govt.nz

Complaints relating to services should in the first instance be directed to the receptionist. These will be logged in Councils system and attended to as soon as possible. You will be advised when the matter has been attended too. Complaints relating to other matters should be directed to the Chief Executive Officer.

With the exception of public holidays, Council offices will be open Monday through Friday, 9am – 4:30pm. Response times to customer enquiries will be as follows:

- Telephone Calls (one working day)
- Reception (fifteen minutes)
- Letters, faxes, e-mail (eight working days)

Councillors can be contacted via their contact details scheduled on the Council web site: www.wairoadc.govt.nz or messages can be left with the Council receptionist.

17.0 REQUESTS FOR OFFICIAL INFORMATION

Under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA) any person may request information from the council. Any request for information is a request made under LGOIMA. You do not have to say you are making a request under LGOIMA.

Once a request is made the council must supply the information unless reason exists for withholding it. The LGOIMA says that information may be withheld if release of the information would:

- Endanger the safety of any person
- Prejudice maintenance of the law
- Compromise the privacy of any person
- Reveal confidential or commercially sensitive information
- Cause offence to tikanga Maori or would disclose the location of waahi tapu
- Prejudice public health or safety
- Compromise legal professional privilege
- Disadvantage the local authority while carrying out negotiations or commercial activities
- Allow information to be used for improper gain or advantage.

The council must answer requests within 20 working days (although there are certain circumstances where this time-frame may be extended). The council may charge for official information under guidelines set down by the Ministry of Justice.

In the first instance you should address requests for official information to the Chief Executive Mr. Peter Freeman. Mr. Freeman can be reached on 06-8387309 or by email: peter@wairoadc.govt.nz