

Review out soon

An opportunity to have a hand in guiding how our district is run will present itself when the three-year review of the Long Term Council Community Plan is released soon. The ten-year plan is currently in the process of being audited, following which it will be presented to the community for consideration. Public meetings will be advertised so that people can come and learn about the review, focusing on key items of interest, including budgeting proposals. The meetings will provide the knowledge base for the submission process, where people have the opportunity to raise their ideas through the official channels, ensuring a fair say. Councils around the country are involved in the same process at the moment, as each is required to update this very important document. It is seen as the key driver behind activities at Council, showing where ratepayers' money is being spent, and it is vital that everyone feels they have been able to have a say.

At the centre of the LTCCP are these nine Community Outcomes, which provide a focal point for planning and activities:

- A strong, prosperous and thriving economy
- A safe and secure community
- A lifetime of good health and wellbeing
- An environment that is appreciated, protected and sustained for future generations
- Supportive, caring and valued communities
- A safe and integrated transport system
- Strong district leadership and a sense of belonging
- Safe and accessible recreational facilities
- A community that values and promotes its culture and heritage

The community will be kept informed as to when the reviewed document will be released. In the meantime, the current LTCCP is available for viewing either online at www.wairoadc.govt.nz, or at the Council offices on Queen Street.

New health plan for food outlets

National changes to the way the New Zealand Food Safety Authority interacts with food outlets has become a major focus for Wairoa District Council's health department. Environmental Health officer Vic Minter has been working with local commercial kitchen owners to introduce the new Food Control Plan – the latest measure by NZFSA to keep safety standards high. Mr Minter is encouraging voluntary adoption of the plan, which has a strong focus on self-management. Currently food outlets are inspected two or three times a year to make sure they are complying with safety standards. By adopting the Food Control Plan, outlets will take the onus on themselves. Measures taken to maintain standards are recorded in a regular diary, which is audited once a

year. If the auditor finds inconsistencies, there is the option to withdraw the plan and close the business, but there would be a grace period to fix problems. Food-related businesses will have time to come to grips with the new plan before it is made a legal requirement, but the Government has not yet set a date for this. Mr Minter said five or six Wairoa businesses had already shown interest, with some of the more progressive outlets "jumping at the bit" to be involved. "It is wise to become involved now so that staff can be trained in the principles of the plan well before it becomes mandatory," he said. Training courses in general food hygiene are expected to be organised by Council later in the year.

Experience Skype now

Have you been Skyped yet? This is the question that is becoming more frequent as the techno age well and truly takes hold in Wairoa. Fortunately, if you have no idea what 'Skype' means, the team at the Wairoa Public Library can help. The library staff are running Experience Skype workshops to take the mystery out of this increasingly popular phenomenon that involves using real time video conferencing and chat technology to bring together people around the world. Head librarian Sandra Hughes said many people had heard of Skype but put it into the "too hard basket". "It is something that can only be used effectively if you have a good broadband connection. At the library we offer free broadband, so we want people to make use of that to learn how easy Skype is," she said. It was also a very useful

communication tool. Someone could be sitting in the library having a conversation with one person on the computer screen, while typing messages to others – effectively creating a multi-person conversation. This was great for bringing together friends or families. The workshops are scheduled to take place on Tuesday, April 21 and Tuesday, May 5, from 9am to 10.30am. Ms Hughes said they would be very hands on so that people could really experience how the system works. Up to 12 people can register for each session, so bookings are important. This can be done by calling into the library, phoning on 838 8450, texting 027 376 2717 or email wrpstaff@xtra.co.nz. If the workshops prove popular, more may be run on a regular basis.



Remembering the sacrifice ... These Wairoa cadets welcomed the dawn at a past ANZAC Day ceremony.

ANZAC Day to feature strong local pride

When dawn breaks on this year's ANZAC Day commemorations it will be greeted by an official welcoming party made up largely of airforce personnel with Wairoa connections. Plans for the day's activities are already well underway, scheduled to begin at Mahia's Kaiuku Marae, followed by services throughout the district on Saturday, April 25. Every year a different branch of the armed services are invited to attend – army, navy or airforce. Following an official invite to the airforce, contact was made by Anthony Nicholson, formerly of Iwitea, representing a group in the

service with local connections offering to make up the firing party that is a traditional part of the commemoration ceremony. This will add a unique spin to what has become a proud tradition in the district. The group, whose names are yet to be confirmed, will be joined by a senior ranking airforce officer and Australian High Commission representative Major Jamie Waddington. Attendance at the annual event has remained steadfast over the years, attracting generations of people who wish to remember the sacrifices of those who served.

Whiteware amnesty day

Fridges, freezers and any other whiteware or large household items that are no longer needed will be picked up free of charge around the district next month. The annual collection is an opportunity for people to dispose of their old goods safely and easily in rural areas. Wairoa township will also have an amnesty, but for whiteware only. General rubbish, greenwaste and old vehicles are not included in the Wairoa Landfill one day amnesty and will be charged at the usual rates.

Disposal schedule:
Saturday, April 4, 2009
Nuhaka: 9am-11am (QRS Nuhaka Metal Depot)
Raupunga: 9am-12pm (Beside toilets)
Mohaka: 1pm-3pm (Old pub site)
Te Reinga: 1pm-3pm (opposite school)
Tuai: 9am-11am (Behind hall)
Wairoa: 11am-4pm (Wairoa landfill – whiteware only)
Saturday, April 11, 2009
Mahia: 9am-12pm (376 Kaiwaitau Rd)

Fence lines surveyed

Boundary fence checks along the length of State Highway 2 through the Wairoa District aim to reduce the number of wandering stock causing problems for motorists. A survey of the fence line is currently being carried out by the Council's Compliance team on behalf of the New Zealand Transport Agency. Team leader Des Jane said wandering stock posed a great danger to road users, particularly at night or when visibility was poor. "We carry out these surveys regularly to keep accidents down, but the onus is really on

the property owners to maintain their fence lines," he said. Where fences don't meet requirements of the Fencing Act, property owners are notified and are expected to act to rectify the situation. Mr Jane said that although a lot of areas had improved since they were last out looking at fences, there were still some hot spot areas around Whakaki, Morere and Raupunga. He is also taking the opportunity to remind stock owners that in order to graze the roadside or move stock long distances, permits are required in the interests of road safety.

For the diary:

Council meetings (second Tuesday of every month):

April 14
May 12
June 9
July 14
August 11
September 8
October 13
November 10
December 8

Forum dates (fourth Tuesday of every month):

April 24
May 26
June 30
July 28
August 25
September 22
October 27
November 24

Full Council meetings and Forums are held in the Council Chambers in the Queen Street offices and are open to the public, unless otherwise specified. Meetings and Forums start at 10am.