

MAYORAL COLUMN

WASTEWATER PROGRESS

We are making progress around Wairoa's wastewater discharge consent application which was lodged with the Hawke's Bay Regional Council at the end of last year.

The work around this application was approved in the 2017/18 Long Term Plan and is one of the most significant infrastructure projects Wairoa has seen in 30 years.

The multi-million-dollar expenditure will include renewals of the wastewater reticulation system, renewal works on the oxidation ponds and consent process development and works.

This is an issue facing New Zealanders all over the country and I commend this council and its staff for addressing it and getting on with the job.

It would be great to see Central Government step in and assist us with funding, so it is not being totally met by the ratepayer.

NEWEST KIWIS WELCOMED

Wairoa welcomed its newest Kiwis at an official citizenship ceremony last week.

It was an honour to present Travis Minter, Douglas Mason, Sara Mason, Milia Kushner and Nora Lee with their certificates of New Zealand citizenship by completing the formal citizenship ceremony and welcoming them as New Zealand citizens.



Mayor Craig Little



Wairoa Mayor Craig Little (right) with Wairoa's newest citizens who were welcomed as New Zealanders at last week's citizenship ceremony, from left, Nora Lee, Milia Kushner and Sara and Douglas Mason.

As Mayor, I welcomed these people to Wairoa on behalf of the Government, the people of New Zealand in general, and the citizens of Wairoa District in particular.

These new citizens took the Oath of Allegiance to Her Majesty the Queen and completed the necessary formalities to make them citizens of New Zealand.

SINCE THE COUNCIL'S APPLICATION WAS LODGED, OUR STAFF HAVE BEEN WORKING WITH THE HAWKE'S BAY REGIONAL COUNCIL WITH SITE VISITS AND PROVIDING INFORMATION REQUESTED BY THEM.

This is a significant undertaking and may take the whole year before consent is granted.

I know the Hawke's Bay Regional Council is making a real commitment to helping us.

They accept we are on a journey to rectify our issues and acknowledge this is not an overnight fix and are working with us. We understand they are the regulatory body and we are working with them to provide the information as they request it.

Our staff have been designing a solution so when the application is approved, we will be shovel ready to begin physical work which will include removing the overflow pipe.

We are also working with the regional council around options to mitigate overflow risks in the short-term.

While we are in the consent process, our hands are tied, so it is a matter of placing ourselves in the best position to get started once the approval does come through.

I believe our town is very fortunate to have an engineering team, led by Stephen Heath, which is passionate about getting our wastewater system 100 percent correct and compliant.

WE ARE ALSO FORTUNATE TO HAVE HAD INPUT FROM THE COUNCIL INITIATED WAIROA WASTEWATER STAKEHOLDER GROUP.

This group was formed at the beginning of the wastewater consultation period and reflects a cross-section of the community and has been invaluable in the process which is being worked through.

The wastewater group had its work recognised as a finalist in both the 2018 Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) Community Engagement EXCELLENCE Awards and the Society of Local Government Managers (SOLGM) Community Engagement Awards. The new consent will include the ongoing involvement of the stakeholder group to help Council review progress towards its goals.

This process is a community and iwi partnership, and our intention is based around long-term, sustainable and affordable solutions for Wairoa.

This is a new era with new regulations and future proofing our wastewater system is not negotiable.

This is not just a Council issue, it is an issue that affects everyone, and as your elected representatives we are working to ensure we can supply the best, and most affordable solution.

IT TAKES GREAT COURAGE TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY OF YOUR BIRTH, AND IT TAKES EVEN GREATER WISDOM TO CALL NEW ZEALAND AND WAIROA YOUR HOME.

I reflect on the recent words of our Prime Minister which are so appropriate right now, 'We are a proud nation of more than 200 ethnicities, 160 languages, and amongst that diversity, we share common values.

Family and friends also gathered at Wairoa District Council's Chambers to share in the ceremony.

Originally from County Wicklow in the Irish Republic, Nora Lee has been in New Zealand for 22 years.

She said her husband and children are all kiwis and she feels a greater sense of connection to her family and to New Zealand now.

"My family here and at home in Ireland would be delighted for me, that I can legitimately call myself a kiwi and be a proud All Blacks supporter now too."

"I've spent most of my life in New Zealand raising my family and working on the farm, and I've only now just started a new career at the Wairoa Hospital which is great too."

WAIROA IS THE IDEAL PLACE TO RAISE A FAMILY, AND I COULDN'T HAVE COME TO A BETTER PLACE TO CALL HOME.

It was great to be able to welcome these Kiwis to our town and Mrs Lee's comments in particular sum up what we as a Council are trying to achieve.

FOR YOUR DIARY

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, 30 April: 1.30pm

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 7 May: 1.30pm

MĀORI STANDING COMMITTEE

Thursday, 9 May: 12.30pm

FINANCE, AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 14 May: 1.30pm



CONTACT US

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GREAT THINGS GROW HERE™
HAWKE'S BAY NEW ZEALAND

HAVE YOUR SAY!

Visit Wairoa District Council's website and have your say on current consultations.

At the moment we are consulting on the following topics:

- Amendments to the public safety bylaw - closes 26th April 2019
- Amendments to the introductory bylaw - closes 26th April 2019
- New Rates Remission Policy for Māori Freehold Land Used for Papa Kāinga Housing - closes 18th April 2019

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