

MAYORAL COLUMN

RATES REVIEW CONSULTATION IS UNDERWAY

A month of full community consultation on the Wairoa District Council rates review began yesterday.

A draft proposal was adopted at Tuesday's Council meeting which will now enable a discussion document to go to the public which will give people a chance to see the implications of the rating distribution and what it means to them individually.

People need to see how a proposed change will affect them so they can in turn tell us their thoughts.



Mayor Craig Little

It is fantastic to be already receiving feedback from members of the community. We want to hear from as many people as possible and need feedback from the whole community so we can have a genuine snapshot of people's thoughts. We particularly want to hear from young people as they are our future.

This review is significant. The key objectives are that our future rating system is simple, affordable and appropriate and we need to hear what our ratepayers think. We want to make a decision based on the opinions of the whole community and it is very difficult to do that if we don't hear from all the demographics of our district. This is a proposal only, there are no pre-determined outcomes. This is simply about having a sensible discussion and hearing our people's thoughts. If anyone has any options that we may not have considered I encourage you to bring them forward. We currently have one of the most complicated rating systems in the country so believe me, we will look at all options.

KEY DISCUSSION TOPICS INCLUDE:

- Should those with more pay more?
- Should those who use our roads more pay more for the damage caused?
- Should everyone contribute for those struggling the most?
- Should we all pay for the benefits of water and wastewater in the general rate?
- Should we reduce the fixed rate portion of the rates?

Consultation began last night at Mahia and tonight a meeting is being held in town at the **War Memorial Hall from 5.30-7.30pm**. Two meetings will be held at the **Wairoa Taiwhenua on Tuesday November 24 and Thursday November 26, from 5.30-7.30pm**.

Community caravan sessions will be held across the District during the month of November:

- Mon, Nov 9, outside Osler's Bakery from 2-5pm
- Tue, Nov 10, 10am-2pm, outside Eastend Café
- Wed, Nov 11, 10am-2pm, outside BJ's Dairy Frasertown
- Thur, Nov 12, 10am-2pm, River Parade North Clyde
- Fri, Nov 13, 10am-2pm, outside Mokotahi Hall, Mahia
- Mon, Nov 16, 2-5pm, outside Sunset Point Mahia
- Wed, Nov 18, 10am-2pm, outside the Nuhaka Shop, Nuhaka
- Thur, Nov 19, 10am-2pm, outside Whakamarino Lodge, Tuai
- Fri, Nov 20, 10am-2pm, outside the Hauora Building, Raupunga

Following the consultation period, a hearing on submissions will be held on December 15 followed by a Council decision on December 16.

To keep up to date on the progress of the rating review please visit our consultation website www.consultations.nz and enter your contact details or email us feedback@wairoadc.govt.nz

MINISTERIAL LIST

I would like to extend a very sincere congratulations to our local MPS who have been assigned ministerial positions.

The Hon Stuart Nash is now Minister for Economic and Regional Development, Minister of Forestry, Minister for Small Business and Minister of Tourism.

The Hon Meka Whitiri has been assigned Minister of Customs and Minister for Veterans along with Associate Minister of Agriculture (Animal Welfare) and Associate Minister of Statistics.

Both Stuart and Meka are hardworking people who have never let

our district down. I know they will continue to do the very best they can for Wairoa, and I look forward to working with them both in the future.

QRS WELL ON TRACK

Congratulations to our local Council owned roading company QRS on its strong financial results announced recently.



Despite the challenging trading environment QRS has managed to exceed its targeted gross revenue. That is a tribute to the board, management and staff.

It is also reassuring to see that QRS no longer relies on the Council for a majority of its work. This change in strategy is an ideal way to strengthen and future proof our local company.

It is always a bonus to get a dividend from QRS as that helps offset the rates. However, for me personally the biggest dividend is the local people QRS employees.

QRS paid out \$7 million in wages and salaries over the financial year - that represents a significant amount of money circulating in our community.

Again, well done on an excellent result.

REVITALISING THE MĀORI FILM INDUSTRY

It was great to see the return of the Māori Film Festival in Wairoa over Labour Weekend. Unfortunately, I was unable to attend this year but received lots of positive feedback on the event.

The Gaiety Theatre is a fantastic venue, and it is good to see this facility used as part of a revitalisation of the Māori film industry. It was also great to see local marae, Taihoa Marae in town and Kahungunu Marae at Nuhaka, used as part of this showcase.

The vision and commitment from festival director Leo Koziol is tremendous and it is great to see that he already has big plans for next year's event.

Well done to everyone who helped to ensure this event remains a major part of Wairoa's culture.

KAUMĀTUA MORNING TEA

Monday's Mayoral kaumātua morning tea was a great success with one of the biggest turnouts I have seen in recent years.



This pre-Christmas gathering is always a great opportunity to catch up with our local senior citizens.

I always look forward to this event as it provides an opportunity to talk and mingle with people who have made such great contributions to our community.

Thank you to everyone who attended, it really was good to see you all. Thanks also to the Lighthouse Lions for helping with the food and Angela Culshaw-Kaisa and whānau for the wonderful music.

FOR YOUR DIARY

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

FINANCE, AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE

Tue, 10 November: 1.30pm

COUNCIL FORUM

Tue, 17 November: 1.30pm

COUNCIL MEETING

Tue, 1 December: 1.30pm



CONTACT US

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RATES REVIEW STAY UP TO DATE

Reviewing the distribution of Wairoa's rates is a big task and ensuring our community has a voice and is listened to is important to us.

The key objectives are that our rating system is SIMPLE, AFFORDABLE and APPROPRIATE.

Wairoa District Council is engaging with the community to look at the distribution of rates across the entire district.

Formal public consultation is now open and will be open until the start of December 2020.

Visit our consultations website for more information about community meetings and to make a submission.

www.consultations.nz

