

MAYORAL COLUMN

OUT AND ABOUT

We are about to engage with the community to discuss the 2020/21 Annual Plan and to talk about our upcoming rates review.

Our community consultation involves parking up the Council caravan which gives us an opportunity to travel throughout the district and talk with people in a relaxed manner.

Unfortunately, the poor old caravan has taken a bit of a battering. We had lent it to the Wairoa Racing Club to use for accommodation and

the roof was damaged in the freak tornado that whipped through the district at the end of last year.

Repairs are nearly complete, and we look forward to getting out on the road and talking with you.

Councillors will be starting the review into Wairoa's current rating system beginning with a workshop in early July.

As I have stated earlier, we are keen to promote a community conversation around our current rating system and the challenges it presents.

The two main issues are, that the dollar amount that Council rates do not cover the cost of running the district and that the distribution of the rates is perceived as not being equitable.

For decades Councils have created differentials within the rating system which smoothed out the peaks and troughs. These differentials, along with the urban/rural split, has left us with a legacy issue, and so as a result, we are heading back to the drawing board in search of the most equitable solution as to how we set our rates.

We will be establishing a stakeholder group, similar to the Wairoa Wastewater Group, which will be formed following public meetings.

I believe there will be merit in inviting input from members of the public and am hoping for representation from a cross-section of the community.

We will bring in a rating expert who has worked with other Councils and will be able to guide us through the complexities of rating systems in general, and the legislative requirements we are bound by.

MATARIKI

Matariki heralds the start of a new year and given the COVID-19 circumstances I am sure many people will be welcoming a reset.

Locally Matariki 2020 involved lots of action and learnings with hip hop dance classes with Te Au Skipworth, an art evening and colouring in competition and culminating with Te Wairoa! Waiata Mai! last Friday, an evening of singing and fun.

Thank you to Esta Wainohu and her team of helpers for all their efforts in organising these events.

GAIETY THEATRE

I would like to take this opportunity to encourage people to take time to catch a movie and enjoy the Gaiety Theatre experience and get our movie-going back up to pre-COVID attendance rates.

The Gaiety is like other businesses and has suffered as a result of the COVID-19 lockdown which has significantly affected its income.

Now is the time that we need our community to step up and help sustain the theatre. Have a night out, enjoy the big screen and support our community.

WHAKAMANAHIA A TE WAIROA: EMPOWERING WAIROA

COVID-19 has presented massive challenges, but it has also allowed us to demonstrate our rangatiratanga and what can be achieved by working in a collaborative manner.

The Council, along with our post-treaty settlement governance

entities Tātau Tātau o Te Wairoa Trust and Ngāti Pāhauwera Development Trust have developed a recovery plan, Whakamanahia a Te Wairoa: Empowering Wairoa.

This initiative will tap into Wairoa's potential to develop a community driven, aligned, focussed and coordinated recovery plan in response to COVID-19.

This recovery plan focusses on immediate actions, employment and short and long-term projects, that address the current response and align with the aims of Wairoa.

We are working together to recover and grow a resilient Wairoa that achieves economic, social, cultural and environmental wellbeing.

While we are working at a regional level with the rest of Hawke's Bay on some projects, Whakamanahia a Te Wairoa: Empowering Wairoa, is a very localised approach.

We want solutions that suit us, and an iwi/local government led plan is the result.

We worked out decades ago that Wairoa is not a one size fits all kind of place, this is about meeting the unique needs of our community.

Our three organisations all aspire to the same outcomes. We want to look after our environment, we want our whānau to prosper, and we want more jobs for our young people.

These outcomes were combined with the impacts coronavirus had on Wairoa across the four Alert Levels and the predicted recovery rate.

That led to us identifying projects, some that were already underway and can be leveraged off, some based on recovery, and others based on empowering, which creates employment and builds skills in the short-term and long-term.

Identified projects that are already up and running and can be built off include;

- Growing Future Farmers
- HPMV Bridge strengthening
- Mahia Resilient Roads
- Nuhaka River Road alignment
- QRS Operations Hub
- Patangata Bridge Replacement
- Te Wairoa E Whanake main street revitalisation & Digital Hub
- Expansion of The Limery juicing and processing capacity
- Wairoa Digital Employment Programme
- Wairoa Job Shop
- Waitepatu Rangatahi Washout Repair.

Recovery projects include;

- Airport extension
- Dust suppression
- HPMV Bridge strengthening
- Mahia Resilient Roads
- Māori Enterprise
- Marae Recovery
- Predator Free Mahia
- Puāwaitia Te Takapau Horanui
- Riparian planting
- Town Hall tidy up
- Urban drain piping
- Wairoa horticultural hub
- Wharerakau housing project
- Walkway and cycleway extension
- 3 Waters - UV, filtration & monitoring, storage & irrigation.

Empowering projects include;

- Māra Pūngao Energy Co-op
- QRS training hub
- Rakaipaaka Hub
- Te Kura Taiao
- Whakarauora Ngā Awa
- 3 Waters discharge diffuser
- 3 Waters Opoutama wastewater treatment, storage & irrigation.

Whakamanahia a Te Wairoa: Empowering Wairoa is now in the hands of the Government and we are hopeful our projects will receive the necessary funding.

For me, the journey of recovery has already demonstrated just what can happen through a collaborative approach with everyone simply wanting the very best for our whole district.

FOR YOUR DIARY

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

FINANCE, AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE

Tue, 7 July: 1.30pm

COUNCIL FORUM

Tue, 14 July: 1.30pm

COUNCIL MEETING

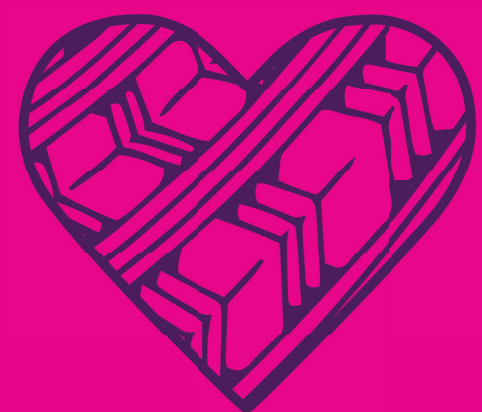
Tue, 28 July: 1.30pm



CONTACT US

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TAUTOKO WAIROA BUY LOCAL



Spend \$30 or more at a local shop and be in for a chance to win one of ten \$100 vouchers.

The draw will run for 10 weeks. Winners are announced each Friday.