

WAIROA DISTRICT COUNCIL ... IN FOCUS

13 August 2020

MAYORAL COLUMN



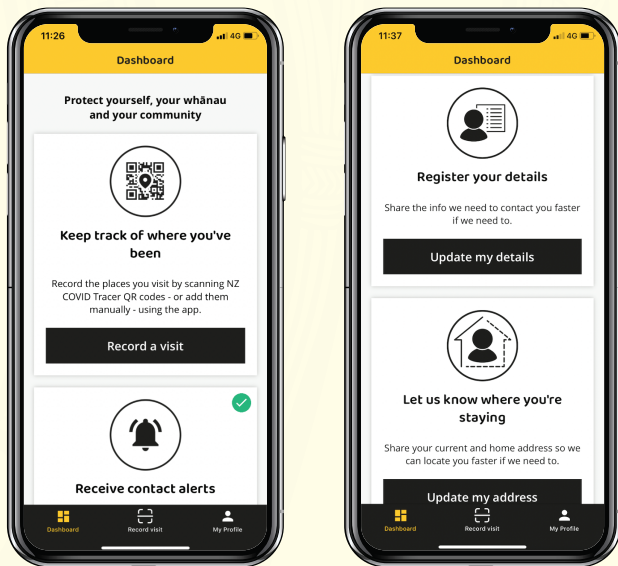
Mayor Craig Little

COVID-19

After doing so well it is disappointing that New Zealand now has Coronavirus outside of a managed isolation or quarantine facility, and I know we are all hoping this situation can be quickly controlled.

A reminder to people to follow the guidelines, social distance and if you are not feeling well please get tested. This terrible virus has no boundaries. New Zealanders have been travelling throughout our country in recent months, weeks and days so we need to be extra vigilant.

I would also like to recommend everyone install the 'NZ COVID Tracer' app on your phones.



Wairoa, like other small areas, has been leading the charge in terms of COVID-19 recovery.

I know the pandemic presented challenges and it is important we recognise and look after our people and businesses that are struggling as a result of COVID-19.

However, it is also reassuring to see a district like ours growing through recovery.

International travel restrictions means New Zealanders have been holidaying at home. Wairoa recently recorded the third biggest increase in local accommodation spending across New Zealand.

Figures from Eftpos New Zealand revealed the spending increase in Wairoa was up by 90.7 % behind only Greytown and Martinborough.

Wairoa tourism is an untapped industry in our district, and we have been laying the foundation for tourism growth for the last 10-years.

Tourism brings in external dollars and creates local employment opportunities that can only be good for our economy.

We also know our whānau is coming home and bringing with them skills and experience which will only grow our district.

The work of our iwi and our training providers is also generating work and providing opportunities and career paths for our rangatahi.

GROWING THE PROVINCES

Wairoa has now received more than \$30 million in additional Coalition Government funding, including the Provincial Growth Fund.

In announcing last week's funding of nearly \$4 million that will create around 200 jobs in the district and drive economic growth for the region, Parliamentary Under-Secretary Fletcher Tabuteau described Wairoa as one of the success stories for the Provincial Growth Fund.

The investment we are receiving, at no cost to our ratepayers, is making a real difference to the lives of our local people.

The latest funding investment of \$3.78 million will go towards marae renovations, the development of a new QRS roading construction hub and expansion works at the Pine Valley Orchard.

Nineteen marae in the Wairoa district will receive a total of \$1.58 million to carry out a variety of renovations creating immediate employment opportunities for local people.

THE FUNDING IS EXPECTED TO CREATE MORE THAN 100 JOBS FOR LOCAL CONTRACTORS AND LABOURERS, AND WILL INVOLVE LANDSCAPING, BUILDING REPAIRS, ELECTRICAL WIRING, PLUMBING AND PAINTING WORK.

What an amazing project that sees our marae, the hearts of our community, being revitalised by our local people which creates employment. It is great that the Government recognises how important the marae are to our communities.

The \$2 million loan to Quality Roding and Services Wairoa Ltd (QRS) to construct an Operations Hub in Wairoa will see extra employment for the duration of the project.

However, what I am most pleased about is that QRS is planning to employ an additional 28 staff over the next five-years.

This will take their total staff numbers to 130. To me that is future proofing and growing Wairoa. This is a credit to the board and the staff.

The PGF also invested \$200,000 in Nuhaka Kiwifruit Holdings Ltd (operated by Pine Valley Orchard Ltd) to assist in increasing productivity.

Construction work on the reservoir and tunnel house systems will create up to 12 jobs and enable an expansion in operations and support more stable employment.

It is great to see private enterprise being involved with the PGF.

These projects are by Wairoa for Wairoa. We are investing in our own people and that is the best way to grow our district.

The Government's support of these projects ensures we keep our local people working which ultimately supports a thriving local economy.

LOCAL ALCOHOL POLICY

Council is considering whether it should adopt a Local Alcohol Policy and if so, what should be included in it.

In the past the Wairoa District Council followed Central Government's alcohol licensing framework.

This decision is around whether Wairoa wants to develop its own Local Alcohol Policy and moving forward Council believes developing a policy is something local people should decide.

Council is therefore seeking feedback from its communities on whether they believe the Council should adopt its own policy and what that should include or continue to rely on the Government alcohol framework.

THIS IS ONE OF THOSE TIMES WHEN THE DECISION IS IN THE HANDS OF OUR LOCAL PEOPLE. WE NEED YOUR FEEDBACK TO GUIDE US IN MOVING FORWARD.

A local policy could mean changes to the way we have traditionally done things, such as no longer licensing alcohol at child-focused events. This could have implications for community events and fundraisers, such as pig hunts, galas and quiz evenings.

Submissions close on August 31 at 4.30pm and can be made online, dropped off at the Council office, emailed or posted in.

I encourage as many people as possible to please tell us their thoughts.

FOR YOUR DIARY

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

FINANCE, AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE

Tue, 18 August: 1.30pm

COUNCIL FORUM

Tue, 25 August: 1.30pm

COUNCIL MEETING

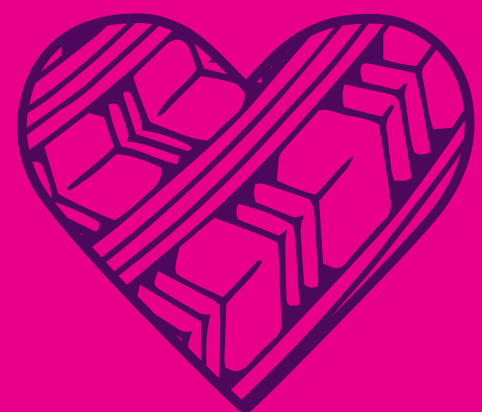
Tue, 8 September: 1.30pm



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.