

MAYORAL COLUMN

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER VISIT

The man with the money came to town last week.

It was great to see our New Zealand Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Grant Robertson in Wairoa, and a tribute to our local MP Meka Whaitiri to be able to bring such a high-ranking cabinet minister to our town.

In welcoming Mr Robertson, I thanked him and his government for keeping the team of five million safe during COVID and acknowledged the game changing investment the Government has made to Wairoa through the PGF funding, tourism funding and other external funding we have received.



Mayor Craig Little

I also voiced our concerns about the Three Waters, Resource Management and Local Government reforms stressing that one size does not fit all, especially in Wairoa's case, and that we do not want to be victims of unintended consequence.



New Zealand Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Grant Robertson was in Wairoa last week, he is pictured with our local MP Meka Whaitiri who arranged the visit.

I highlighted that farming is a vital part of our Wairoa district and the farming industry is a major contributor to our largest employer, Affco, and that I would not want to see Wairoa's farming future, or Affco's presence in Wairoa, jeopardised.

Mr Robertson talked around the uneven playing field of New Zealand's wellbeing and how that information was used to influence the budget and areas of investment.

HIS TALK AROUND EMPLOYMENT WAS ENCOURAGING WITH NEW ZEALAND DOWN TO 4.7% UNEMPLOYMENT- HALF OF WHAT WAS PREDICTED IN THIS POST-COVID-19 PERIOD.

The country has also seen 160,000 New Zealanders take up apprenticeships and trade training which will go towards creating our workforce for the future.

He said, that while the only thing that is guaranteed over the next few years is volatility and uncertainty, New Zealand has done well to spring back from the negative GDP experienced because of COVID-19.

Government priorities this term are keeping New Zealand safe from COVID-19, accelerating the country's recovery and rebuilding from the impacts of COVID-19, and laying a foundation for the future including addressing climate change response, housing affordability and child poverty.

Mr Robertson also touched on the need to make a start and change behaviours around climate change; the significant change ahead in the health space, particularly around getting better outcomes for Māori; the completion of the education reform process within this term; and the country's housing issue with a shortage of more than 60,000 houses.

I have made my opinions around the Three Waters reform very clear but the area that I do agree with Mr Robertson on is the delivery of safe water for all New Zealanders.

LET'S TALK REFORMS

What will the Central Government reforms mean for you?

The Government has initiated three reforms that will review the delivery of services that have been traditionally provided by local Councils.

Three Waters, Resource Management Act and Local Government are all under review.

WAIROA DISTRICT COUNCIL IS INVITING THE LOCAL COMMUNITY TO CATCH UP FOR A CUPPA AND KŌRERO TO HEAR WHAT IMPACT THESE REFORMS MIGHT HAVE ON INDIVIDUALS, COMMUNITIES, COUNCILS, DISTRICTS AND REGIONS.

The first catch up was held on Tuesday with the next sessions scheduled for next Monday, August 9, from 5.30pm at the Tuai Hall, next Wednesday, August 11, at 5.30pm from Mokotahi Hall, Mahia and also throughout the day on Wednesday August 11 with drop-in sessions with me at the Council offices.

HAWKE'S BAY EXPORT AWARDS

I attended the Hawke's Bay Export awards in support of local businesswoman Ilana Cheiban of NZ Mecates who had made it through as a finalist.

The sold-out awards event is a celebration of the vibrant Hawkes Bay/Gisborne/Tairāwhiti region and all the businesses making a name on the world stage.

Ilana did exceptionally well to receive the Judges' Choice award which was given in recognition for outstanding achievement in exporting and is chosen from entrants who do not strictly fit the categories of the other awards.

Ilana moved to town a few years ago and had faith that she could operate her business from Wairoa and has demonstrated what you can achieve at an extraordinary level if you put your heart and soul into it.

Ilana's business specialises in the construction of Californian-style tack. All products have been handcrafted from the finest natural materials, including wool, that New Zealand has to offer. Her business combines contemporary design practice with traditional construction methods.

I was blown away by what Ilana has done and was very proud to be sitting at the table with this local and very humble winner.

Everyone at the awards was very impressed with what Ilana has created, and for me it is incredible that I regularly pass her main street business and was not aware of the high level of success that was being achieved behind the scenes.

Ilana's life story is incredible, and we are privileged she has followed her whakapapa line and moved to Wairoa. Again, congratulations to Ilana and NZ Mecates.



Local businesswoman Ilana Cheiban of NZ Mecates was presented with the Judges' Choice award at last week's Hawke's Bay Export awards. She is pictured at the awards ceremony with Te Radar.

FORESTRY COLLABORATION

Wairoa is leading a collaborative local government response to forestry and future sustainable land use.

Councils throughout the country are doing a lot of good work individually but we haven't been working together for the greater good of future land use.

At a recent Rural Provincial meeting a group of us had a discussion around our forestry concerns and that demonstrated a range of different responses.

I have made no secret of the fact that I believe any further forestry planting on productive farmland in Wairoa is not in the best interest of our community. It is reassuring to know many other Councils share these concerns and by working collaboratively we will have a strong united voice to lobby the government and hopefully make change.

COVID-19 VACCINATIONS

I would like to acknowledge the fantastic work being carried out by the Queen Street practice in partnership with the Hawke's Bay District Health Board in vaccinating whānau in Wairoa.

A lot of the people I have spoken to have already had their second vaccination. If you have not yet received an invitation to have your vaccination phone the Queen Street practice on 06 838 8333 or text 027 280 0430.

FOR YOUR DIARY

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

YOUTH COUNCIL

Mon, 9 August: 3.30pm

INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

Tue, 10 August: 1.30pm

FINANCE, AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE

Tue, 17 August: 1.30pm

COUNCIL FORUM

Tue, 24 August: 1.30pm

If you would like to present at Council Forum, please make a request by emailing governance@wairoadc.govt.nz or call into the Council offices and ask for a Council Forum application form.



CONTACT US

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