

MAYORAL COLUMN

MASSIVE VANDALISM INCREASE

Wairoa is such a beautiful place, and we need to keep it that way.

Unfortunately, there are people out there who don't respect our district and our ratepayer property and are continually dumping rubbish, vandalising assets and painting graffiti.

Council spends more than \$50,000 a year paying to have these acts of vandalism cleaned up. Council staff involved with our assets spend around 40% of their time having to deal with vandalism and fixing the issues that are created.



Mayor Craig Little

The current level of disruption is frustrating and takes budgeted resources away from usual business and improvements, at times this is stretching staff beyond available labour capacity.

This constant damage is a direct cost to ratepayers and sends a message to our visitors that we don't care for our district.



WE CAN NO LONGER TOLERATE OR SUSTAIN THIS LEVEL OF VANDALISM. I AM URGING EVERYONE TO BE VIGILANT AND IF YOU SEE SUSPICIOUS BEHAVIOUR, PLEASE PHONE THE POLICE IMMEDIATELY.

Our community is made up of a small population, we should be looking after each other, but instead we have people who have total disregard by showing such reckless disrespect.

We have seen an increase in the level of negative impacts throughout the district through graffiti, vandalism, fly dumping, car burnouts on reserves and grassed areas and other deliberate damage.

We have had regular occurrences of fly dumping on beaches, beside bins at Mahia and at the upper cemetery. There has been vandalism at the Whangawehi toilets, where it cost \$1,620 to replace a toilet door. At the Black's Beach toilet, pipework was cut, and the extraction fans taken, with replacement and refitting costs totalling \$2,460.

At the Whakamahi public toilets the entire solar system and fans have been stolen with the replacement cost around \$5,000.

More than 30 predator traps, used to trap pests at the Whakamahi

lagoon, have been smashed. The total replacement cost is close to \$4,000, and that includes assistance from the Menz Shed volunteers which we are very appreciate of.

At public toilets, toilet roll dispensers are vandalised regularly and repetitively. The stronger stainless-steel units that we use to try and deter vandals cost \$145 each and at the Mahanga toilet block they have been targeted three times, all for a couple of rolls of toilet paper.

There is daily graffiti at Pilot Hill which has escalated to chainsaw vandalism and broken guard rails.

We are continually cleaning graffiti at the Raupunga toilets and Destination Playground. Fixing alleyways of vandalism, graffiti, rubbish and smashed bottles is costing thousands of dollars.

Please, if you see anyone damaging, vandalising, painting graffiti or generally hanging around our community assets please contact the Police immediately.

HONOURING THE LEGACY OF ANNIE ARANUI

It is fitting to have the memory of the late Annie Aranui honoured with the dedication of a plaque at the MSD building in Napier and the establishment of the Annie Aranui Scholarship.

Annie was the Ministry of Social Development Regional Commissioner for Hawke's Bay and Tairāwhiti and passed away in March of this year. She had served in the public sector for more than 36 years.

Personally, I had a lot to do with Annie and I had a lot of time for her. She worked tirelessly for Wairoa, and with respect for others who will step into her role, she really is quite irreplaceable.

TO HONOUR HER LEGACY, THE ANNIE ARANUI SCHOLARSHIP HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED TO SUPPORT YOUNG MANA WAHINE INTO THE PUBLIC SECTOR.

While the loss of Annie is still very much with us all, I know Annie's husband James Aranui and their whānau must feel proud to know that Annie's legacy will live on.

For details of the scholarship go to <https://www.hastingsdc.govt.nz/hastings/youth-services/youth-futures-trust/>

POSITIVE FEEDBACK

I have received positive feedback around our Council's stand relating to the government's decision to legislate to mandate local councils to hand over their three waters assets to multi-regional entities.

In particular we are being commended for looking after future generations of Kiwis.

One supporter described himself as a fan of Wairoa and he, like me, is concerned this government's new political direction will decimate our East Coast.

Scarily he suggests that within a decade, people will not venture further East than Napier, and the cost of supposed freedom will only get harder for those remaining up the coast.

HE SUGGESTS THE 'POWERS THAT BE' DON'T SEEM TO UNDERSTAND ALL OF THE COMMUNITIES THAT MAKE UP NEW ZEALAND.

He said our central politicians seem to lack intelligence, depth and compassion and the days of relating to being a Kiwi are disappearing at a rate of knots.

He thanked our elected members for standing up for Wairoa and for Kiwi values that will be sorely missed when they are gone.

I agree with many of the letter writer's points and I can only hope that as we continue to push on that the penny will drop and government will realise this non-localised blanket approach will not work for all of New Zealand.

FOR YOUR DIARY

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday November 30 1.30pm

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, December 7 1.30pm

MĀORI STANDING COMMITTEE

Thursday, December 9 1.30pm

YOUTH COUNCIL

Monday, December 13 3.30pm

Under Level 2 all meetings will be held by video conference, the link will be available on Council's website.



CONTACT US

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