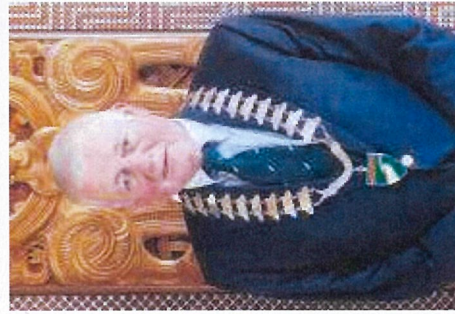


# WAIROA DISTRICT COUNCIL IN FOCUS

2 DECEMBER 2021

## MAYORAL COLUMN



Mayor Craig Little

### WE ARE HEADING INTO A PERIOD OF CHANGE

The Government has done a great job of protecting New Zealanders from COVID-19 to date, but we are heading into a period of change.

Summer travellers and the opening of the Auckland border will have an enormous impact on our country, and I encourage everyone to roll up their sleeves and do their bit for our community.

Vaccination is about protecting yourself and all your whānau and friends.

I recently read an article in Hawke's Bay Today which really brought the COVID-19 Delta variant threat home to me. A New Zealand/French intensive care nurse who is home after working in Paris, said Hawke's Bay people are unaware of just how deadly the virus is. She said in New Zealand we have been protected and not seen the true COVID impact.

She is urging people to get vaccinated saying people are dying worldwide and COVID can happen to anyone.

She saw more than 30 of her patients in body bags and said as a nurse she was supposed to save people, but instead they were choosing who they could save and who they couldn't. For anyone who would like to read Mahina Adams's story I have posted it on my Facebook page.

If you are not yet vaccinated, I urge you to talk to people who you trust and seek advice from your loved ones. Make sure your information and your facts are from trusted accurate sources.

It is also important we talk and plan around how we are preparing for COVID.

Whakawhiwhiti korero, Whakakotahi i a tatou – Coming together through Korero.

### THREE WATERS STIMULUS PROJECTS

Wairoa's three waters projects are being rolled out throughout the district.

Wairoa District Council secured \$11 million in external funding for three waters work as part of the Government's national three waters (drinking water, wastewater, stormwater) investment funding stimulus package.

By the end of the year, around \$7 million of the fund will have been spent on projects with key outcomes around compliance, future proofing, and environmental sustainability. The work is being carried out at no additional cost to ratepayers.

Elected members and Council staff recently visited projects to see first-hand the progress that is being made.

Completed projects include the water main resilience work along River Parade, chlorination dosing pumps for the Raupunga water supply, CCTV footage of Wairoa's water pipes and three years' worth of wastewater pipe relining.

Ongoing projects include the Wairoa wastewater plant upgrade, new pump station generators, remainder of the Wairoa township pipe relining, upgrade of the Blue Bay Opoutama wastewater process and the water toby upgrade in town, Frasertown and Tuai.

The Achilles Street water main replacement is also set to begin following a delayed start.

Council has used the funding to target 16 projects with this type of external funding transformative for a small area like Wairoa.

As well as improving our network resilience, this extra funding has created additional jobs and meant more money being spent in our community.

It has been a real boost for the district and a credit to all those who

have been involved with the work. The funding carries very tight requirements and timeframes and for our staff to pivot and achieve at the level they have has been outstanding.

The three waters space is undergoing significant change through the government's Three Waters Reform and the establishment of Taumata Arowai, which is now the official water services regulator for New Zealand.

The government's decision to legislate to mandate local councils to hand over their drinking water, wastewater, and storm water assets to four new multi-regional entities in 2024, will have a massive impact on what Council's future role is.

We cannot predetermine any outcomes around service and delivery, financial implications or anything else within the Three Waters space until the Government provides a clear pathway forward.

We do know that under the current proposal Wairoa will be a very small voice, making up about one percent of the new entity we will come under, which includes 21 other local authorities.

We also know there will be increased standards around drinking water and all private water suppliers, from farmers to marae, need to be aware of the changes and implications.

Our Wairoa District Council team is focussing on the now and ensuring our services within the three waters space are operating at the highest level they possibly can - and through the additional funding ensuring we are improving our infrastructure and delivery wherever possible.



The Blue Bay wastewater treatment plant was part of the recent Council visit. A temporary system is in place while the upgrade work is being carried out. The infrastructure upgrade is environmentally anchored and future-proofed against the summertime population increase, including the full development of the Blue Bay subdivision.



Elected members, from left, Danika Goldsack, myself, Hine Flood and Chaaps Tumataroa-Clarke near the Blue Bay Wastewater Treatment Plant discharge field expansion project which is being developed by contractors Fulton Hogan. The disposal field works like an underground drainage system where the treated, filtered, UV disinfected wastewater is evenly spread through the ground. The microorganisms growing and living in the soil and the vegetation of the disposal field treat the water again to make it even safer.



Contractors, staff and elected members enjoyed the beautiful view across Blue Bay, Opoutama.

## FOR YOUR DIARY

### PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

#### MAORI STANDING COMMITTEE:

Thursday, December 2 2021, 1.30pm

#### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE:

Tuesday, December 7 2021, 1.30pm

#### YOUTH COUNCIL:

Monday, December 13 2021, 3.30pm

#### INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE:

Tuesday, December 14 2021, 9.30am

#### FINANCE, AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE:

Tuesday, December 14 2021, 1.30pm

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



### CONTACT US

Wairoa District Council  
Queen St, Wairoa  
info@wairoad.c.govt.nz  
(06) 838 7309



In town at the Wairoa wastewater plant where around \$3 million of the Government's national three waters stimulus funding has been invested to improve infrastructure and processes.