



MAYORAL COLUMN

THREE WATERS OVERHAUL

I am pleased the government has demonstrated it can listen and make changes to the controversial Three Waters proposal – now known as the Affordable Water Reform.

Speaking as the Mayor of Wairoa, I welcome the reset, there are a lot of specifics to work out, particularly around localism, ownership and co-governance, but this approach is better than it was.

I welcome this reset as it shows the government is acknowledging there were issues, and I look forward to drilling into the detail and discussing the implications this overhaul will have on our communities, with elected members and colleagues.

Under the previous proposal there were only four entities. This reset has 10 entities in which Wairoa is part of the Tairāwhiti/Gisborne Hawke's Bay region. Each of the 10 public water entities will control drinking, waste and storm water assets across the country. The ultimate deadline for getting the new water entities up and running has been pushed out, from July 2024 to July 2026. Regions that are ready can launch a public water entity sooner.

I was never against change, but the former proposal was centralised and would not work for Wairoa. This smaller entity is more sensible and presents opportunities for the Hawke's Bay and Tairāwhiti regions.

Wairoa is a geographically isolated area, as has been further demonstrated by the impacts of Cyclone Gabrielle. This demonstrated to us how we need to be self-resilient and have skilled specialised staff based in Wairoa. Wairoa's central location, nestled in the centre of an entity that includes Hawke's Bay and Tairāwhiti, gives us all more confidence for the future.

Under this change we could have regional support from both ends of our district and know we can work together in a sensible way with both Tairāwhiti and Hawke's Bay to achieve the results we need.

MAYORAL RELIEF FUND

It is great to be receiving applications from local people for the Mayoral Relief Fund. That is the purpose of this fund, to be able to assist our people who have been impacted by Cyclone Gabrielle.



So far, more than \$150,000 has been distributed. The panel to review applications and allocate the Mayoral Relief Fund comprises Nigel How Chair of Wairoa Taiwhenua, well-respected North Clyde resident Hine Kohn and myself.

We have been canvassing hard to attract as many donations and as much support as possible and have been overwhelmed with the generosity shown to date.

Whenever I am approached, I always ask the donor if there is anything specifically they would like their donation to go towards.

An example is the money we received from the Taupo District Council. After discussion with the Taupo Mayor, he said he wanted to do something specifically for Wairoa's children, and we talked about the playground, a water feature and other ideas. No final decisions have been made. I remain extremely grateful to everyone who has contributed to this fund, without their generosity it would not exist. It is important we all realise the generous people and organisations who make any donations are within their rights to indicate to us how they would like their donations spent and I will continue to have discussions with donors. Applications can now be made by scanning the QR

HEY DUCKSHOOTERS

Fish & Game's game bird hunting licences are available now from the i-Site on Paul Street.

**OPEN WEEKDAYS
BETWEEN
8.30AM - 4.30PM
AND WEEKENDS
10AM - 4PM.**

Code or via the following link: <https://www.wairoadc.govt.nz/our-council/cyclone-gabrielle/wairoa-mayoral-relief-fund>

ASSISTING OUR RATEPAYERS

Council has assisted ratepayers who have been affected by Cyclone Gabrielle by providing options around the late payment of rates with no financial penalties incurred.

The Wairoa District Council does not currently have a Rates Remission Policy which can cover remissions on rates for properties affected by a Natural Calamity, such as the Cyclone Gabrielle flood event. We want to be able to assist ratepayers who are experiencing extreme financial hardship and we are exploring options of what that support could look like. However, we also have to balance these options against the long-term sustainability of our district as the increased costs relating to our response and recovery have been, and continue to be, significant.

There are other forms of financial support available, such as the Wairoa Mayoral Relief Fund mentioned on this page, the Hawke's Bay Disaster Relief Fund and the Rates Rebate scheme, and we encourage you to apply for these or seek assistance to help you apply for these funding avenues. Wairoa District Council staff can assist with any queries and applications, and there is also support available from staff at the i-Site on Paul Street or call into the Wairoa Young Achievers building on Marine Parade (in the former Westpac building).

SUPPORT FOR OUR LOCALS

I am particularly concerned about our local people who may be in a vulnerable position at the moment. There has been feedback to me directly and through the Wairoa Star about residents from the Wairoa Idea Services who have been transferred out of town, and also some residents from Glengarry Rest home. This is extremely difficult for these local people and their families.

I understand the reasoning behind the initial transfer to keep these people safe. However, many of these issues have now passed and I know many of these locals want to come home.

I have been inundated with requests relating to this and have been advocating for the continuation of these locally based services so we can bring our people home. Our community deserves equitable care and needs certainty that there will be a local provision of services.

I really hope my friend and Wairoa icon Gavin Jones, (pictured right) is back home in Wairoa for our ANZAC Day commemorations. To my knowledge he has never missed Wairoa's ANZAC Day commemorations and I know personally it will not be the same without him here. I am working with Gavin's family and agencies and we are doing what we can.

FOR YOUR DIARY PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

Council forum:

Tuesday, May 02, 1.30pm

Council meeting:

Tuesday, May 16, 1.30pm

Strategy, Wellbeing and Economic Development Committee:

Tuesday, May 23, 1.30pm

CONTACT US

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ANZAC DAY SERVICES 2023

5:45 AM

KAIUKU MARAE DAWN SERVICE
Mahia East Coast Road | **MAHIA**

9.00 AM

FRASERTOWN CIVIC SERVICE
Carroll Street | **FRASERTOWN**

9:30 AM

TAIHOA MARAE SERVICE
State Highway 2 | **WAIROA**

11:00 AM

WAIROA CIVIC SERVICE
Wairoa War Memorial Hall | **WAIROA**

25 APRIL 2023
**ANZAC DAY
WAIROA**

Acknowledgements to Wairoa artist Chance Rohe, who designed the graphics in this banner.
KORERO FROM THE ARTIST: Kei Wareware Tatau - the imagery used in the poppy graphic above is derived from conversations I've heard and had about our Tipuna who fought in the World Wars. The Māori Battalion. Korero tuku iho heavily aligned to us and how we are a result of their sacrifice. We shall never take life for granted. We shall never forget. Your sacrifice, created my future. Thank you.