



KŌRERO MAI



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ISSUE 105

FROM THE Mayor's Desk

The big news of course is that Council has made a new Chief Executive appointment for a three year term and I would like to congratulate and introduce Carol Gordon, Deputy Chief Executive, who has worked for our Council since 2014. She has deserved this appointment and I know it has been welcomed by all staff. We have so many communities of interest, committees, volunteer groups etc that it may take some time for Carol to get around to meet you all personally, which I know is her intention. Kevin Ross has been our Chief Executive since August 2023, appointed to fill in a gap, and it was always his intention that this should be for a period of up to two years. Kevin felt that it was appropriate timing for Council to go out for a new CE and I would like to take the time to thank him for his wealth of expertise and experience during this time, he has been an absolute pleasure to work with. Kevin will stay on in an advisory capacity to complete some of the work he has been specifically involved with.



Marton Water – we are nearing the end I think of what has been a very very long process, one that has stretched over essentially decades, to replace the existing dam water with a new water source. It is essential that we get it right and that we have the guarantees in place to ensure the future of Marton's water supply. This is a case of good things take time.

Equally, I am hoping to come to the community with the process around being able to repair and future proof the Marton Swimming Pool. Fortunately I have had approaches from the community wishing to be part of the solution and I am looking to make some announcements soon.

There are a couple of events coming up, first of all on 6 February we have the Waitangi Day Big Day Out hosted by Mokai Patea and Councillor Piki Te Ora Hiroa at Taihape. If you get the chance to drop in there please do so.

Sadly, there have been a number of very serious traffic accidents recently within our region, largely on state highways, and the Hunterville Community Committee through Karen Kennedy have reached out wanting to say thank-you to the Volunteer Fire Brigade Service. They are looking at holding a 'Shout Out' day on 16 February at the Hunterville Rugby Grounds designed as a sports day/big day out event, and a chance to say thank you from our community. I know this will be well supported by everyone.

Finally I would like to recognise Les Clarke from Taihape who over new year was awarded a KSM for services to the New Zealand Police and the community.

Ngā mihi, Andy Watson, Mayor of Rangitikei.



Meetings Update

Hearings Committee Meeting (NEW DATE)

The meeting scheduled for Monday, 03 February at 1.00pm has been postponed to Tuesday, 25 February at 1.00pm.

New Rangitikei District Council Chief Executive Appointed

Rangitikei District Council is pleased to appoint Carol Gordon as Chief Executive for a three-year term. Carol will replace Kevin Ross, who has held the role since August 2023.

"Carol is our current Deputy Chief Executive and Group Manager Strategy, Community & Democracy. She brings a wealth of experience and knowledge across Council and was a clear stand-out in an incredibly strong calibre of candidates," says Rangitikei Mayor Andy Watson.



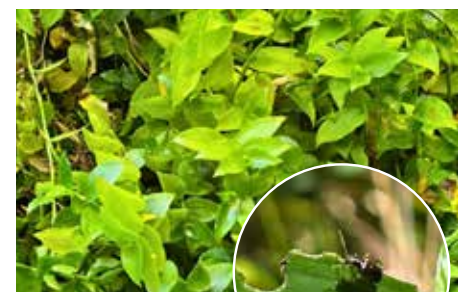
Carol's extensive Local Government experience, knowledge of, and passion for the Rangitikei is evident and invaluable. She is a Rangitikei local with over 27 years' experience in Local Government. Carol has worked with Rangitikei District Council since 2014, holding roles at Hawke's Bay Regional Council and Whanganui District Council in the years prior.

On behalf of Council, Mayor Andy thanks outgoing Chief Executive Kevin for his time at Rangitikei, saying both elected members and staff have benefited from his experience and wisdom.

"Kevin's appointment to the role was always short-term, at his request, while we sought a replacement. I've really enjoyed getting to know Kevin better as a person, and he has been a delight to work with. We are indebted to him for his service," says Mayor Andy.

"In my time at Rangitikei, I've learnt a lot about the district and what it has to offer. I've really enjoyed working with the Mayor and Council and have been impressed by the high-quality staff working here. I'll be watching with interest to see how this district continues to grow and develop with the current changes facing Local Government. I have no doubt that Carol will do an excellent job as the Chief Executive," says Kevin.

Kevin and Carol are now working through a transition process, with a takeover date set for 3 March 2025. Kevin will remain in an advisory capacity for a short period of time to assist the transition.



Collective effort to help remove invasive weed from Tūtaenui Reservoir

Keen gardeners will probably be familiar with Tradescantia, otherwise known as "wandering Jew" (which for obvious reasons is being phased out) or "wandering willie". It's a succulent, brittle weed that originates from South America and is known for its fast growth and thick mats of vegetation, which prevents seedlings from native trees and shrubs from establishing.

Herbicides and pesticides have varying success against Tradescantia, but it does have a natural and more effective predator in the Tradescantia Leaf Beetle, which feeds off the leaves and helps to control its spreading. These awesome critters are host specific, which means they don't eat anything other than Tradescantia and some closely related species. So, they're highly effective at controlling the spread of the weed without damaging any other plants.

Last week, Neil Gallagher from Rangitikei District Council, Rory Johnson from Horizons Regional Council, and Dave Smith from the Tutaenui Stream Restoration Project oversaw the releasing some of these beetles at the Tutaenui Reservoir, where Tradescantia has been causing issues for a number of years now. Yellow spotted fungus was also released, which is proven to be a knockout combination with the beetles. The site the beetles and fungus have been placed in was carefully chosen so that they can establish themselves without interference from human activities. The hope is that if the beetles can be successfully established at the reservoir, they'll be able to do the grunt work of removing Tradescantia for years to come.



First logging train arriving in Napier from Karioi - Napier Port.

Logging train to reduce strain on Napier - Taihape Road

Logging trains between Karioi and Napier are expected to take up to 3000 tonnes off the Napier - Taihape Road, easing the pressure on the deteriorating route.

Following the closure of Winstone Pulp International (WPI) last year, Ernslaw One who provided the logs that would be pulped were looking at an alternative option for them to continue selling the logs they harvested. Trains previously used to operate from Karioi with WPI sending pulp and lumber to Napier via Palmerston North, but this stopped when the mill was closed.

Concerned about the wear and tear on the Napier - Taihape Road that logging trucks contributed to, Mayor Andy Watson facilitated the discussion between Ernslaw One, KiwiRail and Napier Port that led to a deal being struck.

Some modifications had to be made at the WPI site for the purpose of loading logs onto trains, but the operation is now running, with the first train service taking place on Tuesday, 28 January.

In total, 21 log truck will be removed from the road with trains operating five days a week.



Taihape Town Hall & Library and Memorial Park Grandstand

Maycroft have completed the site investigations of the Taihape Town Hall & Library, and have put together a comprehensive assessment of the existing condition of the building.

While Maycroft was engaged through a Design and Build procurement model, the instruction was to focus purely on the seismic strengthening concept design as a first step. The intention was to establish cost estimates for seismic work, which is the main reason for the project. With this cost estimate, Council now have an understanding of what budget is available for the rest of the planned works.

Regarding the Memorial Park Grandstand, staff presented three concept design options along with estimated costs to Council in November 2024. Only one of these cost estimates was close to the remaining project budget, which would not see an upgrades made to the changing rooms on the lower level.

Since the community is keen to see upgrades to the lower level, Council are waiting for the community to organise a meeting to discuss a way forward.