

RANGITĪKEI Connect

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ISSUE 32

FROM THE Mayor's Desk

Tēnā koe, I am sure that nearly everyone is aware of the places of Covid interest in our district started by a truck driver on an approved run from Auckland to Palmerston North recently.

Our district is the major ribbon of State Highway 1 and the North Island and will always be susceptible to this risk. It serves as a reminder for us do to two things - get vaccinated and continue scanning. Unfortunately our district has an average percentage of people currently vaccinated - please get the jab to protect yourselves and others.

Over the last few days we have seen the cancellation of the Hunterville Shemozzle and the Mudder in Marton, both planned for this month, due to Covid. I am sure that there will be other cancellations that arise. My heart goes out to the organisers but it is the right decision and should be made early. All we can do is pledge to support them when they are allowed to run again, even if it is in a year's time.

We are now at the action stage of several projects, the first being the Memorial Park Taihape Amenities Build with all the designs now signed off. I am looking forward to having some structures in the ground and for groups running events being able to share in using some decent showers/toilets facilities. The next major construction will be the Marton to Bulls Wastewater contract. This involves putting a new pipe connecting the Marton Wastewater Plant at Crofton through to Bulls. It's great to see the project actually taking shape.

At the Council meeting last Thursday, there were a number of matters brought to Councillors' attention. One of which was the Annual Residents Survey - there are a number of things raised that were sobering reading for both staff and Councillors. We expected the concerns around things like water quality (predominantly an issue in Marton) and one of the lessons learned is that we need to identify to people what is being done, what the strategies long term are and how they will be funded.

We have put significant sums of money into our Long Term Plan and we are starting that work now independent of what happens with the Three Waters Reform. If the Three Waters Reform is mandated by Government, in other words Council doesn't have a right to make the decision, the money that we are spending will become a debt to the new entity but by starting the work now it ensures that the work will have a high priority under a new entity. I and fellow Councillors have received hundreds of emails in the last few weeks urging us to opt-out of the Three Waters proposed reform and we have expressed our concerns around the Three Waters in our letter to Minister Mahuta which is available on our website. I am hopeful that Council actually gets to make a considered decision in the future.

There were also other issues raised within the Annual Residents Survey and Council and staff are looking seriously at the comments and the individual issues raised and I thank everybody for taking part.

There are a number of people that have questioned myself and other Councillors around what is happening in terms of the Marton Council facilities new builds and the Taihape rebuilds. We have to comply with the Earthquake Prone Buildings Legislation and the clock is ticking. We have a significant commitment within our Long Term Plan to address this issue. In learning the lessons of Te Matapihi we have gone for best practice and have engaged an expert in this field to structure a better business case where all of the options and needs of Council facilities and the community are considered. This work is continuing.

Another query raised is what is happening with the Bio Forestry District Plan change. We had a day of mediation on 4 October and it certainly looks as though it is proceeding well. A lot of work is being done behind the scenes. Rangitikei District is likely to be at the forefront of environmentally friendly bio-degradable options for the replacement of plastics in the future.

Ngā manaakitanga, **Andy Watson**, Mayor of Rangitikei District.

New feedback system rolling out across the District

Council is introducing a fun interactive feedback system into our customer service areas and events through our rohe.

HappyORNot is one of several feedback opportunities that will replace our yearly Annual Residents Survey, offering real-time instant feedback to Council.

We value feedback from the community. It's important that we know what we're getting right. So we can keep doing it! Look out for our HappyOrNot podiums at our offices, libraries, facilities and events around our district. Kōrero mai - Have your say with a smile.



Three Waters Reform RANGITĪKEI DISTRICT

Council Unanimously Supports Submission on Three Waters.

Rangitikei District Council has approved its response to the Three Waters Reform in which it made clear its support for the need to change how Three Waters services are managed and delivered in Aotearoa.

In late July, Central Government released information about its proposal to councils, including indicative funding packages. Councils were given eight weeks to consider the reforms and come back with any questions.

During this period Council assessed the proposal, shared information on its website, and engaged with residents to seek their feedback before responding to Central Government on the proposed reforms. As no formal decision was required, Council did not conduct a full public consultation. Depending on future Central Government decisions, Council expects full public consultation to occur.

Rangitikei Mayor Andy Watson said most residents who responded were opposed to the reform proposal.

"However, Central Government has not done a good job educating people and iwi about what the reforms entail," said Mayor Andy Watson. "They need to step up and front the reform by consulting with communities and iwi across our nation in a meaningful manner."

Mayor Andy Watson said the letter of response to Central Government was a unanimous vote.

"Elected Members understand the need for reform and that a more holistic approach is required, as is increased investment and scale to enable efficiency gains."

"However," he said. "There are a range of views about the scale of investment that is needed, the levels of benefits that will be achieved, the ability of small communities to inform decisions and the right governance model, and much more."

Mayor Andy said Council also outlined concerns about the timing of the reform ahead of the Local Government review, with the expected outcome being the further erosion of Local Government in Aotearoa.

The next announcement from Central Government is expected in October.

Council's letter in response to Three Waters Reform and results of our Council Three Water Reform survey are available on our website. www.rangitikei.govt.nz/threewatersreform

Continuation of Meeting

As the Council meeting held on Thursday, 30 September was not concluded, the continuation of this meeting will take place at 1pm on Thursday, 7 October 2021.

Due to current alert levels only allowing limited numbers in our Council Chamber, no members of the public are able to attend the meeting, therefore it will be recorded and loaded onto our website after the meeting.

Any queries, please phone 06 327 0099 or 0800 422 522.

Kōrero Mai
Have YOUR
say!



Representation Review

Consultation on our "Initial Proposal" for representation for the 2022 Local Government elections closes soon!

Have your say by 8 October 2021

www.rangitikei.govt.nz/representationreview



The vaccine helps protect us all

Everyone over the age of 12 can now book in for a vaccine.

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