

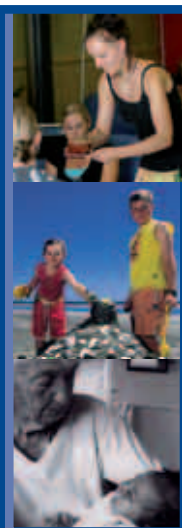


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Whakatane District Council

# BYWAYS

MARCH 2010



## Council to trim rates increase

The Council is working to trim down the 11.9% rates increase that was originally proposed in the 2010/11 Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP).

As indicated in the LTCCP, rates increases are unavoidable if we want continued Council services while dealing with historically poor maintenance of our infrastructure. The Council is also looking at how best to deal with a funding deficit of \$1.95 million from the 2008/09 financial year.

The Council is conscious of the impact on the community of increasing rates, particularly in the current economic climate. To lower the size of the overall rates increase, budgets have been cut in all areas. Changes to budgets and work programmes for the 2010/11 year are

being considered alongside their impact on the level of service that can be delivered.

Despite the tightening of budgets, many key projects indicated in the LTCCP will go ahead. These include continuing with the District Plan review and disaster mitigation projects, construction of a new library and exhibition space, and an archives and storage facility, and initiatives to reduce and dispose of solid waste. The Draft Annual Plan will be adopted on the 23 March, with public consultation opening from the 26 March until the 27 April. We encourage you to have your say. For more information regarding the Annual Plan and LTCCP please contact Wouter Vullings on 07 306 0500.

## Innovation reduces costs for Ohope road works

Works to widen and improve Ohope Road, from the Hillcrest Road intersection past Burma Road, are almost complete.

The project commenced after an assessment found the road was in a poor condition and the pavement in constant need of patch repairs, resulting in ongoing maintenance costs. The road widening also allows for the next stage of the project – a footpath to connect Whakatane to Ohope from the Hillcrest intersection to Pohutukawa Avenue.

Road widening proved difficult between Hillcrest Road and the Whakatane cemetery entrance owing to limited space. A 100-metre-long retaining wall had to be constructed including a guardrail. A second guardrail was installed through this section to provide improved safety for motorists and cyclists.

During construction, excess groundwater was discovered causing recurring potholes from the Hillcrest Road intersection to Burma Road. This

caused a slight delay as additional drainage had to be installed and a final seal will be applied by the end of summer.

A significant amount of money was saved throughout the project through innovative ideas. Recycled crushed concrete from the Burma Road landfill was used saving \$50,000 and reducing waste in the landfill.

Originally a larger retaining wall was proposed opposite the cemetery entrance to ensure the works did not encroach on the neighbouring property. The wall's estimated cost was between \$800,000 and \$2 million. Instead the Council purchased the adjacent property and was able to widen the road without needing the retaining wall. The property boundary has been moved and the property is to be on-sold. This saved the project between \$725,000 and \$1.93 million.

The total project costs of \$1.4 million were shared between the Whakatane District Council and the New Zealand Transport Authority (NZTA).

## Flood prevention measures put in place for winter months

Two of the five Matata regeneration projects to mitigate flood damage are now complete.

The flood prevention work covers four catchment areas, Ohinekoao, Waimea, Waitepuru and Awatariki.

At Ohinekoao stop banks have been raised and the Waimea stream has had a number of culverts installed and replaced. Both Ohinekoao and Waimea have had additional stream protection work done.

Work is still being done in the Waitepuru and Awatarariki catchment areas. Awatarariki includes two projects, the Matata Lagoon and the Debris Detention Structure (flexible barrier net).

A retaining wall is being constructed along the stream at Waitepuru to prevent further erosion and to support the slipped Manawahae Road. Repairs to the road have started and stop banks are being built to prevent flooding.

Work to repair the 2005 damage to the Matata lagoon is almost finished and major earth works, covering an area of 16 hectares, are complete. Planting of the lagoon will continue until April.



Resource consent applications will be lodged at the end of February for approval to construct a flexible barrier net at the Awatariki stream. The net is designed to significantly reduce the risk of flood debris reaching the proportions of 2005 in Matata. Most flood debris would be held behind the flexible barrier and any excess

diverted to open ground west of Matata. The barrier net has a minimum life span of 100 years and requires little maintenance such as the removal of built-up debris.

All of the projects, aside from the Debris Detention Structure, are due for completion in June this year.

## New user-pays policy for Trade Waste Disposal

The Council is encouraging businesses to reduce their trade-related waste as a new "user pays" system comes into play. This follows the adoption of the new Trade Waste bylaw in September 2008 and introduces a charging system based on national standards and the New Zealand Waste Strategy.

Utilities Manager Santha Agas says the introduction of the new "user pays" charges is a good opportunity for business to review their waste streams and assess where they can reduce the waste they are disposing of into the Council's reticulation system. "Such a review will not only benefit the business by reducing the amount of charges they pay but also has environmental benefits", he says.

Businesses are to be charged for the disposal and treatment of trade-related waste following the introduction of the Trade Waste Bylaw – a new charging policy to control the discharge and treatment of waste produced by commercial activities.

Trade waste is any liquid discharged into the wastewater system from trade premises. All businesses in the district will be required to pay for its disposal and treatment.

The volume and strength of trade waste puts a strain on discharge and treatment systems resulting in increased operating costs. Under the new "user pays" policy, businesses that produce a lot of waste will pay more towards the treatment and maintenance of the wastewater systems.

The New Zealand Waste Strategy was introduced in 2002 with the aim of reducing damage to the environment from waste build-up and disposal. The Trade Waste Bylaw supports this nationwide strategy by encouraging businesses to reduce the amount of waste they produce. There are many ways businesses can do this, in the process reducing their trade waste bill and benefitting the environment. A consultation period has also begun providing businesses with information about the Trade Waste Bylaw and new charges. For more information please contact Utilities Manager Santha Agas on 07 306 0500. [www.whakatane.govt.nz](http://www.whakatane.govt.nz)

## Library 'humming' due to improved services

The Whakatane District Library had more than 17,000 visitors last year – an increase of 9% on the previous year largely due to improved services and staff initiatives.

Library statistics released this month show issues and returns increased by 6% in 2009 and the number of visitors rose by 9% to 17,533.

Improved services and staff initiatives have contributed to increased library activity. Space was made available for more new books after a New Zealand book collection was created and stored in the library staff work area. The New Zealand collection can still be borrowed or read in the library.

The installation of nine Aotearoa Peoples Network Kaharoa computers at the Whakatane and Murupara branches also contributed to the

increase in visitors. The computers allow each visitor thirty minutes of free internet usage per day.

Story Time for pre-school children proved popular in 2009 with updated programmes made available for parents at the start of every term.

The recession also contributed to increased library visits with people choosing to borrow instead of buying books.

Library Services Coordinator Tangimeriana Maxine Rua said library staff had been instrumental in the improved services, 'we have a small but dynamic team who are positive and passionate about the services we offer'. Visitors have also noticed change with one regular saying, 'the library is humming!'



Aotearoa Peoples Network has proved to be a very popular service with library users.



# District Plan Review

Community feedback is sought for the first stage of the Council's District Plan review, named Shaping Whakatane.

The District Plan sets guidelines for the use of land in the district, and covers topics such as where to house a growing population, what land can be developed and the protection and management of special features such as landscapes.

The Shaping Whakatane project is broken down into two main sub-projects;

- Sustainable Environment – the management of natural and cultural features; and
- Sustainable Communities – business, residential and rural activities and infrastructure.

The Council is interested to hear what the community's views are on many of the issues we have in shaping, the Whakatane District and will be asking for your feedback on several key questions in the coming months. The Council will then draft some options to deal with these issues which will be available for public comment.

There will be an open day on 13 April where you are invited to come along and share your views.

If you would like to receive regular updates about the the District Plan Review please email [julied@whakatane.govt.nz](mailto:julied@whakatane.govt.nz)

## Shaping Whakatane – a sustainable environment: Indigenous biodiversity project

To improve the management of natural areas, the Council has started a project focusing on indigenous biodiversity.

Indigenous biodiversity includes native plants and animals and the places they live, such as wetlands, native forest and bush. The Whakatane District has many of these areas, some playing host to endangered species such as the kiwi and kokako. Community projects have been created to preserve natural areas, such as the Manawahae Ecological Corridor and the Whakatane Kiwi Trust.

Many landowners also manage and protect Indigenous Biodiversity sites through covenants, fencing and pest control. As part of the Shaping Whakatane project, the Council would like to gain feedback from landowners to find out what else can be done to maintain indigenous biodiversity. These ideas will be used to form parts of the District Plan.

Council would like to speak to people caring for natural areas, particularly landowners who have identified natural areas on their property.

For more information regarding indigenous biodiversity and the Shaping Whakatane project please contact Penny Doorman on 07 306 0500.

# Don't let man's best friend become your worst enemy

The relationship between a dog and its owner is potentially one of the most rewarding human experiences, but successful ownership depends on the owners' awareness of, and willingness to take seriously, the responsibilities involved in looking after a dog. The intimate relationship between a dog and its owner is possible because dogs are basically social animals. However, it is very easy to forget that dogs are in fact 'wild' animals with their own instincts.

People should not try to humanise dogs. Certain characteristics of the dog influence the way it behaves. Being a pack animal, the dog will protect its own pack members and likewise may show protective-type behaviour for its human pack or family. In general dogs react well to kindness and affection

An important point to remember is that owners must establish that they are the leader of the pack and maintain a firm but gentle dominance over the dog. In addition, owners must ensure that their dog has basic training and is well socialised.

Serious attacks over the past few months, including those in our District reinforce the need for owners to take more responsibility for their pets.

While the Government is proposing to reweave the legislation as a means of addressing the dog attack problem, owners must be aware of and accept what is involved in being a dog owner and realise they are accountable for the actions of their dogs. They must also learn about and understand their dog's basic nature—only then can they maintain effective control over its behaviour.

In the financial year 2008/09, the Council dealt with over 1200 dog complaints, of which 135 were for attack/aggression. Communities

as a whole are becoming less tolerant and accepting of nuisances created by uncontrolled dogs.

## Some common behaviour problems

### Why do family pets sometimes become aggressive?

Dogs are territorial and predatory animals. Territorial behaviour means that a dog will protect its territory. Even a lovable family pet can become aggressive within its territory. Most reported dog bites occur when a passerby appears to have invaded or strayed into what the dog considers to be its territory.

### How can I stop my dog behaving this way?

Responsible dog ownership means ensuring your dog cannot leave your property of its own free will. You can protect yourself, your dog and innocent passersby if you adequately confine your dog. Whether or not your dog tends to be aggressive, it is up to you to train the dog to respond to your commands.

### What if my dog attacks someone on my property?

Any person with a reasonable ground to be on your property must be able to reach your door without being attacked. You are in breach of the law if your dog attacks someone, even on your own property and your dog could be destroyed if such an attack occurs.

### What if I have a trained guard dog?

Dogs have become domesticated for their

guarding abilities, among other reasons. If your dog is trained to show aggressive behaviour, then you have similar responsibilities to those of the owner of a firearm. The dog's natural territorial behaviour causes it to sometimes treat unfamiliar people as it would a strange dog intruding on its territory.

### Why do dogs sometimes try to dominate their owners?

Dog owners must exercise authority and domination over their animal so they know who the boss is. An example of this is if your dog is lying across the doorway so that you have to step over or around it. In this situation the dog is in control. If the dog will not move then go through the dog to reinforce that you are the boss.

### Important:

Dog ownership is a long term commitment—at least ten years—and it is important to consider if you and your family are ready for the responsibilities before making the decision to own a dog.



# Strategic Plan for Iwi Liaison Committee

Members of the Iwi Liaison Committee have been involved in developing a new Strategic Plan. The plan will help Iwi and the Council makes decisions of benefit to all. For Iwi, it will enable them to be an active part of Council's decision making processes. The plan is being reviewed to recognise that several Iwi in the District have now settled or will soon settle their claims with the Crown. This will enable those Iwi to make decisions about their future and to use their resources. The Council will need to respond to these aspirations in a timely way.

Two more Iwi, represented at the Iwi Liaison Committee, have signed Deeds of Settlement with the Crown. Ngāti Whare, located in the area surrounding the Whirinaki Conservation Park including Te Whaiti and Minginui; and Ngāti Manawa, located around Murupara, will gain greater control over the management of assets in their rohe (tribal area).

For Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Whare, the settlement will allow Ngāti Whare Iwi to govern a large part of the Whirinaki Forest. It will enable them to develop a Conservation Management Plan for the park alongside the East Coast Bay of

Plenty Conservation Board and the Department of Conservation. The Whirinaki Conservation Park is to be re-named "Whirinaki Te Puna a Tane", recognising the park as a place of plenty, filled with pua and rongoa (animals and food). Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Whare Chairman and Whakatane District Council Iwi Liaison representative, James Carlson, says "the new kaitiaki (guardian) of the park will be more actively involved in preserving the natural environment. This will encourage greater numbers of kokako, kiwi, weka and indigenous plants".

The Ngāti Manawa Deed of Settlement (with the CNI settlement) will result in the Iwi receiving \$12.2 million of Central North Island Forest Lands. Cultural redress has also been acknowledged by the gifting of historical and cultural sites in the area. This includes a total land area of 744 hectares, some wāhi tapu sites and \$2.6 million for special projects. Ngāti Manawa will also receive a share of license rentals and revenue from Licensed Crown Forest Lands.

These settlements follow closely the Central North Island (CNI) settlement last year,



Minister of Treaty Settlements Chris Finlayson and Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Whare Chair James Carlson at the Deed signing ceremony.

involving several Iwi including Ngai Tūhoe, Ngāti Whare, Ngāti Manawa and Ngāti Rangitihī, with rohe in the Whakatane District. The Iwi Liaison Committee congratulates and acknowledges the significance of these events for all of these Iwi.

# 2010 an important year – Whakatane Community Board

2010 is an important year for local communities. This is the year where you will elect local representatives who will become advocates for community concerns and issues. The existence of community boards in our district provides a broader base of representation and extra voices.

The Whakatane Community Board is one such entity which has been involved in many significant developments this year, including the Landing Road bridge, Warren Cole Walkway, future Christmas lighting, the representation review, Town Vision and the Long-term Council Community Plan.

In all cases the Community Board was consulted, our views were heard, and often

acted on. In effect, we act as that extra voice for our constituency with whom we are closely connected.

For the projected 2011 Community Boards, we have requested increased delegations of community roles and responsibilities. We wish to be more 'hands on' in our respective areas. It will be interesting to watch the Auckland model, as this may indicate a way forward for local representation, service and effectiveness. We are not a Council watchdog – we work both with elected members and with staff.

Another significant role we have is the distribution of discretionary funding to local community groups and organisations. We receive the application, align the request to

our funding criteria, a decision is made and the funds are distributed accordingly. Application forms are available on the Council website or at the Council office. The fund is for projects that result in:

- community development
- community pride and beautification;
- community facilities;
- community events;
- board-initiated surveys/questionnaires or projects

Some recent funds distributed include: support for the annual fireworks display, Hockey and Squash Club improvements, Toast to the Coast, Eve Rimmer Games, Bubbles and

Berries evening, Youth Concert, Christmas tree display, Christmas Parade, Anzac Day banner, Community Patrol, Line-dancing Nationals, Chamber of Commerce promotions and the Mataatua Iwi Challenge

We would like to hear your views on the annual fireworks display and whether there is a need to hold it in conjunction with Guy Fawkes or at some other time. Maybe there is another event with which it could be incorporated. Please give us your feedback on the ideas.

The challenge for you is to be active in the upcoming local authority elections later in the year.

Ken Lynch, Deputy Chairperson Whakatane Community Board.