



Whakatane District Council

BYWAYS

November 2011 including Summary of the Annual Report 2010/11



www.whakatane.govt.nz

Council proposes changes to rates system

The Whakatane District Council intends to implement its proposed rates system over a two year period starting in 2012.

The Council has been reviewing its rating system alongside the development of the Long Term Plan 2012-22 (LTP). Whakatane Mayor Tony Bonne says the rates review is not about the total amount of rates that are collected, it is about who pays for those rates. "Ultimately the costs need to fall somewhere and it is about figuring out what works best for our District".

Over the last six years we have taken a strong user

pays approach. The Council wants to take more of a balanced approach that has a stronger emphasis on rates affordability. Some costs will still be passed on to those who use or benefit from services but we are also proposing to place more emphasis back on capital value. As a result, the of rates collected by way of fixed charges (everyone pays the same) will fall from 54% to 40%. For ratepayers, the proposed new system means that those with lower value properties pay less but owners of higher value properties pay more. It also means the rates bill will become simpler because there will not be so many different charging regimes for the 48

activities delivered by the Council.

Mayor Tony Bonne believes that a greater focus on rates affordability is much needed but also acknowledges that some property owners will be paying more in the future. The Council believes that a staged approach to implementing the new rating system is necessary. This will have a smoothing impact on the change whether paying more or less in rates.

HAVE YOUR SAY: The rates review will go out for consultation as part of the Council's Long Term Plan in March 2012.

As part of the rates review we are planning to make some changes to how our services are funded. We are planning to:

- Remove peak water charges for the summer months.
- Amalgamate water supply schemes across the district apart from the Plains and Ruatahuna. This means everyone will pay the same for water including a fixed charge and a meter charge according to amount of water used. Those without meters will be charged according to the average consumption.
- Revoke the Disaster Mitigation Funding Policy. Costs of disaster mitigation will be funded according to the storm water activity (see next point).
- Partly fund storm water from the general rate in recognition that the storm water systems protect public assets (like roads) as well as private property. This will be funded 20% from general rate and 80% from targeted rates whereas this has previously been fund entirely from targeted rates.
- Increase the proportion of Animal Control costs that are funded by the general rate. The general rate component will increase from 20% to 50% with a correlating decrease in fees and charges. This change will be transitioned in over a number of years.
- Fund libraries, swimming pools, parks and reserves through the general rate. Previously these have been funded through targeted rates.
- Introduce a differential for properties over \$15 million. This will regulate the impact of the change on those that will see the highest rates increase.
- Remove the charges for commercial SUIPs which was implemented in 2010 and remove the proposal to implement SUIPs for rural and residential properties.

Arts and Culture project update



Construction of the new Library and Exhibition centre

The \$8 million cultural project to turn the old Briscoes building into a new museum, art gallery and library is well underway.

Since construction started in late June, work has included structural upgrading, installation of heating and ventilation systems, internal partitioning and lining. Now, exterior glazing has been installed, providing an impression of the final design and a tempting glimpse into what will be the light-filled "public-edge" of the Library.

The Library and Exhibition Centre will have three galleries for changing exhibitions, in addition to the core exhibition space where the stories of the district will

be told through Museum Collection objects, text and images. A central courtyard provides another area to showcase sculptural artworks and displays within the Library space will enable even greater public access to Collection items.

Whakatane District Council Arts and Culture Manager Wayne P. Marriott says a focus of the Museum display will be on "taking objects out of the storerooms and out of glass cases".

"We want visitors to leave here inspired and excited about what they have seen and we hope our regular library users will enjoy the easier access to exhibitions and public programmes. That interaction is really at the heart of the shared facility concept and moving towards a seamless service delivery across Council's Arts and Culture activities."

The scheduled completion date for the building phase of the project is January 2012 after which it will be handed over for the installation of the Museum display and opening exhibitions and the relocation of the Library stock. The Library and Exhibition Centre is expected to open in March 2012.

Stage two of Council's Arts and Culture Project is the redevelopment of the current Museum building in Boon Street into a purpose-designed Research, Storage and Archive facility.

Hinemoa Rd Sewer Lines Upgraded

The replacement and upgrade of wastewater pipes in Hinemoa Street is back underway, after being on hold since May, and is likely to be finished by Christmas.

Sections of concrete pipes along Hinemoa and Stewart Streets are being replaced to improve the ability to handle overflow issues in the area during heavy rain.

The work was initiated following a pipe failure in 2008 at the intersection of Hinemoa St and Victoria Ave. The sewer main, weakened by acid attack, collapsed.

Investigations established that sewer main along Hinemoa St was at risk of further collapse, with sections of pipe that were once 30mm thick corroded wafer thin to 8mm.



Contractors replace the corroded sewer mains with new 300mm PVC pipe.

Silt removed

Projects to reduce the amount of silt in the Awatapu lagoon and Wainui Te Whara stream are underway and due to be completed early next year.

Due to heavy rainfall in the area over the past 18 months, silt that has built up significantly in Awatapu lagoon and Wainui Te Whara stream bed will be removed in stages. Silt will be stockpiled at the lagoon reserve and removed once it is dry.

Work has begun at the lagoon and de-silting along Wainui Te Whara stream is expected to be completed before Christmas. Work at Awatapu Lagoon will move into its second stage after Christmas and be completed in March next year.

An application to install a sediment control basin in Wainui Te Whara Street to control silt build-up has been made to the Bay of Plenty Regional Council. The control basin is a detention dam that reduces the amount of water travelling down to the channel so it can be raised, widened and lined. It is estimated close to 400 cubic metres of silt will be removed.

Council's Project Engineer, Debbie Fransen said the Council needs around \$1.7m to address silt build-up in the Wainui Te Whara stream. The stream affects a lot of people and is a high priority for stormwater.

"We will continue talking with the community on which option is the most suitable, the most affordable and most appropriate.

For more information please contact the Council on 07 306 0500.

Catchment management options

Community meetings were held in Ōhope and Whakatāne to discuss stormwater issues in the upper catchment (the hills and escarpment between Ōhope and Whakatāne urban areas).

Residents are still experiencing flooding and want to know what is being done to stop future damage.

We need to better understand upper catchment flows and how it affects the lower catchment. Research is currently being done on two topics:

1. How to control stormwater in upper catchment?
2. Stormwater mitigation in urban Whakatāne and Ōhope

Recommendations will be included in the Long Term Plan 2012-2022.

New harbour vessel

A new vessel is about to be commissioned for the harbour superintendent, replacing the current boat after 15 years' service.

The cost of the new boat is estimated at \$174,000.



Courtesy Whakatāne Beacon Collection, Whakatāne District Museum & Gallery.

West End track

After being closed for nearly four months due to landslips in June, July and November this year, the West End Track opened in time for the Toi's challenge on November 20.

It was a great achievement to have the track ready for the run and just in time for the warmer months.

People are reminded to take care when using the track, especially after heavy rain.

'Tis Christmas season

From early December you may notice a dash of tinsel as Christmas decorations are installed around our district.

Eleven trees along The Strand and two trees in Murupara will be laced with LED fairy lights to accompany existing lights. Not only will it mark the start of the festive season but also the start of a long-term strategy to brighten up our district.

The five year programme will see fairy lights and flags being installed throughout the entire district and thanks to the funding support from the Eastern Bay Energy Trust.

In the meantime, the Mayor Tony Bonne will be hosting an 'Over 80's Xmas Morning Tea' on Thursday 1 December, 2011 at 10am.

Upgrade for Maraetotara playground

A significant upgrade to the Maraetotara playground will be finished in time for Christmas this year.

Consultation with the community led to the upgrade and locals helped choose the equipment. Users will be pleased to know the pirate ship and flying fox are staying along with a few new additions.

Burma Landfill retired

The Burma landfill has been handed back to Ngati Awa as regenerated farmland after its closure more than two years ago.

Since its closure in 2009, the Council has been steadily capping and top soiling the landfill. All residual waste is now transported to Tirohia near Paeroa.

The Council is exploring ways to work with the community to encourage recycling and composting to reduce our solid waste.

Bronze horse statue proposed

A bronze statue of the Melbourne Cup winning horse, Rising Fast and its owner Leicester Spring could be erected in Whakatāne with the square between the Warehouse and the outside the new Library and Exhibition Centre being considered as the most ideal spot.

A group comprising arts and racing enthusiasts has formed a Trust to raise money for Rising Fast's statue to be erected as part of a community-funded public art project.

Owned by Whakatāne Beacon founder Leicester Spring, in 1954, Rising Fast became the only horse in history to win the Melbourne Cup, Caulfield Cup and Cox Plate races – known as the Spring Grand Slam - in the same season.

Leicester purchased the horse in 1950 for 325 guineas and soon after training with Ivan Tucker and Fred Hoysted its blue, gold and black colours became familiar on New Zealand race tracks. Rising Fast was inducted into both the New Zealand and Australia Racing Halls of Fame.

Whakatāne Community Board Chairman Neville Delahunty says while the Board is supportive of the project it will not commit any ratepayer funds towards it.

"We are aware of the idea and as a Board we are supportive, but we do not believe any ratepayer funds should be used".

A similar project was undertaken in Timaru for Phar Lap. A trust was established and most of the funds came from organisations within the racing industry and outside funding bodies.

Good response to draft District Plan

The Council's Draft District Plan released for preliminary consultation in July has had some positive community feedback.

Nearly 250 people took the opportunity to talk directly with council staff. Over 180 written comments were received and staff also met with iwi and key stakeholders to hear their ideas.

Thanks to those who have commented. Your comments will be summarised and reported to the Council to consider before the formal consultation phase.

The District Plan is a document that guides the way people use, subdivide and develop land in the district. It identifies where activities take place, what land can be developed and what features should be protected.

Key changes in the Draft Plan are summarised in a newsletter called Shaping Whakatāne: The Whakatāne District Plan Review. This is available online

www.whakatane.govt.nz/shapingwhakatane

If you want to talk about the Draft District Plan or for more information please the Council's District Planning team on 07 306 0500.



Draft Whakatane District Plan

Te Ihurangi Tuāpapa o Whakatāne

For consultation purposes
15th JULY 2011

