

DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN SUBMISSIONS CLOSE NEXT WEEK

Have you told us what you think about our plans for the future? There's still time to your say – but not a lot. We're asking you to tell us what you think about the draft Annual Plan 2013/14, draft Fees and Charges 2013/14, and the Matatā Sewerage Reticulation options, which are all open for feedback until this coming Friday (12 April). These documents highlight the proposed budget, projects, and fees and charges for the year beginning 1 July 2013.

The draft Annual Plan represents year two of Council's Long Term Plan 2012-22 (LTP) and takes on a 'business as usual' approach. There are not many changes from the programme set out in the LTP, with Council's main focus remaining on the key principles of Affordability, Sustainability and Responsibility.

"These principles aim to balance people's ability to pay with the need to maintain assets and deliver services, so the community gets the best value for money from its Council," Mayor Tony Bonne says. "We have proposed an average rates

Have Your Say!

Whakatāne District Council
DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN 2013/14
 Submissions close 5pm, 12 April 2013

increase of 2.47 percent for the coming year, which is the lowest increase for the past 10 years. Our rates pay for a wide range of things that people often overlook – everything from roads to footpaths, halls to boat ramps, water to sewerage, parks and reserves, and much more."

Mayor Bonne is calling for the public to get involved in the development of the Annual Plan and help influence the future of our district. "We will read and listen to your feedback before we make final decisions about work programmes, priorities and expenditure. Knowing your views and what

is important to you helps us work towards the kind of district you want.

"Our vision as a Council is to make the most of the opportunities that our district provides, to be the place of choice for people to live, work and play. We need to hear from you if we are going to realise that vision," he says.

Consultation on the draft Annual Plan and draft Fees and Charges opened on 11 March. Submissions can be made by visiting Council's website (www.whakatane.govt.nz) or filling in a submission form and dropping

Keen to discuss the draft Annual Plan?

Come and have a chat with us today, 6 April at the Ōhope Market on Bluett Road, or on Sunday, 7 April at the Whakatāne Market in the Pyne Street carpark. We look forward to seeing you – we may have a little treat for the kids too!

it in to the Council offices in Whakatāne or Murupara.

Alongside the draft Annual Plan, the Council is also consulting all ratepayers connected to a sewerage scheme about Matatā Sewerage Reticulation options. While the issue particularly affects residents in Matatā, the Council's rating policy means that all ratepayers connected to a Council sewerage scheme (excluding Murupara) would pay slightly higher rates if a sewerage system is developed in Matatā.

VISITOR GUIDE HIGHLIGHTS WHAT'S ON OFFER

Visitors around the country will now have a better idea of what's on offer when visiting our district. The Whakatāne Visitor Guide has been revised and 45,000 guides have been distributed to i-SITES around New Zealand, as well as all the motels and hotels in the Bay of Plenty.

The guide details many of our local attractions, including White Island and Ōhope Beach, as well as highlighting our rich cultural history, fishing, dolphins, water activities, walking tracks and mountain bike trails.

New tourism activities profiled this year include guided tours to Whale Island/ Moutohorā, which are run by White Island Tours and Diveworks; cultural tours run by Nativ Connectionz; the Mataatua Whareunui; and Te Kōpūtu - our new library and exhibition centre.

More than 80 local businesses have taken the opportunity to advertise in the seventh edition of the guide. If you'd like to see what's on offer in our district, visit the local i-SITE, or check out www.whakatane.com.



TSUNAMI SIREN TESTING TOMORROW

If you hear a continuous siren sounding a Tsunami warning tomorrow at 10am, remain calm, it's only a test.

Fire sirens located in coastal Eastern Bay of Plenty communities have recently been converted to provide a tsunami warning system, which will be put into action for the first time to coincide with the end of daylight saving. Whakatāne and Ōpōtiki District Councils are jointly managing the siren test, which follows on from the release of the Eastern Bay Tsunami Evacuation Information booklet earlier this year.

Eastern Bay of Plenty Emergency Management Coordinator Jim Tetlow says the fixed fire sirens in Matatā, Whakatāne, Ōhope, Ōpōtiki, and Waihou Bay will be sounding the continuous rise warning in an effort to inform and educate communities on what to expect if the real thing happens.

"In an actual tsunami warning, these sirens will emit a 10 minute constant rise tone, which is the signal for people to tune in to Radio 1XX (90.5/92.9FM or 1242AM) to receive information about any potential threat," he says. "We're fortunate to have a locally-owned and operated radio station in the Eastern Bay, so we're working closely with them on the day of the test.

"The sirens themselves are not a call to evacuate, but the signal to tell people that they need to listen to the radio to get the

latest information from Civil Defence on any threat," Mr Tetlow says. "The reason the sirens will not be used as an evacuation signal is that they cannot tell people which areas need to evacuate and which don't.

"We will also be deploying our mobile 'stinger' sirens in Coastlands, Ōhope and Ōpōtiki," he says. "These are attached to the top of a vehicle and can also broadcast public announcements."

Mr Tetlow says he wants as many people as possible to take note of the siren testing so they can provide feedback. "We will have a quick survey available on the two council websites following the test, and we'd really like to know who could hear it, what they think the siren sound indicates, and perhaps who didn't hear anything at all.

Advertising has been undertaken to raise community awareness about the test, but residents are also encouraged to tell family and friends about what to expect at 10am on Sunday 7 April.

Tsunami evacuation information booklets are available from both council offices, their websites and other council facilities such as libraries.



New road markings now feature around the Whakatāne – Ōhope Secenic Reserve roads where the 200th Kiwi chick was released in March.

Pictured from left are Whakatāne Kiwi Project partners: David Paine of Bay of Plenty Regional Council, Marguerite Timbs of Whakatāne Kiwi Trust, and Aidan Glynn of Whakatāne District Council.

LEARN TO SWIM – SKILLS FOR LIFE

Enrol your children for learn to swim classes and gift them with a skill for life. Enrolments are now welcomed for Term Two, which runs from Monday 6 May to Friday 12 July.

- Babies 6 – 36 months
- Preschool 3 – 4 years
- School age 5 – 12 years
- Adult classes - It's never too late to learn to swim. Adult group or private lessons are available.

The Whakatāne Aquatic Centre Swim School has options to suit everyone.

Visit www.whakatane.govt.nz > Swimming Pools to find out more.

IT'S OFFICIAL ŌHOPE VOTED NEW ZEALAND'S BEST BEACH

After a suspenseful wait, it's now official. Ōhope has been voted New Zealand's 'Best Beach' in a nationwide peoples' choice poll initiated by the Green party earlier this year. Green Party member Gareth Hughes visited Ōhope Beach in March to present the best beach award to Mayor Tony Bonne.

Mayor Bonne says he was very proud to receive the honour on behalf of the District. "We've been crowned the Sunshine Capital of New Zealand and now Ōhope has been voted New Zealand's best beach - we really do live in paradise."

Council Promotions Officer Nicola Burgess says that in anticipation of the announcement, the community celebrated with its own version of the Harlem Shake. "It was fantastic to see so many people join in and the footage of the festivities is now on our Facebook pages for everyone to see," she says.

"The community's efforts really paid off as the video looks awesome. A huge thank-you and well done to everyone who came and celebrated with us. We're certainly privileged to be living in such a wonderful place."



Those keen to see the finished product can visit either of Whakatāne District Council's Facebook pages (www.facebook.com/whakatastic? and www.facebook.com/WhakataneDistrictCouncil).

Top: Celebrating our 'best beach' status with our version of the Harlem Shake

Bottom: Green Party member, Gareth Hughes presents the Best Beach Award to Mayor Tony Bonne

ARE YOU ENROLLED FOR LOCAL ELECTIONS 2013?

Local elections for city and district councils, regional councils and District Health Boards will be held from 20 September to 12 October this year.

From Monday, 1 July 2013 everyone enrolled will be sent an enrolment update pack in the mail. All you need to do is check that your details are right. If they are correct, you will get your voting papers sent to you in the mail. If anything needs updating, make the changes and send them back immediately.

If you don't get a pack by Thursday 4 July 2013, you are not correctly enrolled

to vote, and you need to enrol. You can enrol online at www.elections.org.nz, by Freetexting your name and address to 3676, from your local PostShop, or by calling 0800 36 76 56.

If you're not enrolled in time – by Friday 16 August 2013 – you won't get your voting papers sent to you in the mail.



98TH ANZAC DAY COMMEMORATION 2013

Anzac Day is an important occasion and an opportunity to remember those who have served in the armed forces and fought for the freedom of this country. Please join us to commemorate this special day on Thursday 25 April 2013.

The 98th Anzac Day Commemoration Service for the District of Whakatāne will be

held in the stadium of the Whakatāne and District War Memorial Centre, Short Street, Whakatāne, commencing at 9.00am.

Organisations in uniform are invited to march with the Returned Servicemen. Leaders of such groups should report to the Parade Marshal by 8.30 am in the reception lounge at the War Memorial Hall.

MURUPARA POOL SEASON COMES TO A CLOSE

The cooler weather and low demand at the Murupara Pool have brought the summer pool season to a close. Council will now turn its focus to the 2013/14 summer season and use the winter months to concentrate on achieving Pool Safe status. The Pool Safe New Zealand programme ensures pool

management covers areas of supervision, emergency action plans, health and safety, the 'pool alone' policy and water quality. Council will also be looking to appoint and train reliable lifeguards and pool supervisors in preparation for the upcoming summer season.

YOUNG? KEEN TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Are you young? Would you like to make a positive difference in your community? Why not put your name forward for our Youth Council?

The Whakatāne District Youth Council (WDYC) is a team of young people between the ages of 12 and 24, who provide a youth perspective to what the Council does. The team will be a mixture of ethnicity, age, gender, experience and from different geographic locations. WDYC aims to encourage youth participation in the community. The team meets monthly to discuss youth issues, work on youth projects, gain valuable skills and learn a bit about how local government works.

Youth Council members are selected annually and applications are now open. If

you wish to become a member of the Youth Council you need to:

- Attend a compulsory Training Day held at the beginning of each year
- Attend eight meetings throughout the year, held from 4pm to 6pm in the Council Chambers, Whakatāne District Council
- Be a link between the Council and the community
- Be confident speaking in front of a group
- Be proactive and positive

If this sounds like you, visit www.whakatane.govt.nz > Youth and download a Youth Council application form, or visit our offices. Applications close at 4.00pm Friday 26 April 2013.