

## FORECAST RATES INCREASE HALVED

The first draft of the Whakatane District Council's Annual Plan budget for the 2013/14 year forecasts a substantially lower rates increase than that set out in the Long Term Plan (LTP).

Reporting to the Monitoring and Policy Committee this week, General Manager Finance Helen Barnes said summaries of the costs of all Council services prepared for the draft Annual Plan indicated that an overall rates increase of 2.38 percent could be achieved, almost halving the 4.52 percent increase forecast for next year in the Long Term Plan.

The reduction in the forecast increase is partly due to the operating surplus achieved in the 2011/12 year, with \$329,000 in reserves utilised to reduce the rates

requirement. A portion of the surplus will still be available to reduce future rates costs.

Other significant factors were a reduction in overheads and operating budgets across all Council departments and the use of an additional \$89,000 from the Harbour Fund to contribute towards the cost of parks and reserves and public conveniences.

The report also set out debt forecasts for the year, with total borrowing expected to increase from \$59.1 million at the beginning of 2013/14 to \$60.6 million by the end of the year. Again, that debt level is substantially lower than the maximum of \$75 million set out in the Long Term Plan.

Further details about rating impacts will be provided early next year as the draft 2013/14 Annual Plan is finalised.

## DISTRICT PLAN UPDATE

Our District Plan sets out the way we use, subdivide and develop land in the District, with the key goals of enabling use and development while protecting the places we value. It aims to promote growth by providing for new residential and business development and maintain a strong rural base by ensuring that our best soils are kept for rural production. An important part of growth is ensuring that Whakatane remains a great place to live, work and play – and the plan does this by helping to create 'liveable spaces' and protecting special places.

The Council has decided to carry out an economic assessment of the Proposed District Plan to further support its aspirations of affordability, sustainability and responsibility. Councillors considered

that an economic analysis would enhance the District Plan review process and make a valuable contribution to the content of the District Plan.

Council staff will review the outcomes of the economic assessment and once all of the possible changes have been worked through, the Proposed District Plan will be publicly notified. We expect that this will likely be in early-April 2013. The economic assessment report will be available to anyone wishing to make submissions to the draft District Plan.

For information on the District Plan review, contact the Planning Assistant by phoning 306 0500, or emailing [shapingwhakatane@whakatane.govt.nz](mailto:shapingwhakatane@whakatane.govt.nz).

## YOUNG ACHIEVERS RECEIVE AWARDS



Pictured above are some of the 160 Whakatane Young Achievers who were presented awards at a special ceremony last month. The Young Achiever Awards, which are organised jointly by the Council and the Rotary Clubs of Whakatane and Whakatane West, recognise high achieving sportspeople and students in the Whakatane District.

## NO FOODSCRAPS IN GREENWASTE BINS

We'd like to keep taking your food scraps in our greenwaste collection, but they are too smelly!

**As from this Monday (3 December), no food scraps will be allowed in greenwaste collections.**

This means that for all greenwaste collections from Monday onwards, content must be restricted to garden waste, including: lawn clippings; weeds; flower and plant cuttings; hedge trimmings; and small branches. Any bins still containing food-waste will be treated as "contaminated", and therefore uncollectable.

The change reflects the need to remove odour-causing material from the greenwaste stream ahead of the summer months, when higher temperatures accelerate decomposition and the smells food waste produces.

Since food scraps were included in greenwaste in late-2010, there have been ongoing problems with objectionable odour emissions affecting the air quality in the neighbourhoods surrounding our waste transfer stations,



particularly the Te Tahī Street Transfer Station in Whakatane.

Council has taken a number of actions to try and overcome the problem, including work practice changes and the trialling of a sprinkler system over the Te Tahī Street greenwaste bays, and although there have been some improvements, the issue hasn't gone away. The bottom line is that food scraps are just too smelly.

## WATER TANKER ASSET FOR COMMUNITY



*Pictured above are the volunteers who serve on the Edgcombe Volunteer Fire Brigade.*

A large crowd gathered at the Edgcombe Fire Station on 23 November for the blessing and dedication of the brigade's new water tanker.

Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Roddy Hendl says the analysis of five years of New Zealand Fire Service call data showed that Edgcombe had the biggest need for a tanker to assist in fighting rural fires, and was also the most central location for a resource to be used by the wider region.

"The tanker will be available 24/7 to assist with any vegetation or structural

fire in the Eastern Bay of Plenty and further afield if required. It will be a major asset for future rural fire-fighting activities, providing ready access to water in remote locations. It will also be available in Civil Defence emergency situations to provide drinking water supplies wherever they are needed," Mr Hendl says.

Many businesses and organisations helped to make the purchase and upgrading of the tanker possible, including Fonterra and the Whakatane District Council.

## TOP FREE OR LOW-COST THINGS TO DO

You don't need a lot of money to have a good time with the family this summer. Our District offers a range of sights and activities that can be enjoyed at little or no cost. Here are 10 of the best...



### WHAKATANE AQUATIC CENTRE AND MURUPARA POOL

You can swim some laps, soak in the spa, get your thrills on the hydroslide or take the toddlers paddling in the beach play area at the Whakatane Aquatic Centre. Or slap on some sunscreen and take the family along to the Murupara Pool for economical fun in the sun.

### GO FISHING

Head out to Thornton wharf and see if you can catch a kahawai or take a drive to Pikowai and try your hand at surfcasting. Enjoy fish and chips on the Whakatane wharf or Port Ōhope as you watch your rod nod.

### WHAKATANE GARDENS

Pack a picnic and head along to the Whakatane Gardens. Enjoy the flowers in bloom or unwind your mind in the Japanese garden. Play in the playground, or visit the amphitheatre during one of the summer cultural events.



### NGA TAPUWAE O TOI WALKWAY

Make the most of one of New Zealand's most scenic walkways. The full track includes Kōhi Point Reserve, Ōtarawairere Bay, West End Beach, and the native bush of the Bird Walk.

### GO BACK IN TIME

Whakatane District is rich in cultural history. Take a tour of some of the historic sites such as Muriwai's cave, Wairere waterfall, Kapute-rangi Reserve and Tauwhare Pa.

### PLAYGROUNDS GALORE

Play near the beach at Maraetōtara or Mahy Reserve, watch the boats come in at Wairaka playground, or admire your kids' skills at one of the skateparks around the District.

### ŌTARAWAIRERE BAY

Take a walk over the hill from Ōhope's West End Beach to beautiful Ōtarawairere Bay. Visit when the pohutukawa are in bloom and enjoy the song of the tui as you paddle and play.



### VISIT TE KŌPUTU A TE WHANGA A TOI

Te Kōputu is home to the Horizon Whakatane Library, Whakatane District museum display and three gallery spaces. Explore the rich history of the Eastern Bay of Plenty and marvel at the art exhibitions.

### WARREN COLE WALKWAY

Take a stroll or a bike-ride along the banks of the Whakatane River on the Warren Cole Walkway. Stop at one of the three playgrounds along the way or enjoy a picnic in one of the reserves.

### VISIT THE LIBRARY

Whether you need a good book to read on the beach, a DVD for a rainy day at home with the kids, or you want to surf the internet, the Horizon Library offers something for everyone.

For more information and other things to do visit [www.whakatane.com](http://www.whakatane.com)

## CHRISTMAS HOURS

### WHAKATANE AQUATIC CENTRE

Christmas Eve	6am – 4pm
Christmas Day	Closed
New Year's Eve	6am – 4pm
Weekdays	6am – 8pm
Weekends	7am – 6pm

### TE KŌPUTU A TE WHANGA A TOI

Thursday 20 December	Closed at 4pm
Friday 21 December	Closed at 4pm
Christmas Eve	8am – 1pm
Christmas Day	Closed
Boxing Day	Closed
New Year's Day	Closed
2 January	Closed
Weekdays	9am – 5pm
Weekends	10am – 2pm

### WHAKATANE CUSTOMER SERVICES

Thursday 20 December	Closed at 4pm
Friday 21 December	Closed at 4pm
Christmas Eve	8am – 1pm
From Christmas Day	Closed
Reopens	3 January 2013

### MURUPARA SERVICE CENTRE

Thursday 20 December	Closed at 3pm
Friday 21 December	Closed at 3pm
Christmas Eve	9am – 1pm
From Christmas Day	Closed
Reopens	3 January 2013

### VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE

Thursday 20 December	Closed at 4pm
Friday 21 December	Closed at 4pm
Christmas Eve	8am – 5pm
Christmas Day	Closed
Boxing Day	10am – 4pm
New Year's Eve	8am – 5pm
New Year's Day	10am – 4pm
2 January	10am – 4pm

## TIPS TO KEEP YOU SAFE THIS SUMMER



Have fun over the Christmas break, but please consider your neighbours and keep your stereo volume to a reasonable level.



Ensure dogs have plenty of food and water and avoid leaving them in vehicles. Remember – if your dog wanders, it could end up in the pound and be an unnecessary cost to you.



Ensure swimming pool fence gates are closed and that children under eight years old are supervised by an adult at all times.



Vehicles are restricted from beaches unless launching or retrieving vessels, and must stick to authorised access ways.



Enjoy your summer feasts, but make sure you remember the four Cs:

**Clean** – Wash hands before handling food. Wash food utensils and scrub chopping boards to prevent contamination;

**Cook** – Ensure poultry, meat patties and sausages are cooked through. Reheat leftovers until they are steaming hot;

**Cover** – Keep food covered, especially prepared precooked food awaiting use; and

**Chill** – Cool food to 4°C or below. When outside, use a chilly bin and icepacks to keep prepared foods cool.



It's restricted fire season so you'll need a permit from the Council before lighting a fire in the open air.



Drink responsibly. Know your limits. Look out for family and friends. Respect the liquor control bylaw. Don't drink and drive. Be safe.



Practice safe boating. Always wear a lifejacket. Remember the five knot rule.



Remember to slip, slop, slap and wrap this summer. We live in the sunshine capital of New Zealand.