

## Skatepark is open!

The official opening of the new Tokoroa Skatepark went down a treat on Saturday 30 June, with hundreds turning up to test out the new ground.

Council is thrilled with the final result and we know this has been a real team effort.

Our thanks go out to RICH Landscapes for the amazing skatepark design, Angus McMillan Concrete for the exceptional build, to the steering and working groups, for laying the foundation work on this project. Thank you to Trust Waikato for the generous \$100,000 funding it gave to the project, and to our supporting contractors Downers and RYH. A huge thank you to Tokoroa Host Lions for the fantastic seating they built and donated to the park, and to Holsters Engineering for the railing they donated.

"It's clear to see so much work went into this from many different teams, but there are two people who made a world of difference to the success of

this project - Council's Project Manager Sarah Flavall and local community member Evan Dickenson," commented Mayor Jenny Shattock. "Both Sarah and Evan have given so much time, commitment, and love to this project and continue to do so even now. So thank you both."

The Tokoroa Skatepark is now open for use, and it's great to see so many people down there skating everyday of the week - if you haven't checked it out yet, bust out that skateboard and head on down!

Here are some comments from Facebook users...

*"Awesome. What a fantastic effort to everyone involved. Can't wait to bring my grandies to have some fun." - Doreen*

*"This is such an asset, thanks to every one who played their part." - Lorna*

*"Awesome work Richard and Team! There is no better future to invest in than the future generations." - Pania*



## IN brief

- The proposed Putāruru Zoning Plan Change project is nearing draft consultation stage with stakeholders.
- Customer Satisfaction Survey results indicate satisfaction with Communication and Participation has increased by 2%.
- We are waiting for Code of Compliance sign off on our new pensioner housing units in Kindergarten Street. The tenants have been selected and once compliance is achieved, agreements will be signed off and move in dates arranged.

## IN side

- 2&3 Council Services, what it all costs
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## IN house

Produced in-house for the South Waikato community by the South Waikato District Council.

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# UNDERSTANDING COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

Every year South Waikato ratepayers make an annual rates contribution to Council. This contribution pays for a wide range of activities from core services to community activities and assistance.

In this article on pages 2 to 4 we have broken each service or activity down into a cost per week. Figures are based on an urban property that is valued at \$137,000. This value house is the median house value in the South Waikato. The cost per week figures fluctuate depending on property value; it is impossible to illustrate this for every single ratepayer.

Activities are listed from lowest funded activity to highest funded activity. Each activity provides what it costs per week, a summary overview and how the service or activity is funded. We have also colour coded them to illustrate which activities or services fit together in our Council groups.

\*CPW = Cost Per Week

- ASSETS
- REGULATORY
- CORPORATE
- COMMUNITY

start here ↓ **Cemeteries**

**1** CPW \$0.08



There are four cemeteries in the South Waikato, one in Tirau, two in Putāruru and one in Tokoroa. Local authorities have a legal responsibility to provide public cemeteries. We perform around 80 burials and 40 ash interments each year. Council maintains all cemetery grounds and keeps records of all plots, searchable online via Council's website.

**Funded:** 60% by the users (ie, fees and charges) and 40% by rates

## Emergency Management

**2** CPW \$0.29



In emergencies that go beyond the capabilities of emergency services such as Police and Ambulance, Council helps to access more resources and co-ordinate support to assist in protecting people and property. Council staff volunteer and train for specific Civil Defence roles during emergencies.

**Funded:** 100% by rates

## Animal Control & Compliance

**3** CPW \$0.32

Our Animal Control and Compliance Officers are responsible for complaints regarding dogs, stock, derelict vehicles; handle dog registrations and manage the dog pound. There are 3,932 dogs in the district registered to 2,620 dog owners. Council responds annually to around 1,960 compliance related queries.



**Funded:** 60% by the users (ie, fees and charges) and 40% by rates

## Other Community Facilities

**4** CPW \$0.33



Council owns and manages a number of community facilities including Council buildings, The Plaza, community halls, airfield, and others.

Community facilities foster community cohesion and provide for performing arts.

**Funded:**

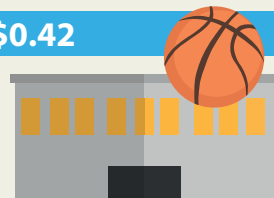
- Community Halls - 5% by users (ie, fees & charges) and 95% by targeted rates (only those in the hall rating area)
- Property Management - 10% by users (ie, fees & charges) and 90% by rates
- The Plaza/Tirau Hall - 100% by rates
- Airfield - 70% by users (ie, fees and charges) and 30% by rates

## South Waikato Sport & Events Centre

**5** CPW \$0.42

Situated at the Tokoroa Memorial Sportsground, the South Waikato Sport and Events Centre overlooks the oval with the wider sportsground forming a backdrop.

The facility has a two court arena and two function rooms (that can be one large one), and changing facilities for up to four teams.



It has proven a popular venue for events and activities with one of the highest satisfaction ratings across all facilities.

**Funded:** 20% by users (ie, fees and charges) and 80% by rates

## Health Services and Monitoring

**6** CPW \$0.46



The Environmental Health section covers an unusually vast array of activities.

When you have a slice of cake, pick up a bottle of wine, go for a haircut, or visit other businesses like motels, camping grounds, funeral directors, the team has already made sure the business maintains good standards of hygiene and follows government regulations. Around 220 health licences are issued each year.

The team also:

- respond to over 1,300 nuisance complaints a year, such as noise, vermin, long grass and insanitary conditions
- investigate infectious diseases to stop outbreaks
- provide safeguards following incidents involving hazardous substances, such as chemical spills from a vehicle accident
- among a number of other duties!

**Funded:** 20% by users (ie, fees and charges) and 80% by rates

# ... and what they cost each week

## Building Control

7 CPW \$0.53



Council is an accredited Building Consent Authority (BCA) which manages, processes and inspects consented building work.

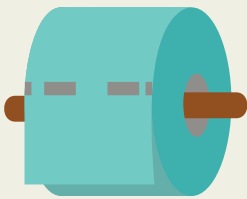
The Building Control Team administer this process, which is designed to ensure that buildings within the district meet the Building Act 2004

This can be anything from processing the application, inspecting building work during construction, issuing code of compliance certificates and administering building warrants of fitness. Around 420 building consent applications are processed each year.

**Funded:** 50% by users (ie, fees and charges) and 50% by rates

## Public Toilets

8 CPW \$0.54



Council owns and maintains 33 public toilet blocks or single public toilets across the district.

These are found in our CBD areas, public spaces in Council buildings and reserves. Public toilets are an important part of our tourism attractions, particularly along the Waikato River Trails and Te Waihou Walkway.

**Funded:** 100% by rates

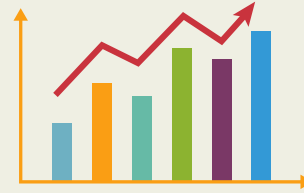
## Economic Development

9 CPW \$0.56

Council promotes the District to potential investors within New Zealand and overseas, as an attractive location to establish or grow a business.

We work collaboratively, with the South Waikato Investment Trust (SWIFT), to actively support local businesses to capitalise on growth opportunities.

We fund information centres; invest in sustainable tourism promotion and asset



management and promote signature events.

Council's Business Case management service aims to help investors navigate our regulatory processes.

**Funded:** 100% by rates

## Planning and Monitoring

10 CPW \$1.01

Every day people apply for resource consents for activities such as building a new business development or subdividing their properties. Resource consents are processed in accordance with Council's District Plan and under the Resource Management Act (RMA).

The RMA promotes the sustainable management of natural and physical resources such as land, air and water. Council's duty is to ensure rigorous assessment of resource consent applications.

Around 70 resource consent applications are processed each year.



**Funded:**

- 65% (of consent processing) by rates and 35% by users (ie, fees & charges)
- 100% of policy planning and environmental monitoring is funded by rates.

## Swimming Pools

11 CPW \$1.20

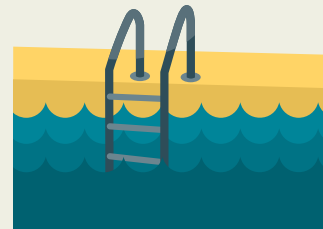
Council provides safe hygienic pools for recreation and sporting activities. Public swimming pools are located in Tokoroa, Putāruru and Tirau.

The South Waikato Indoor Pools in Tokoroa are heated and operate all year round.

The outdoor pools in Putāruru and Tirau are seasonal, open during summer months only.

Programmes such as Woggle classes and Learn to Swim classes are run at the indoor pool facility.

The pools are one of Council's highest rated activities.

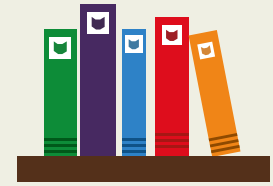


**Funded:**

- South Waikato Indoor Pool in Tokoroa - 20% by users (ie, fees and charges) and 80% by rates
- Seasonal pools in Putaruru and Tirau - 10% by users (ie, fees and charges) and 90% by rates

## Libraries

12 CPW \$1.34



The South Waikato has a library in Tokoroa and another in Putāruru (that serves a dual role as a service centre).

Our libraries offer a wide range of collections and services including books, e-books, puzzles, DVDs, free WIFI/ internet, a housebound service, and much more. We have a library outreach programme in Tirau called LibraryLink operating out of The Dog.

The library team run programmes for children of all ages, from school holiday activities to celebrations of national promotions, such as Māori Language Week, among others.

**Funded:** 10% by users (ie, fees and charges) and 90% by rates

## Other Community Support, Contracts and Grant funding

13 CPW \$1.61



Community support covers many activities including arts, events and culture (which strengthen our community cohesion and community pride).

Council encourages youth development through initiatives with other organisations, advocates on behalf of the community, manages social development contracts and funds and coordinates events such as Anzac Day celebrations and Balloons Visit South Waikato.

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continued from page 3...

Council grants funding to a number of organisations. Funded through this area are the Information Centres, the Waikato River Trails, TCOSS, Pride in Putāruru, Tokoroa Big Weekend, Overdale Community Centre, Hamilton Waikato Tourism, the Plaza, Sport Waikato and event funding.

This area also funds the Community Development Grants that support community groups and their volunteers through a number of recreational, cultural, welfare and social activities. Financial assistance is given directly from Council or administered by Council on behalf of other parties.

**Funded:**

- 100% of the community support is funded by rates
- 100% of grants are funded by rates, excluding TCOSS\*

\*TCOSS is funded 15% by users and 85% by rates

## Stormwater

14 CPW \$1.64



Council's role in stormwater drainage is to provide effective drainage and disposal so that the roading network can function effectively and safely, reduce the risks to people from stormwater ponding for long periods and to mitigate the environmental effects of contamination of the stormwater discharge.

There are 118.28km of stormwater pipes, open drains and watercourse in the urban stormwater network.

Stormwater drainage is also to prevent flooding of private property and to take stormwater from properties and road surfaces in pipes and open drains and disperse it into water courses.

**Funded:** Fully funded by targeted rates (urban ratepayers only)

## Governance & Corporate

15 CPW \$2.09



Corporate costs include a share of all the administrative and management functions that support the governance and strategy development of Council, like general management, corporate planning, communications, community engagement, financial and information services.

Governance costs include elections and Councillor remuneration and expenses.

**Funded:**

- 100% of the district governance and corporate management activity is funded by rates
- 100% of community governance (ie the Tirau Community Board) is funded by targeted rates (Tirau Ward ratepayers only)

## Refuse Collection & Recycling

16 CPW \$2.43



Waste management involves a number of activities. Council owns and manages a transfer station in Putāruru and a landfill in Tokoroa.

We do an urban household weekly refuse collection and an urban fortnightly recycling collection.

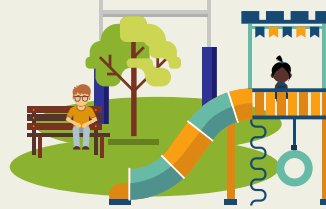
We manage five recycling stations across the district and the main Croad Place recycling facility in Tokoroa.

**Funded:**

- Landfill - 80% by users (ie, fees and charges) and 20% by rates
- Recycling - 100% by rates
- Refuse Collection - 50% by targeted rates (urban ratepayers only) and 50% by bag sales
- General litter collection in CBD areas - 100% by rates

## Parks, playgrounds, sportsgrounds & reserves

17 CPW \$2.72



The South Waikato is a beautiful place to live, work and play, with more than 285 hectares of parks, reserves, sportsgrounds and playgrounds on our doorstep. These include one lakeside reserve, nine esplanade reserves, seven rural reserves, the Jim Barnett bush reserve, several urban reserves, an arboretum and Te Waihou Walkway.

We also have 12 playgrounds and two skateparks.

We maintain a number of plantation strips, flowerbeds, road berms, park furniture, roadside gardens and street trees.

Council maintains the grounds, keeps environmental issues in check and makes sure all equipment is safe and in good condition.

Whether you're playing rugby with your mates or watching your kids play soccer, the South Waikato's sportsgrounds are always well maintained and available for all residents to use.

Council manages and maintains four sportsgrounds across the district.

**Funded:** 5% by users (ie, fees and charges) and 95% by rates

## Roading

18 CPW \$5.03



The South Waikato has 540km of roads, 170km of footpaths, 45 bridges and large culverts, 38 stock underpasses, 3,030 signs and 2,158 streetlights.

To ensure that travel around the district is as safe as possible, all of these assets are regularly maintained and improved upon.

State Highways are maintained by the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA).

**Funded:** 100% by rates (after subsidies - average just over 38%)

## Water Supply

19 CPW \$6.37



Water is for cleaning, drinking, showering, swimming and a whole lot more. It is the one thing we can't live without!

Council aims to provide a safe and reliable supply of water to residential, industrial and commercial properties. It also plays a role in supporting community safety through fire fighting capability. We have six treatment plants.

**Funded:** Fully funded by targeted rates (urban ratepayers only)

## Wastewater

20 CPW \$7.23



Ever wondered what happens when you flush the toilet? Ever thought where the water from the dishwasher goes? Council's role in wastewater is paramount to public health and safety.

We collect, remove and treat wastewater from all urban households to make it safe to discharge into the environment, either into a waterway or land.

Council adheres to resource consents that are issued by the regional council to ensure our discharge has minimal effect on the environment.

Council has four wastewater treatment systems.

**Funded:** Fully funded by targeted rates (urban ratepayers only)

# CHANGES to recycling

Due to changing world markets, Plastics 3 - 7 can no longer be recycled, so Council is asking our community to help us by only putting Plastics 1 and 2 in to your recycling crates/recycling drop off facilities. Please either stop buying Plastics 3 - 7 or put these plastics in your general waste.

This change is due to world markets no longer accepting these plastics for recycling. Our Council simply can't get rid of them so we need to stop collecting them as recycling.

Council's contractor has been looking for new markets for several months. During this time we have been removing plastics 3 to 7 and stockpiling it. They're still working on this but we want to be honest with our community - if we don't find a market, we may have to take them to our landfill. Council is disappointed by this prospect.

Council appreciates the tremendous efforts people in our community put into recycling and encourage our community to look for alternatives to plastics 3 to 7.

Please continue to rinse plastics 1 and 2 and recycle these using the green crate.

Stop buying products that are or use plastics 3 to 7... here's some simple changes:

1. Stop using plastic bags for supermarket shopping, use the cloth reusable ones.
2. Use the reusable cloth bags for your fruit and veg at the supermarket.
3. Use alternatives to plastic wrap (which is plastic 6). Alternatives can be bought like honeywrap or lilybee wrap (they are a bit costly) or made - google it, easy and fun.
4. Identify one product a month that you use regularly; check out each brand when you replace it, buy the one that is a plastic that can be recycled. **Consumer power rocks!**

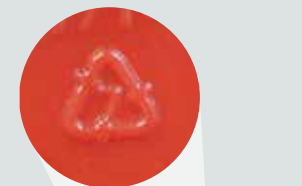
## How can I check which products are Plastics 1 and 2?

Check the recycling symbol - usually on the bottom of the container. If the number is 1 or 2, it can be recycled. Any other number, or no number, please don't put it in your recycling.



Above: This product is a number 2 - it CAN be recycled

Below: This product is a number 7 - it CANT be recycled



No other product that is currently recycled in our district - glass, paper, cardboard, tins, aluminium cans - is affected by this change in markets.



**Saturday 25 August, 7pm-10:30pm- Spellbound**

Fundraiser for Youthline. Tickets \$10, light supper, cash door sales or tickets from Tuscany Road.

**Saturday 8 September, 2.30pm - SW Music Society - Richard Mapp**

Piano concert by leading pianist Richard Mapp. Adults \$25, members \$20, students free, door sales, no eftpos.

**Saturday 16 September, 2pm - Putaruru Choir - Proms in Concert**

A compilation of groups and individuals. Adults: \$20, Children: \$5 from The Plaza ; includes afternoon tea.

**Wednesday, 3 October, 7:30pm - Adam McGrath and the Roaring Days**

Folk singer, Adam McGrath will get the hearts beating.

## COMMUNITY GROUPS

- Mah Jong: Mon, 12:45pm
- Putaruru 50+ Group: Indoor Bowls, Scrabble, Rummikub, 500. Tues, 12.45pm
- Zumba: Tues, 6pm-7pm
- Hulanesian: Wed, 6.10pm-7.10pm
- Putaruru Plaza Indoor Bowling Club: Thurs, 7.30pm
- SW Country Music: 4<sup>th</sup> Fri of each month
- SW Grey Power: last Thurs of every 2<sup>nd</sup> month, 1.30pm

## MOVIES

Sundays, usually the the last Sunday of the month but subject to change to accommodate other events.

## CONTACT

- 07 883 8596 or 027 655 9715
- [www.plaza.org.nz](http://www.plaza.org.nz)
- [theplaza@plaza.org.nz](mailto:theplaza@plaza.org.nz)
- [www/facebook.com/plazaputaruru](https://www.facebook.com/plazaputaruru)



## Wastewater consultation - coming soon

Due to changing legislation with Healthy Rivers, and the fact that our wastewater treatment plant consents need renewing, Council is looking at options for plant upgrades for all four of our wastewater treatment plants.

These upgrades will require significant capital requirements, over the coming 30 years; that will have a significant impact on urban ratepayers.

It is important that our community watch this space

and engage with Council once we have finalised the options and come back to you for your input.

Through the LTP process, Council has already decided to cap the maximum rates increase that directly relate to the wastewater upgrade. Over the first 10 year period of the LTP this is capped at 20% for an urban ratepayer with an average valued house. Council remains very conscious of rising rates costs and our community's ability to pay.

We point out however, that upgrades to our wastewater treatment plants are required and currently won't achieve the necessary resource consents to operate our plants going forward.

Council has worked very closely with consultants, Waikato Regional Council and iwi to be in a position to outline some broad options. The proposal is likely to include three options for comment.

1. full plant upgrades discharge to water, over the next 30 years
2. full plant upgrades discharge to water, via a wetland, over the next 30 years
3. discharge to land, via irrigation to farmland.

We encourage our urban ratepayers to keep an eye out for this public consultation period. The increase in rates to fund this necessary work will impact all urban ratepayers and has been included in the Long Term Plan rates forecasts.

## Sign Up for ShakeOut

New Zealand ShakeOut, our national earthquake drill, is taking place on Thursday 18 October 2018 at 9:30 am\*. You can register your participation - either as an individual or company, club, school etc at [www.shakeout.govt.nz](http://www.shakeout.govt.nz).

ShakeOut is held across the world to remind people of the right action to take during an earthquake - Drop, Cover and Hold.

*\* If this date and time doesn't quite suit you, you can still register to participate, just choose a time to suit you within two weeks of the drill and your participation will still be counted.*

New Zealand ShakeOut was first held in 2012, and then again in 2015. Whether you're doing the drill for the first time or you've done it before, taking part in New Zealand ShakeOut 2018 is as easy as 1-2-3! Drop-Cover-Hold.

The ShakeOut website has heaps of information and resources including workplace preparedness plans, home emergency plans, lesson plans, teaching resources for schools and more.



## Fantastic Fish

*Extract/summary from Forest and Bird magazine - Winter 2018  
Original article by Cherie Pascoe*

A study of the dwarf galaxias at the Blue Spring is unlocking new insights into this little known native fish.

A unique population of one of New Zealand's threatened native fish species, the dwarf galaxias, can be found at the Blue Spring on Te Waihou, near Putāruru.

The Blue Spring dwarf galaxias is part of an ancient family of scaleless fish called Galaxiidae; and it is believed they may be a genetically distinct population, found only at the Blue Spring.

Some galaxiid don't migrate through river systems, spending their entire life in the stream or river where they hatched.

It appears that the Blue Spring dwarf galaxias was at some point in the past cut off. A 2% difference in the mitochondrial DNA of our special little fish has been discovered. Based on this difference, it is believed that it is between 100,00 and 200,000 years since the Blue Spring dwarf galaxias was last in contact with other family members.

So it seems our very own Blue Spring galaxias is unique, distinctive and as special as Te Puna (Blue Spring) itself.

Certainly both taongas (treasures) are deserving of our protection.

*The full article can be found in the Winter 2018 issue of Forest and Bird magazine.*

## SH1 Tokoroa Lane Changes - North & South Lanes Now Single Laned

These changes were made to make access to and from Tokoroa town centre safer and easier by adding longer turning bays and longer merging areas. Having one lane will also help to calm traffic through the town.

The images alongside show what the new layout looks like.

The highlighted blue lane is the south lane

The highlighted pink lane is the north lane

**Remember to drive with care while getting used to the new layout.**

SH1 Main Road Tokoroa is due to undergo major repair works which includes resealing during the summer and we are repainting the lines now to determine the best layout for the lanes once this work is done. The one-laning has primarily been done for safety reasons.

Please note that the coloured lanes in this image are for illustrative purposes only to highlight the new layout of the lanes.



# WHAT'S HOT



↑ Gateway students from Forest View High School, Putāruru College and Tokoroa High School spent a day with the Tokoroa Police. The group was taken on a tour of the station, conducted reasoning tests, physical tests and attended traffic stops... all in day's work for these students. Many thanks to Tokoroa Police, Tokoroa Blue Light, along with Council for making this day happen.

Micro-filtration and UV treatment successfully installed at the Glenshea water supply; improved protection for our community.

The capital programme for footpaths is complete.

Modular housing and how suitable the South Waikato is for business development in this area.

Antenno - currently has 627 installs with 1,070 places; and 24 people have used the app to notify Council of issues.

Sign off of the Putāruru Concept Plan. This Plan outlines the future of Putaruru following extensive community engagement.

Julie Thomas's success with the Horowitz book trilogy.

New exercise equipment in Tirau.

Matariki planting at Mason's Reserve with our friends from Raukawa. Great opportunity to celebrate our continued collaboration, relationships, improving plantings in our public reserves and celebrating Matariki.

Civil Defence training for Council staff to help prepare our district for emergencies... that we hope we don't ever have!

Collaborative discussions with other local councils in Waikato catchment regarding the Healthy Rivers Plan Change 1.



↑ The District wide LED replacement is close to completion. This includes over 2,000 lamps having been replaced.

→ School holiday library programmes. Recycling was the key message and the kids had a ball making fish and owls from plastics and other materials. What is impressive is just how much our kids know and understand about recycling and how conscious they are about plastics. They really are the future!



# WHAT'S NOT



On-going wet weather that is creating issues for the maintenance contractor repairing potholes in our roads. Drive with care.

↑ Plastics are not hot... at the side of the road, in our rivers and lakes, in our oceans...they're not hot at Croad Place... they're not hot anywhere!



## IN brief continued...

- The Tirau Community Board (TCB) has approved a prioritised programme of work for the Tirau Domain and this year's activities are now being scheduled.
- Council expects to sign the Partnership Agreement with the new Regional Economic Development Agency (REDA). At this stage it appears all Councils within the Waikato Region will agree to be part of REDA which was formally established on 1 July.
- The recycling education campaign is in full swing. There has been great engagement and it is a hot topic on social media. Brilliant engagement from the children at the library programme - they know more than Mums and Dads! They truly are the future.
- A number of large business case project meetings have been held over recent months. Some of these proposals would potentially generate relatively significant employment. Many are currently under confidentiality agreements due to reasons such as commercial sensitivity. But Council will keep our community posted as and when we can.

## IN the know

You can keep up to date with Council information via:  
[www.southwaikato.govt.nz](http://www.southwaikato.govt.nz)  
[www.facebook/SouthWaikatoDistrictCouncil](http://www.facebook.com/SouthWaikatoDistrictCouncil)  
[@SouthWaikatoDC](https://twitter.com/SouthWaikatoDC)  
[info@southwaikato.govt.nz](mailto:info@southwaikato.govt.nz)

## IN view

If you would like to receive this newsletter in electronic format please email [kerry.fabrie@southwaikato.govt.nz](mailto:kerry.fabrie@southwaikato.govt.nz).

## Councillor Column Marin Glucina

Tokoroa, Putāruru and Tirau are South Waikato District towns which front State Highway One and as such are visible to all traffic on that road.

One of the priorities of this Council has been to tidy up our image and make the South Waikato an attractive place to stop and enjoy.

Recent progress is being made with Tokoroa having a new Skateboard Park, a Leith Place CBD re-development that tie in nicely to the beautifully refurbished Raukawa headquarters.

Soon there will be a new building on the old RSA site which will also make a statement about the South Waikato community and its importance to the wider district.

For Putāruru, Council has adopted a development plan which will ensure that Putāruru co-ordinates development on the main highway as much as possible to ensure it will be welcoming and attractive to visitors.

Tirau and Arapuni are already very attractive spots for tourists to stop and work is continuing to develop the amenities in these towns.

Overall the South Waikato has gone through years of neglect and now benefits from the rural revival. Council will use all of its best endeavours to promote, develop and improve the South Waikato District.

## Councillor Column Gray Baldwin

Well I've just survived my first Long Term Plan (LTP) process as a councillor. To help readers understand how it felt, I thought I'd compare it to running a church.

At the top is God. This represents Central Government in Wellington who prescribe every aspect of how the LTP must be done in the Local Government Act. No room for innovation or thinking outside the box. Then they make you pay an independent auditor to check that you have done it exactly as they said.

Then there's the cardinal (the mayor) and bishops (ordinary councillors like me) who are carefully watching over the process and walking a tightrope to avoid too much political heat. If you put too much money in the LTP for district services, the rates rise will be too big and you will have a riot. If you don't put enough money in, there will be potholes in the road and the lawns won't get mowed regularly enough and you'll cop the blame for that.

Then there's the vicars and the priests. This represents council staff who do all the work. Lots of well thought out projects that could be funded to improve the district. Councillors listen to staff and then make the call about what's in and what's out.

Finally there's the parishioners who put the money in the plate at church, for LTP that's the ratepayers. They have the chance to be consulted on the LTP, but a bit like church, not many people show up these days. But I was surely impressed with our small towns Arapuni and Tirau that had excellent representation at our consultation meetings.

So our LTP has now been adopted and on balance, I think we got it about right. And in three years time, we can do it all over again..!

## Mayor Jenny Shattock

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## Tokoroa

### Wendy Cook

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