Is our Engagement Engaging?

One of the focus areas for Council over the coming years is to improve our engagement with our community. Councillors and staff are beginning work on an improved engagement framework that will focus on tailoring engagement to the particular issue, level of participation and affected audience.

Community Concept Plans for each town is a priority work area. Pride in Putāruru and Putāruru Moving Forward drove the very successful Putāruru Concept Plan with support from Council. This plan is bedding down and significant progress is being made with the concept planning for growth planning, business development, the Water Park and Kensington Street area.

Our Strategic Planning team is now working on Concept Plans for our other towns in collaboration with individuals. business organisations and the community board.

We want to move away from public meetings to more regular, more frequent conversations with different sectors in the community.

Council believes that good community engagement works best where it is an ongoing cumulative process enabling relationships and trust to build and strengthen over time.

"We already have strong relationships with some sectors and some individuals," said Ben Smit, Council's Chief Executive. "The success of projects delivered when we work together proves that these engaging relationships are the way to go."

We have already started down the road of improved engagement by extending submission and formal consultation time frames. engagement sessions with community and business groups, exploring opportunities for partnerships, the half hour Open Public forum sessions, Meet the Mayor sessions in Putāruru, and at Neighbourhood Parties and other events.

"We're looking for further input from our community as to how Council can further enhance engagement with different groups in our district," continued Ben. "We don't have all the answers as to how this can be best achieved, but you might!"

If you have an idea let us know:

- Call Council on 885 0340 ask for Kiri Diamond.
- Contact the Mayor or your Councillor (contact details on the back page).
- · Email us at info@southwaikato. govt.nz.
- · Facebook message us at www.facebook.com/ SouthWaikatoDistrictCouncil.
- Report to us via Antenno (download free from Google Play or the App Store).

We'd love to hear your ideas.

Annual Plan 2019-20

At the time of writing, the 2019-20 Annual Plan is not substantively different to what was resolved during the Long Term Plan 2018-21 process, so it is unlikely that Council will be doing formal consultation on this document.

We are however delaying adopting the Plan until late May/early June to allow time for conversations with our community to occur about what is in the Plan, what the focus is and seek more informal feedback on it.



By adopting later in the year we have time to change the plan in case something important crops up or if a significant issue or idea is raised by the community.

ENGAGEMENT WITH OUR COMMUNITY IS A JOURNEY AND IT'S A TRIP WE CAN'T TAKE ALONE!

- Downer has completed a footpath condition assessment and developed a priority works programme.
- The summer district wide road line remarking is complete.
- Antenno is now installed on 785 devices in our community. If you haven't installed it yet, please do. It's free and can be downloaded from Google Play or the App Store.
- Whakamaru Reserve remains closed, expected opening is April.

- Summer Reading - What's Hot

- Illegal dumping - New look for website

Garden waste - Emergency alert

- Councillor Columns - Councillor contacts

Produced in-house for the South Waikato community by the SWDC Communications Team.

Editorial: Kerry Fabrie, Renee Renata and Anthony Momoemausu, 07 885 0340

Print: GASP Designs



Summer Reading programme

South Waikato District libraries celebrates another successful Summer Reading programme, sponsored by the Tokoroa Lions Club. This free programme involves a range of library related activities aimed at children, who must complete each activity and report into Tokoroa or the Putāruru library for sign off. It has been so popular and successful that it's been going for over 20 years.

Desire Morunga, Community Services Librarian said over 500 extra books were read and checked out across the district during the duration of the Summer Reading programme. Tokoroa had an 88% completion rate, with Putāruru at 75%, highlighting the success of the programme.

The main highlight of the programme was the prize giving, with over 60 children aged from 3 to 13 years attending the ceremony at the Tokoroa Library.

Tokoroa Councillor Arama Ngapo-Lipscombe along with representatives from the Tokoroa Lions Club presented each child who completed the programme with a certificate, medal, book and a range of healthy snacks.

Rutendo, aged 10 said this was her first time doing the Summer Reading programme and she wants to do it again. Mum, Rachael said her daughter enjoyed the programme so much she wanted to check out more books straight after the prize giving.

A special thank you to the Tokoroa Lions club for their generous book donations and support over the years.

Arama said these programmes are really important to our community.

"I encourage everyone young and old to get involved. Our district is lucky to have such passionate people who deliver these programmes year after year."

For more information about the next holiday programme pop in and visit your local library.







Meet the Mayor

Want a meeting with the Mayor, but can't get to Tokoroa?

Don't forget about the Meet the Mayor sessions at the Putāruru office on the fourth Wednesday of each month from 10am to 11am. This is a great opportunity for people in our northern wards to have a chat with the Mayor. "I introduced the sessions in June last year so that people in the northern towns in our district had the opportunity for a chat without having to come all the way to Tokoroa," said Mayor Jenny. "The sessions started slowly but I am now meeting with between four and six people per session. The ideas and concerns raised are taken

on board and if necessary fed through to Council and staff for action.

"People have raised a variety of topics such as littering, tidiness of the town, road safety issues and general matters of economic development for the town. I look forward to more people popping in for a chat."



- ↑ New surface for the Tirau Pools is looking fantastic. The pool opened on Saturday 12 January, attracting 80 swimmers keen for a cooling dip on day one and a total of 355 visits to date.
- ◆ The Putāruru seasonal Pools opened on Saturday 17 November last year and the free opening day saw 253 people enjoying a dip. These seasonal pools are a popular favourite for young and old over the hot summer months. Since the pools opened, close to 5,000 people have made a splash.







↑ Check out this image of the old Tokoroa Town Pools at the Memorial Sports ground we found on the internet! Who remembers swimming here?



→ Big thank you from our Compliance Manager Kerry Beckett and her team for the generous Christmas donations for our pound pooches. Lee Jacobi and a team of year 10 students from Tokoroa High School and the McFadyen family both donated heaps of toys and treats to Council's Animal Control team for the dogs that were cared for in the pound over Christmas. Nice one!



Dumping at waste facilities escalates

Dumping at the Tīrau recycling station, Putāruru Transfer Station and the Tokoroa landfill is becoming a significant issue and an additional cost to ratepayers.

Council has ordered new security cameras which will be delivered and installed in the coming weeks. These new cameras are far superior to the previous ones. Council staff are focussed on reducing this type of behaviour and will be investigating and following up on material dumped.

We are keen to hear from others in our community if you see people dumping at these facilities. Without compromising your safety, vehicle registrations are a good place to start. Incidents like this have been reported to Council previously and we're pleased to let readers know that we are following these up and appropriate action is being taken.

Bags are examined for identifiable material – not a pleasant task might we add!

No dumping

of rubbish!

\$400 fines

Sadly, it is likely that local people are doing this dumping. These people and their bad behaviour cause negative impressions and an unpleasant environment for other users.

Council does not believe that landfill charges are the issue; it currently costs just \$1.56 per kilogram of waste. Unfortunately, this illegal dumping is one of the factors driving an increase in landfill charges kicking in on 1 March this year (increasing to \$2.49 per kilogram). Some may be concerned at this, however, we note that for a single cup of coffee you can get rid of two to three kilograms of waste. It's a pretty good deal really!

Council is well aware that this behaviour frustrates many people in our community. The state of these facilities is often reported to Council via phone, website, email and social media. It frustrates us no end too!

"Probably the most frustrating behaviour is people who dump the official green Council bags at these sites," said Gordon Naidoo, Council's Infrastructure and Maintenance Manager. "Please leave these bags on the footpath on your rubbish collection day. Or if you do want to drop them off at the landfill or transfer station please do so during our opening hours. There is no charge for green bags direct into the dump."

We wanted to say a big thank you to the many people in our community who use these waste facilities responsibly. Managing our waste is the responsibility of every person in our community, every ratepayer and every landfill user – we know the majority of people are responsible users.

We also want the community to come forward and raise any issues they do experience when disposing of their waste so Council can address the problems and ensure that the community can use the facility correctly and safely.

To those who have reported incidents to us so that we can follow them up, another big thank you. Please be assured, your reports are taken seriously and we do follow them up.

Large scale dumping makes using these facilities unpleasant. Far below and below left is the Putāruru Transfer Station and below and below right were found at the Tirau Recycling Station. These dump sites are sifted through for identifying information



Waste facilities

Recycling stations at Kurunui School, Te Waotu School and the Putāruru Transfer Station are available 24/7. The recycling bins at the Tokoroa Landfill are only available during landfill operation hours. The Croad Place recycling centre is open weekdays 8am to 4pm and weekends and public holidays from 9a to 1pm. Just a reminder that these stations are for recycling only, not rubbish. And a second reminder that Plastics 3 - 7 are no longer recyclable; only 1s and 2s should be left at the recycling station.

The Tokoroa Landfill is open six days a week (closed Mondays). It is open 9am to 4pm Tuesday to Saturday; and 9am to 6pm on Sunday (Oct to March) and 9am to 5pm (April to Sep).

The Putāruru Transfer Station is open Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays, from 9am to 4pm.







New look for Council's website!

Council is pleased to announce that its website is set for a fresh new look.

"Council's website is managed by an external provider, along with a number of Councils across New Zealand," said Simon Lewis, Council's Information Services Manager. "Our Council is part of the consortium because it provides reduced costs and development advantages."

The new Council platform has been refreshed to reflect changing user requirements, and national and international trends.

Content from our old website has been migrated to the new test site; for review and testing.



Once this is complete, we will be pressing the Go Live button. We anticipate this to be mid-February; so around the time this issue of In Touch comes to you.

"For those in our community who are familiar with our website, just a heads up that it does look a little different," said Council's Communications Manager Kerry Fabrie.

"The top section has seven links to the most popular pages

identified by Google Analytics. The menu button (the three lines, top left) on the home screen mirrors the current website structure - Our Council, Our District and Our Services, so if you're really stuck heading there is a good place to start."

Our new website has a cleaner, fresher look and feel to it.

It will also include some improved features and functionality including better site search results and is much

easier for staff to author and maintain making updates that much quicker and easier.

Currently our online services are hosted by another website, but with our new format, this feature can be embedded in the site.

With an increasing number of users accessing Council's website on a variety of devices, this new website seamlessly formats correctly to varying digital devices, from laptops to tablets and mobiles.

GO LIVE expected mid-February!

Adopt a dog success

The Animal Control team face many challenges and finding homes for dogs is one of them.

Up to 50 dogs are re-homed a year and for former South Waikato resident Sally Fraser, the Adopt a Dog programme ticked all the right boxes.

Sally explained she had worked for the SPCA previously and was aware of the fact that many dogs needed a home. She had been wanting to adopt an adult dog but waited for the appropriate time.

The process was simple where Sally had emailed the Animal Control team at Council

detailing her lifestyle and what kind of dog would best suit her.

After meeting with the team and arranging to meet and have a weekend trial with the dog whom she named Kelly, Mrs Fraser said, "As I was driving away, I knew I would keep her."

A year since Sally adopted Kelly she's noticed her confidence grow. From being timid and shy, she has much more confidence for different situations and seeing her more relaxed is the best thing.

Sally, who now lives in Raglan had a few tips for those considering adopting a dog.

"Take the time to have an honest think about what dog would suit you and your lifestyle, like how much exercise can you offer? And stick to that, because if you do, it will be a great match."

"You do have to be patient, and wait, to find the perfect pooch for you at the pound. They will love you for choosing them."

For further information about the adopt a dog programme head to the Council website and search for the Animal Control page.



Kelly a year on and looking like she is loving life thanks to the Adopt a dog programme.



Dry it. Stack it. Cover it. How to stack firewood correctly

Split the wood and open stack it in a crisscross pattern for maximum air circulation.

Ventilation and warmth are more important than cover.

Cover the top but not the whole pile.

Keep seasoned but rain wet wood inside to dry out for

a couple of days before burning.

Buy or gather more wood than you think you will need - you can always use it next year!

Burning wet wood is expensive, bad for your burner and bad for our health.

Your Legal Rights Series: Trees, fences & neighbours



Disputes over trees and fences are a common cause of hard feelings between neighbours; trees that block your sun, roots that choke your drains, fences that your neighbours want built or replaced - often at considerable expense. Your differences can usually be settled through open communication, compromise and tact, but if you are forced into a stand-off, legal action may be your only way forward. This could cost you hundreds of thousands of dollars and will most likely destroy neighbourly goodwill. In this series of articles we explain where you stand if a neighbour's tree(s) or fence(s) are causing trouble.

TREES

The Property Law Act 2007 allows property owners who are affected by any nuisance or damage caused by trees or illegal structures in their neighbourhood to apply to the Courts for an appropriate remedy. The process for applying to the Court, and matters the Court should take into account are set out in sections 333 to 338 of the Property Law Act 2007.

But decide first whether the nuisance is worth the risk of souring relationships between you and your neighbour. You need to decide as well whether the problem outweighs the benefits the trees give you both, such as beauty, privacy, shelter and shade.

Try to work out a solution tactfully. Give your neighbours time to think about what you are suggesting. They may be quite happy to help you with any work caused by their trees if it means keeping them. It's better to talk over the fence than in a court room.

If you reach an impasse, you may need to take legal action. If

you do, tell your neighbour. How would you feel if you received a court order in the name of your neighbour without warning? Your neighbour may cooperate if there is a legal obligation to do so.

ROOTS

Example: A Willow tree's roots on a neighbour's property continually block your drains. Twice in the past 18 months you have had to get a plumber in to clear them. They warn you that this will be a regular exercise, and expense, unless the cause of the problem is completely removed. Even worse, it could eventually cost you new drains. You approach your neighbour about having the tree removed. He indignantly points out that the tree was well established on his property long before you bought the one next door, and he has no intention of removing his tree for you and your drains. Have you any comeback?

Yes. The law does not accept that a tree planted 30 years ago cannot be a 'nuisance' today. If all the facts in this situation were presented in court the neighbour would probably be ordered to remove the tree.

Don't Waste Your Garden Waste

It's reported that 2.12 billion tons of waste are dumped globally every year, and 18% of the waste dumped in landfills is garden waste. Garden waste, whether it's old branches and leaves or soil and grass, has to go somewhere. Even though there are now many recycling initiatives and facilities, you can also be effective with your waste at home to ensure that you are deposing of it safely and helping the environment.

BUILD A COMPOST BIN Building your own at-home compost kit is a great way to manage garden waste and turn it into fodder for the garden. Ideally, you'll want to keep it away from the house in an area with efficient drainage. You also want to build it on soil, not concrete. As you stock it with garden waste and organic kitchen waste too, the decomposition process will occur. The result over time will be a rich material that's dark in colour and can be used to help your plants thrive. Woody stems have a high carbon content and can take time to decompose, so you can build a separate compost bin or shred them before you add them.



More Kiwis get emergency message

Almost twice as many people received the test Civil Defence emergency alert to their mobile phone at its last test in November last year. This means that more New Zealanders than ever are capable of getting a heads-up in an emergency.

Six out of 10 Kiwis (60%) received the test alert, a significant increase on last year's first mobile alert test of 34%.

New Zealanders can take comfort in how quickly the system has consolidated itself as a critical alerting channel. Emergency Mobile Alerts can now be received by most mobile phones sold in New Zealand, including models costing as little as \$29. This means more Kiwis can be warned via their phone about potentially life-threatening emergencies.

Word of mouth is vital in spreading the warning.

"If you're one of the people who receives a warning, please don't assume those around you know about it," said Stuart Aston,

Emergency Manager. "Pass on the information you have received in your alert message. Especially remember your family and anyone you know who may not yet receive these messages."

Other emergency information channels – such as radio, TV, online and social media – mean New Zealand has robust arrangements for informing people about emergencies.

"Whether by traditional means or the new mobile alert system, the more people who can receive warnings, the safer we all are," continued Stuart.

The Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management is working with manufacturers and vendors to address some of the issues with how different handsets behave.

Shout out to 2degrees, Spark and Vodafone, who partnered with the Government to deliver the project. Without them throwing their weight behind this system, we wouldn't be seeing such strong pickup.



About Emergency Alerts

The Emergency Mobile Alert is an additional channel to help keep New Zealand safe in an emergency and does not replace other alerting systems and information channels, or the need to take action after natural warnings.

If you feel your life may be in danger, don't wait for an official warning. Take immediate action.

Volcanic eruptions for example could give no warning and there may not be time to send an alert before the first effects like ashfall, hot gasses and other hazards. Recognise the natural warnings and get safe – don't wait for an alert!

Emergency Mobile Alert messages can only be sent by the Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management, Civil Defence Emergency Management Groups, NZ Police, Fire and Emergency New Zealand, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry for Primary Industries.



Get your Emergency Alert... anytime, anywhere!

Elections... coming this year

Elections for local authorities are held once every three years, on the second Saturday in October. The next elections for our local Council are coming up this year on 12 October 2019.

Elections will be held for city councils, district councils and regional councils; as well as district health boards, and community boards.

For our community, the elections are for South Waikato District Council, Tirau Community Board, Waikato Regional Council and Waikato District Health Board.

Some key dates are below:

19 July

Candidate nominations open

16 August

Nominations close at 12 noon

Electoral role closes – after this date, anyone who is entitled to vote and who is not enrolled, or whose details are not correct, will have to cast a 'special vote'.

21 August

Election date and candidates' names are publicised by Electoral Officers

20-25 September

Voting documents are delivered to households. Voters can post the documents back to the Electoral Officer as soon as they have voted.

Saturday 13 October

Polling day - the voting documents must be at the Council before voting closes at 12 noon. Preliminary results (ie once all 'ordinary' votes are counted) will be available as soon as possible afterwards.

17-23 October

Official results (including all valid ordinary and special votes) declared.

Not on the electoral role? Want to check your electoral details?

Visit www.elections.org.nz/voters/enrol-check-or-update-now.

If you want to vote and you're not on the roll, now's the time to sort that!



The Fleetwoods – Saturday 16 February, 8pm. Tickets \$35 from Wolf Event Management. NZ's #1 Fleetwood Mac Tribute Show LIVE on stage. High intensity sets and all the hits!

Michelle A'Court & Jeremy Elwood **On the Road** – Sunday 24 February, 7:30pm. Tickets \$20 from The Plaza and Eventfinda. Two of our premier stand-up comics.

Group and Loyalty discounts for our 2019 Arts on Tour Season - enquire at The Plaza.

The Melbourne Ballet -

Alice in Wonderland Youth Workshop- Sunday 31 March, 3pm (for ages 8-12) and 4pm (for ages 13-18). A chance for young artists to work alongside Melbourne City Ballet's performing artists in their production of "Alice In Wonderland". Limited spaces.

The Melbourne Ballet – Alice in Wonderland – Sunday 31 March, 7:30pm. The enchanting performance tells the classic Lewis Carroll tale of Alice and her adventures with the White Rabbit, Queen of Hearts and the Mad Hatter.



Councillor Column Thomas Lee

Season's Greetings and Happy New Year to everyone. This summer so far has turned out to be a cracker, and the pools in the district have been well patronised, even though Tirau pool had a later than expected opening date. With the unfortunate closure of Whakamaru Reserve this holiday period (because of dangerous trees) the other reserves on the river have been a little busier than normal.

It's been great to see the large numbers of young people using the new Skate Park every day and families also using the neighbouring Youth Park while entertaining younger ones.

With the property valuations out now, it's time to reflect on the consequence/benefits of such a large upward swing in urban and lifestyle property values. As our rates are based on our capital value, with such a big increase of our valuations our rates increase as well. Couple this with the growth phase that the district is going through and needs to fund we are looking at a larger than usual rates increase. Council and staff have been working hard to limit the rate increase and will continue to do so during this Annual Plan stage.

That's the consequence; the benefit is the growth in the value of our major asset. This should help us borrow more money from the banks if required, or if you are thinking of selling this should return us a better price. Plus with a recent Stuff article about the shortage of available housing stock for sale in the South Waikato District we should get a very good return. The down side will be finding another house to purchase.

IN the know

You can keep up to date with Council information via: www.southwaikato.govt.nz www.facebook/ SouthWaikatoDistrictCouncil Download Antenno FREE info@southwaikato.govt.nz

Councillor Column Gray Baldwin

Time has flown and we're back into Council elections this year. I'll be pulling up stumps this year and moving on so an opportunity is there for candidates from Putāruru to have a go at Local Government. I've enjoyed my involvement at SWDC. Progress at our River Trails, clean financial audits (I'm the Audit Chair at Council) and transition to a new CEO have been highlights.

I stood for Council on a ticket of "business development, more jobs and economic growth". There's still a lot of work to do to achieve this. Job creating projects that started before the current Council was elected such as Putāruru Growth Plan and the Tirau walkway are delayed. Leith Place construction after years of planning and significant sunk costs has been cancelled.

I've heard it said with pride around our Council that we have the 'fifth lowest rates take of all 67 Councils in NZ'. That was a good strategy when we were a rural backwater and population was declining in the 1990s. But it isn't now. In the business world you need to spend money to make money. We need to change our approach as the big cities to our immediate North and East are booming. We need to decide if we want to participate or not.

So now I'll pull my head in and my finger out for the remaining nine months of Council. I'll attend meetings, make the best contribution I can for the stipend I'm paid. Thanks to all who've supported me in elections, I wish all aspiring candidates fair and robust election debates and hope a strong, growth focussed Council will be elected. Ma te wa.

iN view

If you would like to receive this newsletter in electronic format please email kerry.fabrie@ southwaikato.govt.nz.

Councillor Column Adrienne Bell

Welcome to the first edition of In Touch for 2019! I hope you have all had a good break over the holiday period – or, for those of you who have worked through, I hope you have a good break to look forward to!

While a new year brings new beginnings there are some issues from previous years that remain unresolved. Disposal of our solid waste and wastewater are the 'big ticket' items and involve working to comply with new environmental standards while trying to keep rates increases affordable. Council is all too aware that housing costs have almost doubled over the last 20 years while incomes have remained relatively static.

It's reassuring to see that communities are taking preventative steps which will significantly reduce the cost of cleaning up our environment. People are realising that 'cheap' is not cheap in the long run and are turning away from consumerism and 'disposable' products that are clogging up our landfills. Retailers are aware of the trend and many are now offering interestfree three-month terms in order that consumers can buy long lasting quality without having to waste precious spending money on outrageous interest payments to bank credit card companies.

And while farmers are busy reducing the amount of nitrogen they discharge to waterways the rest of us are starting to reduce the amount of phosphorous we discharge to waterways by making the move to organic, phosphorous-free shampoos, detergents and washing powders.

Great to see! Take care all!

Mayor Jenny Shattock Phone: 0274 416 230 Email: jenny.shattock @southwaikato.govt.nz



Tokoroa Wendy Cook Phone: 021 719 093 Email: wendy.berylin cook@gmail.com



Jeff Gash Phone: 021 974 327 Email: jeff.gash @outlook.com



Marin Glucina Phone: 021 284 3214 Email: glu-@hotmail.com



Thomas Lee Phone: 027 332 1292 Email: lee.whanautk @gmail.com



Bill Machen Phone: 027 471 5899 Email: lilyandbill @xtra.co.nz



Arama Ngapo-Lipscombe Phone: 0275 339 988 Email: arama @nll.co.nz



Putāruru Gray Baldwin Phone: 027 239 0497 Email: baldwin @xtra.co.nz



Adrienne Bell Phone: 027 471 2404 Email: adriennejb @yahoo.co.nz



Herman van Rooijen Phone: 027 246 6601 Email: vanrooijen @xtra.co.nz



Tirau Peter SchultePhone: 021 434 933

Email: peter@

otobahncoffee.com

