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What's the plan for the coming year?

We have locked in our work programme, costs and income for the coming year after adopting the 2016/17 Annual Plan at the Council meeting of 30 March.

The process of setting our plan is a little different this year due to changes central government made to the law towards the end of 2014 relating to annual plans. In previous years, we would invite feedback from the public on a draft annual plan before we finalised it. The law has now changed so that we only request public feedback when major changes to our 2015-25 Long Term Plan (LTP) are being proposed. The government's intent with this change is to save local councils (and therefore their ratepayers) time and money by not having to ask for feedback on issues that have already been decided when preparing our major planning document, the Long Term Plan (LTP). Our current LTP covers the 10 year period from 2015-2025 and is available on our website - www.hauraki-dc.govt.nz.

This year we've reviewed our 2016/17 programme to check we are still on track. We've made few changes as a result but we haven't changed the services you receive from us.

When we reviewed our programme we scrutinised any new spending, and prioritised budgets to make way for projects that we believe give the most value to the public. We have delayed some projects that are not yet needed, and we are bringing forward other projects that are required earlier than we originally thought.

When looking at our financial position for the coming year we have made a determined effort to keep costs down, reducing budgets where we can to minimise the rates impact. We're continuing to keep our rates and debt levels well below the limits we set in our financial strategy.

We're pleased to report that we have managed to reduce the general rate rise we had signalled in the 2015-25 Hauraki Long Term Plan, from a 4.01% increase to a 2.95% increase. In our Long Term Plan we also signalled a water rate increase of 2.0%, and we have been able to reduce this forecast figure and keep water rates at the same level as 2015/16 – no increase!

We have kept these predicted water rates level without compromising the services we deliver. In 2016/17 our investment in infrastructure will be focussed on increasing treated water storage in the Plains area and ongoing consolidation of water supply schemes by 2018.

The major capital works focus for the year will be on the following projects:

- increasing reticulated treated water storage on the Plains
- connecting the Kaimanawa water supply with the Plains or Paeroa
- completing a number of upgrades to our water and wastewater assets to keep them running well
- expanding the Pukerimu cemetery in Paeroa to provide more capacity
- constructing a new library in Paeroa
- building new public toilets in Kaiawa
- redeveloping our Morgan Park sports grounds in Waihi.



In addition to the projects rated for in our Annual Plan, from 1 July 2016 there will be a change to the property values we rate against over the whole district. All properties were re-valued at 1 July 2015 by Quotable Value, our independent valuation provider, and these valuations are used to apply rates for the coming year. These revaluations will have different effects on each type of property in the district.

Our 2016/17 Annual Plan comes into effect 1 July 2016 and is available to download on our website or in hard copy from any service centre.

If you have any queries on the annual plan please contact us. We welcome your feedback on all Council issues at any time during the year.

Don't ditch your rubbish!

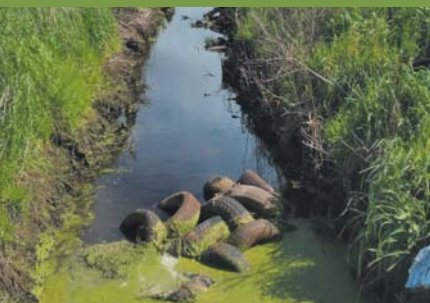
It's a big job for the Council to keep our 650 km of land drains in the best possible condition for everything to flow smoothly in winter. We set to work weed spraying along the banks in summer; then get stuck in with excavator cleaning to prevent the waterways becoming clogged.

However our best efforts can be frustrated if people dump grass clippings or any other rubbish in or near a drain. In the past we've found everything from garden refuse to mattresses and broken down washing machines quite literally ditched. Often this happens during dry periods when the drains aren't doing much in the way of drainage – only to create a pile-up of rubble and a potential flood risk when the rains come.

While a bit of greenwaste can seem innocuous or a few tyres from silage covers inconsequential, they can block pump inlets and cause floodgates to leak or jam open. Floating debris can get caught in the pumps, resulting in damage or failure.

So if you're having a clear-out, please help us by disposing of rubbish responsibly. If you're moving house, or moving farm at the end of this dairy season, plan ahead to make it a clean getaway for everyone!

It's also important to keep access to drains free of buildings, fences, vegetation and stored materials. The Council's drainage bylaw requires a minimum clear distance of 15 m from the top edge of open drains, to allow access for maintenance staff, contractors and machines.



Sinkhole stresses the need to move

The recently discovered sinkhole that re-emerged on the Waihi Netball Centre's No. 1 court within days of being filled is being monitored daily, but no further slumping has occurred since the Council filled the "second" hole.

Parks and Reserves Manager Steve Clark says the original hole of about 1.5 m diameter and 1.5 m depth, found on 21 March, was filled on 23 March with compounded rock material. But in the wake of substantial rainfall during the week, a larger hole developed in exactly the same spot, at the edge of the court by the main gate. This time it measured about 6 m long, 5.5 m wide and 4.5 m deep.

"All the fill we put in had completely vanished," says Steve. The hole also swallowed part of the fence, leaving the pole on which the main gate swung "hanging in mid-air".

The hole has been filled and the court fenced off, and we've shifted the gate to the back of the playground. As well as monitoring the site daily, we're monitoring the rest of the courts – where it's planned that play will continue for a final winter season.

It's the fourth time a sinkhole has appeared in the netball court area: an issue not believed to be attributable to historic or modern mining operations. The last two holes have appeared quite quickly during or shortly after heavy rain, notes Steve.

He says the ongoing instability problem emphasises the necessity of a Waihi Recreation and Community Centre project to relocate the courts and pavilion to the south side of Morgan Park, bordering Baker Street.

Tenders for the work were called in January, with a view to the facilities being re-sited before winter. However no complying proposals were received – with potential contractors indicating that prior commitments prevented them undertaking the project in the specified time frame. So it's planned to re-tender the project in May, for construction in spring this year.



Cenotaph with a difference comes to Ngatea

Do you live in the Hauraki Plains ward and have a personal, family or research connection with the New Zealand Defence Force? Until 6 May, visitors to the Ngatea Library can check out the He Pou Aroha Online Community Cenotaph, using one of the cenotaph's mobile kiosks that's on loan from the Auckland War Memorial Museum.

The unit allows family members and researchers to look up information on any New Zealand servicemen and women, to contribute information to their stories, and scan documents and pictures into the database for others to see. It can even create on-the-spot digital images of war-related memorabilia you may have, such as medals, pay books, or pieces of uniform. People can also lay a virtual poppy against an individual's name as a tribute; or apply to have veterans added to the digital roll of honour if they haven't yet been included.

The kiosk is easy to use, and library staff are happy to help as needed, as they have in the Paeroa and Waihi libraries where the unit has recently been hosted. Paeroa librarian Lesley Young encourages locals to make the most of the opportunity. "It's not often there's a facility like this at the Ngatea Library." Anyone is welcome to come and look up or contribute information – you don't need to be a library member. *More information can be found on <http://www100.govt.nz/he-pou-aroha-community-cenotaph>.*

Photo: Leonard Fletcher Mouldley, a Kopurahi farmer who served with the New Zealand Engineers Tunnelling Company during the First World War, is among Hauraki Plains residents honoured on the Online Community Cenotaph.

PUBLIC NOTICES

2016/17 ANNUAL PLAN

Pursuant to section 95 of the Local Government Act 2002, notice is given that the Hauraki District Council's 2016/17 Annual Plan was adopted at the Ordinary Council meeting of 30 March 2016 and will come into effect from 1 July 2016.

The adopted Annual Plan is available to download from the Council's website www.hauraki-dc.govt.nz or you can request a copy of the Plan by calling the Council on 07 862 8609 or 0800 734 834 (from within the District).

Minor amendment to HAURAKI DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSOLIDATED BYLAW

Pursuant to section 156(2) of the Local Government Act 2002 the Hauraki District Council has made minor amendments to the wording of the liquor ban bylaw in Waihi found in Schedule 4 of Part 3: Public Safety of the Hauraki District Council Consolidated Bylaw.

The minor amendments have been made as a result of the Waihi street name changes and are deemed minor in nature because they do not affect an existing right, interest, title, immunity, or duty of any person to whom the bylaw applies; or an existing status or capacity of any person to whom the bylaw applies.

You can view the Consolidated Bylaw on the Council's website www.hauraki-dc.govt.nz or a copy can be obtained from the Council offices and libraries, or by contacting the Council on 07 862 8609 or 0800 734 834 (from within the District).

CANCELLATION OF MEETING

Pursuant to Section 46 of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, public notice is hereby given that the Plains Ward Committee meeting scheduled to be held on Tuesday, 12 April was cancelled.

LD Cavers
 Chief Executive
 Hauraki District Council

SITUATION VACANT

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

If you have a positive can-do attitude and attributes that reflect our values of respect, communication and commitment, then we would love to hear from you.

This newly created position of Communications Officer will be a varied and interesting role. You will be responsible for providing communication and marketing advice to Council and staff as well as Council community engagement. You will need to be proactive in maintaining effective relationships with the media, writing articles and keeping social media channels up to date with relevant information. The role will also include reviewing the Communication Strategy and Policy Guidelines.

A tertiary qualification in Communications or Public Relations and 2-3 years practical experience in related field is essential. You will also need to be a skilled written and oral communicator who interacts effectively with a wide variety of people. A systematic approach to completing tasks and events with a high standard of professionalism and attention to detail will be important attributes.

To take this opportunity of enhancing your career apply electronically on www.hauraki-dc.govt.nz, or contact:

Sue Greenville on 07 862 5024, or
 Julie Sweeney on 07 862 5023

Applications close on 22 April 2016

At Hauraki District Council ... It's More than Just a Job!