

## NEWS FROM YOUR WAIKATO DISTRICT COUNCILLOR – 25 AUGUST 2019

Finally, a welcome break from the wet weather – a fine weekend at last; time to cut the lawn.

A lot has been happening in the Waikato District during the last month including: -



**A \$92m funding announcement for the start-up 150-passenger rail service** between Hamilton and Auckland – the culmination of an 18-month collaboration between multiple councils and government agencies.

Following on from the rail funding announcement, **NZ Transport Agency Board committed funding to implement the infrastructure** needed to roll out the rail service in June 2020. This means Waikato District Council can now begin upgrading the Huntly Railway Station. Huntly township will be bypassed when the Huntly Section of the Expressway is opened in 2020, so this project is well-timed to create work and future opportunities for Huntly.

**A contract between Waikato District Council (WDC) and Watercare Services Ltd** to deliver safe drinking water, wastewater and stormwater services to Waikato district from 1<sup>st</sup> October has been completed.

You can read more about this partnership on our [website https://www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/news/media-releases/article/2019/08/16/partnership-between-waikato-district-council-and-watercare-agreed](https://www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/news/media-releases/article/2019/08/16/partnership-between-waikato-district-council-and-watercare-agreed) The formal signing of the contract will take place on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> August at The Point, Ngaruawahia at 10am.

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Have you visited the **Sculpture Park at Waitakaruru Arboretum in Tauwhare**? From their website - *Situated at 207 Scotsman Valley Rd, the Park is a former quarry that has been transformed into a 17.5 hectare arboretum with more than 20,000 trees. The rehabilitation started in 1991, utilising the existing features: rocky outcrops, ponds, flowing water and broad vistas. Along the 2 km long nature trail you will discover more than 100 sculptures and installations within one of New Zealand's largest outdoor galleries.* Go on to their website at [www.sculpturepark.co.nz](http://www.sculpturepark.co.nz) to learn more about the park.

They will be open on Sundays from 1<sup>st</sup> September but will be celebrating spring by **being open every day from Friday 20<sup>th</sup> September to Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> September: 10am – 5pm daily**

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I represent Waikato District on the **Hauraki Gulf Forum** and last week I attended their quarterly meeting. Our Annual Report was released at this meeting. Our mission statement is - *to promote and facilitate integrated and coordinated management of the Gulf's environmental, cultural, economic and recreational resources.*

<https://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/about-auckland-council/how-auckland-council-works/harbour-forums/Documents/hauraki-gulf-forum-annual-report-2018.pdf>

27<sup>th</sup> February 2020 will mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Hauraki Gulf Park and around this date the Forum will release the 2020 *State of the Environment* and the 2020 Marine Park poster.

Supporting the management and action around the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park/ Tikapa Moana/ Te Moananui-ā-Toi is the *Hauraki Gulf Journal* - [gulfjournal.org.nz](http://gulfjournal.org.nz) Their latest newsletter includes mention of:

1. **BLAKE Ambassadors**

An opportunity for young New Zealanders (18 – 25 years) to work on projects in Antarctica, the Southern, Southwest Pacific and Atlantic Oceans and New Zealand through the BLAKE Ambassador Programme <https://blakenz.org/blake-ambassador-programme> **Applications close 31 August**

2. **Tikapa Moana / Hauraki Gulf Oceans Lab** – an innovation lab working to restore the environment and health of the [gulf www.thespiritlab.co/oceans-lab](http://www.thespiritlab.co/oceans-lab) Successful applicants get to spend four days on the water and on islands in the Gulf developing themselves and their ideas to improve the Gulf; learn about environmental issues the Gulf faces, hear from stakeholders across the ecosystem; learn indigenous based leadership and innovation methodologies with leading coaches and facilitators; connect and build a network with other passionate environmentalists; receive follow up support to develop and take forward a solution to improve the Gulf. **Applications close 6 September**

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Consultation opened in 21 August on the **WDC Cemeteries Bylaw** – this review is about amending the 2016 Bylaw that restricted the pre-purchasing of plots to only when a relative was to be buried. After public consultation we propose to amend this clause so that at any time up to two plots can be pre-purchased. **Submissions close at 5pm on 22 September 2019.** You can make a submission online at [waikatodistrict.govt.nz/cemeteriesbylaw](http://waikatodistrict.govt.nz/cemeteriesbylaw), or by emailing [consult@waidc.govt.nz](mailto:consult@waidc.govt.nz) or posting to Waikato District Council, Attn: Corporate Planner, Private Bag 544, Ngaruawahia 3742.

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The completion of the Hamilton Section of the **Expressway** is now scheduled for late 2021. On SH1 Tamahere, motorists have now been diverted onto new lanes under the East-West Link Bridge onto what will eventually be the Tamahere off ramp while work begins on constructing or reconstructing routes and links for the Expressway including shared paths for cyclists and walkers. In Eureka Ward, work is beginning on Powells Road, compacting embankments and removing peat from the road where a concrete underpass (a box culvert 5m high x 10m wide) will, in about 3-4 months, be constructed to allow the Expressway to cross over the road. The Powells Rd underpass will be the 17<sup>th</sup> and final bridge structure on the Hamilton Section.

**Contact me any time - Rob McGuire, Councillor Eureka Ward**

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