

Tamahere-Woodlands Councillors' update October 2022: Council sworn in

Thank you to everyone who voted in the Waikato District Council elections. Tamahere-Woodlands Ward led the District with a 32.3% turnout although, sadly, the overall turnout across the District was 27.8%, the lowest of the last three elections.

Mike Keir and I, Crystal Beavis, have now been sworn-in as Councillors for the Ward, which stretches from Tamahere to Gordonton, encompassing Matangi, Tauwhare, Newstead, Eureka, and Puketaha.

Your new Mayor and Deputy Mayor are Jacqui Church and Carolyn Eyre who will lead a team that includes nine women and five Maaori Councillors. Among them is Tilly Turner, Councillor for the new southern Maaori Ward, Tai Runga Takiwaa, which also covers the Tamahere-Woodlands area.

Your Waikato constituency representatives on the Waikato Regional Council are Noel Smith and Pamela Storey.

Mike and I want to thank our predecessors Rob McGuire and Aksel Bech who have already taken time to make us aware of local issues and to ensure an orderly handover.

We have enjoyed meeting people in the Ward at committee meetings and election meetings over the past weeks and look forward to meeting many more over the next three years as we work together with you on behalf of our communities.

It's great to see a gradual return to post-COVID normalcy across the Ward with our local schools able to hold their regular Spring Ag Days and Calf Days.

A special congratulations to St Stephen's Church, Tamahere, who have just celebrated 18 years of hosting and running the Tamahere Country Market – a very popular monthly event that attracts people from far afield to buy locally-made handcrafts and locally-grown produce.

Council business has continued through the election period and there are two consultations currently open for your feedback and submissions.

The General Policies Reserve Management Plan (RMP) is under review. The RMP covers the development, use and management of Waikato District reserves. Key changes in the new draft RMP include a new section on reserve values, updates to the reserve naming process and to the authorisation and approvals section (eg. leases and licences), and the inclusion of new technologies (eg. drones) in the "Use of Reserves" section. Consultation on the new draft RMP opened on 12 October and closes on 12 December.

The proposed Trade Waste and Wastewater Bylaw is also under review and has a submission closing date of Monday 21 November. A significant proposed change is to separate mortuary waste from the public wastewater system for disposal at an approved mortuary waste disposal site to align with tikanga Maaori (customary practice/values).

For more information on both these consultations, please go to the Waikato District Council website and click on "Have your say".

On roading matters, Waka Kotahi is reviewing options on the Holland Rd-Telephone Rd intersection on SH1B and the Council has a watching brief on developments. Pothole numbers have increased significantly across the country (not just in our District) as a result of New Zealand's wettest winter since 1971. So please ensure you report any potholes to the Council using the "Request a service" section on the Council website. If you have trouble accessing the internet, you can phone the Council on 0800 492 452 or contact the Tamahere office (email tamahere.counter@waidc.govt.nz or ph 0272684304).

At the time of writing, Waikato District Council is still awaiting further developments on three major Government reform programmes affecting local government – Three Waters reform, Resource Management reform, and the Review into the Future for Local Government on which a draft report is due to be released on 28 October for consultation until 28 February. Watch this space!

Thank you for electing us to represent you on the Waikato District Council. Mike and I honour that responsibility. We are committed to continuing the good work of Aksel Bech and Rob McGuire and to serving your interests in the Tamahere-Woodlands Ward and in the District at large.

Contact your Tamahere-Woodlands Councillors anytime:

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