

## **Tamahere-Woodlands Councillors' update May 2024: District news**

### **WDC Annual Plan hearings**

Thank you to all who made submission on the Council's draft 2024/25 Enhanced Annual Plan. You've told us to keep to essential spending and to keep rates down.

We received 227 submissions on the draft 2024/25 Enhanced Annual Plan and 50 submitters requested in-person hearings. The affordability of a 13.75% rate rise was a real concern for 149 submitters, but there was also dissatisfaction expressed with services being provided. A smaller number supported the proposed rates increase with comments that indicated an understanding of the reasons behind it and a desire not to further delay infrastructure maintenance and renewals.

Your Council will review and discuss these submissions when we deliberate on the Annual Plan from 4 to 6 June. The final plan is due to be adopted by the end of June and will come into effect on 1 July 2024.

This year we took advantage of central Government's one-off option to delay our 2024-34 Long Term Plan as part of the "Local Water Done Well" legislation and prepare an enhanced Annual Plan for the year ahead. This means we will consult with you again over the next year as we prepare a nine-year 2025-34 Long Term Plan for adoption next year.

### **QV revaluations delayed until early June**

The release of the latest rating revaluation data from QV for all Waikato district properties has been delayed as the Office of the Valuer-General has asked QV to do more work on our district valuations as part of an independent audit. This is outside WDC's control. We anticipate the new rating valuation data will be available from 5 June and ratepayers can expect to receive new rating valuation letters in the post starting from 12 June 2024. These will be used to calculate rates from 1 July. Property owners have 40 days to object to QV from the date of the valuation letter.

### **Maaori Wards**

Your Council unanimously endorsed the decision to introduce Maaori Wards during the 2021 Representation Review and issued a media release with its reasons earlier this month. The Council is strongly opposed to the Government's proposal to repeal legislation allowing the introduction of Maaori Wards without a binding poll, and is making a submission to the Select Committee along these lines now the Bill has been introduced. Reasons include recognising the voice of our Treaty partners, recognising local democracy, and the value that Maaori Wards have brought to our relationships with our Maaori communities and the ongoing work of Council. If passed into law, the requirements of the Bill will also add costs either to run a poll at the next election or make changes that will require another Representation Review.

The Waitangi Tribunal has recently issued a report saying the Government's plans to repeal the earlier legislation breaches the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi.

Waikato District Council currently has 11 General Ward Councillors and 2 Maaori Ward Councillors, elected in 2022. The Maaori Ward covering the southern half of our district, including Tamahere-Woodlands, is Tai Runga Takiwaa and the elected Councillor for that Ward is Tilly Turner.

### **Airport Rd weekday traffic restrictions for Fieldays 12-14 June**

To ease peak morning Fieldays traffic congestion on the weekdays of 12 – 14 June, Airport Rd will be closed to through-traffic heading east (away from Fieldays) from 7am until 10am, with restrictions finishing earlier if traffic conditions allow. The Expressway underpass at Tamahere will be closed to east-bound traffic from 6am-11am.

- Only local businesses or residents with recognised passes (available from Fieldays) can travel east on Airport Rd from Raynes Rd to the Waikato Expressway northern on-ramp, but there will be no right turn from Pencarrow Rd onto Airport Rd during this time.
- The Expressway underpass will be west-bound only from 6am-11am. East-bound traffic on Airport Rd will be unable to cross to Tauwhare Rd or the southern Expressway on-ramp.
- Traffic exiting Tamahere Dr can access the Waikato Expressway northern on-ramp, but an alternative route is recommended due to expected traffic congestion.
- Tamahere School says it will work with parents wishing to setup walking school buses as required.

*This information has been provided by Fieldays. For more info on traffic management go to 'Attend Fieldays' on the Fieldays website or email [info@nzfnfs.co.nz](mailto:info@nzfnfs.co.nz) .*

### **Temporary closure Waverley/Holland Rd rail crossing Sunday 9 June**

KiwiRail and Higgins contractors will be closing the Waverley/Holland Rd rail crossing on **Sunday 9 June** to do maintenance work on the crossing. The road will be closed from the Waverley/Seddon Rd intersection through to the Eureka/Holland Rd intersection between 7am and 7pm. Detours will be put in place for motorists to transit around the closure.

### **Keeping of Animals Bylaw**

Thanks to all who provided early feedback on updating our Keeping of Animals Bylaw. We received 306 submissions, with 12 organisations among the submitters. Your feedback is being collated and is being used to inform how we draft our proposed new Bylaw. You will have an opportunity to have your say on the proposed new Bylaw when formal consultation takes place in June-July 2024.

### **Contact your Tamahere-Woodlands Councillors:**

Crystal Beavis, mob 0275 957 927, email [crystal.beavis@waidc.govt.nz](mailto:crystal.beavis@waidc.govt.nz)

Mike Keir, mob 027 449 3012, email [mike.keir@waidc.govt.nz](mailto:mike.keir@waidc.govt.nz)