

April 2013

To all Kaipara District Council residents and ratepayers

Submissions have now been received to the changes proposed by the Commissioners to the Council's Long Term Plan and its 2013/14 Annual Plan. The next stages of this process are described below. As the Commissioners finalise the Plan, they will consider the submissions made and be mindful of the need to restore confidence in the community.

Aiming for inflation levels

Council Plans are important to provide ratepayers with some certainty.

As ratepayers, you have a right to know what you might expect for your rates over the years ahead. The Long Term Plan proposed by the Commissioners does that. To get us back to a sound base, rates are proposed to increase for this next year on average by 9.3 per cent to ensure that Council finishes with a small surplus rather than more debt. In the years after this, rates are proposed to be held at near to inflation levels.

Reaching this milestone is important.

Debt reduction

The proposed plan also deals to debt. The Commissioners capped debt after their appointment at \$80 million. The Plan proposed by Commissioners attacks this debt over time, paying it down to \$50 million by 2022.

Dealing to debt is important, for otherwise interest costs will absorb more and more of rates.

Judicial review

All organisations need to constantly review their cost structures.

Managers at Council are under pressure from the Commissioners to find ways to trim costs. They have done so. Costs will continue to be strictly monitored.

There are some costs that Council carries today relating to historic matters. These "fix up" costs include legal costs to develop the Local Bill that is heading to Parliament. They include the considerable time required by Council staff to review historic information and to put proper management and information systems in place.

A new cost has landed on our table, again relating to matters historic. The Mangawhai Residents and Ratepayers Association have decided to take your Council to Court, seeking a Judicial Review of certain past matters, and the return of rates back to 2006, among other things. The costs for Council to defend this action will be huge if the proceedings go through the full Hearing process. Our estimate is up to \$500,000. To pay for this, it is likely we will need to take money out of operational budgets (possibly

cutting back road maintenance). We may even be required to raise rates should costs be this high. We sincerely hope not.

While this Association has every right to take the Council to Court, it is extremely disappointing that they have done so. There can be no winners from this action; it is already imposing further costs on all ratepayers.

As the community works through these past issues, we must remember that we need to take care of the future interests of ratepayers. We need to build a strong Kaipara, where rates are held down but Council services are of a high quality, where the productive sector does not bear unnecessary costs, where jobs are created, and where all in Kaipara work together.

Submissions - what happens now

The submission period for the draft Annual Plan 2013/2014 including proposed amendments to the Long Term Plan 2012/2022 closed at 4 pm Friday 19 April 2013.

At the close off time, Council had received 300 submissions and around 70 of those submitting had indicated that they wished to speak to their submission.

Hearings will now be held at the Lighthouse, Dargaville on Monday 13 May 2013, The Country Club, Maungaturoto on Tuesday 14 May 2013 and The Club, Mangawhai on Wednesday 15 May 2013. These are public opportunities for anyone who wants to come along and listen.

A public meeting will be held at The Lighthouse, Dargaville on 21 May 2013. This is where the Commissioners will consider all the information before them, including the submissions, and then make final decisions. The Annual Plan for the year ending 30 June 2014, and the Long Term Plan through to 2012/2022 will then be settled. You are welcome to attend this public meeting.

All those who made a submission will receive responses to their submission in the weeks following this meeting.

This process is about shaping Kaipara's future. Thank you for your interest and participation.

Sincerely



John Robertson
Chairman of Commissioners

Investing for growth

Commissioners are keen to encourage growth in Kaipara. Growth creates jobs and brings vibrancy to our communities.

Councils cannot deliver growth — the private sector does that. But Councils can facilitate growth, by providing the public infrastructure that enables and encourages community development and private sector investment in the District.

Council's investment in our District includes:

- Building and maintaining Kaipara's roads, bridges and footpaths.
- Building and maintaining water, wastewater and stormwater systems where they are needed in our built up areas.
- Organising household waste collection, and encouraging recycling.
- Developing and managing our parks and reserves, like at our pristine Kai Iwi Lakes.
- Managing our camp grounds.
- Assisting communities to plan and build facilities for young people, including supplying places for amenities like the Activities Park in Mangawhai and the proposed new Skate Park in Dargaville.

Our District Plan is also part of the infrastructure that makes growth possible. The Plan sets out the rules for development, and where such development is preferred.

Since appointment eight months ago, the Commissioners have been buried in matters around the "fix up" of the District Council. Much of the Chief Executive's time has been taken up with these matters too. It is important that increasingly we focus Commissioner and management time at Council on building our District and capturing opportunities for business and employment growth.

We cannot reverse what has happened in the past, but we can shape what will happen in the future.

With this in mind, Commissioners are beginning to engage with business and industry. When business weighs up investment decisions, it considers many factors, including the state of public infrastructure, the availability and reliability of resources like water and energy, proximity to markets, and the provisions of the District Plan.

Let's talk business. We are keen to engage. Kaipara is well positioned for growth, with places like Kaiwaka and Maungaturoto even closer to the ever demanding Auckland, as transport networks improve, and technology changes our lives.

Your Commissioners



Chairman
John Robinson
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Richard Booth



Colin Dale
CNZM, JP.



Peter Winder

To contact us

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To contact the Commissioners, please contact the Council or email commissioners@kaipara.govt.nz

Should you wish to communicate with Chairman John Robertson, please contact the Council or e-mail John at jrobertson@kaipara.govt.nz.