



Kaipara te Orangahui

**KAIPARA
DISTRICT**

Two Oceans Two Harbours

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9 April 2020

Kia ora,

Across Kaipara District and New Zealand, as I write this message, everyone is ending Week Two of COVID-19 lockdown. These are extraordinary times for us all. By the time you receive this message I expect there will have been countless new announcements, revelations and developments affecting us all, and that any predictions written today on 9 April will be very outdated, despite best efforts.

Council Services

In these rapidly-changing times, Kaipara District Council is working hard and fast to continue maintaining service levels across the Kaipara. Every effort is being made to keep Kaipara citizens well-informed with regular Council Services updates in newspapers, by radio and on the Kaipara District Council website kaipara.govt.nz. Kaipara District Council continues to serve our communities, providing many services essential to keeping you healthy and safe throughout the Level 4 Lockdown and beyond. These services include ensuring communities have safe drinking water, that wastewater systems keep operating, rubbish is collected, burials can take place, essential roading and safety repairs are made, emergency services (Civil Defence) are on hand, and flood protection is being monitored. We also continue to monitor the ongoing record-breaking drought situation. This is business-as-usual but in very unusual times.

Current rates and future rates

As a result of the COVID-19 Level 4 Lockdown we know that many people are suffering hardship. To help with this the Government has provided a large package to support people's incomes, including working with banks to provide mortgage holidays. People who have lost their jobs or are on reduced incomes may qualify for the Accommodation Supplement administered by the Ministry of Social Development through Work and Income. If people are experiencing hardship, please contact the Council early so we can help with a payment plan for rates.

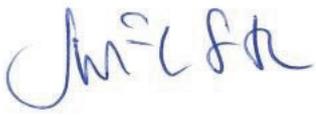
Officers are modelling the impact of COVID-19 on Kaipara District so Elected Members can make best future decisions, based on sound evidence. In coming days and weeks Elected Members will be making fresh decisions in the normal considered, steady and thoughtful way for a revised draft of Annual Plan 2020-21, including future rates. At this point I expect a focus on maintaining essential services and on the provision of vital infrastructure to encourage recovery in our community. Updates on those decisions will be announced as we go.

Rising strong

Kaipara has been making great progress away from the austerity of the last decade and we need to be particularly careful how we go forward so we can continue to rise strong. The Kaipara Mayor's Task Force for Economic Support and Recovery has been established to assist with this. We also have the People's Panel (kaipara.govt.nz/panel) that we will use to engage with members across Kaipara for our support and recovery. If you haven't joined up yet then please consider doing so now - it's free and a new way for you to engage with your Council. Between the two oceans and two harbours of Kaipara District the promise of abundant wellbeing of 'Kaipara te Oranganui' remains undiminished and, some may say, more important than ever in these challenging times.

Stay safe and well, keep close to home and let's continue to rise strong together.

Kia kaha Kaipara, mauri ora Kaipara te Oranganui,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J Smith', is positioned above the printed name.

Dr Jason Smith
Mayor of Kaipara District