

Dear Kaipara Ratepayer

Since the election it has been a very busy time for Councillors. We initially spent time agreeing how we will operate as a group and had some great sessions in that regard.

I am pleased to report to you that I think we will be able to operate well as a team, which I believe will be fundamental to effective decision-making.

The next period has been spent learning the “business” of Council, with days spent with the Council Chief Executive and his Executive Management team, covering areas ranging from Finance, Procurement and Contracting.

Our aim which I think we will achieve is to have a good base understanding of the workings of Council (and each other!) by years end.

Looking toward the New Year, we will spend some time identifying what training we will each need as Councillors and that will vary widely amongst the group. We are each getting to a stage of knowing what we don't know.

So the New Year will be exciting for us. In Kaipara we have a real dichotomy, controlling growth in the east and needing growth in the west!

For the eastern side we will have the draft report from the group (chaired by Belinda Vernon) working on the draft Mangawhai Town Plan. Council will need to adopt the draft, then spend considerable time consulting with residents. I suspect some of that will need to be done over weekends to ensure all residents can have an opportunity to be heard.

The centre of the western side is Dargaville and I intend to spend time considering how Council can help progress the town. There are many great groups, across the district, doing fantastic voluntary work and whether there is an overall co-ordinating role for Council is something I would like to explore.

For those who can get some time off over the Christmas period, enjoy the break, and for the rest, I hope you have a great time with family and friends. Life after all, is about people.

Best regards



Greg Gent

Mayor