

# Kia Ora from the Mayor

Ending the first quarter of the new Council business year at 30 September saw Kaipara District Council right up to speed and several important decisions being taken. Included among them were:

- Adoption of Annual Report for the year ended 30 June 2021;
- Adoption of Animal Management Report 2020-21;
- Feedback from Kaipara District Council to Government on its proposed Three Waters Reforms.

## Annual Report

The Annual Report 2020/2021 of Kaipara District Council has been adopted and the report of our auditors Deloitte is unqualified – which means no ‘black marks’ against the Council. Our teams worked with speed, efficiency and accuracy to get complete data together for the Annual Report. Government extended the statutory reporting deadlines for councils to complete their Annual Reports, to end of December; however, KDC didn’t need the extra three months Government has allocated for completing this work. In the books Council made a greater financial surplus than expected, too. The document is a great read and is available on the KDC website now [www.kaipara.govt.nz](http://www.kaipara.govt.nz)

## Animal Management

In 2019 the service of Animal Management, for Dog Control and Wandering Stock, was brought back in-house after years with external contractors. This was a tough call at the time for the council but improved service levels were demanded and sought by Elected Members and we knew this would only come at an increased cost for ratepayers. The results now showing are positive evidence that we made the right call. For the year to 30 June just ended there was a 250% increase in public park, beach and reserve visits by our own Animal Management Officers above the year before. Increased visibility, customer service and efficiency is working. There are 9%


fewer dogs in Kaipara District than the year before but 12% more dogs impounded and also 7% fewer service requests. On a shorter leash now, Kaipara can’t be accused of having gone to the dogs on this one.

## Three Waters Reforms

Local Councils across New Zealand have been heavily focused in recent weeks on the Government’s Three Waters Reform program and what it may mean for us all.

From Kaipara, we have sent a clear letter to Local Government Minister Mahuta about the position of Kaipara District in the proposals and also our many questions which remain unanswered still. We believe proposed governance and accountability pose a real problem and there’s a misalignment between councils and the proposed water entities. With the diffuse ownership of water infrastructure proposed it’s difficult to see linkages between local assets and local council leadership. And it’s difficult to see how local Kaipara peoples’ needs would be heard and reflected in future arrangements. Alongside such questions Kaipara District Council also understands it would be made nearly debt-free and receive a \$16.1m grant for a community development project to encourage us into the proposals as well. There’s much in all this. As at the start of October next steps are with Government and are unknown to Councils. More water to flow under the bridge on all this yet. Rest assured we’re prepared and ready to ride any wave ahead.

Ngā mihi nui



Dr Jason Smith  
Kaipara Mayor



# What’s happening?

*Here are some highlights of what’s happening in Kaipara and in your area.*

## Kaipara Water

Building on Kaipara Kai, the Kaipara Water project further supports valuable kai opportunities. We’ve set up two demonstration sites – one in Te Kōpuru and the other up at Maunganui Bluff, on iwi land – showcasing smart water use and the ways in which this can support specific crops. Look out for community open days before the end of the year.

## Kaipara Kai brings rewards

One of the many projects the Kaipara Kai Hub team were involved were the infamous peanut trials. The sites were identified by the Hub team and Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) using Plant & Food research commissioned as part of our Kaipara KickStart programme. This research is available on our website at [www.kaipara.govt.nz/kickstart/kai-for-kaipara](http://www.kaipara.govt.nz/kickstart/kai-for-kaipara). The results from the initial trials showed huge potential, and additional trials are now being undertaken.

# What's happening?

## Reimagining our libraries

Do you use the library? If not, what might draw you there. We're looking at how we can reinvent our services so they can be enjoyed by more people. Join the discussion on the library Facebook page, look for us in markets, and keep an eye on the newspaper for more details.

## Kaihu Valley Trail

The Kaihu Valley walking and cycleway is well underway with works to start this summer and finish in time for the following year. Did you know, the Twin Coast cycleway in the Far North attracts around 10,000 local and tourist travellers each month.

## Reconstructing unsealed roads

Have you driven along any of the newly reconstructed unsealed roads? Check out Brown Road, Omana Road, Gorge Road or Charity Hill Road. We've now completed 150km of smooth-riding unsealed roads.

## Celebrating arts, culture and heritage

If you love art you'll love the Arts, Culture and Heritage Strategy we're developing with Creative Northland. A strategy will guide our projects and work in the future so art and culture are embedded in what we do.

## Pouto Road sealing

Work to seal the first 10 km of Pouto Road is progressing well and on track to be complete by December 2021. The \$6.5m project is supported by Kānoa – Regional Economic Development & Investment Unit.



## Stopbank renewal

We've received funding to install new stopbanks from Dargaville to Te Kopuru to help protect the fertile Kaipara plains. Planning and land owner engagement will start soon.

## Upgrading Te Kopuru wastewater

A new and improved aerator has been installed at the Te Kopuru wastewater treatment station to improve the quality of the discharge and reduce the impact to our harbour.

## Ways to stay up-to-date with Council news



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Check out our news website [www.kaipara.govt.nz/news](http://www.kaipara.govt.nz/news)