

Message from the Mayor

Waimate 2020



It is with pleasure I present this message highlighting some of the activities of Council over this year and for the future of the Waimate District.

During the 2005 Council year, elected members at Council meetings dipped to where there were just enough members present to hold some meetings. This was brought about by Cr. Foley's accident which saw him absent for several months, a bi election needed to replace Cr. Len Shaw, Cr. Andrew on a leave of absence for two months and other councillors unable to attend meetings. I am glad to say from the latter part of 2005 when Cr.

Matt Henderson was elected to Council and Cr. Foley returned to council meetings we have been back to full representative strength.

The long awaited Sport and Recreation Plan is nearing completion. This plan has been carried out for two reasons. One is to have a plan that is able to attract Government and other funding, and the other is to show the future needs of the Waimate district community. The information from the Sport and Recreation Plan will give some direction on the future of the Waimate Stadium.

While recycling is in full swing through the very enthusiastic Whitehorse Recycling Trust and your support, Council has concerns. Tonnages of wheelie bin rubbish being collected is far too high, as it appears that recyclable material removed has been replaced by other material such as green waste. The cost of all waste disposal is still rising and this means if community habits don't change we are all going to pay dearly for this service now and in the future.

Introduction of the new Building Act imposed upon Council by central government has seen building permit fees rise because of the extra inspections and compliance requirements. While there is a significant extra work load placed on staff, and builders, due to the new act, Council has not increased the staff levels which has kept costs from rising even higher.

During the last two years, Council has started to put in place a civil defence plan which is a legislative requirement from central government to local government. In light of the flooding experienced in parts of the North Island, the South East Asia tsunami and more recently the possibility of a bird flu pandemic, Council needs a Civil Defence strategy. Council could have been in an embarrassing situation if a civil defence emergency had taken place in the past, as nothing was in place to handle such an event. To date, most parts of the Waimate district have been supportive in setting up sector posts, where local communities

have been willing to work with council staff. It is all about being prepared in an emergency whether it is a flood, windstorm, earthquake or bird flu pandemic.

Dogs registered for the first time this year, will have to have an electronic chip inserted under the skin of the dog. This is another legislative requirement Council has to comply with that has associated extra costs. Council has to have facilities to connect to the national data base, this will add to the cost of registration of these dogs.

Of all the bright ideas central government has put into legislation that local bodies have had to implement of late, the Drinking Water Standard is one of the worst, with huge costs to all councils' rural water schemes. How innovative will we have to be to avoid treating 90% of rural water schemes' water which is only for stock use.

After long delays of obtaining trades people to build them, the tourist cabins at Victoria Park are due to be opened very soon. The Parks and Reserves department would have liked the cabins to have earned income much earlier in the year.

Whilst referring to Council's reserves, I would like to thank the Friends of Knottingley Park for all their good work in helping maintain Knottingley Park over the years and their interest in establishing an arboretum in the park.

While there have been many furniture factory closures throughout New Zealand, it's not until your own district experiences such an action that it really comes home to one the harm it does to a community. It was sad to see the factory doors close at Abraham Furniture and Debonaire Furniture last year.

Then in early 2006 the fire at Pukeuri Freezing works affected approximately one hundred employees from our district. Those who worked in the fire damaged part of the works were most affected while others retained their jobs.

I am a little frustrated that we have not made a firm commitment as to where the Council's infrastructure will go for the future growth of Waimate, and would like to see this progress over the next few months.

Irrigation has been a hot topic on the south side of the Waitaki, with a large scheme being built. Over the next year I am sure Waimate will see some irrigation proposals put in front of our farmers. Let us hope the economic climate gives confidence for them to take our share of Waitaki water.

Thank you to the councillors and staff, for their input into this plan.

John Coles JP

Mayor of Waimate District