

NEWSLINE

1 JUNE 2023



Waimate
District Council

MAYOR'S COLUMN



Mayor Craig Rowley

As you will be aware, we are now less than five months away from the general elections. It is particularly important during this time to ensure that central government is aware of what is needed here in Canterbury. On 11 May, I went to Wellington along with my fellow Canterbury Mayors (Canterbury Mayoral Forum) to present our recently refreshed Plan for Canterbury.

While at the Beehive we advocated for permanent co-investment in flood protection schemes for the region, immigration and skills policies that work for Canterbury, greater collaboration on an integrated approach to transport funding, and supporting Canterbury's continued economic development and emergency management. We had valuable conversations around local government funding and the need to work together on financing tools and funding options to address current shortfalls.

A number of ministers acknowledged that Canterbury is well placed to tackle challenging issues facing our communities, largely because of our councils' ability to work together and speak in one strong voice.

We shall continue to advocate for our region and strengthen our connection with central government while ensuring that local voices are not ignored.

Until next time, take care.

CELEBRATING THE KING'S CORONATION

On Saturday 6 May at 11am, Council celebrated a momentous occasion for our country; the coronation of our new sovereign, King Charles III, with a special tree planting ceremony at Knottingley Park and Arboretum.

The tree, although not native to New Zealand, is one of Britain's most iconic and stately trees. The young oak tree was planted in the formal area of the Park, surrounded by mature oak trees.

Tewera King, representing Te Rūnanga o Waihao, blessed the event with an opening karakia, after which the Mayor shared a few words about the significance of the occasion.

"The King serves as a role model to millions of people around the world. He is reigning in a world vastly different from the one served by the late Queen Elizabeth. The King's passion for environmental conservation, sustainability and youth development will lead us into a better future," Mayor Craig Rowley said.

The event was attended by councillors, members of the public and Council staff.

A commemorative plaque provided by the Government will be installed at a later date in memory of the occasion.



Mayor Craig Rowley and Tewera King planting the young oak

COUNCIL APPROVES PROPOSED RATES INCREASE OF 7.54%

On 16 May, Council considered the draft budget for the year 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 and agreed on an overall rates increase of 7.54%.

Like the rest of New Zealand, Council is also facing a number of challenges with inflationary pressures, rising interest rates, supply issues and staff shortages.

The overall rates increase of 7.54%, which is 0.74% higher than the 6.8% forecast in the 2021-31 Long Term Plan (LTP), accounts for increases in asset replacement and management, compliance costs and rising employment costs. It will, however, enable the Council to push ahead with long awaited projects like the library extension and the denitrification plant in Glenavy, among others.

It will also help Council ensure that the infrastructure assets like water supply and roads, along with community facilities and parks are well maintained with timely renewals and upgrades to future-proof them.

Council continues to smooth the impact of the dividend income reduction from our Alpine Energy investment and increased costs of the waste management contract. Smoothing lessens the need for large increases in rates in any single year and is spread over multiple years.

The current cost of borrowing indicated an interest rate of 5.45%, a significant increase from the previous forecast of 3% in the LTP. Due to delayed borrowing drawdowns next year, the increase would amount to additional interest servicing costs of \$41,000 compared to the current year budget. Bearing all this in mind, Council have minimised the rates rise as much as possible by using reserves where applicable. Some Council fees and charges in relation to building consents, cemeteries, roading and new water connections will rise to ensure users pay fairly for the benefit they receive, which reduces the cost impact instead of falling on rates.

The 7.54% rates increase is an overall average, and individual properties will vary based on their targeted rates and services and movement in capital value from the 2022 property revaluations. A table providing a guide for the value and percentage change to rates for a selection of properties from the Waimate District can be found on the Council website.

"The proposed rates increase was a result of a detailed review of all budget items and is in line with the rate of inflation. We wanted to ensure we could continue to provide our core functions without cutting services, and our planned infrastructure upgrades can move ahead," Mayor Craig Rowley said.

The draft 2023/24 Annual Plan will be presented for adoption at the Council meeting on 20 June.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

Tuesday 6 June

9.30am – Open Workshop, followed by Long Term Plan Workshop

Tuesday 13 June

9.30am – Audit and Risk Committee Meeting

Tuesday 20 June

9.30am – Ordinary Council Meeting, commencing with Public Forum

Meetings are held in the Council Chamber, 125 Queen Street, Waimate, unless stated otherwise. Agendas are available on waimatedc.govt.nz at least two days prior to a meeting. To receive a Microsoft Teams link, or to arrange to speak at the public forum please contact the Committee Secretary on karalyn@waimatedc.govt.nz or 03 689 0038.

365-DAY A YEAR PAYMENTS

From 26 May 2023, New Zealand banks are changing how they process electronic domestic payments, such as bill payments, automatic payments, direct debits and direct credits.

This means that payments can be processed on weekends and public holidays and so long as the transaction is made before the daily cut-off time, the money will be available to the recipient the same day.

What does this mean for you?

From June 2023, Council will be processing its 20th of the month payments, both direct debit and direct credit, on the due date, rather than on the closest working day. Please make sure you have enough money in your account to cover payments on their actual due date.

For more information about this change please refer to your bank's website or visit www.paymentsnz.co.nz/resources/articles/payments-moving-365-days-year/

HOT ASHES CAN START A FIRE!

Winter is coming and a lot of families rely on burning firewood for keeping their houses warm. Where there's a good fireplace there's a warm house and plenty of ash to clean out.

Hot coals or embers hidden in a pile of ashes can stay hot for up to 4 days. They have the potential to start a fire if not disposed of correctly. Some people take the ashes out of their fireboxes and throw them in their wheelie bins or on the ground next to the woodpile – that's how fires can start.

How to safely deal with ashes?

- An ideal time to clean out the fireplace is first thing in the morning, before you start the first fire of the day.
- Always empty ashes and ashtrays into a metal bin with a metal lid, then douse with water and leave it to cool for 4 days.
- Store the ash bin outside, away from dry vegetation and buildings.
- The ashes, once completely cold, can be placed in a bag and disposed of in your red wheelie bin.

Tip: Wood ash is a good additive to compost and a great source for many micronutrients needed for adequate plant growth. It can also help keep snails, slugs and ants away.

HOT ASHES



WHEELIE BIN



NEAR DRY VEGETATION



METAL BIN WITH METAL LID

NEW CITIZENS OFFICIALLY WELCOMED

On Tuesday 16 May, Council acknowledged four Waimate residents who have recently been granted New Zealand citizenship. Originally from Belgium and Britain, the new citizens administered their oath and were sworn in and welcomed at a civic ceremony held in the Council Chambers.

Among the four new citizens, was Paul Cartlidge, the Principal of Waimate Main School. He missed out on a citizenship ceremony as he received his citizenship certificate during the COVID-19 lockdown in January 2022 directly from the Department of Internal Affairs. Mayor Craig Rowley commented that it was very opportune that Paul could attend the ceremony, as his students from Waimate Main School were at the ceremony to lead the National Anthem and perform a waiata.

The new citizens were shown video messages from the Governor-General and the Minister of Internal Affairs followed by morning tea with the Mayor and councillors.



From the left: Martine Bal-Bogaerts, Guido Bal, Mayor Craig Rowley, Lucy Finch and Paul Cartlidge

CIVIC BEAUTIFICATION PROJECT

The Parks and Reserves team have started on an exciting new project to beautify the car parking and bus stop area outside the Civic Office. The removal of the hedge has created an open space, which will be further developed to make it a more comfortable and inviting area for those waiting for the bus.

The new open space will have soil added to the centre to elevate it. The area will be re-grassed and have a picnic bench installed for people to sit and relax. The bus stop will be upgraded with a modern design and comfortable seating.

Rhododendrons, sourced from the surplus plants at the camping grounds will be added along the fence line and carpark border. The garden beds will be barked to make them neat and tidy.

Council is proud to create open spaces for the public, while also making it easier to access public transport.



Please note these images are a visual representation only.

ARE YOU READY?

With the recent weather events the country has experienced, it's a good time to ensure your household is prepared for emergencies, such as floods, fires, earthquakes, tsunamis, windstorms and more. Make sure your household or business has a plan before you need it.

- **Could you survive at home for three days or more?**
- **Do you have an emergency kit?**
- **Do you have a plan for your pets?**



You can find useful information and templates on the following sites:
<https://www.waimatedc.govt.nz/services/civil-defence/a-hazards>
<https://getready.govt.nz/>

RATES REBATE SCHEME

Rates rebate application forms for 2022/23 are available at the Council office or can be downloaded at www.govt.nz/rates-rebates.

A rates rebate provides a subsidy to people on a benefit, superannuation or to low-income homeowners, with those eligible receiving up to \$700 off their rates balance per annum.

Please ask one of the friendly staff at reception (125 Queen Street, Waimate) for assistance, or call 03 689 0000, for more information.

Applications close on **30 June 2023**.

