

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Featherston library opening hours public submission
Date: Tuesday, July 4, 2023 7:52:30 AM

Good morning,

I note the change to Featherston Library opening hours. As a Featherston resident I have two points of feedback:

1. Having known opening hours (as opposed to ad hoc closures) is much preferable.
2. For people who work weekdays, opening on Saturday, if only for a few hours, would give an opportunity to use the library. If opening hours are only Mon though Fri this largely excludes people who must work these week days.

Thanks for your consideration,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Library Submission Feedback
Date: Tuesday, July 4, 2023 7:46:58 AM

Dear SWDC,

Thank you for requesting further feedback from the community regarding the cost savings decisions made about the local library services.

My submission here is to request the reconsideration of the need to close the Featherston library, especially on Saturday.

Residents who commute to Wellington every day need the library to be open on Saturday, at least.

Personally I would prefer to see the library open on both Saturday and Sunday, and closed on Monday and Tuesday (if it has to be closed any day).

I appreciate the need to cut costs. But Featherston is a Booktown, and it needs it's local council to get behind this concept in every way possible.

Sometimes it's ok to favour one town over another, when it's not a question of fairness, rather a question of common sense.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Featherston Library Hours
Date: Tuesday, July 4, 2023 7:17:31 AM

I would suggest that if people want the library to be open on Saturdays then pick 2 weekdays where it is only open for a half day each to compensate and ease the cost burden on ratepayers.

Possibly monitor the number of users over a period to see what days are least busy.

Cheers

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Submission on South Wairarapa libraries
Date: Monday, July 3, 2023 10:54:14 PM

Dear Council,

I am writing to say that I disagree with your decision to close South Wairarapa libraries some days as a cost-saving exercise.

I would like to see Featherston Library open on Saturday mornings.

It is ridiculous that Booktown doesn't have a library accessible to the people who live here if they happen to work a 9-5 job.

Our tamariki are already disadvantaged enough in Featherston with such limited options of things to do, shutting the library on the one day a week that they could visit with their parents is unnecessarily cruel.

The library is a really valuable service for our community. I'm really invested in keeping Featherston Library open on Saturdays and look forward to hearing the outcome.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Submission on South Wairarapa libraries
Date: Monday, July 3, 2023 10:01:34 PM

Dear Council,

I am writing to say that I disagree with your decision to close South Wairarapa libraries some days as a cost-saving exercise.

I would like to see Greytown Library open every weekday. Being a town without a shared working space like that of Martinborough or Carterton I feel the library is an important resource for locals who need a place to work with internet out of home. Furthermore as a mother of two young children, having limited days of the week to get out new library books after school when we also have extracurricular activities on certain days after school as well is very restrictive and disappointing.

I have lived in South Wairarapa for over 5 years now and the library has played a pivotal role in my parenting experience. From preschool story time in the library on a Tuesday in Featherston to going with my girls to select new books, or escape the house on a cold, rainy day. The new hours limit these options for all parents and I think will be greatly met with sadness and disappointment. We can also no longer frequent the library as a whole family every Saturday, as during the week my husband works as a commuter and the new hours mean even if he catches the last train into town or the first one back to Greytown he will still arrive outside of library opening times on weekdays.

The library is a really valuable service for our community. It provides shelter, education, friendship and entertainment. It helps kids learn to read, teenagers find graphic novels, old people get online, and commuters find books to read on the train.

I'm really invested in keeping Greytown Library open every week day and every Saturday and I look forward to hearing the outcome.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Featherston + SWDC Library submission
Date: Monday, July 3, 2023 9:25:26 PM
Attachments: [REDACTED]

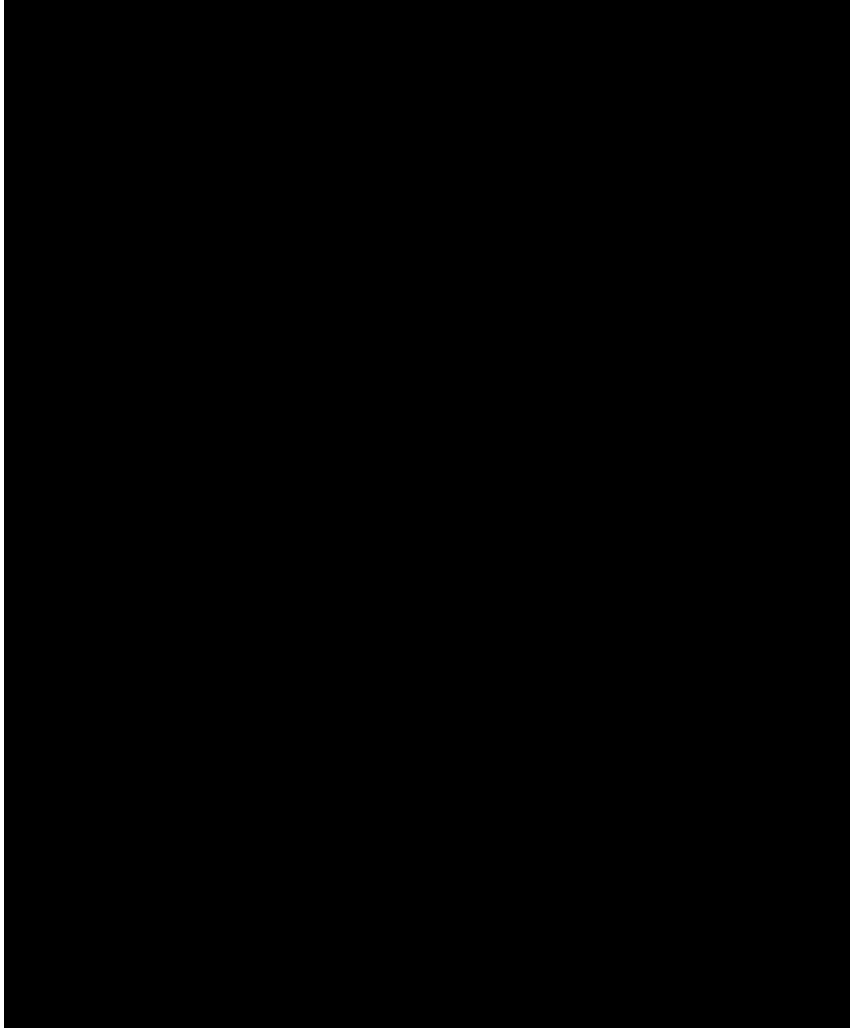
Hiya, I've read the Facebook post calling for submissions about the Libraries, and clicked through to the relevant SWDC webpage to read about how the decision came about. I submitted last time using the online form when we were asked to, and stopped in to a drop-in session too.

I have a [REDACTED]-year old boy ([REDACTED]) who attends [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. We often go to Greytown Library around 3pm on Mon/Tues/Weds, and as we live in Featherston we could theoretically pop into Featherston Library on any 'normal' day, including a weekend.

Libraries are more than just places to rent books; Featherston Library is also a print shop when Print Space is not open. Featherston Library is an Information Centre, now that the actual info centre is not used. Featherston Library is a service centre for everything Council-related in Featherston, like rubbish bags or dog tags or other bits and pieces. Featherston Library is the only safe, indoor community space for literally everyone of all ages/abilities/genders/races where there is no expectation of any financial transaction whatsoever. Featherston Library provides important internet and computer services for disadvantage households that do not otherwise have access to what is increasingly viewed as a human right. Featherston Library is where Penny, Liz, and the other hardworking librarian staff share their smiles, knowledge, expertise, and sweat as they deliver personalised quality service — and yes, they know us all by name.

I could go on and on and on about how much I use the Library in Featherston and what SWDC Libraries mean to me.

Instead, I'll simply attach a photo from 6.5 hours prior of my [REDACTED] old son discovering today that his safe warm Greytown Library space wasn't available to him any more, and that despite his efforts to open the door he could not get in.



█ be blunt, this is the education of our kids we are talking about. Library services are not ring-fenced and funding can be sourced from other line items, generated from sale of land assets, or charged out to ratepayers.

Thank you for considering my submission. If you are accepting hearings, I will talk to this if desired.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: A submission about library hours
Date: Monday, July 3, 2023 8:15:00 PM

Kia ora Council,

I am writing to say that I disagree with your decision to close South Wairarapa libraries some days as a cost-saving exercise.

I would like, at the very least, to see Featherston Library open on Saturday mornings.

I've lived in Featherston for [REDACTED] years and love visiting our library. I value the Saturday morning opening hours because I commute to work and Saturdays mean I can visit the library with my young [REDACTED]. There is no other time we can go as a family.

Libraries have always been a big part of my life - as a child I wasn't part of a well-off family and the weekly library visit was a highlight. I was a voracious reader, which has served me very well in life. I now work as a communications manager and credit an early love of reading for that.

I also think that if you can't commit to all the days, then switch out one full day to a half day to 'give' us half a day on Saturday.

It's universally agreed that Monday morning is a bit rubbish so let's give that to Saturday.

The library is a really valuable service for our community. I now use it with my family, and to keep up on the reading for my book club. However, as a lonely mother of a small child it was a safe haven. A place where people were kind and Miss Penny would dish out great parenting advice (just add water) and where I met friends who have become my community.

I'm really invested in keeping Featherston Library open on Saturdays and look forward to hearing the outcome of your decision.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Martinborough Library
Date: Monday, July 3, 2023 8:02:12 PM

The library is a fantastic space for our family. We used it almost daily when my children were smaller as we had access to the plunket area for easy feeding while my older child read books. The day cares and kindy visit regularly too. Having the knucklebone cafe to compliment the area is incredibly (how sad for them with this decision to reduce hours). We visit almost daily during school holiday. Such a shame rates keep rising and services keep being removed. Must be hard to balance things but never thought we would lose access to the library.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Library submission
Date: Monday, July 3, 2023 7:57:34 PM

Kia Ora koutou,

Can Featherston please have a regular Saturday open so that commuters and people working locally during weekdays can arrange books out as well as other council required matters such as dog registration.

Also, when looking at closing facilities to reduce council costs can council put more value on amenities such as libraries when considering cost cutting measures. Look at the research out there on the value, good and well run libraries contribute to the population.

It's not a simple yes/no vote. Relying on what people stated in their submissions is not always ideal (especially when these submission forms don't articulate the full extent of what is being asked). Did anyone voting ask themselves what our towns would look like without libraries? Are we future proofing the kinds of places where we want to see vibrancy and interest and well read families?

I would personally rather you culled jobs such as full time comms people or managed some of your "big budget" decisions (like the school gym loan) to be able to accommodate town library services. Libraries are at the centre of every town and it's been that way since nz towns began. Let's put more value on them!

Featherston also needs to retain some mana in the district and council should be strategically supporting above other towns our world booktown status. We are hosting the world next year and imagine how it looks to folk when they hear our council closes it's library services in booktown.

Regards

[REDACTED] (disappointed recipient of SWDC's poor decision making in regards to the Featherston library services reduced hours)

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Martinborough Library Service
Date: Monday, July 3, 2023 7:56:42 PM

The decision to partially close the libraries is a terrible idea.

What happened to children's education, allowing them to learn through books is extremely important.

In Martinborough the Community come together as it has so much to offer.

Surely there is other avenues which could be taken to allow the Libraries to stay open. Does it need more than one Librarian? Could any other Council office employee work from the Library so the Librarian isn't in the building alone, obviously for security reasons!

In Martinborough The Waihinga Centre is a great hub for the Community having a Cafe and i-site also on site. What a waste for the building if it's not being used to its full potential! I have been in the cafe when people have come in to use the Library facilities and been frustrated when they are closed and now that will happen more frequently.

All these Libraries are very important the the Communities!

Taking this facility away from us is very frustrating and am sure been stressful for the Staff and the Community.

What I would like to see from this decision is for it to be overturned and back to normal.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Library hours
Date: Monday, July 3, 2023 7:23:34 PM

Thank you for reconsidering the hours the Council libraries will be open. This is something I am passionate about as the father of a [REDACTED] year old who loves reading and as an avid reader myself. The proposed hours just will not work for us, especially the very limited weekend hours proposed. I strongly suspect the approach will mark a death knell to our library usage. If we cannot be sure the library will be open when we leave the house on Saturday, then we are unlikely to visit. And to be honest, we will probably be less likely to leave the house at all as a result. The Saturday ritual of coffee / hot chocolate at a Greytown cafe, a visit to the library and then a treat from the French Baker or Bicycle Kitchen will be a thing of the past. A library is the heart of a community, and cutting hours so drastically is going to impact on more than just library lovers like ourselves - it is also going to impact on the businesses we frequent when we make our visits.

This move is also going to remove my refuge for when the water or power is (frequently) cut at home, and my access to resources that are useful to me in my work. It is also going to stop me from being able to access the extremely valuable information and advice that your skilled library staff are able to provide - including about how to access other Council services. And will the meeting rooms be available when the library is closed? I suspect not.

Anyway. Thank you again for reconsidering your decision. And please count me as a very strong vote to retain the current library hours.

Warm regards,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Enquiries](#)
Subject: Library closures
Date: Monday, July 3, 2023 10:21:21 AM

Hi there,

I have just arrived at the Greytown Library to find out that it's closed today.

Really? This is how far the capitalist society has come? We now close libraries?!?!?! This is making me so sad.

I would like to hear your reasoning behind this.

What about people who can't afford education in any other way than getting books out from the library or who can't afford an internet plan and rely on public free internet.

People now need to drive to a different town, spend money on petrol and contribute towards global warming if they want to read a book on other days than Tuesdays, Wednesdays or Fridays.

This will mean people will spend more time on their phones still looking at instimulating social media and dulling down their brains.

I think this is a decision towards a sad future and would love to encourage you to reconsider this.

Best regards,

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Enquiries](#)
Subject: Library hours
Date: Thursday, June 29, 2023 2:03:56 PM

A few years ago the library staff covered and labelled books and library managers were able to source and purchase items to suit their clients. They no longer do these tasks so one would presume they would have more time for other activities. In those days casual staff were rare. Have the numbers of permanent staff been reduced? If not where is the extra money spent that they can no longer service the same hours? Is having an overall library manager the added expense?

It is interesting that Carterton does not find it necessary to reduce hours. You post that library membership and usage has increased by 29% in the last year. Is this a problem? Do you hope to decrease usage by restricting hours? Our libraries are also our community centres. In the days before staff were continually rostered to different branches they were places people could find a familiar face and someone to help with queries. You put up the rates and take away a service that most people in the community use and value.

As a Greytown resident who worked as a librarian in Wellington for over 20 years and as an unpaid volunteer at Greytown library for several years I find the council's decision to cut library hours quite shocking.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Enquiries](#)
Subject: Library hours
Date: Friday, June 30, 2023 6:29:54 PM

Hi there

I'm really saddened to hear that Featherston Library will not be open on a Saturday now.

Surely if Martinborough and Greytown can be open on a Saturday then Featherston could be part of that rotation too?

Why was no one consulted on this change which has a significant impact on the community?

The Featherston Library is THE best community resource that Featherston has. My son and I often go there and it is a really special place for him. The staff are absolutely wonderful and we love spending a couple of hours there playing and getting books out.

I hope you reconsider this decision or at least consult with the community to come up with a better solution.

Look forward to hearing from you...

Thanks

[REDACTED]

From:

Subject:

Date:

Attachments:

MEDIA RELEASE: Out-of-touch Council closes Featherston library in classic 'dick move'

Friday, June 30, 2023 10:36:10 AM

[Media release - Council closes Booktowns library.docx](#)

Media release

Friday, 30 June 2023

For immediate release

Out-of-touch Council closes Featherston library in classic 'dick move'

Featherston locals are angry, disappointed, and shocked after the South Wairarapa District Council (SWDC) announced through social media channels yesterday that the library will close on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

Featherston, which is New Zealand's only Booktown, and a community of young families and commuters will have its library closed on Wednesday and Saturdays from this Saturday, 1 July, which is also the first day of the school holidays.

The Council says the move is a cost-cutting exercise and was consulted on in the Annual Plan. However, many locals felt the Council has not been transparent and honest, and that what was consulted on was a pool of funding for sick leave cover.

Local professional and mother, Erin Banks said on the Council's Facebook page, "the fact that so many people are surprised and upset to read of these cuts today is testament to the fact the consultation didn't reach wide enough and the impact was clearly not communicated."

In an undemocratic move, on Thursday evening, the Council turned off commenting on the library closures Facebook post.

Award-winning author and local mother Noelle McCarthy said on Instagram, "this is a decision that directly impacts children in our community [and SWDC] you are not understanding what matters in a community and how working parents live." She was writing in reference to the closure of Saturday mornings.

Council scores own goal on announcement

In announcing the closure of some library days, the Council's own press release said, "the new roster will enable the libraries to remain open as much as possible, taking into account commuters who might not be able to visit the library during the week."

Across Wairarapa, at least 1350 people commute daily, with a significant number coming

from Featherston. Yet the new Featherston Library will open after the last commuter train leaves town in the morning and before the first train arrives home in the evening.

The wrong way to improve reputation

On 22 February this year, RNZ reported that only nine percent of South Wairarapa residents were happy with council decisions, a drop in satisfaction of 50 percent compared with the previous year's survey ^[1].

At the time, Mayor Martin Connelly was quoted as saying, "we have to rebuild the trust... we need to show people that we are listening, and we are taking their views seriously."

The closure of Featherston Library on Saturday demonstrates the hollowness of the mayor's intentions.

Libraries as a return on investment

The closure of Featherston Library on Saturdays is a Council bid to save money, despite overwhelming evidence that libraries economically benefit communities.

In the Council's own annual customer perception survey, the libraries are its most valued service. Since 2020 usage and membership has increased by about 30 percent.

In the UK, the economic value of health and wellbeing benefits through library engagement has been estimated to be 748.1 million pounds per year ^[2].

The value of libraries isn't news. In 2014 the Library and Information Association of New Zealand Aotearoa (LIANZA) commissioned a report that showed the economic value that libraries deliver to first-world economies like New Zealand's isn't in doubt.

"Hundreds of research projects across the OECD – some running for many years – have demonstrated that libraries produce solid returns on investment. Depending on the sector and the country, returns of 3:1 to 9:1 is typical – for every dollar invested, between \$3 and \$9 of direct benefit is achieved by society." ^[3]

What needs to happen?

Full reinstatement of the hours of the Featherston Library (Council is closing it on Wednesdays and Saturdays).

At the very least, open Saturdays. Closing on Monday mornings and 'giving' that half day to Saturday is a sensible move that would serve the community and cost no more.

ENDS

For more information



[1] <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/484677/survey-shows-only-9-percent-happy-with-south-wairarapa-council>

[2] <https://natlib.govt.nz/about-us/collaborative-projects/new-zealand-libraries-partnership-programme/new-zealand-libraries-partnership-programme-reports/data-research-and-evidence-strategy-resources/new-zealand-libraries-partnership-programme-towards-a-value-proposition#:~:text=In%20the%20UK%2C%20the%20economic,of%20disadvantaged%20and%20vulnerable%20groups>

[3] <chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://lianza.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/LIANZA-report-v1.0.pdf>

From: enquiries@swdc.govt.nz
To: [Enquiries](#)
Subject: New submission from Provide Feedback
Date: Sunday, July 2, 2023 5:09:11 PM

Name

[REDACTED]

Email

[REDACTED]

Phone

[REDACTED]

Your preferred method of contact

Email

Would you like someone to call you to discuss this issue in more detail?

Yes

Council department and/or Council officer you have been dealing with:

Don't know - library hours

Please enter details of your compliment or complaint, being as specific as possible

On Facebook, I saw a posting of the new reduced library hours throughout SWDC.

I'm very upset by this. It is extremely shortsighted. Higher literacy rates are shown to be associated with less crime, higher earnings, and higher employment rates, and it improves the development of the wider community. Multiple studies show this. It's also a well known fact that libraries make a huge contribution to a fostering a literate community. Reducing library hours does not increase literacy – it does quite the opposite. Reducing library hours harms communities.

I am concerned that this is just about the Featherston library. The library hours reductions across all locations is a significant concern.

What is your desired solution?

This decision is making our council look incredibly ignorant and narrowminded, and it harms our community. I encourage you to at least have the libraries open every Saturday. I encourage you to figure out how to do this. Many people only have access to libraries on Saturdays. It will be very extremely confusing with libraries open only every other Saturday.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Enquiries](#)
Subject: Re: Library closures
Date: Thursday, June 29, 2023 1:20:07 PM

On Thu, 29 Jun 2023, 1:14 pm [REDACTED] wrote:

To whom it may concern,

I am absolutely appalled at your callous cuts to our libraries.

Libraries are not just a place to get books. They're a space for our community, a community that YOU are supposed to represent, to meet, to talk, to work, to stay warm, to have someone to talk to, to do their homework in safe and quiet environment, to use the wifi, to get help with technology, to print out a bus timetable...the list goes on. The space is used by the entire spectrum of our society from babies right through to the elderly. It's one of the first places people go when they are new to town. People with disabilities use libraries regularly. The library is a safe space for so many people.

How is our community supposed to thrive without proper daily access to this space? You are dragging us backwards.

All this on top of a 29% rates increase? What an absolute joke. You should be ashamed. I'm ashamed of you.

I know there will be a huge backlash to this news, and deservedly so. I desperately hope you'll take notice.

Yours,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Enquiries](#)
Subject: Reduced library hours Featherston
Date: Thursday, June 29, 2023 6:29:59 PM

To whom it my concern

As a resident of Featherston and mother of [REDACTED] primary school aged children I am shocked at reading that the library will be closed on Wednesdays! Not only do we lose access to reading material, council services and resources on that day, but also the children lose a safe space to go to after school that is shelter for many. What a shame! Investing in libraries and ensuring staff is supported is investing in our children and our future!

Please review the reduced hours and staff cuts and bring back a fully operational library for Featherston!

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Enquiries](#)
Subject: Reduced services in Paetumokia Featherston
Date: Thursday, June 29, 2023 4:17:56 PM

Kia ora SWDC,

This is my first email to the SWDC during the [REDACTED] years I have resided here, but after not being able to put up a poster of a local family event happening during the July school holidays in the public library today and seeing the notice of reduced hours I feel compelled to express my concerns for the future [REDACTED] new citizens I have care of. and the wellbeing of our community. Please reverse these reduced services in our library. I need support to bring these [REDACTED] boys up well. A positive place to visit offering a sense of community, routine and that we can walk to is essential.

Nga mihi nui

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Enquiries](#)
Subject: Reduction in library hours
Date: Friday, June 30, 2023 8:20:50 PM

I write to object to the proposed reduction in library hours across SWDC.

Please explain to me the process the swdc has followed to determine the cost benefit analysis that has been conducted that favours financial gain over lost jobs, lost opportunities for social cohesiveness, lost learning opportunities for tamariki and lost knowledge sharing?
I oppose such a proposal.

Thank you

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Library hours
Date: Tuesday, July 4, 2023 9:37:54 AM

Submission re: Library Hours

I am a Featherston ratepayer and regularly use the Library. I believe the library is a vital community resource and should be open six days a week to accommodate everyone. I am a pensioner and can't afford to drive to other libraries as recently suggested by the Mayor. I'm sure others are in the same position.

I can't believe the Council are reducing library opening hours to save money. There must be other ways to do that (including selling off the Golf Course and Hodders Farm).

The latest rates increase is unaffordable and outrageous and to have library services reduced at the same time, makes Featherston a very unappealing place to be living right now.

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Submission on South Wairarapa libraries
Date: Tuesday, July 4, 2023 11:01:44 AM

Dear Council,

I am writing to say that I wholly disagree with your decision to close South Wairarapa libraries some days as a cost-saving exercise.

As a [REDACTED] for the rollout of the Literacy and Numeracy assessments, I have seen the need for strengthening literacy among our ākongā. As someone who also delivers the Young Readers Programme for Booktown in my spare time, I have seen how empowering it is to give children the space to read and engage with literature. Removing a vital and free resource for young readers and their whānau on a Saturday morning is an absolute travesty, and completely goes against the aims of improving literacy levels in Aotearoa. It also seems completely at odds with promoting Featherston as a Book Town. It is essential that the library stay open on Saturday mornings.

As Featherston becomes more of a commuter town, this also strips access for those who may only get the chance to use the services on a Saturday. Libraries are a valuable community hub and resource, and when we strip these, we start to unravel the fabric of community. The library is one of the few resources in Featherston which is accessible to people no matter their age, gender, ethnicity, income, or ability, or interests. It feels like a real step backwards to reduce access to this resource.

I also think that more could be done to improve the community engagement with the South Wairarapa libraries. Things like drag story time for rangitahi and whānau have been incredibly popular around New Zealand, and would encourage more engagement with the libraries and reading.

I'm very interested in keeping Featherston Library open on Saturdays and look forward to hearing the outcome.

Ngā mihi

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Library
Date: Tuesday, July 4, 2023 11:41:57 AM

It is very disappointing to find the library closed this morning even in the school holidays!
The library is a tax payer's right to access... closing it during the week or on a Saturday is absolutely unacceptable and very frustrating!

I came in this morning and was confronted with a shut off library....

Please keep the library open as expected every day for our Martinborough citizens who pay their rates!

Thank you for your attention to this

Please acknowledge receipt of my email

Sincerely

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Featherston Library Hours
Date: Tuesday, July 4, 2023 12:15:14 PM

Please keep Featherston Library open on Saturdays ... it is the only time that commuters can actually use the library, and as such is vital to our community.

Regards

[REDACTED]

From: [Enquiries](#)
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: FW: New submission from Provide Feedback
Date: Tuesday, July 4, 2023 12:51:32 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Christine Allanson
Receptionist



South Wairarapa District Council
06 306 9611, Ext 828
PO Box 6 Martinborough 5741
19 Kitchener Street Martinborough 5711
www.swdc.govt.nz

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From: enquiries@swdc.govt.nz <enquiries@swdc.govt.nz>
Sent: Tuesday, July 4, 2023 10:51 AM
To: Enquiries <enquiries@swdc.govt.nz>
Subject: New submission from Provide Feedback

Name
[REDACTED]
Email
[REDACTED]
Phone
[REDACTED]
Your preferred method of contact
Email
Would you like someone to call you to discuss this issue in more detail?
No
Please enter details of your compliment or complaint, being as specific as possible
As a long time Featherston resident and rate payer, I am disgusted and appalled to learn of the reduction to our library hours. Losing Wednesday is bad enough, but Saturday as well!!! That is so unfair. I work full

time and don't drive, and reading is my life! Featherston library is my second home. I know I'm not alone in feeling completely let down and unimportant.

Can I assume a reduction in my rates now that my access to a vital service has been severed?

I look forward to your reply, and hopefully a reversal to your ill thought out decision.

Thank you,

██████████

What is your desired solution?

Saturday opening hours reinstated.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Traffic counts
Date: Tuesday, July 4, 2023 7:04:28 AM

Could you make available traffic counts or the number of bodies in the library each day? How does it compare to year over year? How much traffic has been moved to Libby? How do traffic reports compare to the other libraries in the area?

I have been to the library 3 or 4 times in the last two years. Always feels like i am the only one there.

I appreciate the strong fiscal stewardship. I personally don't want to pay for 52 Saturdays, so people can get their dog license

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Library service
Date: Tuesday, July 4, 2023 2:35:33 PM

It is incredibly disappointing to hear that the Martinborough Library service is being reduced. If anything the service should be increased to seven days.

If any community service deserves support it is the library. It services all ages. I regularly visit the cafe after sport Tuesdays and Thursdays. It is always active with children and adults. In fact, I have a couple of friends whose grandchildren almost live at the Library. What an asset for their education.

It is also not fair on the Cafe business who I am sure took over the lease in good faith, understanding they would have custom from Library visitors.

What about all the locals who fundraised for the Waihinga Facility. It will become even more underutilised. How about somebody managing events? Perhaps this could be included in the Librarian's role (if there was the right person). Carterton Events Centre is alive. Martinborough dead. Please let's make the Waihinga Centre work. It is such an asset to this community.

I am sorry - an increase in rates because of the inefficient management of our waste system. Please look after the soul of this town. We're paying extra rates for stuff going down the drain. Let's look on the surface as well.

Very disappointed, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Changing Featherston Library Hours
Date: Tuesday, July 4, 2023 3:00:25 PM

Hi there,

I am just one of many who was dismayed, confused, and quite honestly taken aback at the news of the Featherston library now being closed on Wednesdays and Saturdays. I work as a [REDACTED] at Featherston School, and half of our classes now have to change their library days because of the Wednesday closure. Half of our school is affected with next to no notice. I don't drive, so having Saturdays cut out completely affects me greatly as well. The library is not only my second home, my primary source for reading material, my go-to for resources, but also the only place I can go to utilise services such as registering my dog. In addition to this, as a much broader point, Featherston is New Zealand's one and only Booktown! I don't know if you recall your own article on the matter, but we are even meant to be hosting the GLOBAL conference for the International Organisation of Booktowns next year!

<https://swdc.govt.nz/news/booktown-goes-global/>

We'll be a laughing stock to the 40 representatives of other booktowns around the world, if the changes go ahead. I remember the utter joy and pride I felt when hearing that my own hometown was chosen to be NZ's booktown. Now, what I feel is a crushing sense of disappointment and shame that, although we still hold the title of "Booktown", so very many families are being stripped of their access to free reading material. It feels extremely Anti-Booktown, if you ask me. I know countless people who work over the hill all through the week, and their only chance to visit the library is on a Saturday. The library is where people go to register their dogs, pay their rates, have important forms printed, or even just to source information. Families make trips to the library after visiting the market on a Saturday. It's part of their routine, and kids and adults alike love it. Our library is the heart and soul of our community, and it cannot be shut down willy-nilly like this. Cutting off access to necessary resources and services should never be seen as a "solution" to any problem. I was born and raised in Featherston, and am mostly very proud to still be living here, but it's decisions such as these that I cannot stand behind. It would be detrimental to countless families, mine included, and to our schools and the tamariki in them too. I sincerely hope there is an alternative conclusion reached, because what kind of a booktown would we be if this went ahead?

Best regards,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Submission on recent library changes
Date: Tuesday, July 4, 2023 4:28:02 PM

Good morning,

Thank you for agreeing to review the library hours changes. I agreed in the recent consultation that the libraries should not get the full grant, but that was only due to the fact that we need to cut the budget somewhere. I disagree fundamentally with having permanent closure of the libraries on some days.

I understand that it is inconvenient for a lot of people when the libraries close ad-hoc. However I fear that permanently closing on some days will exclude segments of our community from their use entirely. The library is so much more than just a place to borrow books. It's a social hub, a place of refuge, an information centre. When I moved to Martinborough it was a place to go with my daughter when I knew no-one. Several of my early connections were similar people using the library as somewhere to go when you didn't want to spend money but wanted out of the house. South Wairarapa has so few places that offer this respite and the mental benefits are huge.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Library Services
Date: Tuesday, July 4, 2023 6:02:43 PM

I am terribly disappointed that the SWDC have decided to cut Martinborough's Library hours. With more children and young adults turning to social media instead of reading, I would have thought the Council would take measures to encourage more hours not less! Reading is such an important attribute to young and old alike and I am going to miss the opportunity of popping into the library whenever I feel the need to renew my books. I have always relied on the library being open every day!!

This should have been a rate payer decision - we didn't get an opportunity to discuss this change.

[REDACTED]
Rate Payer

Sent from my iPhone

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Martinborough library
Date: Tuesday, July 4, 2023 7:09:49 PM

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to you today to express my feelings on the new opening hours of Mon, wed, Friday and every second day of the martinborough community library.

I am a [REDACTED] year old mother of 2, a [REDACTED] year old and a [REDACTED] month old. We currently spend every Tuesday morning at the library to join the librarians AMAZING story time. At this story time my kids have learnt to sit and listen to the librarian reading, sing along with their songs, dance to their dancing, socialise with other children near their age and much much more. We also spent at least 1-2 other morning during the week at the library, either playing and reading books or meeting other mums in the cafe or plunket area where the kids can read books and safely stay is our view. This is especially good in the colder months when it is too cold or wet to be playing outside.

Being a mum who has young children we also use the plunket area as a meeting space for new mums to meet, have a coffee, breastfeed and change our children and to just get out of the house for the benefit of our mental health. And yes I have tried breastfeeding in the cafe... it is not easy! Especially when I have had a toddler to look after too! This is the ONLY place in martinborough where I have felt 100% comfortable breastfeeding... I have been abused in local cafes, people near me have got up after staring at me and "huffing" because they don't want to be near it. This is more of a common issue than I ever realised... which is devastating... yet a different issue altogether! My point is this is a safe, warm and friendly space for all mothers to meet and feel welcome.

The library is also the only place you can go for a morning out that is FREE. And as we all know everything these days is rather expensive.... As much as I do like to treat myself to a lovely coffee at the cafe every now and then! Which brings me to my next point.... If people stop coming to the library then what happens to the cafe? It will eventually loss too much money and have to be sold or shut down. This is one of the only cafes in martinborough I can get my pram into! As well as many people who come in to the cafe who have wheelchairs or mobility scooters.... It would be heartbreaking to loose the ability to cater for EVERYONE in one place.

The librarians always put so much effort into have activities for the kids, either new book displays or computing in and the librarians all know my children by name... and my kids love them all! And I'm not sure what their position is but I know if my hours got cut my that many hours then I would be looking for a job elsewhere as soon as possible.... Who can afford to like of a part time wage these days...?

I really do hope that these hours get reconsidered for the benefit of our WHOLE community.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Library
Date: Tuesday, July 4, 2023 7:50:53 PM

SWDC - Submission to the reduced hours of the Martinborough library. I am very disappointed with the news of reduced hours to the Library. I was @ Knucklebones Cafe today & was staggered to see so many disappointed people, who were returning their library books & were hoping to choose their next bag full of books. Library was CLOSED. We have many retirees in our town - come on Council - wake up. We have given dollars to this venue - let's use it. So convenient to have Library, Toy Library, Cafe, money machine, clean toilets & Information Centre under the one roof. Hope our Councillors take time to rethink their decision in reducing the library hours. [REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: library opening hours
Date: Tuesday, July 4, 2023 9:02:05 PM

I was shocked to find the Martinborough library closed today when i went in to use the computer and to print out documents which I needed today (tuesday); I had to drive to Featherston library to print them instead.

A library seems to me to be an essential service in a community. I use it regularly for doing computer work, photocopying and printing jobs as well as for borrowing books.

As I drove to Featherston library I thought that this would not be an option for everyone, particularly elderly people, youth, or those on tight incomes, to drive to the next town to use the library. It is also not a wise move environmentally, when we're all trying to minimise petrol use, to require people to drive to another town to use the library. A library is a good use of our planetary resources, a shared community facility; we don't all have to own and run our own computers, printers photocopiers and books.... a wasteful practise. And the libraries help those who struggle with technology.

Today the Waihenga centre was full of people wanting to use the library, particularly because it is the school holidays.

Our rates are rising dramatically but a council service we pay for through our rates and which we depend on is cut back; it makes no sense. In particular I think it's really unfair to only open every second Saturday... this will make it very hard for workers and commuters to use the library (which they pay for). There will always be that confusion about which Saturday will be open and people cant plan around that or rely on its opening days. If you have to restrict hours (which i hope you don't) don't make it Saturdays. Saturdays are an important family time for libraries where working parents can take their children to the library.

The library plays an important role in many people's lives. I always see young people going in after school to use the computers and to read in a calm, peaceful space. Not all youth have computers or a space to chill out and read in their homes. The library should be homely, accessible and OPEN! Libraries are an essential service, we really can't compromise on this without having negative repercussions in the community down the line. I think many of us would see the library as the heart of the community.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Submission on South Wairarapa libraries
Date: Tuesday, July 4, 2023 9:03:32 PM

Dear Council,

I want to express my disappointment with the intention to close South Wairarapa libraries over some days during the week, particularly Featherston library on Saturdays.

South Wairarapa benefits annually from Featherston Booktown and the Young Readers Programme. It's a depressing state of affairs that the local authority is unable to resource local libraries sufficiently, in a region growing in its national reputation for literary promotion. Would it be more suitable for Featherston library to remain open on Saturdays in place of another, to support this reputation with visitors year round?

Have you consulted with the Booktown Board? Are there other funding options, collaborative, charitable or volunteering opportunities to sustain the service, besides rates revenue?

As a commuter, the best time I get to spend in Featherston is on a weekend. It's frustrating to learn of the prospect of another service no longer being available to me.

I hope you will consider creative alternatives to maintain this service in our community's leisure time.

Thank you

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Kaitlyn Carmichael- Lead policy advisor](#); [Amanda Bradley- General Manager, Policy & Governance](#)
Subject: FW: FYI: Council to review library opening days
Date: Wednesday, July 5, 2023 11:25:36 AM
Attachments: [image001.jpg](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)

During my drop in sessions at the Library on a Wednesday I was made aware that Featherston School no longer have a school library as they needed the extra classroom. They instead use the town library and it was always lovely to see the children visiting.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Our Library
Date: Wednesday, July 5, 2023 6:13:37 PM

What is happening with the South Wairarapa District?

A visit to our library yesterday only to find, with no prior notice or even information at the library, it is closed.

The web site still has our usual opening hours advertised.

Martinborough residents readily supported and generously donated to the building of our Town Hall Centre.

We have an excellent new library. It is used by residents of all ages, especially encouraging our younger readers,

but is not now providing the service we ratepayers deserve.

The Town Hall, sadly, is not being promoted as a wonderful venue. Carterton Events Centre is a fantastic example of

a well used and managed Community Centre providing valuable extra finance to their Council.

Knucklebones is a great

cafe and meeting place for all with time spent at the library as well. Their business will suffer financially with restricted days.

Our rates have just been hugely increased and many residents will be affected by this as well as the cost of living.

It is time the Council listened to and showed some consideration for their long suffering ratepayers please.

There is no justification at all for taking away one of the few services we enjoy with library closures.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Library Opening Days
Date: Thursday, July 6, 2023 11:07:26 AM

I wish to register my strong objection to the reduced library opening days implemented from 1 July 2023.

I was not aware of the change until visiting the library on 3 July as, it would appear, is the case for many residents. The way, the inclusion of the budget to cover staff leave and the likely impact if not included, was described in the proposed Annual Plan was at best equivocal and at worst disingenuous.

Our Martinborough library provides an essential service to the community. It is astonishing to see that the cut to hours has been implemented during the school holidays when families are taking advantage of its services even more than usual. I note that Saturday opening is no longer available for the Featherston library. This is a harsh blow to the community especially for those that are in employment.

In addition to the reduction of library hours letting our rangatahi down, access to resources and computers is essential to support the community and literacy in particular. It must be remembered that the library is more than a place to borrow books. It provides a safe place for children, a place for elderly to read the newspaper, ongoing holiday activities, copying and printing facilities and access to computers to name a few. The Council cannot assume that all children, students and residents have access to computers at home. As you know we do not have any Government agencies, Post Office or Bank where those without computers can access some help. Once again, the most vulnerable of our community with so little voice are affected. The library is their only option and in Martinborough their access has now been reduced by more than 30%.

The Council's commitment and contact with the wider community is not discretionary. A functioning library is part of that picture. Without a cohesive community what does the town have?

One has to wonder at Council's commitment to the town, after encouraging them to raise many millions for what is now a very attractive facility it now wishes to diminish its accessibility and use with this short sighted change.

I would urge Council to reconsider its decision and reinstate the library opening hours.

Yours faithfully

[REDACTED]

From: [Enquiries](#)
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: FW: New submission from Provide Feedback
Date: Thursday, July 6, 2023 10:27:59 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

From: enquiries@swdc.govt.nz <enquiries@swdc.govt.nz>
Sent: Thursday, July 6, 2023 9:48 AM
To: Enquiries <enquiries@swdc.govt.nz>
Subject: New submission from Provide Feedback

Name
[REDACTED]
Your organisation (if relevant)
Nil
Email
[REDACTED]
Phone
[REDACTED]
Your preferred method of contact
Email
Would you like someone to call you to discuss this issue in more detail?
No

Please enter details of your compliment or complaint, being as specific as possible

While I can understand library hours being shortened, I think it's unfortunate Featherston library wasn't given a Saturday given that is the only day working people can use it. This includes workers with children under 5

What is your desired solution?

I'd like Featherston library to be given at least 2 Saturdays per month. You must realize that considering Featherston is a BOOK TOWN drastically reducing library hours is not a good look!

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Submission on South Wairarapa libraries
Date: Monday, July 3, 2023 9:40:18 PM

Dear Council,

I am writing to say that I disagree with your decision to close South Wairarapa libraries some days as a cost-saving exercise.

I would like to see Featherston Library open on Saturday mornings. My son goes to the library on Wednesday for his school. You are taking away services which have seen a 30% increase over the last three years.

Miss Penny was in tears on Friday, is this how you treat valued members of your workforce or community? She is the epitome of librarian kaupapa but you seem ignorant of this fact.

The Mayor can sit at my business on a Saturday morning and not buy anything. Should I charge him for this service?

I also think that:

- You might want to reconsider the word salad you use when communicating.
- As per the terms, saving 165k to charge us 4 million more is not reasonable
- How does dropping 5.5 days across all three libraries equal 165k a year?
- when you made a lm announcement of fb on 16 June saying the public had agreed to spend more on water than libraries, all the comments mentioned how amazing the libraries were and not to cut services. That might have been a good clue as to how the public are feeling
- the mayor saying you can just goto other towns for the Saturday library service is short sighted. What about people who don't drive, or can't afford too?

The library is a really valuable service for our community. It provides shelter, education, friendship and entertainment. It helps kids learn to read, teenagers find graphic novels, old people get online, and commuters find books to read on the train. I don't have to kill the environment by buying more books. I can read up on the history of the Wairarapa. I'm really invested in keeping Featherston Library open on Saturdays and Wednesdays and look forward to hearing the outcome.

Ngā mihi nui

[REDACTED]
A rate payer both here and at Masterton District Council so comparing communications has been interesting

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Library hours
Date: Monday, July 3, 2023 7:30:23 PM

Dear sir/madam,

As a resident of Featherston I do understand SWDC has to consider costs of operation and as a result the reduction of library hours and other services.

I do support the choice to pick fixed days to open. It makes planning easier.

I do NOT support the inequitable access to be libraries between towns that is proposed by the council. This is highly disappointing.

People working in Featherston have lost all access to the facilities and will be forced to travel under the current proposal while a fair system would prevent this.

The working class of Featherston contributes significantly to the SWDC rates and are locked out of the service while this is not needed if the council would consider a more equitable approach. Just travel as suggested by the Mayor on Facebook isn't always an option considering the costs of petrol as well as time constraints. Simply opening up a Saturday in Featherston would mitigate this.

The Saturdays are the only day some of the families can take their children to the library, taking away this option can have a significant impact on the literacy and academic performance of these children. Considering the lower socioeconomic demographic of Featherston compared with the other towns, these children already have enough barriers. Simply opening a Saturday would mitigate this.

I suggest each library opens at least one Saturday a month in each town. This would not increase costs to the council and would ensure equitable outcomes for the population.

The remaining Saturdays could be assigned for the town with the total shortest travel time from that library the other towns (being Greytown 27 mins, Featherston 26, Martinborough 31).

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Library hours - feedback
Date: Friday, July 7, 2023 12:46:04 PM

To whom it may concern -

I'm officially sending through my views on the library opening hours.

When SWDC asked for feedback on library funding in the 23/24 Annual Plan consultation document, it was made very clear in the document that the extra \$166,000 you wanted feedback on was “a pool of casual Library staff to cover leave”. That meant that what was at risk (in the eyes of those making submissions) was some occasional and irregular closures due to staff leave--NOT systemic cuts to library opening hours across the board. Had you made that clear in the consultation document, your public response would have no doubt been very different.

The fact that the SWDC took advantage of the situation to make drastic and systemic cuts that were NOT consulted on has eroded not only my trust in the Council, but (based on the social media response) the trust of many in our local community. I urge you to undo the damage you've done and return the libraries to their normal hours.

In particular, Saturday hours every weekend are critical--in Featherston, Greytown and Martinborough. Many Wairarapa residents commute to Wellington or the Hutt during the week, and we need regular and dependable Saturday hours--even if it's just the morning. This 'every second Saturday' business will be too hard for residents to track, not line up with when books are due, and eventually lead to no customers on Saturdays at all.

Below is the letter I sent to the Wairarapa Times Age, which appeared on 6 July, and which clarifies my further views.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

Where's the consultation?

Recently a stream of residents was shocked and angered when it was announced that SWDC has ruthlessly cut library hours in a significant and systemic manner across Featherston, Greytown, and Martinborough. The announcement was made on the Wairarapa Library Services Facebook page.

Why was everyone so surprised and angry? Wasn't this covered in the 23/24 Annual Plan consultation document? No, it wasn't.

Nowhere in that consultation document did it say that SWDC were planning on systematically cutting library hours. According to that document, the only thing on the table was “a pool of

casual Library staff to cover leave”. That is very different from asking the community if we would like to systematically reduce library hours. In fact, multiple days have been completely cut from the regular schedule.

This shows an egregious lack of transparency by the council. SWDC have utterly failed to meet their basic duties in consultation.

In addition, SWDC has shown itself to be extremely short sighted. It is a well-known fact that libraries make a huge contribution to fostering a literate community. Higher literacy rates are shown to be associated with less crime, higher earnings, and higher employment rates, and it improves the development of the wider community.

Reducing library hours does not increase literacy – it does quite the opposite. Reducing library hours harms communities. Failing to consult properly does the same.



Martinborough

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Library opening hours
Date: Thursday, July 6, 2023 8:28:53 AM

Thanks for opening this for discussion.

I think that all four small towns - Carterton, Greytown, Featherston and Martinborough - should have the same opening hours. Those hours should include Saturday mornings.

Perhaps the budget available could be made to work by having the libraries open a little later or close a little earlier? The librarians will know when the libraries are quiet - but my guess is that from 4-5pm there isn't much happening and the staff would probably appreciate getting home a little earlier.

Best wishes

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Library hours
Date: Thursday, July 6, 2023 12:20:04 PM

I would like to put in a submission for the library hours and would like Saturday mornings to stay as I'm a pensioner enjoy my Saturday morning to the library after the market but I know workers can only get to the library on a Saturday and take their children making it a family morning outing.. Thanking you .. [REDACTED] ..

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Library hours
Date: Thursday, July 6, 2023 1:53:05 PM

Hello

I and my wife are regular users of our local library in Greytown.

My suggestion would be to look to other options for hours rather than closing for entire days

Monday would be a sensible day for a total closure and perhaps save more hours by starting/finishing hours adjustment.

The other aspect of this would be that workload for staff may stay the same, with reduced hours to complete their work.

Have you considered using volunteers?

Regards

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: objection to cutting library opening hours
Date: Thursday, July 6, 2023 2:04:25 PM

I object to the Council's decision to cut the hours of opening of its libraries. The original consultation with the public on this matter indicated 50% of people making submissions wanted to keep the \$165,000 budgeted to cover staff on leave. The Council indicated that removing this amount from the budget would mean that libraries would be closed four days a month. In fact, the Martinborough library is now being closed the equivalent of ten days a month which is far more than the Council had previously suggested.

The libraries are an important community resource and a large amount was committed to the Martinborough one when the Waihinga Centre was built. It is particularly important that the library is open on Saturdays as this is when families can come together. People working full time cannot come on weekdays and children only have limited time to come after school.

I would like to see the libraries open six days a week even if this means reduced staff on some days or the use of volunteers. The library is important in many different ways. It is a social centre, particularly for children, parents, elderly and the poor. The café at the Martinborough site is linked to the library and would be affected by the closing of the library on ten days a month. This amount of reduction could even make the café's viability threatened.

I'm happy for my comments to be made public.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Submission regarding Featherston Library Opening Hours
Date: Thursday, July 6, 2023 4:09:19 PM

Kia ora.

I am writing in regards to the recent changes to the opening hours of the Featherston Library. While I acknowledge certain fiscal cuts need to be made to keep rates as low as responsibly possible, I do not agree with the decision to close the Featherston Library on Saturdays.

As a commuter town, there are many residents who can only use the Library on Saturdays. As the WLS website states, our libraries offer many more services than just loaning books. So these services also become inaccessible to many ratepayers.

I would ask that when important decisions like these need to be made, that community surveys might be made available to gauge community value and usage, before any major decisions like days of opening are made.

I do acknowledge this time of frugality, but even more reason why community involvement is crucial.

Ngā mihi

[REDACTED]
Featherston ratepayer.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Reduced library hours
Date: Friday, July 7, 2023 8:49:41 AM

To whom it may concern,

I am opposed to the reduction of library hours throughout South Wairarapa. The libraries are a vital community hub, providing not only books but a haven for anyone who might need it. The libraries offer free wifi, warmth and security, and many other services in support of the community. The staff are always friendly and helpful, often having in-depth knowledge of the local community in which they are based.

If funding is an issue perhaps focus attention on how libraries can be used in new ways thereby further enhancing what each town can offer both locals and visitors alike.

In tough times like these, our libraries are needed more than ever before. In the interests of all, please reconsider your stance on reducing the opening hours of our libraries.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Feedback on library opening days
Date: Friday, July 7, 2023 2:37:02 PM

Kia ora,

I just wanted to express my disappointment over the reduction in service of Featherston library, and other South Wairarapa Libraries in the new hours announced last week.

My [REDACTED]-year old son and I have Wednesdays off together and for the past two years we have biked down to Featherston Library nearly every week. On first reading these changes I was devastated that our special ritual was taken from us with no notice. When I told my son he was baffled and upset – why is it closed? But this is our library day? It is very hard to stomach a big rate rise when the community asset we make most use of will now be all but inaccessible to us. We can't simply change our day due to day-care hours and work schedules. All in all it's pretty heart-breaking. The library has helped foster a love of reading in our son and we will miss this place terribly.

The library is much more than just a place for books – and we see that whenever we visit. We change over our books, do some printing, partake in activities or story times, play with the legos and train tracks and often stay for well over an hour. In that time I have never seen the library not busy – and we always see at least one school group of around 20 children, sometimes more. In fact, as I understand it, Featherston School – which has no library of its own - has at least half the school attend Featherston Library on a Wednesday. Much of the discussion around Featherston library changes has focussed on the Saturday opening – which I agree is vital, but I would urge you to look at all the days of the week. Many folks can't just change the day they go to the library and some people do go every day.

People come in to get books, pay council fees, buy rubbish bags, and make general enquiries as the Featherston library is a one stop shop for all of these things, and our resources like this as a town are very limited. It's a hub for young and old, a warm and welcoming very special taonga that is very dear to our community. I think some of the broader use of the library has been lost in the discussions I've seen – it's a public space, in winter it's warm, for some people it's the only warm, free space they can be. I work adjacent to the Carterton library and there are everyday regulars who come here because they have nowhere else to go – I'm sure the same is true of all the libraries in the South Wairarapa Region. We are talking about people's sense of belonging, their basic needs, their access to education and literacy here – none of these are "nice-to-haves".

I know the WLS have done everything they can to maintain their service levels, and it's so sad the council chose not to keep this resource accessible to all. As it stands many of the librarians I have spoken to have said they are already pushed for time to do the library work like weeding and shuffling that is so important in their work, simply because they are so busy with the public actually using the library. Reducing hours means concentrating these people across fewer days – and even less time available for the library staff to maintain a high standard of work and keep the library functioning well and thriving rather than just surviving.

Some thoughts on potential solutions might be:

- As a first point of call I think having at least an alternate Saturday would be important for Featherston's working and commuting population.
- \$165,000 seems pretty small-fry in the context of council budgets – would it be possible to use funding from say other areas like new acquisitions or other areas of council to supplement libraries? Taking funding from other projects by extending their timeline for completion?
- Could the libraries be open every day but with reduced hours?

Lastly, thank you for responding to the public outcry by requesting further submissions on this topic and the hosting of an informal meeting with elected members of council and the Featherston Community Board. Thank you for taking the time to listen to your community – I hope we can reach a point where this decision can be 'unmade'.

I give my consent for this email (with personal details removed) to be shared publicly.

Ngā mihi,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: library scheduling feedback
Date: Friday, July 7, 2023 4:12:35 PM

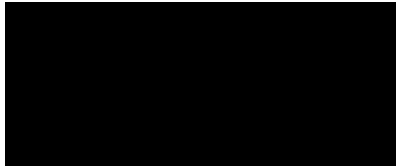
Kia ora tatou

I would ideally like the 3 South Wairarapa branches to have no reduction of hours at all. The library and the accessibility to its collections and services is vitally important to all of us. The list of benefits to our communities and our wellbeing is well established and proven, please make sure that we all continue to have equitable access.

Open every Saturday for ALL branches should be standard, it allows those who work, commute and are otherwise unable to get to the library during the week, access. Regular weekend access is a must, at the minimum.

I use the Greytown branch regularly, I can't speak to the other branches but when you close the Greytown branch you stop access to the toilet facilities, the meeting spaces and the visitor information office (that shares information about all the South Wairarapa towns). I'm sure the Greytown Community Board might be interested in this intended or unintended side effect of your scheduling choices

Thanks



Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: New Library Hours
Date: Saturday, July 8, 2023 1:08:07 PM

It has been made clear that the library budget cannot be increased for this financial year. Understood.

Meanwhile....

I would like to see the Featherston library open every Saturday for the following reasons:

- Featherston is Booktown. It can hardly accept that title when, what appears to be the busiest day in town, the library is closed. (A full day would be preferred but 4 hours is preferable to no hours)
- to enable the hundreds of commuters a chance to use the library facilities.
- to enable working parents to visit the library with their children
- for social and reference/reading reasons.... book issuing is not the only reason a library exists.
- for those who are, for whatever reason, unable to travel elsewhere to collect ordered books.

Suggestions to be considered when reviewing the hours:

- librarians are consulted, as they have the statistics and can consult users
- the library has more user friendly hours on Saturdays.... 10am to 2pm or 11am to 3pm....
- weekday hours are reduced at either beginning or end of the day.
- open days are consistent.... barring illness
- (People seem to have enough confusion caused by recycling collection days.... best not to add to this)
- to reduce librarians workload, a more reliable, and, fool proof self issuing and returning system for books is installed.

I consent to this information being used but without my name.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Feedback on reducing budget for casual librarian staff
Date: Saturday, July 8, 2023 2:13:18 PM

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this issue. Happy to have my feedback posted on the website.

Within my sphere of the community it would seem there is no support for the councils majority vote to remove the budget for casual librarians within the South Wairarapa. Lets be clear this is a council decision and not a public decision following a consultation process, which perhaps some media comments may suggest.

I have concerns about the consultation and deliberations process, particularly in relation to how the information was presented.

After reading the consultation document, much is made of increasing budget for water and roading, however the only options provided for budget cuts were casual librarians and community grants. The tone seemed to be increase budget for these vital options and reduce budget for less vital options. The general public could be misled to view this as a "one or the other" situation or rank in importance. When you read the public feedback from the deliberation report, a number of comments mention that water is more important than the library which supports this idea. (See deliberations report on council website)

I'm unsure whether the council was presented with the deliberations report as part of the voting process. If so the 4 options are all skewed against the casual librarian budget. Options 2, 3 and 4 in the document site **significant community support** for those options. All options had the librarian casual budget removed.

Significant community support is a stretch of epic proportions. 152 submissions were received on the casual librarian budget option. 50% voted to keep it in the 23/24 budget. 50% voted to have it removed, bearing in mind my previous comments. The SWDC notes that less than 2% of ratepayers responded to the public consultation. Perhaps the council is disconnected and needs more information to make these decisions. I would presume the community boards who represent and advocate for the community would have their fingers on the pulse of community sentiment. The decision to reduce hours in Featherston is embarrassing given that Featherston is positioning itself as " NZs only Booktown".

To put into perspective removing the budget item for casual librarians accounts for 0.5% of SWDC revenue. I understand the COL crisis requires that councils review every budget line, but why choose this cost centre? It is purely a budget as the SWDC state and there seemed some ideas that could lessen the need for this budget (volunteer librarians for example). Library use has increased by 30% over recent times. The library is one place we can go to where we don't need to spend money for entertainment, providing its open. It allows social connection, which is waning as has been well documented.

From a council perspective, I could imagine the challenges of an apathetic public. Engagement of all

groups within the community is so important for decision making. As humans we make mistakes, and from this perhaps the community will learn to be more engaged on public consultation and voting. My family's request would be that the council roll-back its decision and re-instate the budget for casual librarians. Acknowledging the mis-step based on a lack of information may be an opportunity to foster improved community engagement.

Cheers

A solid black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the sender.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Library hours - feedback
Date: Tuesday, July 4, 2023 7:31:25 PM

Kia Ora

Sending my comments on the changes to the library open days and hours; focusing on Featherston where my whānau reside.

Please reinstate a weekend day option for people like my husband who work full time Mon to Fri and cannot get to the library during week days.

With no weekend option, my husband cannot take my two tamariki to the library or use any services provided by the library. I'm sure this also inconveniences many other working people.

We would be in favour of having it open on Saturday considering many families have Sunday engagements i.e. sports and swimming lessons or church.

Also FYI my son's class (at [REDACTED] School) and other classrooms had been using the library for excursions every Wednesday. Hopefully they are still able to get out to the library with this day being closed.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Library Hours Submission
Date: Friday, July 7, 2023 3:19:48 PM
Attachments: [REDACTED]

Good afternoon,

I am making a very brief submission, as requested on the SWDC website, concerning the opening hours of SWDC libraries.

I live in Featherston, and was concerned to see Library hours reduced, especially with weekend opening being removed from Featherston Library completely (notably being kept at both Martinborough and Greytown- two communities obviously already wealthier and more privileged than Featherston). While other (Martinborough & Greytown) library hours were reduced more, I think the Saturday reduction in Featherston would have a proportionally more negative impact, largely due to the high number of commuters and less privileged people in Featherston. The removal of a Saturday in Featherston would obviously mean people who work normal (ie. somewhere between 7am and 6pm weekdays) working hours would not be able to access the library at all.

I urge SWDC to reconsider the move to reduce opening hours, and instead consider raising these funds from another source (increasing rates on derelict urban commercial buildings, for example).

Cheers,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Featherston Library Closure
Date: Friday, July 7, 2023 4:51:56 PM

Dear Council,

I am writing to say that I strongly disagree with your decision to close South Wairarapa libraries some days as a cost-saving exercise.

My family and I would like to see Featherston Library open again on Wednesday and Saturdays or at least on a rotating schedule with other South Wairarapa libraries.

I've lived in Featherston for 10 years, and my family and I love visiting our local library, especially with my children, who are avid readers. Saturday mornings are my kids and my library time as I work during the week. We love spending time there reading books and chatting with our lovely librarians.

I would also like to add that Penny Griffin is a highly-valued and much-loved librarian, and my kids have grown up seeing her friendly smile and book recommendations every time they visit the library. If anything, she deserves a kinighood for all she does for the community. The idea that she and the other librarians in South Wairarapa are being sidelined/facing unemployment is extremely disappointing & infuriating, especially when the money being talked about isn't that much in the grand scheme of things, and compare to other much (much) bigger financial concerns.

I understand tough choices have to be made (in all areas), but the consultation on this issue was extremely misleading. It seems to me (from the outside looking in), that these cost-cutting measures were always on the cards, but were hidden within misleading wording - as evidenced by your Instagram post on June 16 that said:

South Wairarapa District Council (SWDC) wishes to correct recent misinformation shared in social media about the proposed 2023/24 Annual Plan funding for the Wairarapa Library Service.

I would also like to express my dismay at some of the comments made by councillors on social media in reply to residents expressing their disappointment at the changes. The Mayor's comment that Featherston residents could drive to other libraries on Saturdays is both insulting and out of touch with the realities of our community, where people still use public transport to get around and can't afford to travel to other towns for that reason.

I welcome the Mayor's statement regarding the possible reverting to previous hours

and look forward to Featherston getting their Wednesdays and Saturdays back.

I hope that the SWDC will listen to reason and reconsider these decisions and also show due consideration to the welfare of our valued librarians who do so much for the literacy of our tamariki.

Sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the author.

Featherston resident / Author

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Featherston Library Hours Feedback
Date: Friday, July 7, 2023 5:47:42 PM

Hi,
Please consider this my official request for the Featherston Library working hours to be extended to Saturday, for at least half the day.

Thank you,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: library submission Featherston
Date: Friday, July 7, 2023 6:03:58 PM

Hi submission from [REDACTED] as follows
cut back book spending budgets
council needs to take money to pay workers from council administration budget as they do
councils job by taking payments for some of the things listed as you took all local councils
away by closing them and putting them in library assuring us the library was open business
hours to these things for example dog rego, Rates and water bill payments, building consents
,rubbish bag sales , council venue bookings and rates rebates just to name a few things and
you get paid by public for these services so you should be putting money into the library kitty
to help pay library running expenses. The swdc needs to rethink and leave the services alone.
cutdown staff levels use volunteers who need to community work for shelving mending etc .
Take people on who are studying and need work experience all ways of volunteer labour while
doing a service to community . There is many tasks they can complete and be a proactive
member the community in our Library that would help them cover staff who are away on
leave or illness as you just a regular roster of volunteers in every week . Thats how it was
when library only had 1 Librian and if she was off sick she a had a relief person and the
volunteers to help man library . you could get rid of wairarapa library service since they come
on board we have blown the budget with the lavish spending costs . Take things back in house
as way it was and Libraries are pretty much able to do there own thing and just report to who
is in SWDC thats in charge . Employ a in house cleaner not commerical business that charge
so much which doesn't help councils operating costs. I
I won't be available to read this but my views on this [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Library Opening Hours
Date: Saturday, July 8, 2023 11:51:43 AM

I support Council revisiting the opening hours. The Library always scores top in the satisfaction survey and is now having restricted access. Even for those that are not regular library users it is still an essential service that is available when needed. (Rates, dogs registration, rubbish bags, photocopying, scanning, newspapers, wifi)

I hope there is consultation with the staff as to what they see is achievable without having casual cover available.

The opening hours across the District should be equitable.

Sincerely

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Featherston library hours
Date: Sunday, July 9, 2023 9:19:30 AM

Submission re: Featherston Library

As a current school principal (19 years) and 35 years in teaching I would implore you not to reduce in any way the operation of the Featherston library its opening hours and services.

People are struggling to pay for essentials in their homes in terms of mortgages, petrol and food. Access to books is a lifeline to many elderly, unemployed and parents with children.

A small picture book in NZ costs around \$30 to buy. This is out of the budget for many parents.

If we are to lift literacy achievement and therefore economical wealth for the country and region by having highly literate people, they need access to books, for free, especially on weekends. If there are to be closures then richer communities like Greytown and Martinborough would be much better placed.

I grew up in a household where we could not afford to buy books and my father was illiterate. The local library was a lifeline and got me on a path to reading and to education. Without access to a small community library my life would have been very different. Digital devices and reading online is not the same and not an appropriate substitute for selecting books in a library each week.

Please find other ways to reduce costs if this is indeed a cost cutting exercise. Many Featherston people have little petrol money to drive to another town. Featherston continues to be deprioritised in the South Wairarapa. Please consider other areas to reduce costs to the ratepayer eg. Reducing staffing salary costs, removing ineffective and superfluous meetings, poorly planned projects and general overheads at the council itself as a first option closely followed by considering what can be reduced in the wealthier communities of Greytown and Martinborough. Other councils are creating hubs for their communities. I would suggest we look at how to expand services for Featherston, not reduce them. Our elderly and people at home with little to new transport options need a library open every Saturday without fail.

Happy to talk more on the importance of libraries to build healthy and wealthy communities at your convenience.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Library closure consultation
Date: Sunday, July 9, 2023 10:38:40 AM

Kia ora

The question posed during the Annual Report consultation failed to convey that reducing funding of \$160,000 would result in the partial closure of all of the South Wairapa libraries (excluding Carterton). Had this been better articulated, the response (based on the current community reaction to the closures) would undoubtedly have been quite different.

The reduced hours was also poorly conveyed to the public. Communication has to be broader than social media channels such as facebook to reach the whole community. The rapidity of the changes was also of concern for a decision that was clearly going to have an impactful (negative) reaction from residents.

As many submitters have already commented, libraries hold a pivotal place within the community. Libraries are our portal to learning and enrichment, deliver Council administrative functions which often have a regulatory role e.g. submission of dog registrations, provide essential IT services at no or minimal cost to users who otherwise have no access to these, and are an important place of connection for our communities.

The closures are particularly impactful on Featherston residents as with no Saturday service, access to library services for a large segment of those who work Monday to Friday out of town, are now non-existent.

The Featherston closures are also out of alignment and intent of Featherston's increasingly high profile as New Zealand's only Booktown, an initiative that the community are overwhelmingly proud and supportive of. A limited library service will simply signal to visitors that books and its artefacts are not valued.

Of all the positive services within our communities, libraries rank highly. We don't need our towns to be slipping further backwards and I ask that the Council reconsider and reinstate this essential service which provides so much to our community and wider society.

I consent to this submission being made available to the public (anonymised).

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Featherston Library opening hours
Date: Sunday, July 9, 2023 12:06:11 PM

I'm out of town at the moment but when I'm in Featherston I love to visit and use library services.

It is a key town resource and a free indoor place for people to be.

It also is essential that our young and old have access to free reading material, free internet and many use the librarian services including for getting things printed off or sent via the internet if they haven't got this at home, which is a way of ensuring equitable access to digital technology.

Saturdays are a key family day and for many working parents it may be the only day they have available to visit with their children and get out books and enjoy the library. My kids are grown up now but as a young sole parent the library was an integral spot for me and my kids. Is there a way to have locals volunteer at the library to help maintain hours ?

I understand (rightly or wrongly from online discussion) that we have only a small pool of locally available librarians for the Sth Wairarapa and it is the cost of casuals that increases costs of opening if there is sickleave.

I think Saturday needs to have some opening hours

Say 10am -2pm

Week days are also important but like Saturdays could be less hours, 10- 4pm perhaps ?

If there had to be a closed day what about a Tuesday ? Or have reduced services only open 10-12 that day?

It seems so much closes on a Tuesday in Featherston, which during weekends has become quite vibrant, so it seems counterintuitive to have that as the day the library is shut.

Regards

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Feedback libraries
Date: Sunday, July 9, 2023 1:54:17 PM

Kia ora

I've been disappointed about the sudden and unexpected decision to cut library services in South Wairarapa.

Since we moved to Greytown in 2011, we have been regular users of Library services in Featherston, Greytown and Martinborough. The quality of service has been excellent. Your Librarians always helpful and attentive. I credit our [REDACTED] year old sons abilities as a great reader in huge part to the wonderful selection of books we have borrowed over the years.

As a commuter travelling 5 days a week into Wellington, Saturdays are the one day of week when I can visit the Library. Knowing they are open and we can pop in every Saturday had become part of our weekly routine. The plans to restrict openings on Saturday will impact how often we can visit. There are many 100s of commuters in a similar situation.

In particular the decision to not open on a Saturday in Featherston seems short sighted. Surely you should be supporting opportunities to avail of library services at the weekend. You are removing this as an option for those living in Featherston.

For Greytown does this not also affect access to the building itself during the existing hours. Who will manage access to the building which is used by the community providing information for visitors, access to toilets and use of building itself?

I suspect as well that visitors will forget which days library is open during month and just won't bother going resulting in reduction of visits.

I would ask that you reconsider the hours you are suggesting and support opening hours on Saturday thought the South Wairarapa. It is so important that for young readers in particular that they can easily access books to support their reading and learning. Literacy is so key to a good education.

I am happy fir you to share any of my comments.

Yours sincerely [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Library closures
Date: Sunday, July 9, 2023 3:13:41 PM

I was shocked and disappointed to see that Featherston library would be losing Saturday service, and feel misled by the limited public consultation on this matter.

I am not personally dependent on the library being open on Saturdays, but I feel compelled to speak on behalf of those who are - people who may be under-represented in submissions due to their limited time and resources.

It was apparent how out-of-touch our councillors are when one suggested that Featherston residents simply drive to Greytown or Martinborough to use the libraries there - given the cost of petrol, the fact many library users do not have a car, and the environmental impact, this is a disappointing take. Saturday is Featherston's busiest day, when many residents visit the fruit and vegetable market and those working Monday to Friday have the opportunity to shop.

Libraries are not just for checking out books, but are, for residents on the lowest incomes, the only place where they can copy documents, pay council bills and use the internet. These residents, who pay the same rates as everyone else, directly or indirectly, are often working Monday to Friday on the lowest wages. They cannot simply visit during the week and they are unlikely to be able to visit the region's other libraries. They are simply losing all access to a service they pay for.

I expect to see our rangatahi heavily disadvantaged by this move as well, with those without internet access at home hurt the most - Featherston does not have a highschool, so all of our young people commute from Greytown or Masterton, with limited time to use the library on weekdays, especially after accounting for after school activities.

While I appreciate that spending has to be cut somewhere; I hope this move will be reconsidered. For Featherston to be the only library deprived of weekend opening hours is manifestly unjust.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: FEATHERSTON LIBRARY CLOSURES
Date: Sunday, July 9, 2023 3:41:04 PM

SUBMISSION AGAINST THE CLOSING OF FEATHERSTON LIBRARY ON WEDNESDAY & SATURDAY

Featherston library was opened in 1896, debt free, on land given to the town by Mr Alfred Matthews & has been going strong since then. Yet, here we are in 2023 restricting access to the public on two days a week! In my opinion, this us a backward step, especially as it is now the Service Centre for the South Wairarapa District Council, where residents can conduct their business, get information, pay rates, register dogs, as well as borrow books etc.

Featherston is a commuter town, so some people are only able to use the Library/Service Centre on Saturday mornings. For some, especially new residents, it can be the only opportunity to meet people & get information - a one stop shop.

Our Library is a favourite destination for children, enhancing their lives through literacy & knowledge & which should be available, at the very least 5 1/2 days a week.

I have lived & paid rates in Featherston for 36yrs & have regarded our Library as 'the heart' of the town, which enhances the sense of community which we treasure. Our librarians are our friends & we theirs, they do a fantastic job.

The savings from these changes are minimal, not to mention the job losses involved, so I think that more harm than good will come of these closures.

[REDACTED]

I am happy for my comments to be published.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Library opening hours
Date: Sunday, July 9, 2023 3:51:29 PM

Hello, I wish to add my very loud voice to the growing protest of proposed changes to Featherston library hours. Most people have commented on the fact that our commuters will have no access to their local library, except during their holidays I guess. They pay rates for the service too. Otherwise they will have to leave town and spend time and petrol travelling. The Saturday family experience gone too. the love of books and reading is bred in the warm and safe family environment of a library. I believe there are options. Keep Saturday times, shut three/four mornings a week, kids at schools with their own libraries anyway, and maybe stay open later one night to accommodate commuters. Pretty sure the morning closures will help redistribute the funds and maybe even save money. It will take an experienced person using spreadsheet software to create a roster. And maybe the odd volunteer could be included to assist staff with the basic duties. A list of volunteers could be drawn up. Be creative.

Sent from my iPad

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Library Hours
Date: Sunday, July 9, 2023 4:44:57 PM

Thanks for the opportunity to comment on the recently announced reduced library hours for South Wairarapa District. My submission will be brief.

I understand that the vote not to allocate funding for a pool of casual staff to cover leave is not reversible and that sometimes as a result, the library in Featherston will be closed due to staff being on leave of various kinds.

My preference is that Featherston Library is open according to its hours before any closures came into effect, that is, open every day except Sunday. I understand that the library may need to close sometimes if staff are on leave.

If this is not possible, and some regular reduction in hours must occur, my preference is that the closed days are during the week and not on Saturdays.

My reason for this is that many people, including myself, work in town during the week, and Saturday is the day that we can visit the library. The library is more than just a place to get books out. It is a key attraction in town and a visible Council presence. It is important to maintain this in our town. I do note that weekday opening is important for our school kids and parents with young children.

I appreciate very much the time and effort Councilors and Community Board members have put into addressing this issue recently.

Thanks again.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Objection to the Library Opening Hours
Date: Monday, July 10, 2023 8:58:06 AM

I object to the Council's decision to cut the hours of opening of its libraries. I am a pensioner and I rely on the Library for my reading material which is a large part of my life. I cannot afford to buy books and magazines. The closing of the Library two days a week and every second Saturday gets me in a slight panic. To me it is an important resource for all the community. Working people need to use the Library on Saturday mornings and school children during the holiday and after school. Surely it could be open five and a half days a week with either volunteers or workers on the living wage for some of the hours or days. I would volunteer.

It saddens me to think of all the fund raising by the community for the Waihinga Centre and now a major part of it will be closed to the public, what a waste.

I'm happy for my comments to be made public.

Regards

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Library hours feedback
Date: Monday, July 10, 2023 12:13:53 PM

Good afternoon.

Thankyou for the opportunity to voice our concerns around the new library hours. As a rate payer and a mum of primary school children I am disappointed in the reduction of hours that our library will operate.

Rural communities rely on the library services to connect with others, access the internet, keep connected with community issues and current affairs.

There has been a lot of talk around the lack of resources available to children in our community and the library is one of them. My daughters happen to be the biggest borrowers on file at the Martinborough library and they are really disappointed that the service is being reduced. They aren't sporty so their options are even more limited which is exasperated by the new library hours.

It is my belief that the library is a community hub that many people utilize and find it hard to stomach given the continuous increase in rates with a reduction in services. It's a hard story to sell I must admit.

In addition to the consequences this will have on my children, what about the business that operate out of the space. No one will go in there if the library is closed. Locals don't need the info centre and given we are the ratepayers our needs should matter. Many young parents and new to the area people use that cafe to catch up and tie it in with a visit to the library. Reading physical books should be encouraged in this increasingly digital world where everyone is looking for ways to reduce screen time yet our council appears to be adding even more hurdles.

I would like to see the libraries returned to full operating hours and that we don't cover or assist carterton in any manner with staffing their libraries. They have their own ratepayers to fit that bill.

Regards
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: library hours feedback from a [REDACTED] school student
Date: Monday, July 10, 2023 12:28:52 PM

I am [REDACTED] and I am a HUGE reader, I am [REDACTED] years old and read on a daily basis. Since our family moved to [REDACTED] around 7 years ago we have been visiting the library weekly. I love the smell of brand new books and the helpful librarians. It is always a warm and welcoming place. The library is one of my favorite places to hang out and I love to visit after school, but with the new times it makes it harder for us to figure out a day to go to the library, to meet mum after school. The library means a lot to me because I have always been bullied and it is like a place where I can just escape into a different world and leave life's drama behind. I want the library to reopen all days of the week except Sunday (So old hours) I am sure that we could even find a couple of bookworms like me to help out after school. We could even start a fundraiser if we needed to.

Your
Sincerely

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: library hours addressed by [REDACTED] year old
Date: Monday, July 10, 2023 12:51:45 PM

Hi, my name is [REDACTED] and I think that the library should be back to normal. I have three very good reasons for the library to stay in business. 1. me and my sister both love reading and if the library is only open on some days of the week then it makes it quiet for us to get out books. 2. If the library is only open on the days that it is right now then think of all the people that don't know if they want to go to the library and they live very far away like me and when they get to the library and it's closed they won't know what's going on. 3. I love doing puzzles and if the library is closed then i can't get out a puzzle.so i would be bored because i can't get out a puzzle thank you p.s [REDACTED] hey just so you i'm only [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Reduced library hours
Date: Monday, July 10, 2023 2:32:10 PM

I am writing because I strongly disagree with the reduced library hours recently announced by SWDC.

I am a senior citizen living in Martinborough for nine years and have actively used and supported the Martinborough library as well as the other two. Having worked my whole career in a variety of health and social services I understand well from a professional as well as a personal viewpoint the invaluable roles libraries play for connecting and supporting so many people in various ways.

Often and sadly it is some of our communities most vulnerable people who will once again be most effected by these changes. For example children, elderly people, those who lack transport, people without internet services, to name a few.

Although my husband and I live Martinborough it seems very unfair to all those who live in Featherston to have no Saturday opening hours at all. This in particular needs to be addressed asap.

Some suggestions I have to help the situation are possibly making opening times during the week at all three libraries later to free up some paid hours that could be used to keep the Featherston library open on rotating Saturdays too. If two of the three libraries were open each Saturday at least people with transport options could avail themselves of a library nearer to them.

My final suggestion is to bring back vetted and trained volunteers. I thoroughly enjoyed volunteering for seven years at the library until volunteers were phased out about two years ago.

Thank you for taking the time to ask for the communities input again on this issue. You are welcome to publish my comments or contact me about what I have written.

Kind regards
[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad

From: [Redacted]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Feedback on library opening days
Date: Monday, July 10, 2023 8:37:38 PM

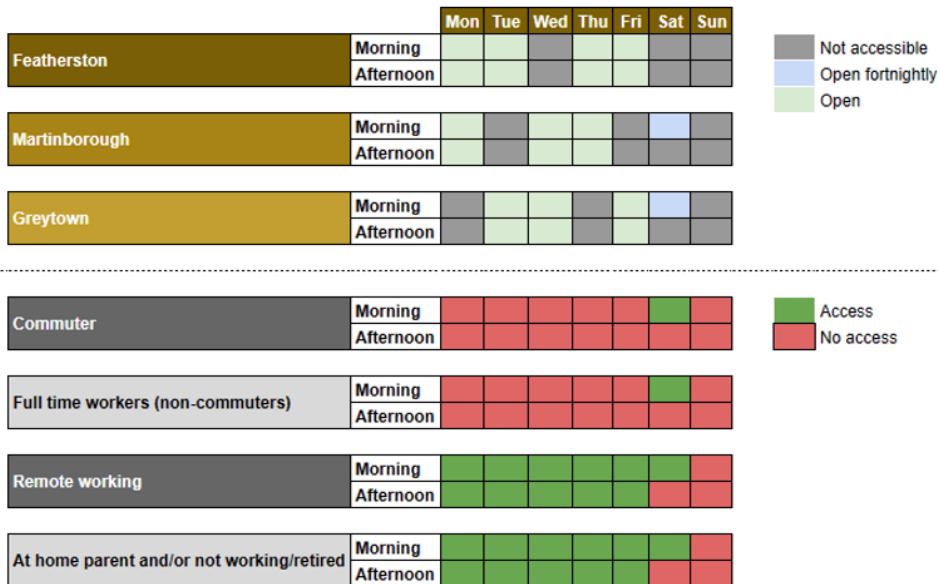
Hi SWDC

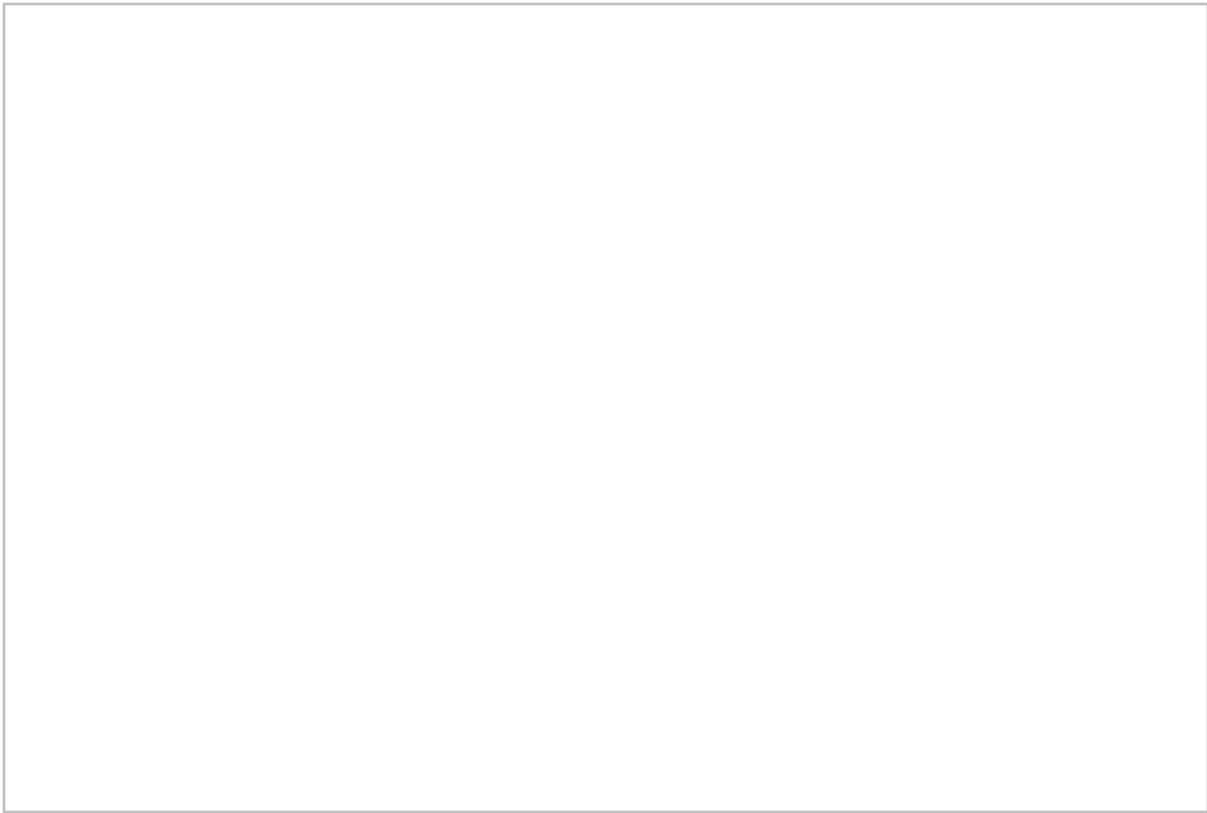
Thanks for inviting public views on library opening days. I'm happy to be available if you'd like to discuss any aspect in more detail, and you have my consent to publish this submission.

Thanks

On SWDC's previous decision, offering only week-day opening hours for libraries effectively removes the ability for local working families to access SWDC library facilities. This affects all families and people in the region, and particularly those who work out of the region - particularly Featherston, where a meaningful proportion of the working population commute.

The schedule below roughly shows the effect of the previous options - full time workers having, at best, a Saturday in Martinborough or Greytown - with no local option for Featherston residents in this position. It does seem clear this option is unfavourable.





With this in mind, SWDC's first-best option is to consider:

- opening at least a full day Saturday - if not both Saturday and Sunday (with staggering across the three townships)
- to reduce or change weekday hours or weekday availability in compensate - for example, opening at 10am or in the afternoon.

To the extent it hasn't already, the SWDC could look at what hours other councils offer - there will be many smaller districts in NZ with similar challenges. From a quick review, it is clear that most councils offer a combination of later morning open hours (e.g. 10am) and evening hours (e.g. 6pm to 8pm), and opening on Saturday and/or Sunday.

SWDC may also like to use this opportunity to progress the Councillor's decision to explore opportunities of service delivery with community - for example, use of volunteers.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: opposition to reduced library hours in south wairarapa
Date: Tuesday, July 11, 2023 9:11:49 AM

To whom it may concern.

As an kindergarten teacher for over twenty years I understand both the educational and social value of libraries.

How in your decision process did you decide to value investing in the camping ground in your jurisdiction (private good) over libraries (public good) I'd like to understand .

feel free to send me both the economic and social rational of this opportunity choice of private/public use of rate payer money

Regards

[REDACTED]
(multi generational raised south wairarapuan)

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Library hours
Date: Tuesday, July 11, 2023 9:18:58 AM

I am a retired pensioner in Greytown, and I use the library.
I support the library proposal; as I understand the alternative is more spending through higher rates.
Please do not bow to media pressure, no -one is put out by this , no one goes to the library 4 days a week! No one.
I f 100 people object, that's around 2% of ratepayers in South Wairarapa.

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Libraries
Date: Tuesday, July 11, 2023 12:43:28 PM

Libraries are fundamental to each of our towns community. These closures are disappointing on so many levels and haven't been well thought through.

Council should look at library numbers, so you can tailor the opening hours accordingly, recognising the reasons we use libraries. Any changes must be based on this data, but also recognising the Waihenga centre, with its Cafe, and Greytown with visitor centre, toilets, exhibitions, perhaps consider offering space to Toy library. All towns need to open at least some time for commuters and their families.

Regular hours are vital.

Literacy is the key to society.

Come on SWDC, do some homework before you make decisions and at least work together. After your poorly worded Long Term Plan, reading submissions and allowing this decision to be made, then The Mayor and Councillors say the changes are unacceptable, doesn't sound like a constructive working council and give ratepayers any confidence at all.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Change in Library opening hours by SWDC
Date: Tuesday, July 11, 2023 1:47:57 PM

The change in library opening hours shows huge short sightedness on the part of the South Wairarapa District Council.

Reading and understanding how to research subjects is a vital skill for every human, and libraries make this possible for every member of the community, irrespective of their education and financial means. We want to encourage literacy, not limit the opportunities for developing it.

It is even more bizarre that Featherstone Library should be closed on Saturdays, given the tremendous success of Booktown with the result that Featherston, gateway to the Wairarapa, is on the map for very positive reasons (as opposed to petty crime and abuse of children).

Libraries in our current and unfolding technological age are an integral hub for the communities that they serve. They need to be prioritised as such.

Finally, as a rural ratepayer I am amazed that SWDC thinks it can increase rates by 29% and reduce services.

This is simply not okay.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] ■

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Revised Library opening hours
Date: Tuesday, July 11, 2023 2:50:22 PM

I wish to submit my objections to the closure of the libraries in SW on several days each week. The indication in the annual plan consultation was that if the pot of money to cover casual staffing to cover for sick leave and holidays was not approved then libraries may have to close one day each week. The current new schedule has each library closing at least two days each week and three days on each alternate week including always closed in Featherston on Saturdays. This is ridiculous and deceitful - and the explanation that it seemed better to plan closures is just plainly underhand.

I am very disappointed in the way this has been carried out and to spring the closures on all of us including, it seems, on our elected councillors I consider is disingenuous, as this was not what was consulted on in the Annual Plan process. I am very disappointed at the lack of transparency and the lack of management.

I give permission to publish my submission.

--

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Re Library Hours in South Wairarapa.
Date: Tuesday, July 11, 2023 3:54:52 PM

I am writing to express my dismay at the new revised library hours across South Wairarapa. The libraries are at the very centre of our communities and consistently rate in satisfaction surveys as the most valued service provided by council.

It is inconceivable that you would choose to take this decision to reduce library hours. It is a pity that you did not learn the lessons from other councils who had considered reducing hours or closing branches, and had it backfire in their faces.

This will have a massive impact on schoolchildren and pensioners across the district. It also impacts those residents that commute from all of our towns across the region.

I note that Carterton which is part of the Wairarapa Library service has had no reduction in their hours. As a joint library service I would have anticipated that they should have hours reduced as well.

Nowhere in that consultation document did it say that SWDC was planning on systematically cutting library hours. According to that document, the only thing on the table was a pool of casual Library staff to cover leave. In the past there was a pool of casual staff that covered annual leave & sick leave, which worked well

I would ask you to reconsider your stance and revisit this.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Library hours
Date: Tuesday, July 11, 2023 4:04:53 PM

Featherston Library needs to be open on a Saturday for all those who are at work all week.
The Council must acknowledge this essential service and fund it sufficiently.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Library Consultation
Date: Tuesday, July 11, 2023 5:45:34 PM

As misleading as your feedback in the annual plan was, we now need to solve this issue.

It seems as though you were not employing enough staff to staff the libraries in the first place. Not just relievers, but your full time staff are not enough to cover the hours which the libraries were open for.

Having been a library reliever, I have helped people with computers, printing, accessing information, finding books etc, it was a job I loved and am totally dismayed by this whole situation. To close when you have staff away sick or on leave is one thing, to schedule closed days is misleading and dishonest, but what we have come to expect from our council.

All the libraries must be open on weekends and preferably every weekday afternoon with some morning sessions each week. Our towns are full of commuters who work away and have limited time to access. Our tamariki and rangitahi need access after school to support their literacy and learning. Our elderly come and read the papers daily and need to have time when they can access the library in peace and our parents need their groups. I would recommend a couple of mornings a week when the libraries don't open till one for each library (with the exception of Saturday's when the libraries all need to be open). But the libraries need to continue to be open every day on reduced hours 2-3 days per week.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: library hours
Date: Tuesday, July 11, 2023 7:11:06 PM

Good evening SWDC staff,

I disagree strongly with reducing the library hours in the South Wairarapa townships.

The camaraderie & sense of community that is found at these 'establishments' is a testament to their importance within the three towns.

Young children through to the elderly access this important asset frequently, so to reduce the hours would be a disadvantage to all users.

Long-time havens of bibliophiles, school children needing access to computers & information for school projects, people requiring photocopy services, town folk dropping in for a chat.....these are just a few of the uses of our libraries; there are many others.

The library is regarded by many as the hub of the town, & helps the elderly, the solitary, the reclusive to connect; it reduces the isolation & loneliness that is often experienced by our elderly folk. The immense enjoyment that so many town folk get from visiting the library is reason to keep the current library hours as they are.

I would urge members of the SWDC to reconsider their decision.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: South Wairarapa District Council – Library hours review submission
Date: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 8:15:42 AM

Please include the list of our concerns regarding the reduction in library hours throughout the South Wairarapa for consideration in the library hours review. We all live in Martinborough and share a love of books and the value that the local library and staff provide.

Key points:

1. The third place

The library acts as the third place for a community after home and work. They are places where we exchange ideas, have a good time, and build relationships.

2. Library functions

A library's basic functions include the promotion of education, the dissemination of information and the promotion of culture.

3. Opening hours

Standard opening hours are essential for ensuring accessibility to the library and enabling the community to benefit from its functions and purpose. These hours support access to all the community and not just those able to make their way on the days it is open.

4. Services to children

The services the library provides to children should be seen as a priority. Currently, schools visit the library to teach children what is available and how to research. School holiday programmes are enjoyed by many families and regular interactions with children of all ages is possible throughout every day.

The library plays a crucial role in providing services to children, modelling curiosity, fostering learning, and granting access to quality information. Limiting access impacts those who are less likely to have access elsewhere, undermining the investment made in the library service.

5. Support for the elderly

The libraries operate as a place for many elderly people to have regular contact. It provides them with access to a wide range of resources and activities, fostering intellectual stimulation, social engagement, and a sense of belonging within their community. Loneliness is a significant issue in this demographic and libraries have and continue to be a place that acts to minimise isolation.

6. Impact on adjacent businesses

The negative effects of limiting hours will affect businesses and services located near the library. An example is the Martinborough Library which shares space with the iSite and a café that will see a drop in foot traffic from library users on the days the library is closed.

7. Need to improve customer space.

There is a need to improve the customer space of libraries in South Wairarapa, as the current focus on book stacks has overshadowed the library's purpose as a place of learning, fun, and safety for the community. The restrictions experienced by both the Greytown and Martinborough libraries due to their design as storage facilities rather than a customer space should be improved rather than have reduced investment.

8. Lose partial benefit of the national system of libraries

The amount required to maintain current staffing levels and therefore opening hours is well worth the money to maintain a core service at the standard enjoyed by other library users around the country.

The library services not only work closely with each other in the South Wairarapa and have links to the Wellington libraries but they are part of a national library system which maintains catalogues, interloan, Aotearoa People's Network Kaharoa (APNK) for free wifi and other services funded by central government at no cost to councils. Reducing access reduces the full utilisation of these free services.

9. Summary

In summary, retaining the current opening hours of libraries is crucial to preserve the library's role as a community hub, provide essential services to children and the elderly, support adjacent

businesses, improve customer space, and maintain access to the national library system.

Signed

[Redacted signature block]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Library hours
Date: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 10:51:43 AM

Hi,

I am a resident of Martinborough, I have a child at [REDACTED] school, and I commute regularly through to Wellington for work.

The new library hours are not appropriate for our town. We use the library regularly, I often reserve books online and recently was unable to pick up on time as the library was closed the times that I was in town during the day. Saturday opening for the library is essential, especially for commuters. But also for children, for something to do on a Saturday. We love to read but buying new books is expensive, the library is a wonderful resource that should be treasured not limited. The new Waihenga Centre where the library is located will become a white elephant if it is not utilised fully. I think these library changes are shortsighted and damaging to the community.

I also don't think it is fair for Featherston to have no Saturday opening. There are a lot of commuters in Featherston as well, when are they supposed to be able to utilise the library?

Please review these changes.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Featherston

12th July 2023

Martin Connelly, Mayor
South Wairarapa District Council
19 Kitchener Street
Martinborough

Kia ora Martin,

I am writing on behalf of the [REDACTED] to register our concerns regarding the proposed reduction of Library, Service Centre hours.

The [REDACTED] concern is the reduction could well affect users of the Anzac complex to struggle to collect keys as the limited hours make it very difficult. Whilst this is only part of the story it does mean just concentrating on the library functions to the exclusion of the service centre. Clearly service is the key here and the SWDC budget could easily through the other functions raise the required monies your staff have highlighted as their reasoning.

We all understand the financial implications that have meant our rates have risen again at an unprecedented level but this small amount of the budget spread should enable this to be absorbed.

Thank you for giving us the time to submit to you.

Naku Noa Na

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [submissions](#)
Subject: Change in library hours
Date: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 2:16:11 PM

I consent to my submission being published provided it is anonymous.

Summary of submission

- The change that has been made to library hours is not the change that was consulted on in the Annual Plan Consultation document.
- The information currently available and the current two-week feedback period does not meet the requirements of the Local Government Act.
- South Wairarapa District Council needs to run a consultation for this decision that meets the requirements of the Local Government Act and its own Significance and Engagement Policy.
- I disagree with the decision to reduce the opening hours of South Wairarapa Libraries.

The scope of consultation to date

In the annual plan submitters were asked to submit on a choice between:

- Keep a budget of \$165,000 for the cost of casual staff to keep libraries open when permanent staff are on leave.
- Remove the budget for the cost of casual library staff and risk continued library closures on some days of the week.

On 9 June the outcome of removing the budget for the pool of casual staff was reported by council to me “that some libraries may be closed on some days due to a lack of sufficient staffing numbers, estimated as 4 days per month”

All the wording implied that the impact of not having this budget available was ad hoc closures at reasonable levels.

What was not consulted on was a permanent and significant reduction in the hours of service across all libraries. Specifically, a 41% decrease in the hours of service at Martinborough and Greytown and a 27% decrease in Featherston (but made worse by no weekend hours).

Consultation requirements

The change that has been made is outside what was consulted on and given its significance that is in breach of the Local Government Act and SWDC’s Significance and Engagement Policy. The degree of significance of the decision is high because the decision involves a large reduction in a level of service, has a moderate impact on a high proportion of the population and is inconsistent with community outcomes. Accordingly, to lawfully make this decision SWDC needs to meet the requirements of consultation under the LGA as summarised by council here:

<https://swdc.govt.nz/consultation/consultation-process/>

That involves an options analysis, making the information as widely available as

possible, and a month-long submission period. The information provided in the Annual Plan and the current two-week submission period via email is insufficient.

My feedback on the change

I disagree with the decision to reduce the opening hours of South Wairarapa Libraries by such a significant amount. I would like:

- To see the libraries return to full opening hours and close on an ad-hoc basis as required due to staff leave.
- To see a full review of the libraries budget to identify where cost savings can be made without reducing opening hours.
- The requirement that a library cannot open without at least two staff to be reviewed. With changes like self-check-out and current library attendance it is not clear to me that two staff is always necessary.
- Each library to be open each weekend for at least 2 hours. Every alternate weekend is confusing and no weekend hours for Featherston is not acceptable.

If for some reason none of these options are available, I would prefer to see the opening hours be reduced (for example 10am to 3pm) rather than libraries be completely closed some days.

Libraries are the communities most loved council service. They are a place of learning and a sanctuary. I strongly disagree with such a huge reduction in service without adequate consultation.