



Chief Executive's message

I hope you're managing to keep warm and dry as the temperatures plummet. While it's chilly outside, the last month has seen a flurry of activity in the Council offices.

Much of our focus has been on the 2022/23 Annual Plan, the document which sets our budget for the year and the level of your rates. As I write, the plan has been adopted, on 30 June, by Council.

Feedback from ratepayers strongly indicated a need to cut rates this year. We have worked to that brief, and our net cost increase on last year's budget to service Council is 6.61%, reduced from the 8.06% forecast in the 2021-31 Long Term Plan. This equates to a budget of just over \$21.3 million for the 2022/23 year.

The savings identified are tangible, without damaging the level of service we need to provide. I hope you will make the time to read our Annual Plan and the finer details of what is planned for 2022/23 via our website, Council offices and libraries. We hope to have it uploaded before the end of July.

Keep well

Harry Wilson
Chief Executive



Careers Bus

Youth Jobs in South Wai, our Mayor's Taskforce for Jobs programme, had a very successful tour of the district's three towns and Kuranui College with the "Careers Bus" in May. Nearly 400 people came to learn more about prospective career options using the bus' interactive displays. Afterwards, prospective employers and others were ready to receive them in the tent next door with information and a sausage sizzle.

Youth Jobs' co-ordinator Henriëtte Nagel (pictured) said it was really gratifying to see the turnout, some of whom were picking up the piece of their careers after Covid. "Many adult attendees mentioned how they wish they had access to such vast information earlier in life," she said.



Re-imagining Featherston

In July, our planners will start consulting the public on how Featherston should look over the next 30 years.

Featherston's Master Plan follows the work of last year's South Wairarapa Spatial Plan, which looked at the district's overall future planning needs.



Featherston's population is expected to grow by 1700 over the next three decades. Planners now see the town as a "growth node" - an area suitable for future growth. So much so, it is now in one of the Wellington Regional Leadership Group's top seven areas to be considered a CDO or "complex development opportunity".

The Master Plan is an opportunity to consider Featherston's needs in detail. It's a chance to look at the big picture and ask, what kind of housing does the town want? How does the town balance character and growth? Where should the town centre be? How does it connect with transport and recreation needs? Is everyone on the same page?

To date, Council planners have been talking informally to local community groups and government agencies, as well as holding a Zoom workshop with residents on March 30.

All this has helped shape a Foundation Discussion Document and by the end of July this document will be put out to the public for their views.

Please keep an eye on our website and social media for more details about how you can view the document and contribute to the discussion.

July, the month for planting

The winter rain may seem a little dismal at times, but for tree planters, it's the best time to get new plants established.

Our Amenities team have been out in force, planting several new trees at Consedine Park in Martinborough. The park now boasts four oaks along the road frontage to match existing oaks, and five ornamental pear "Pyrus calleryana aristocrat" along the back fence to bring more colour to the park.

Elsewhere, an avenue of eight tulip trees will be planted at the Greytown dog park, and a trident maple at Stella Bull Park, thanks to Greytown Community Board's beautification fund.

South Wairarapa District Council is also proud to be associated with the Tonganui Corridors project, which is restoring parts of South Wairarapa back to native bush.

The four-year project's ambition is to recreate a green "corridor" from Aorangi Forest Park to the Remutaka Ranges, by linking patches of existing bush with new plantings.

By the end of this season, it's estimated that 170,000 native trees will have been planted.

Council's contribution to the project this year will be 3.5ha of land opposite Kohunui Marae, which will be planted out with

trees bought from the marae's newly established nursery.

This adds to 4.5ha of Council land planted out last year to replace felled pines.

Aorangi Restoration Trust is in charge of the project's delivery, and its chairman Clive Paton says it will be beneficial in many ways.

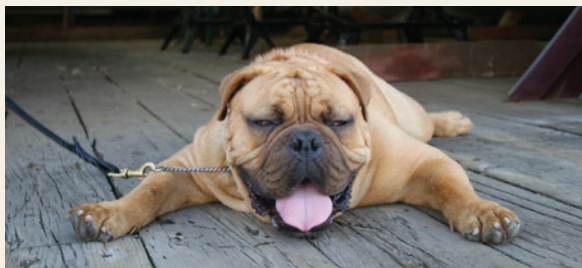
For private landowners, it's often land that is of no pastoral value to them, and the trees will help offset their carbon footprint.

"There is also predator control that is going in with the trees so that's helping Predator Free NZ, and just enhancing the countryside and creating places for birds, and linking us to Wellington, in the long term."

The restoration trust shares the cost of the plants with landowners, and implements the planting.

Paton hopes that the trust will get an extension of funding so that the full vision of the corridor can be completed.

"We have about 38 different plantings across the valley and if we can keep that up, in 10 years' time things will be starting to look a bit different there."



Dog Registrations

Are you the proud owner of a canine companion?

Payments for dog registrations are due on July 31. This year's tags are green. Fees are being maintained at the current level this year so get in before July 31 to get your dog registered and avoid a penalty.

Welcoming Communities

The Council is happy to announce that South Wairarapa has been selected to join the Welcoming Communities scheme. Led by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, this scheme will identify and help put in place what we need to do to become better at connecting with new residents.

Mayor Alex Beijen says a focus on making the district a more welcoming place will be to everyone's benefit.

"Churches and community groups, business groups, sports clubs, iwi and hapū, various agencies – we can all play a part in making South Wairarapa a place where newcomers feel that they can make connections quickly and find their feet.

"If we as a district can do more to reflect the diverse range of people here, and let that become the norm, we will be richer for it as well as making others feel more at home."

Bridge update

Great progress has been made on the Tauherenikau suspension bridge which is expected to open in September. The bridge is the first stage of the Five Towns Trail network, a grand plan to link all the main Wairarapa towns with cycle and walking trails. While it's very exciting, the Greytown Trails Trust is asking people to stay away at present as work is still being done, both to the bridge and to the access routes. We will have an exciting update in the next Community Focus.



Fabulous Fundraising

Council, community board, creative arts and sports grants are available at various times of the year through the Council and its community boards. They do a lot to encourage small initiatives or worthy people to carry on.

Examples include Featherston Booktown which, thanks to sponsorship, was able to give each primary child in the district a book voucher to encourage reading. The Council was one of these sponsors.

Community board grants help keep our towns beautiful or help support worthy causes. In Martinborough, a grant was used to put all the students through a one-day water safety programme (pictured).

Rural Travel Fund Grants are made available every year from Sports NZ via the Council. These grants have provided significant assistance to some very talented and deserving young sportspeople or their clubs.

One recipient said that with their grant "students that may not ordinarily be able to participate in sport because of travel restrictions can be active members. No one need miss out."

Applications for the next round of grants opens on 10 July and closes on 12 August.

Another fundraiser for sports clubs and service groups is the Council's annual water meter read. This year Featherston Rugby Club, Martinborough Rugby Club and the Greytown Lions were out doing this service. The Featherston Rugby contingent was aiming to raise enough money to pay for junior subscriptions.

Three Waters

The public has a chance to give feedback on the Government's Three Waters reforms by making a submission to Parliament.

Have your say on the Water Services Entities Bill which is currently before the Finance and Expenditure select committee.

Public submissions close on Friday 22 July 11.59pm.

www.parliament.nz/en/pb/sc/make-a-submission/document/53SCFE_SCF_BILL_124081/water-services-entities-bill

Or go to our Three Waters page on our website to tell us what you think.

Rebates 2022/23

The Rates Rebate Scheme provides a rebate of up to \$700.00 for low income earners. Ratepayers must have been living in the home they own on 1 July 2022.

1. Your rebate will be calculated based on your gross income from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, your rates, and the number of dependants you have. The income eligibility for a rebate is \$28,080 - \$42,000.
2. You must provide details of income from your income provider for ALL forms of income, including interest and dividends. If requested by the Department of Internal Affairs you must provide proof of this income. Application forms will be sent to those who have received a rebate in 2021/22 and are also available from the Featherston and Greytown libraries, the Council office and online www.swdc.govt.nz/services/forms and can be obtained by calling 06 306 9611.

Get your rates invoice by email

If you wish to receive your rates notice by email contact rates@swdc.govt.nz

We encourage you to take up this option to allow Council to use the postage savings on projects to benefit the district.

Having trouble paying your rates?

Please contact us as soon as possible so we can work with you on a payment plan. Council's policy is to approach banks and legal representatives to assist us in recovering arrears at the end of the rating year.

For any queries regarding your rates, please contact our rates team at the following email address: rates@swdc.govt.nz

Payment by direct debit

Council encourages ratepayers to pay rates via direct debit as this ensures the correct amount is paid and you avoid paying penalties for late payment.

Based on feedback from ratepayers, we offer **weekly, fortnightly, monthly or quarterly direct debit options** to pay rates. Direct debit is the easiest way to pay your rates as we withdraw the funds directly from your bank account at the very last minute. That way you will get the benefit of your funds for the longest time and avoid

penalties. If you would like to pay using this method, forms are available from the Featherston and Greytown libraries, as well as the Council office and on our website

www.swdc.govt.nz/services/forms. All you need to do is complete the form and send it to SWDC, PO Box 6, Martinborough 5741, scan and email it to rates@swdc.govt.nz or drop it off at either the Council office in Martinborough or at the Featherston or Greytown libraries.

Rates 2022/23 Instalment One

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Enclosed with this newsletter is the rates invoice covering the period 1 July 2022 - 30 September 2022.

The last day for payment is 22 August 2022. Please pay by this date to avoid the 10% penalty.

Please help us to process payments by ensuring you include the property valuation number for all properties you are paying. If paying online please make a separate payment for each property.



GET IT SORTED

Something needs fixing?
Let us know...

To South Wairarapa District Council,
P.O. Box 6, Martinborough 5741

From:

First name

Surname

What's the problem?

Where exactly?

Street, Road, Number

Your phone number (Should we need to contact you to clarify the details)