

Rangitikei – a path to well-being

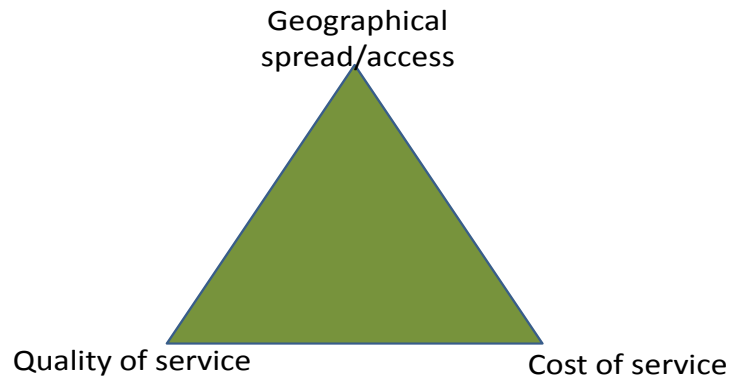
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Theme 1: Good access to health services – achieving access to health services whether it be the GP or hospital is key

Rural service provision dilemma



Access to health services came through as the issue of most concern to people within the Rangitikei during the development of the community outcomes. Whilst it would be unrealistic to expect a full range of primary and specialist health services to be provided within, say, 10 minutes of all residents, it is important that people can appropriately access quality healthcare at times of need. The problem is summed up by the rural service triangle above. In rural areas, quality and cost of service can sometimes take precedence over good access.

The *Rangitikei – a path to well-being* conference theme group identified the following prioritised actions

- 1 Investigate the possibility of joint recruitment drives across all sectors to meet skill shortages (local and national government, health, education, large employers). It was suggested that Rangitikei District Council to pull together an initial meeting
- 2 Identify assets of the community and pull together. Work initially through the Marton Health Network and the Taihape Networking Group/Otaihape Health Trust.
- 3 Rural Health Forum to be held annually to continue the discussions held and to support activities taken. To be held in rural areas and to have break-out groups for each separate area. It was suggested that this should be co-ordinated by the WDHB and to involve all health agencies.

The Health Theme Group has met three times since the conference– in June, September and December.

Priority 1: Recruitment and retention

Progress over joint recruitment drives between public sector agencies and possibly larger employers has been slow pending the arrival of a Strategic HR resource at the District Council. HR professionals from the regional territorial authorities are beginning to meet regularly and key personnel within the health sector have been identified.

The group were pleased to hear about the workforce development plan being put in place by the PHO and DHBs. This is aimed to provide professional development and progression opportunities to the local healthcare professionals so that they will not need to move to another area to pursue their career. GP and practice nurse mentoring has been put in place and is working extremely well.

The group has also discussed and identified the need for an online facility to promote the Rangitikei lifestyle, collating information from the town co-ordinators, Rangitikei Tourism, Real Estate agents, local businesses and offering a welcome package to new residents. This facility could be linked to all job adverts etc. To be effective, online and web content needs to be regularly updated and this creates a resource issue: creating and then maintaining a website can be time consuming. The group has felt that this should be taken on by a District-wide agency such as the Council.

The group will be making a submission to the RDC Annual Plan 2011/12 for resources to create and maintain a collaborative website promoting the district lifestyle.

Priority 2: Developing collaborative projects with the health networking groups

There are issues over the availability of District-wide information on the services that are provided and how to access them. There is a health directory for Taihape (maintained by Work and Income) and a Directory of Services for Older People (maintained by the Marton Health Centre). Various databases exist of, for example, community groups, sports clubs etc. Paper directories of this kind become out-of-date as soon as they are printed and an online resource, regularly updated would have many advantages. As above, this requires a dedicated resource.

The group will be making a submission to the RDC Annual Plan 2011/12 for resources to create and maintain an online database of local groups and services as part of a collaborative website promoting the district lifestyle.

The Southern Rangitikei Health and Social Services Networking Group has discussed various issues around which some collaborative project work could take place. A start was made by working to put on a small event as part of the White Ribbon family violence campaign in November when several groups worked together to bring the Super Maori Fellas and the Patriot Motorcycle Club national bike ride through Marton and provide information on local services.

A larger event is now planned to coincide with the Harvest Festival Market Day on 26th March in Marton Park. The aim is to bring together public and community services at a family fun event. An application has been made to the Lottery Community Fund for some

resources – additional support is needed from public health providers, including GPs and iwi providers.

The group will be seeking to ensure that the public sector agencies and providers are present at the event in March 2011 alongside the community providers.

Priority 3: Annual Rural Health Forum co-ordinated by the WDHB

There has been no progress on this priority to date. However, several rural issues have been in the local news over recent months:

- 1 Otaihape Health Ltd was placed into voluntary liquidation and subsequently the rest home in Taihape has closed. WDHB has been working with the residents and their families to find alternative arrangements to for their needs and have commenced negotiation with WRPHO to provide 'ageing in place' services in Taihape following the closure of the rest home. This includes transport services for elderly, meals on wheels, aged care day services, respite care and individual packages of care which can be clinically designed around the individual clients needs. All other health services have continued and will be managed in the future by WRPHO.
- 2 There has been a group established in Rangitikei to raise funds for a mobile dialysis unit to operate throughout the central north island although it is unlikely that a mobile unit will provide a solution for many patients. The WRPHO and the DHB are members of the working group developing a business plan for the provision of dialysis services within the Whanganui and central region district health board areas.
- 3 The Ministry for Social Development Children and Family Services are developing new models for social services delivery across the country. The Ministry has established regional Community Response Model Forums which have been charged with developing local models for service delivery. Rangitikei has been selected as a pilot area for consultation over the coming months. The opportunity is for us to identify what models of service delivery work well in the Rangitikei and then to roll them out across the District.

Theme 2: A Safe and Caring Community: Through effective partnership with local policing, rescue services, neighbourhood support and local initiatives

The outcome around safe communities was given second highest priority during the consultation process over the community outcomes. The headline indicator for this outcome is reported and resolved crime. However, perception of safety by residents is of equal importance to crime statistics. Internationally recognised programmes, such as the World Health Organisation's International Safer Communities, provide models that can be used to develop a "positive safety culture" and "safe environments" for the district. These issues were explored at the day conference.

The *Rangitikei – a path to well-being* conference theme group identified the following prioritised actions as steps on the way to accreditation as a WHO International Safer Community:

1. Establish a working group. The group would consist of Samuel McMillan, Te Ora Nyman, Rowena Kuia, Geoff Hipango, and Judith Tamblyn.
2. District charter for agencies and groups. This is the first task of the working group to complete.
3. Sharing our resources within the region. This would happen within the working group and will set the scene for other groups and agencies in the district. This is about sharing knowledge, contacts and resource among each other.
4. Rangitikei District Council to let us know what they bring to the table. Local authority buy-in for the international safer community model is important. It is important to know if the council support this model and how they will be willing to be involved. (Rebecca Tayler)
5. Identify leaders within each community. Leaders identified could be local government, national government, or even members from within the community not involved with local or national politics. (This is to be done by each agency at the forum).
6. Support/nurture our emerging leaders (this to be done by each agency at the forum)
7. The leaders can then advocate on the communities behalf to have needs addressed e.g. if geographic isolation is seen as a major issue, the leader could lobby for better public transport.

The Safe and Caring Community Theme Group first met 9 June 2010 and have met monthly since. At the first meeting the group recognised that they were not in a position to commit the District to the WHO programme. The Theme Group revisited the town/area specific issues identified at the conference and identified the common themes that came through and decided to develop actions in the following areas:

- Rural safety
- Urban safety
- Youth

Priority 1: Rural safety

The group revisited the notes from the conference to identify the key issues around rural safety. They found the main issues are: higher rates of accidents at work (in particular quad bike accidents), geographical isolation from essential services (response times of emergency services) and ensuring that the stoicism and self-sufficiency of rural people extends to proper planning and preparedness for civil defence emergencies.

With this in mind, the following initiatives were planned:

Action taken: the Group are organising a number of Rural Safety Forums to be held over the coming months. Displays will be prepared for main events in the larger centres (Taihape, Marton, Bulls) and in smaller rural communities (Ratana, Turakina, Hunterville and Mangaweka) evening events with guest speakers will be held.

Priority 2: Urban Safety

The group revisited the notes from the conference to identify the key issues raised in the discussions around safety in the townships. They found the main issues are: road safety (state highways running through the towns), perceptions of safety (as opposed to the crime statistics) and breakdown of community spirit and neighbourliness. The group identified that a key tool for promoting a sense of safety and neighbourliness is Neighbourhood Support. Neighbourhood Support is aligned with police district boundaries and is currently very active in the south of the district, but not yet in the north.

Action taken: The group felt it was important that residents in Taihape had the same level of service as residents of Bulls, Hunterville and Marton. The group are on track to launch Neighbourhood Support in Taihape late March 2011 to coincide with Neighbour's Day.

Priority 3: Youth

At the day conference, issues around "youth" were raised in many of the discussions within the Safe and Caring Community Theme Group. These tended to be quite negative around alcohol, drugs, graffiti and other vandalism although it was recognised that there are few, if any, facilities for young people in the towns across the District. The Group wanted a better understanding from a youth perspective on the issues identified at the conference, and so one of their first actions was to invite youth representatives to be a part of the Theme Group.

Youth members of the Group shared the preliminary results of the Rangitikei Youth Survey which had been undertaken by the Marton Community Development project. This highlighted the desire for a youth space in Marton and a working group has been established to work on this in Marton.

Action taken: The Group have resolved to support the development of a youth centre in Marton.

Theme 3: Lifelong educational opportunities

One of the headline indicators for this outcome is the level of high school and tertiary qualifications attained by the population. However, this does not capture the aspirations of lifelong learning which include opportunities for residents to participate in:

1. Formal learning at any stage of life, from basic literacy and numeracy through to post-graduate, extra-mural study
2. Informal learning, from family history through heritage arts and crafts to website design and management
3. Formal and informal training linked to local skills shortages (several initiatives have been identified - a trades training centre and an agricultural training centre - but have struggled to get off the ground).

One of the issues identified in the pre-conference briefing papers was possibly the lack of information and research on the availability of, and demand for, the range of lifelong learning opportunities potentially available.

The *Rangitikei – A Path to Well-Being* conference theme group identified the following priorities for further action:

1. Establishing and building relationships with stakeholders, this could be a collaborative venture
2. Mentoring – in all areas of the community, both for school students and professionals. Also from a wide range of sectors.
3. Career education. Developing career programmes that are relevant for school students and other members of the community.
4. Building business capability to engage and develop staff. Engage those in the workforce in lifelong learning.

Since the day conference, the Education Theme Group has met three times.

Priority 1: Establishing and building relationships with stakeholders, this could be a collaborative venture

The issue associated with this priority action was the lack of networking between providers of different levels of education. The group began by sending invites out to all primary and secondary school principals to attend theme group meetings. Initial invites were accepted by the principals of Rangitikei College and Nga Tawa and the principal of Rangitikei College had undertaken to promote attendance at the theme group to primary principals in the District, as and when the opportunity arises through the various principal meetings that occur in and around the District. The group has also committed to make contact with a wider group of private training providers and tertiary operators.

The group has not made any direct progress with trades training opportunities, but are aware of the initiative being led by Vision Manawatu to create a workable solution for the proposed agricultural training centre at Westoe. This work is still in its early stages.

Action taken: invites sent out to primary and secondary principals by the group, individual members of the group have taken further actions to approach and invite other educational providers (for example PTE's) and primary school principals.

Priority 2: Mentoring – in all areas of the community, both for school students and professionals and from a wide range of sectors.

This was not confirmed as a priority for action by the Theme Group at this stage. No action has been taken.

Priority 3: Career education - developing career programmes that are relevant for school students and other members of the community.

The issue associated with this priority action is a perceived lack of understanding around career development and opportunities for young people, both for youth attending schools and also within the general population.

Provision at schools, could be supplemented by, for example, Inzone careers kiosk (and bus). These are used by local secondary schools to provide career information. Inzone career kiosks are available to be placed permanently at sites for a fee. It was suggested that the funding already spent on bringing Inzone to individual schools could be contributed to a permanent facility, probably owned and operated by Council that could be accessed by all.

Rangitikei College held a career expo for its own students in 2010. The College has offered to expand this expo to all schools in the District and involve local businesses, and invite wider training organisations and employers to participate.

Action taken: Rangitikei College is planning to host a career expo in 2011 that all schools in the district (and wider region) would be welcome to attend. Dates would be aligned with the current career expo calendar and initial enquiries have been received positively by a number of providers.

Action taken: Group confirmed its intention to investigate possibility of having 'inzone' at public place for all to use.

Priority 4: Building business capability to engage and develop staff and to engage those in the workforce in lifelong learning.

The issue associated with this priority action is the lack of up-skilling opportunities for business and those in established professions. The Group also discussed potential benefits of investment by employers in workplace training (including fostering collaboration amongst local employers) and whether employers were willing to invest in this type of training. While no conclusions were reached, it was acknowledged that this training could be in demand if it was easy to access and cost-effective. Furthermore, this may and lead to initiatives such as secondments to other organisations to gain key experience.

The Group wanted to obtain further information on:

- 1 Employment, qualification and age profiles of people within the Rangitikei.
- 2 The current range of training opportunities available locally, and in nearby centres such as Whanganui and Palmerston North.
- 3 The number and type of individuals and businesses accessing further training opportunities in the nearby centres.

Action taken: The Group has sourced and distributed reports from the Department of Labour and BERL to consider further. The Group will be looking to identify any gaps or overlaps from this information.

Theme 4: A Buoyant District Economy: with effective infrastructure and attractive towns that entice growth

The District economic strategy has identified agriculture and agricultural services, downstream processing and tourism as the three key sectors for Rangitikei. The key features of the majority of employment in these sectors are low income and low skills. Factors that underpin prosperity in the sectors are the natural and managed rural environments, excellent communications and transport infrastructure and attractive towns and settlements. There are a few large employers in the district, mainly public sector employers such as Council. It is worth noting that the district is host to three private / semi-private institutions which also bring regular visitors into the towns.

Generally, the District is experiencing slower economic growth than the national average but is doing relatively well when compared with neighbouring and comparative Districts.

At the *Rangitikei – a path to well-being* conference the Economy Theme Group developed the following priorities:

- 1 Create a standard template for event attendance measure: (This needs to capture information such as attendance figures, weather, marketing, trends etc. This can be used for activities rather than exclusively for iconic events).
- 2 Improve signage in the towns and throughout the district: (Posters on toilet doors in our main towns, museums etc. 5 things you must do in Taihape / Bulls / Hunterville / Mangaweka / Marton / Turakina / Ratana)
- 3 Develop a group or structure similar to a chamber of commerce for the district. (Rangitikei Business Train)
- 4 High speed broadband: (Investigate available resources for high speed broadband services within the district to expand).
- 5 Establish a group representing agriculture, tourism & business with paid employee

The Economy Theme Group met once since the conference but was unable to confirm the actions identified on the day. It was agreed that the theme needed to be thought about further.

During discussion at the Partnership Board meeting in July 2010, it was felt that it was important to engage with the wealth generators in the District and that participants for the Economy Theme Group may need to be shoulder-tapped to ensure there is good representation from the right sectors. To support this intent, Council officers have developed a set of survey questions to understand the needs of the business communities within the District, and identify possible Theme Group participants. The survey will be distributed in early 2011 once it has been tested with a focus group.

The Partnership Board agreed that the key issues for the local economy are;

- 1 Small businesses are the largest employers in New Zealand. The economy group needs to focus on business development and support. There are issues around businesses being aware of the support services that are available.
- 2 Connectivity is a key issue – the Government’s rural broadband initiative is in process but will be a long time in the implementation.
- 3 Do work-based skills programmes meet employment skill shortages? Are programmes “user-friendly” for employers? There may be a need for further research.
- 4 NZTE has recently changed its funding focus from funding anyone with an idea, to funding ‘winners’ and allowing the economic benefits of that to filter down to the rest of the country.

These are the issues for reporting back to the Partnership Board.

Priority 1: Importance of small business development

The Council was approached in the later part of 2010 by the Ministry of Social Development (MSD), with an offer of working in partnership to support the local economy and foster business development with the potential to lead to employment opportunities for young people. This initiative is intended to align with the Mayors’ Taskforce for Jobs initiative underway around New Zealand, and will be initially piloted in Marton.

Action taken: the Council and MSD have developed an initiative to support small business development and youth employment, piloted in Marton. The Council has developed a list of contacts of small business owners who may wish to participate. These businesses may also play a role in contributing to the economy theme group, or will at least provide some good real time information on the issues facing small businesses in the District.

Priority 2: Connectivity and High Speed Broadband

The Government has awarded the national contract for the Rural Broadband Fund to a partnership between Telecom and Vodaphone. The Council has not been informed that work will commence in the District in the near future. Meanwhile, Chorus is completing its cabinetisation programme locally.

Priority 3: Work place skill shortages and up-skilling opportunities

This issue has now been highlighted in the Lifelong Education Theme Group and a “fact-finding” process established. There may be issues arising from that which require a more “economic focus”.

Priority 3: Changes in funding from New Zealand Trade and Enterprise

No progress made to date.

Theme 5: A Treasured Natural Environment: With a focus on sustainable use of our land and waterways

The District's major natural and cultural resource is its rivers and waterways, particularly the magnificent Rangitikei River. The main threat to the quality of our landscapes and waterways is the District's major economic resource – increasingly intensive farming. Given the regulatory framework, what can we do within it to maintain both the natural environment and the businesses that are the back-bone of the Rangitikei economy?

At the Rangitikei – A Path to Well-Being conference, the Environment Theme Group explored issues around biodiversity, water quality, sustainable land use and the tension between land users and regulators. A common theme that appeared through the Group's discussion was the need for greater community involvement and understanding of environmental issues and the need for the community to actively input into regulators' consultation processes. The three prioritised actions were:

- 1 Community led forum on the Rangitikei River – underpinned by the following principles: understanding the causes of poor water quality in the river; greater knowledge of tools and measures used for poor water quality; education; SLUI; changing and emerging role of Iwi and the environment (suggested to be led by Nga Pae o Rangitikei).
- 2 Community led forum on regional biodiversity – focusing on: How to control pest species such as Old Man's Beard; SLUI; communication of biodiversity initiatives to the wider community; changing and emerging role of iwi (suggested to be led by Rangitikei Environment Group).
- 3 District Plan – focusing on: making it relevant and getting people involved; issues such as wind farm concerns can be solved through planning documents such as the District Plan; Communication, giving people a greater understanding about how to access these documents, how to use them etc; Strengthen communication so there is increased understanding of the document (suggested to be led by Rangitikei District Council).

The Group have met twice since the *Rangitikei – a path to well-being* conference.

Priority 1: Community led forum on the Rangitikei River

At the first meeting of the Group, Horizons proposed that a River Leaders Forum was established along the same model as one already in place for the Manawatu River. The Group agreed to this and at its second meeting, agreed to a project plan as put forward by Horizons. The Group agreed to the following goals and objectives of the Rangitikei River Forum:

- 1 Protect the intrinsic characteristics of the river environs;
- 2 Protect existing water quality and character and water quality in the Rangitikei River;

- 3 Where water quality depleted, take steps to improve and maintain over time;
- 4 Support and advocate sustainable uses of the river resource and those activities which impact on it.

Action taken: A project plan has been agreed for establishing a River Leaders Forum for the Rangitikei River. Implementation to be progressed in 2011.

Priority 2: Community led forum on regional biodiversity

Rangitikei Environment Group suggested that the overlap between the community led forum on biodiversity and the community led forum on the Rangitikei River would mean involving the same people in two sets of meetings. It was agreed to incorporate elements of regional biodiversity into the River Leaders Forum.

Priority 3: Rangitikei District Plan

Rangitikei District Council has led on this issue as it directly refers to its own planning document. The Resource Management Act 1991 (part 5) sets out the requirements for what must be included in the District Plan. Schedule 1 of the Act sets out the criteria for preparing, changing or reviewing the District Plan. This includes certain requirements for public consultation.

Action taken: Council undertook targeted stakeholder consultation during the development of the District Plan prior to notification. Stakeholders included Federated Farmers, NZ Historic Places Trust, a number of large energy companies (e.g. Mighty River Power), Amateur Radio operators, Rangitikei Guardians and the NZ Jetboating Association. The 600 land owners who were identified in the landscape assessment were sent letters and invited to make comment. Council's Community Boards and Community Committees were sent copies of the draft for feedback. Several opportunities were offered and taken up for Tangata Whenua input, both through Te Roopu Ahi Kaa, and Marae representatives.

Council notified the District Plan on 28 October 2010, allowing a longer submission period than is statutorily required. Along with publicly notifying the plan and complying with statutory requirements of informing neighbouring Councils and certain Crown agencies, the Council wrote to land owners affected by proposed zone changes. The Council also held four public meetings and published a number of summary articles in the paper, inviting feedback on these topics as well. Council has received good engagement to date, with over 100 phone enquiries and anticipates that this will flow through to a good number of submissions on the proposed District Plan, by the closing date of 28 January 2011.

Theme 6: Enjoying Life in the Rangitikei – with a distinct identity and a reputation as a viable and attractive place to live, work and play

This theme group reflects the “quality of life” aspects of the District. Population growth (or slowing of the decline) is a headline indicator that life in the Rangitikei is good, supported by a full range of local facilities and services, with an active community and voluntary sector and a sense of pride in place and heritage played out through our District-wide events and attractions.

During the Rangitikei – A Path to Well-Being conference the Enjoying life in the Rangitikei theme group identified the following priorities for further activity:

- Strengthen Communication
- Development of a Rangitikei Day
- Open Day for Sports Clubs (to encourage sharing of resources and recruitment of volunteers)
- Town assets that are surplus to requirement and investigate new multi-purpose facilities e.g., town hall, library and info centre.
- Swimming Pools

Since the day conference in April 2010, the Group have been meeting every three months in conjunction with the Council’s district-wide Leisure Plan Implementation Group which has met monthly. The membership of both groups is very similar, as are the goals. At the joint meeting on 18th January 2011, the two groups formally agreed to merge and to report via the Path to Well-being Partnership Board.

Over the past year, the Groups have completed an ambitious work programme addressing the priority areas and have plans well in hand for the coming year.

The Leisure Plan Implementation Group has developed two particular, regular events which it has been building on each year.

Walk-tober: a walking brochure was developed several years ago (currently in its second re-print) and launched with a series of semi-organised social walks under the Walk-(Oc)tober. The walks initially happened in Marton, Taihape and Bulls but in later years walks have been added in Hunterville and, most recently, in Turakina.

Swim-4-All: the Group has applied for funding from the Whanganui Community Foundation and Sport Wanganui to hold free family days at the districts pools. The free days have been held during the school holidays: this year the funding has been supplemented to enable free admission for swimming lessons to the Marton and Taihape pools. The initiative is part of a New Zealand-wide drive to improve water safety. In our “river” District, it is particularly important.

Many of the future projects for the Enjoying Life in the Rangitikei are an extension of current activities of the Leisure Plan Implementation Group. The major focus is co-

ordination of activities happening throughout the district and promotion and support of upcoming events.

Priority 1: Strengthen Communication

The day conference requested that a working group was formed to investigate a communication strategy. The membership of the Group, particularly linking with the regular meetings of the Leisure Plan Implementation Group, and with monthly meetings does provide a good avenue for better communication. The Group has its own work programme but is an excellent networking opportunity for local groups involved in leisure and recreation.

Action taken: The Group have requested that the Marton Community Development Officer (who is a regular attendee of the meetings) provide communication skills courses through his community training programme. This will take place before July 2011.

Action taken: The Group developed an arts database and subsequent Art and Craft Rangitikei brochure (attached). The brochure showcases major local artists and art-based iconic events. It was produced and distributed before Christmas in time for the summer season.

The arts database requires constant attention and updating. It is suggested that this links to the need for a resource that can be used to keep this, and other databases, current. The Group will support a submission from the Access to Health Services Theme Group to the Council's draft Annual Plan 2011/12 to fund such a resource.

Priority 2: Development of a Rangitikei Day

The day conference requested that a project team be formed to take this idea forward, with representatives from each town and ward (e.g. town co-ordinators). The suggestion was that it could be a new District-wide event or co-ordination of existing town events.

The Group already consists of the town co-ordinators and other key stakeholder groups (such as Rangitikei Tourism) so it agreed to look at this issue. On reflection, it felt that there were ample events available throughout the district without having to put additional pressure on finding volunteers for another event so is looking at ways to better link the iconic town events, such as Gumboot Day in Taihape and Harvest Festival in Marton, under the one promotional umbrella.

The Group has also been aware of linkages that should be made with heritage and culture groups. Co-incidentally, Rangitikei Heritage – a coalition of the Museums across the District – has independently decided to have a Rangitikei Day during this year where each Museum will open a new exhibition reflecting their town's heritage and history. The Group will offer practical support and advice to Rangitikei Heritage to help ensure success.

As a point of interest, Taihape Museum and Historical Society and Rangitikei District Council have successfully applied to the Department of Internal Affairs for an intern to work with

the Society on its systems and processes. If successful it could provide the model for a wider programme rolling out the same service to other local Museum societies.

Action taken: The Group has begun to prepare for a festival around the 2011 Rugby World Cup in October 2011. Lottery festival funding has been secured for events in Bulls and Taihape and the Group is negotiating for street flags to go up in towns across the District so that local groups may feel able to organise their own activities around the national festivities.

The Group has also started to discuss the Vintage Car Rally that will take place in Wanganui in January 2012. The rally involves about 750 vintage cars in five separate rally events – three of which will take place in the Rangitikei at Marton, Hunterville and Ratana. Independent groups in each town are undertaking planning for these events – the Group will offer what support it can to co-ordinate between them.

Priority 3: Open Day for Sports Clubs

There has been no real progress in this area to date. There are two projects underway that will encourage the sharing of facilities across a range of sports and community groups: the Taihape Leisure Centre project at Memorial Park in Taihape and the Marton Youth Centre project initially focussing on Centennial Pavilion in Centennial Park, Marton. The Group has been supportive of both projects and will continue to be so.

The Group has also begun to look into the feasibility of a District-wide database of skills (a list that outlines who can do what and is willing to volunteer their time to help with projects, events, or other community activities). The idea is in operation in other areas as a “TimeBank” or “Local Exchange System”. The Group will report further in due course.

Priority 4: Town Assets that are surplus to requirement and investigate new multi-purpose facilities e.g., town hall, library and info centre

Rangitikei District Council is currently undertaking a review of assets and infrastructure in each of the towns. The Group felt that multi-purpose facilities are a good option for the districts smaller rural centres rather than having multiple facilities that are seldom used and can cater for a smaller range of uses. The Group looks forward to working with the Council and other stakeholders in the near future.

Priority 5: Swimming Pools

The Council has resolved to develop an aquatic strategy in the near future and consult on it widely as part of the Long Term Plan process. As part of the above initiative, the Council has begun to work with Marton and Taihape Pools management on strategic planning. The Group looks forward to working with Council and other stakeholders in the coming months. At the day conference, the theme group particularly wanted to investigate the possibility of having at least one pool in the District open all year round.