

RANGITIKEI Connect

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ISSUE 20

PLAYGROUND OPENS
17 APRIL



FROM THE Mayor's Desk

Last week Beth and I, along with hundreds of others from all sectors of the community, spent time helping to finish the new Marton Playground Te Āhuru Mōwai.

This playground has been the brainchild and full time job (without pay) for Lucy Skou, helped by the wider Development Group. In one day 2000 new plants were planted in what was rock hard ground and surrounded with new bark. A couple of days later probably about 40 tonnes of sand was wheelbarrowed into place in about 45 minutes. These are quite remarkable achievements. Marton is not unique in this community spirit. I think back to the hundreds of people who planted Mt Stewart, in Taihape I think of Papakai Park, beach clean-ups at Scotts Ferry, plantings at the dam and Walton Street in Bulls. We have the right to feel justifiably proud of our community.

Banking! There have been considerable public and social media comments around the withdrawal of banking services in Marton. I thank Sue Wells for her interest and petition. Again, this is certainly not unique to Marton with the steady withdrawal of services throughout our district and region. I have been in touch with senior banking officials from Westpac and ANZ Banks recently. What I have suggested is that they provide a banking hub similar to the one in Opunake and one of only four in the country. I have been to the banking hub at Opunake and asked staff there how it has worked and what the community uptake has been. The staff said that while there was initial hesitation that it would provide a worthwhile service, the community has adopted it and it has proven to be incredibly helpful. It still does not deal with the need for local retailers and communities to handle cash. With the numerous meetings I have had with banking officials over the last 2 years on this subject I begin to understand their dilemma. The number of people entering banks to do transactions with tellers are few and far between. The banks will often have less than 10 people per day and the banks are providing 2-3 tellers and facilities to be able to provide this service. So commercially I understand the difficulty. This is an issue that a number of mayors have banded together to take to the Banking Commission and Government. The banks do make considerable profits and the only possibility may be to look at legislation to require them to provide some form of social service in continuing to provide banking. It is something I would like to continue working on and at the moment I await the promised actions by Westpac and ANZ to follow-up.

I have spoken on many occasions recently about Long Term Plan meetings myself and Councillors are having throughout the district. These are in full swing at the moment and it is the opportunity for people to have their say on what Council services we should provide and who should pay for them. As part of that process I have become very aware that the changes signalled by Central Government with the delivery of the Three Waters (wastewater, drinking water and stormwater) across the county to an aggregated model is not well understood or even known about within the district. This is an enormous deal and represents the single biggest change to Local Government in New Zealand's history. When I think about how we can increase public knowledge of this, one opportunity will be for me to do some web broadcasts around this issue in some sort of Zoom or Chat function. Similarly I will do a broadcast on the Long Term Plan detailing how easy it is to make a submission - not only the process around putting in a submission but who can help you with your submissions.

Remember that Councillors and I are happy to talk to any community group or have a one-on-one meeting with anyone to explain things further so please feel free to contact myself or a Councillor at any time.

Ngā mihi **Andy Watson** - Mayor of Rangitikei.



(L to R) Leymar Saili, Mayor Andy Watson and Waitatata Ratana-Karehana

Youth Councillors take up the challenge

A new group of Youth Councillors were sworn in by Mayor Andy Watson last week.

Our 11 Youth Councillors are Lisa Cruywagen, Sophia Lewis, Atawhai McDowell, Jessie Lee Ellery, Denise Pio, Zoe Hayward, Leymar Saili, Sofie Kendrick, Waitatata Ratana-Karehana, Charly Ward Berry and Lily Bartlett.

Youth Council is a formal body made up of youth who advise Councillors from a youth perspective. You can follow the team at

fb Rangitikei-Youth-Council

Project Updates

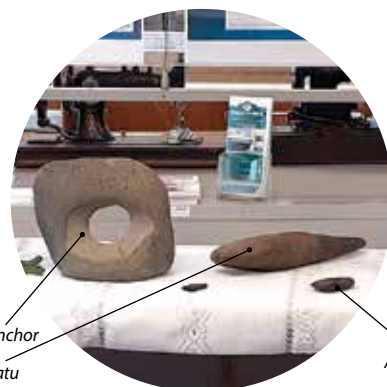
Historic landfill on Pūtōrino Road

Council received the final resource consent on 25 March and the remediation will commence on 1 April 2021. We also received a winter works permit so that the works can continue until completion, without a break for the winter months.



Taihape Wastewater Pump Station

Geotechnical investigation of four shallow boreholes is due to commence on Tuesday 6 April. The investigation will provide ground information required to make a decision on the location of the new wastewater pump station. The approximate locations of the boreholes are shown above. The work will take approximately four days to complete.



Anchor
Patu

Adze

Taonga returned to local iwi

Taonga (treasure) discovered along the Rangitikei river has a new home at the Bulls Museum.

These taonga consisting of an adze (cutting tool similar to an axe), an anchor and a patu (stone club) - thought to be around 100 years old, was found by the Sanson family of Bulls. These treasures have been returned to local iwi Ngā Wairiki Ngāti Apa and Ngāti Parewahawaha and will be on display at the museum on a long term loan.

A small ceremony at the museum was held on 25 March to place the taonga. Iwi, community and Council staff members were in attendance.

The museum is very pleased and excited to have the opportunity to have these items on display for all of the community to enjoy.

Entry is free to the museum and open daily from 10am-3pm.