

FROM THE

Mayor's Desk

Last week, I attended the Matariki celebrations at Te Matapihi where schools performed waiata and haka with great skill. The evening was incredibly well supported by kapa haka and large numbers of parents.

While there, staff talked to me about the huge number of groups, from both in and out of the district, that are using the centre virtually on a daily basis at the moment.

Councillors spent time at the recent Council meeting looking at options around changing room spaces and access issues for wheelchairs getting onto the stage. Council has now formally asked the Chief Executive and staff to investigate changing the lower stage area to include a lift and installing a new set of stairs directly onto the stage. Changes would also include extra lighting and windows in this area. The side benefit is that moving chairs out into the hall and back under the stage would become a much simpler operation. I think this is a real opportunity to increase useability of the Hall.

Recently, I convened a public meeting in Bulls with the Bulls Community Committee aimed at ensuring the Committee will continue to operate in the future. I was thrilled with the outcome from that meeting and Council will schedule the next Community Committee Meeting in Bulls on the normal rotational day of 11 August. I understand we have someone who is prepared to take on the role of Chairperson of the Bulls Community Committee. I highly value the role of community committees - Council's official engagement process with communities.

On 22 June, I held a Public Meeting in Marton to gauge interest in the Marton Community Committee. Unfortunately the meeting clashed with a Project Marton meeting, with many of the existing members of the Marton Community Committee opting to go to the Project Marton meeting instead, and people at the Marton Community Committee meeting wanting to leave early to attend the Project Marton meeting, so we spent only a very limited amount of time talking about the roles of the Community Committee. It did become apparent however there was interest from existing Community Committee members to schedule their next meeting on the normal date of Wednesday 11 August, which Council staff will organise. There will be room, if that meeting proceeds, to possibly elect or co-opt a couple of new members. I attended the Project Marton meeting afterwards and while it's not up to me to talk about what happened at that meeting, I was thrilled at the huge number of people who attended and that the community can now see a way forward for Project Marton.

Over the next few months we have to undertake a Representation Review, which in simple terms is how many Councillors will sit at the Council table and how ward structures will operate. It is important to have community committees to work through during this process.

Ngā mihi, **Andy Watson**, Mayor of Rangitikei District.



Digital Engagement Coordinator, Rashmi Natarajan (right) and Online Banking student (above) learning at ICT Hub, Rātana Pā.



New Digital Engagement Coordinator bridging the gap

Rangitikei District Council Libraries team was recently successful in securing funding to employ a Digital Engagement Coordinator, Rashmi Natarajan.

Her role is to increase the community's ability to use digital devices and platforms – such as internet banking, code clubs for kids, using a smart phone better, connecting with friends and family. The internet banking course is all about enabling better use of technology to bridge the gap between the community and banking facilities. Rashmi's internet banking course will teach you all you need to know about internet banking. This basic internet banking course is a personalised programme that caters to the individual's needs, pace and abilities. Since the programme is customised, the learners can have as many sessions as they want until they have become competent and fully independent and confident. The sessions run every week for an hour at designated venues around the district such as the ICT hubs in Marton, Rātana Pā, Te Matapihi in Bulls and the Taihape Library.

Rashmi's main objective for this course is to build the confidence in her learners who are encouraged to learn from their own device, however tablets and computers are available. The sessions use demo sites and apps that are in place just for these training and learning purposes ensuring full security without anyone divulging any personal details.

Learners get to experience the world of online banking from these dummy websites and apps where they are allowed to make mistakes without having to worry, and learn to navigate through all of the different features that their respective banks have to offer such as paying bills, making personal transfers and setting up an automatic payment.

If you know of anyone who is wanting to jump on the internet banking bandwagon, please contact Rashmi at 027 2182 248 or email her at rashmi.natarajan@rangitikei.govt.nz

How did we do this year?



Help us, help you, by answering our survey...



www.rangitikei.govt.nz/howdidwedothisthisyear?

RANGITIKEI DISTRICT COUNCIL
Annual Residents Survey 2021

Closes 26 July 2021



Planned Works



Pukenaua Road Over Bridge

Proposed closure dates:
Monday 5 July to Sunday 25 July - Works to repair damage to Rail Bridge

Notice of Meetings



Sport NZ Rural Travel Fund

Thursday 8 July at 10am

Council (Adoption of Long Term Plan)

Thursday 8 July at 11am

Any queries, please phone 06 327 0099 or 0800 422 522.



In case of an emergency...

Last week, Council staff took part in a day exercise to practise vital roles needed when an emergency occurs. Staff undertook duties in a pop up tent in a car park, replicating the Civil Defence response to a significant earthquake hitting our district.

To our knowledge, this is the first time any Council or Territory Authority had trained in this unique way, simulating an actual event.

Council's role in an emergency is to coordinate the response with emergency services, lifeline utilities, volunteers, community groups and others.

When an emergency occurs our Council website and facebook will include up-to-date situation information.