

RANGITIKEI Connect

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FROM THE Mayor's Desk



Kia ora koutou, over the weekend Beth and I attended the Christmas Parades in Bulls followed by Taihape and Marton which is always a logistics challenge – I would have loved to have spent more time in each of the towns. Congratulations to all of the businesses, schools and community groups that put floats in – I really look forward to seeing these every year. I would have to say that the single standout float across the district was the effort that the Downs Group did in producing Gru's Airship from the Minions – quite an amazing effort.

I would also like to congratulate Suze Redmayne as our new National MP. The early engagement I have had with her and her support in dealing with a very difficult local case has been brilliant. We will be well served by Suze. Equally I have reached out to Adrian Rurawhe and Debbie Ngarewa-Packer to have early talks about Rātana before the birthday celebrations in January. We effectively have four representatives working for us in Wellington with Andrew Hoggard for ACT being on the List, Debbie taking Adrian's previous role as he moved to the List for Labour and Suze Redmayne.

Last month, Horizons hosted a Freshwater Reform Meeting with the community at the Rangatira Golf Course. The Government has made a series of decisions that regional councils will have to enforce. These include the need for improvements in freshwater quality and will result inevitably in reductions of our beef and dairy herds, increased forestry and the reductions in rural water usage. These changes are far reaching with little recognition of the value of work that the agricultural sector, catchment collectives and voluntary groups have made which is disappointing. People are understandably nervous, lifestyles and the financial vulnerability to agriculture are leaving New Zealand export bases under threat. All of this happening without a social or financial evaluation is damning in my opinion.

On 4 November TUIA (Mayors Leadership Mentoring Programme for young Maori) had their final hui in Wellington. Unfortunately Matthew Coogan one of my two TUIA could not attend having come down with Covid. Bridget Watson my other TUIA and I were asked to be one of two presentations talking about our "TUIA journey together". Bridget is a standout young Maori woman and she spoke emotively and well about her journey of discovery within TUIA and her progress towards fluency in Te Reo. This programme has benefitted me and I will look back on this as a highlight of the year and of my term in office.

The Rangitikei Business Awards were hosted recently by Marton Rotary and in particular Jasleen Saluja and Karan Singh. The awards have not been held for a considerable length of time and this has been absolutely a step in the right direction. We need to recognise not only the commercial successes but the involvement that our businesses have within our local communities and the support they provide.

And finally, the JBS Dudding Trust met recently and have given out around \$930,000 to organisations within our district. This is the highest amount that has ever been distributed by the Trust which is an outstanding result for our district. Many of our organisations would struggle without having support from the Dudding Trust as we have very few other significant funding opportunities available. Well done to all those recipients.

Ngā mihi, Andy Watson, Mayor of Rangitikei.



Rangitikei District Council appoints a new Chief Executive

Mr Kevin Ross was appointed to the Chief Executive role by the Rangitikei District Council at their meeting on 30 November 2023, the decision was unanimous.

Following the resignation of Mr Peter Beggs in May 2023 from the role of Rangitikei District Council Chief Executive, Council undertook a recruitment process for a new Chief Executive. An appointment panel, made up of all Elected Members, one business representative and one iwi representative, was established to undertake the recruitment. That process has been completed.

Kevin has been appointed for up to two years to enable Council to take time to understand what the future of Local Government will be and the outcome of the Resource Management Act and 3 waters reforms. He was previously Chief Executive of Whanganui District Council but had retired from that role in 2015 and has been undertaking various board and management roles. He comes with a vast amount of local government experience.

Mayor Andy Watson said "Kevin initially came to us to undertake the role of Interim Chief Executive and has made a positive impact during that period. We are very pleased to appoint him permanently to continue the great work he has been doing."



Community play trailer launch success!

An amazing day was had launching the Rangitikei Waka Tākaro at our local rural kura (school) Taoroa.

Even though the day brought the rain and wind, that didn't stop the students from having a fun filled morning in their local hall.

The play trailer is filled with lots of different equipment for our tamariki and rangatahi to utilise and enjoy. A huge mihi to Hautapu Haulage Ltd for their sponsorship towards some of the new play equipment for our trailer.

The Rangitikei Waka Tākaro was funded via the Sport Whanganui - Tu Manawa Active Aotearoa Funding. Rangitikei District Council and Taihape Community Development Trust collaborated in a joint application for the funding. A special thank you to those schools who supported our application with letters of endorsement.

The trailer is now available to be booked and we look forward to seeing all our Rangitikei District communities enjoying our new addition.

www.rangitikei.govt.nz/waka-takaro



Local tamariki take on Tough Kid event

Our Rangitikei kids were pumped and ready to race in the Mitre 10 MEGA Whanganui Tough Kid® event last week, sporting new t-shirts, bucket hats and drink bottles from our Community team. Congratulations to Harry O'Neill who placed 3rd overall in the Year 3 & 4 boys race and Neko McDougall who won the Year 7 & 8 Boys race. Great results from our Rangitikei team, well done to all those who competed!

Make your rates payments

Easy As!

Go in the draw to win \$600 worth of grocery vouchers by paying your rates by direct debit and/or receive your rates invoices by email.

Making your rates payments via direct debit is an easy way to keep on top of your bill, and receiving your rates invoice by email is much more environmentally friendly!

And if you choose to do either between Friday, 1 December and Wednesday, 31 January, you'll go in the draw to win 1 of 6 grocery vouchers.

We have \$150, \$100 and \$50 vouchers to be won.

There's a draw for direct debit sign ups, and a draw for emailed invoice sign ups. So if you currently do neither, you can enter both draws!

To find out more, visit www.rangitikei.govt.nz/EasyAs



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