



land of ranges **MAYOR'S REPORT**

27 MAY 2020

Love Local
TARARUA



MAYOR TRACEY COLLIS



*"Let the winds of the Ruahine and Tararua give you strength and the waters of the Manawatū nourish you...
for we are the pounamu of Te Tapere nui o Whatonga!"*



Mayor's Report

Mayor Tracey Collis

May 2020



1. Mayor's Introduction and Thankyou 3
2. COVID-19 4
3. Regional Economic Recovery Taskforce 5
4. #LoveLocal Tararua 6
5. Te Āpiti Manawatū Gorge Governance Group 6
6. Provincial Growth Funding - Pūkaha 7
7. Norway Day 8
8. Letters of Support and Congratulations 8
9. Events Attended by the Mayor 9
10. Councillor's Portfolio Reports 11

land of ranges

Page | 2

1. Mayor's Introduction and Thankyou

I am extremely proud of the way our people and agencies have worked together to ensure the needs of all in our communities were met during the Covid-19 lockdown in both Alert Level 4 and 3.

A special thanks to both our iwi Rangitane o Tamaki nui a Rua and Ngati Kahungunu o Tamaki nui a Rua for the outstanding resource, care and commitment to looking after our people. The team here at council have worked extremely hard through three crisis' almost simultaneously with our towns water shortage, declared drought and Covid-19.

We have used many of our existing networks and relationships and formed new ones which will strengthen us further. One of the most challenging aspects for me during lockdown was knowing how brown and dry we were at lockdown, having rain but being unable to visually see how that was making a difference in our rural communities. As mayor, it is tough to know your district is hurting and be operating in a reduced capacity to assist. Thank you to the Rural Support Trust and Federated Farmers for working strongly with council in supporting our farmers.

Whilst managing two crisis together, we also had a recovery team dedicated to our way forward. #LoveLocalTararua was launched and has been well received to support our businesses and wider economy.

It has been wonderful to enjoy seeing people again. We acknowledge that many are experiencing increased anxiety, loneliness, stress and hardship and we are re-considering our Annual Plan and rates increase, looking for ways we can assist. A special thanks to the team here at council that worked through Alert Level 4 to provide the essential services to keep the Tararua District running and safe. I would also like to acknowledge and thank their families as it was a stressful time knowing your loved one was potentially putting themselves at risk daily.

Thank you to all our essential workers throughout the Tararua District that made such a difference in our lives. There are too many local heroes to name individually but some of these stories should be acknowledged and shared because they are stories of humanity and the reason Tararua and New Zealand have done so well in our fight against Covid-19.

There may be a few mayoral high teas around Tararua to say thank you.

He waka eke noa – we are all in this together



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2. COVID-19

April 29 was the first Council Meeting held electronically via ZOOM conference and because of COVID-19 we have been forced to embrace more technology than ever before.

It has reinforced the challenges faced rurally, working from home with other family members all requiring internet at the same time.

But, while my coverage is not perfect, it is more than many others have in our rural areas. We were not without connection issues at our first virtual council meeting either and this was experienced in our towns too.

We are moving in the right direction and I am pleased to see Chorus back working, installing fibre in Dannevirke starting under Alert Level 3. Once Dannevirke is complete, they will move to Woodville, Pahiatua and Eketahuna – it is coming.



Connect Tararua worked with local communities, identified potential tower sites, understanding the extent of the issues and all this work has been used to influence better connectivity outcomes for the district. We are expecting work to start on the towers this year in Herbertville, Ahiweka, Kumeroa, Mangamaire, Nireaha, Pongaroa and Rongomai, as part of the Rural Broadband Initiative 2 rollout which is considerably more than the one tower announced initially.

I am proud of our district's response, sense of coming together and community spirit to help in the fight against the virus. As we all enjoy the freedom that Alert level 2 brings, it is important to stay vigilant and well-practiced in simple measures such as thorough hand washing and appropriate social distancing.

As the community members of our district travel and receive visitors we all need to keep working together to maintain the low COVID-19 cases seen in recent weeks. It is now up to each and every one of us to maintain the low numbers of cases we have seen in recent weeks.

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3. Regional Economic Recovery Taskforce

I am working as part of the Regional Economic Recovery Taskforce which is a role I considered very seriously before agreeing. My priority will always be to our people and our district and I understand how crucial our own recovery plan is, but we also need to play our part regionally, especially with the opportunities the Manawatu Tararua Highway offers.

The taskforce consists of iwi, business, local and central government leaders, and economic development agency representatives and will build on the work already achieved under Accelerate25, Te Pae Tawhiti, and the Manawatū-Whanganui Civil Defence Emergency Management Group.

The critical impacts from Covid-19 will predominately be social and economic, however opportunities for stimulating recovery also extend to the built and natural environment, rural areas and cultural wellbeing.

As well as delivering a regional economic recovery plan, the taskforce will act as a key channel for interaction with central government, identifying and pursuing opportunities to strengthen and build our region's economy.

I have always aspired for Tararua to be collaborative, working together locally, regionally and nationally to achieve the greatest outcomes for us. Being part of this taskforce is not something I have taken lightly or could possibly take part in without the full confidence in our team of councillors and staff at the Tararua District.

We also connect with the Wairarapa Economic Development Strategy and understand what is planned and how we can both work together and leverage the opportunities which arise here.

We are fortunate to sit between the Hawke's Bay, Manawatū and Wairarapa regions. Tararua connects them all and understanding each is important for our growth and prosperity. We are in the middle of everywhere. We can be proud of the enormous effort being contributed by the team here at council working for us in our recovery.

Whakahoutia Tararua - we will flourish again.



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4. #LoveLocal Tararua

We have all made sacrifices and changes to the way we live over the last 2 months and I am truly grateful to see the community coming together and supporting local businesses as they re-open.



Our resilient district has been able to adapt to the challenges it has faced throughout the various alert levels of COVID-19. For the businesses that have worked exceptionally hard to review their business practice, innovate, and have been able keep our local people employed I thank you.

It is important to recognise and celebrate these businesses by showing our support when able to. Let's get behind our local businesses and the Tararua District and #LoveLocal Tararua.

Tararua District Council has launched the #LoveLocal Tararua Campaign in May to encourage residents and visitors to continue to come together as a community, support our local economy and buy locally where appropriate. Resources are available from the website below.

<https://www.tararuaadc.govt.nz/Living-Here/Love-Local-Tararua>

5. Te Āpiti Manawatū Gorge Governance Group

The Te Āpiti Manawatū Gorge Governance Group met on the 5 May 2020 via ZOOM.

The Manawatū Gorge project has been operating since 2006 and since then formed the Te Āpiti Manawatū Gorge Governance Group.

This governance group involves Horizons Regional Council, Department of Conservation, Palmerston North City Council, Tararua District Council, Manawatū District Council, Kiwirail, tangata whenua and neighbouring landowners.

The Terms of Reference for the Governance Group were revisited and the four pillars of the project; recreation, biodiversity, culture and education were re-visited in detail.

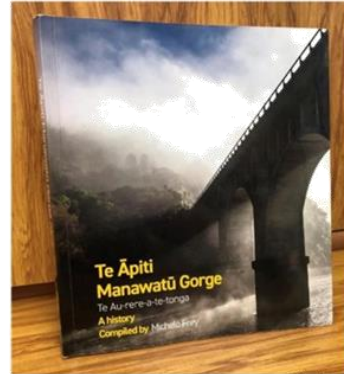
The Group also discussed a final report from Central Economic Development Agency: Te Āpiti Tourism Potential which investigates the potential to transform Te Āpiti Manawatū Gorge into a major tourism destination, offering high quality visitor experiences. Some of

land of ranges

the tourism opportunities explored in the report included Māori cultural tourism and ecotourism, agricultural tourism, active and adventure tourism, utilisation of old gorge road sections and other experiences such as utilising the railway line.

I am excited to see what the future holds for our district and I am grateful for the abundance of opportunity around us.

The book, *Te Āpiti – Manawatū Gorge Te Au-rere-a-te-tonga, a history*, is still available in both the soft cover (\$39.99) and hard cover (\$59.95) at the Tararua iSite, Paper Plus Pahiatua and online from mayor@pncc.govt.nz. With incredible photography, a wide range of topics and content previously unrecorded it makes a wonderful gift, or addition to the coffee table all while supporting a local endeavour.



6. Provincial Growth Funding - Pūkaha

Regional Economic Development Minister, Shane Jones, announced in May the investment of \$2.5 million from the Provincial Growth Fund to expand and develop Pūkaha National Wildlife Centre.

I attended a meeting with Pūkaha Manager, Emily Court, to discuss the development of the centre and they are committed to supporting local contractors and people which is great.

The successful wildlife centre, captive breeding facility and over 1000 ha of native forest was recently returned to Rangitāne o Tararua and Rangitāne o Wairarapa in February and Deputy Mayor Erana Peeti-Webber and I were lucky enough to be invited to this momentous celebration.

It is exciting to see such a fabulous asset in our district being celebrated and able to realise its potential.

With the expansion of Pūkaha's education program and facilities, accommodation and a nocturnal boardwalk, it will help boost our local economy through development and attract even more tourists to our district. I look forward to staying overnight at Pūkaha, enjoying an overnight tour and promoting #LoveLocal Tararua.

land of ranges

7. Norway Day

Norway's National Day was celebrated by ZOOM this year instead of the traditional event held in past years which spans the Norsewood area. Participants from around the world gathered electronically, including the Honourable Consul General for Norway, Graeme Mitchell, to celebrate.



It was wonderful to see so many international guests and New Zealanders acknowledge this celebratory day and we look forward to celebrating in the Norsewood Community next year.

8. Letters of Support and Congratulations

11 May 2020	Sympathy Card and flowers for Family of Denis Tatere
22 May 2020	Dannevirke and District Returned and Services Association
22 May 2020	Norsewood and Districts Returned and Services Association
22 May 2020	Woodville and Districts Returned and Services Association
22 May 2020	Pahiatua Returned and Services Association
22 May 2020	Eketahuna Returned and Services Association
22 May 2020	Thank you letter for putting Tatarua on the map – Coleman Family
26 May 2020	Congratulations Letter - Diamond Wedding Anniversary - Malcolm and Sylvia Peffers

9. Events Attended by the Mayor

29 April 2020	Tararua District Council Meeting via ZOOM
Ongoing	Keeping up to date with the various Emergency Operations Centre, National Crisis Management Centre, Across All Government, Ministry of Health Updates
30 April 2020	Central FM Phone Interview- Ongoing Twice Weekly
30 April 2020	Horizons Update COVID-19 - Ongoing Twice Weekly -ZOOM
30 April 2020	CEDA Evaluating and prioritising recovery initiatives – frameworks- ZOOM
30 April 2020	Wairarapa Economic Development Strategy – Governance Group Meeting – Ongoing Twice Weekly - ZOOM
1 May 2020	Annual Plan and Recovery Meeting – Ongoing Weekly Meeting- ZOOM
1 May 2020	Te Kāura – Eastern Manawatū Hapū Collective Hui - ZOOM
5 May 2020	Te Āpiti Manawatū Gorge Governance Group Meeting - ZOOM
6 May 2020	Mayor and Councillor's Meeting – ZOOM
8 May 2020	LGNZ Infrastructure Meeting - ZOOM
8 May 2020	Regional Chiefs Meeting with Minister Jones – Regional Economic Development - ZOOM
8 May 2020	Economic Recovery Taskforce Meeting – Manawatu-Whanganui Economic Recovery Plan (Horizon's)- ZOOM
11 May 2020	Accelerate 25 Meeting with Geoff Henley - ZOOM
11 May 2020	Tuia Catch up with Sheridan Kaweka- ZOOM
13 May 2020	Tararua District Council Strategy and Policy Committee Meeting- ZOOM
13 May 2020	Tararua District Council Economic Development and Marketing Committee Meeting- ZOOM
14 May 2020	Visit to Robert Tennent's grave at Old Gorge Cemetery – Celebrating 150 years since the first game of Rugby in New Zealand.
15 May 2020	Norway Day Celebration – ZOOM
18 May 2020	Wider Welfare Group Meeting - ZOOM
19 May 2020	Economic Development New Zealand Meeting– Budget Special with Dr Ganesh Nana - ZOOM
20 May 2020	Tararua District Council Works Liaison Meeting
20 May 2020	Tararua District Council Finance Committee Meeting
20 May 2020	Tararua District Council Extraordinary Council Meeting
22 May 2020	Meeting with Rachel Keedwell Chair of Horizon's Regional Council- ZOOM
24 May 2020	Eid al-Fitr Celebration Lunch with Muslim Community

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Mayor Tracey Collis and Councillor Shirley Hull visit Robert Collings Tennent's grave on 14 May 2020 to recognise 150 years since the first game of rugby was played in New Zealand. Mr Tennent was one of three local men who organised and played in this historic game.

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10. Councillor's Portfolio Reports

Erana Peeti-Webber (Deputy Mayor)

29 April 2020	Tararua District Council Meeting via ZOOM
Ongoing Weekly	Community board group emails and phone calls to the chair
Ongoing	Phone calls to members of the Community
Ongoing	Skate Park Survey
Ongoing	Worked closely with Mayor
1 May 2020	Annual Plan and Recovery Meetings with Mayor, Councillors and Senior Staff – Ongoing Weekly Meeting- ZOOM
20 May 2020	Extraordinary meeting with Mayor and Council

Carole Isaacson

29 April 2020	Tararua District Council Meeting via ZOOM
1 May 2020	Annual Plan and Recovery Meetings with Mayor, Councillors and Senior Staff – Ongoing Weekly Meeting- ZOOM
20 May 2020	Extraordinary meeting with Mayor and Council
24 May 2020	Norsewood Community Business Check In

I took a trip out to Norsewood on Sunday the 24 May, first time out of Dannevirke since I went into lockdown on the 22 of March 2020, a long time for me to stay in one place!!!!

My first call was to the Norsewood Sock Factory and shop. They have been overwhelmed by the people calling into the shop and the online shopping has exceeded their expectations tenfold, keeping them busy getting merchandise ready for the also very busy couriers.

I talked to Phil Grant and he has a big smile from ear to ear, they are really pumping along nicely in their warm facilities in Lower Norsewood.

Next stop was to the Scandi Superette and I was greeted by the owner, Vipul Patel, also with a smile. Business has been going well and he's more than happy with the support of the locals during lockdown and now with the passing traffic dropping into visit the Museum and other historical displays.

The last but not least stop was the café, I started talking to a couple travelling through from Napier to Palmerston North after visiting their grandchildren and they said they always stop there for a coffee break, it's the best kept secret in New Zealand the gentleman believes. The café like the other two business have also been kept busy with locals and passing traffic.

land of ranges

I must say my visit gave me a big lift in the positivity of the businesses and the fact that they are doing so well.

It has been a good month and it was very nice to be out and about again and be able to meet again in the Council Chamber.

Kerry Sutherland

29 April 2020	Tararua District Council Meeting via ZOOM
1 May 2020	Annual Plan and Recovery Meetings with Mayor, Councillors and Senior Staff – Ongoing Weekly Meeting- ZOOM
20 May 2020	Chaired Works Liaison Committee Meeting
20 May 2020	Finance Committee Meeting
20 May 2020	Extraordinary meeting with Mayor and Council
Throughout May	Real Estate and Work Webinars

Sharon Wards

29 April 2020	Tararua District Council Meeting via ZOOM
1 May 2020	Annual Plan and Recovery Meetings with Mayor, Councillors and Senior Staff – Ongoing Weekly Meeting- ZOOM
13 May 2020	Strategy and Policy committee, Economic Development committee
20 May 2020	Extraordinary meeting with Mayor and Council

During this period there has been interaction with social agencies and Welfare staff working during the COVID-19 emergency. Such support will help determine a framework into the future to ensure enhanced collaboration with Council and stronger relationships/awareness of agencies that work hard in our district. Recovery planning has been the primary activity in the past month with a clear focus on communicating with our rural communities.

Alison Franklin

29 April 2020	Tararua District Council Meeting via ZOOM
1 May 2020	Annual Plan and Recovery Meetings with Mayor, Councillors and Senior Staff – Ongoing Weekly Meeting - ZOOM
20 May 2020	Extraordinary meeting with Mayor and Council

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Shirley Hull



29 April 2020	Tararua District Council Meeting via ZOOM
1 May 2020	Annual Plan and Recovery Meetings with Mayor, Councillors and Senior Staff – Ongoing Weekly Meeting - ZOOM
12 May 2020	Economic Development Meeting
13 May 2020	Strategy and Policy Meeting and Long Term Plan Meeting
14 May 2020	Visit to Robert Tennent's grave at Old Gorge Cemetery – Celebrating 150 years since the first game of Rugby in New Zealand.
15 May 2020	Pahiatua Main Street Upgrade and Recovery Meeting
20 May 2020	Works Liaison Meeting
20 May 2020	Extraordinary meeting with Mayor and Council

Level 2 feels like I can breathe a bit better...like I held my breath for too long in a confined space. Keeping connections with our community especially our elderly and businesses has been challenging, I've felt the anxiety of a 'let out' community, some who are finding those first steps difficult. Confidence is a bit shattered, and folk a bit kinder.


It's been very positive having the Pahiatua Upgrade workforce out and full on, and some very positive steps have been made with the above ground collaborative design assisted by Hiria Tua, Richard Daymond, Stuart Malins, Project Manager and Robbie McNair of Metalform Industries.

150yrs ago a group of young men played the first ever Rugby game in New Zealand. These young men would never know the impact Rugby would have on our country...my daughter ex Black Fern and NZRFU Referee Bex Mahoney, came with Mayor Tracey and I to honour Robert Tennent, player, Secretary and treasurer of that team, now buried in the Old Gorge Cemetery in Woodville. Robert, later became a bank manager whose love of sport followed him around the country, he was the bloke who joined a team, became the sec/treasurer and supported his community. He sounds like a good bloke.

Peter Johns

29 April 2020	Tararua District Council Meeting via ZOOM
1 May 2020	Annual Plan and Recovery Meetings with Mayor, Councillors and Senior Staff – Ongoing Weekly Meeting- ZOOM
20 May 2020	Extraordinary meeting with Mayor and Council

land of ranges



Raylene Treder

29 April 2020	Tararua District Council Meeting via ZOOM
1 May 2020	Annual Plan and Recovery Meetings with Mayor, Councillors and Senior Staff – Ongoing Weekly Meeting- ZOOM
Weekly	Communicating with Charlie Death - Eketahuna Community Board
1 May 2020	Infometrics – COVID-19 Maori Focused - Webinar
7 May 2020	NZTA Urban Mobility for liveable Towns and Cities- Webinar
15 May 2020	Norway Day Celebrations – ZOOM
19 May 2020	The Rainy Day Budget - Webinar
19 May 2020	Horizon's Passenger Transport Meeting – ZOOM
20 May 2020	Assisting Communities in Hard Times - Webinar
20 May 2020	Extraordinary meeting with Mayor and Council

This month has been a really busy month attending Council ZOOM meetings, making phone calls and attending webinars. Can't believe we are in May already.

Fantastic to be in Level 2 and have some normality to life, thanks to all the essential workers who have worked through these turbulent times and the many organisations in the District that helped out our elderly and most vulnerable over this period.

I was fortunate enough to be invited to Norway Day hosted by the Norsewood Community on ZOOM. It was a heart moving ceremony that I felt honoured to be invited to and am looking forward to attending the celebration in person next year.

I'm really looking forward to being back in the Dannevirke Chamber for the May Council meeting and being back out and about in the Community.

"Stay Safe Everyone"

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