



Date: Wednesday 30 June 2021
Time: 1.00pm
Meeting Room: Council Chamber
Venue: 26 Gordon Street
Dannevirke

Tararua District Council

OPEN ATTACHMENTS

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Love Local
TARARUA

land of ranges MAYOR and COUNCILLORS REPORT

Council Meeting Report
June 2021



MAYOR TRACEY COLLIS



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

Mayor's Report

Mayor Tracey Collis
June 2021



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1 – Te Ahu a Turanga: Manawatū-Tararua Highway

Te Ahu a Turanga: Manawatū-Tararua Highway - Dannevirke Information session was held at the Dannevirke Sports Centre.

The visitor site is open on the Ashhurst side in Waka Kotahi's office where people are able to drop in and see how the project is progressing. An overall turnout of about 120 visitors across the four sessions held saw the largest attendances at the site offices in Ashhurst and Woodville. Waka Kotahi have recently taken delivery of their new mobile visitor centre. They are looking forward to engaging with people from across the region at a variety of locations and events.

You can drive on the simulator and experience the road although the steering wheel is sensitive, and I experienced the road barriers. It was great to see the four lanes and what these will look like. There is a special feature on the approach to Woodville - one of our Land of Ranges Welcome to Tararua signs.

The digital touchscreen display allows you to engage in the many aspects of the project. The display wall shows all points that are being worked on and what is happening at those locations. All of this is updated regularly. We hope to have one of these visitor offices in Woodville soon.

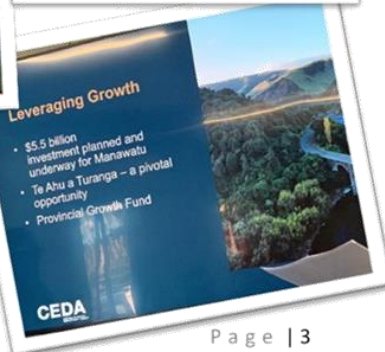
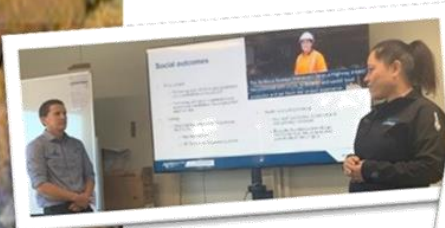
5000 people are expected to be employed throughout this project, peaking at 350-400 per day. Two million shrubs and trees will be planted, and three viewing areas will be created over Ashhurst, Woodville and Te Apiti Wind Farm.

While Minister Stuart Nash was in Palmerston North presenting at the Economic Development Conference, Accelerate 25 took the opportunity to show Te Ahu a Turanga: Manawatū-Tararua Highway project to him on site. CEDA also presented the opportunities and regional passion for Te Apiti.

Always proud to see local Leanne Clark presenting this project. There have been 669 people inducted into this project so far which has a social outcome of employing 50 local staff.

Tararua Mayor Tracey Collis tried her hand at the 'Drive the Highway' simulator during the opening of the project's visitor centre last month

Waka Kotahi - Mobile Visitor Centre



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2 – East Coast Life at the Boundary

The Hikurangi subduction zone at the East Coast Lab science talk was held in Dannevirke on Wednesday 15th June 2021.

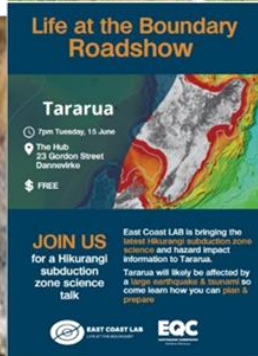
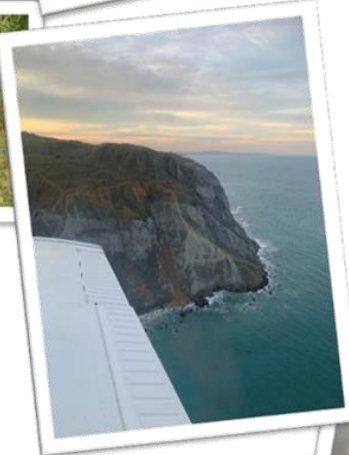
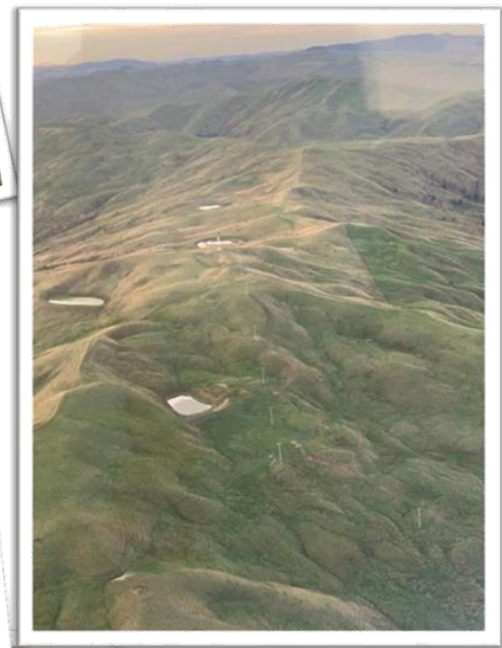
Scientists from GNS Science and Te Herenga Waka—Wellington University are installing instruments across southern Hawke's Bay, Tararua and Wairarapa regions as part of a project to better understand the Hikurangi subduction zone.

They timed the deployment of nearly 50 temporary seismic and geodetic (GPS) instruments to record the next Pōrangahau slow slip event, which scientists expected would occur sometime this year.

Slow slip earthquakes release pressure slowly over days to weeks rather than suddenly in a normal earthquake. If you would like to read more the link is:

www.eastcoastlab.org.nz/news/article/199/h2new-slow-slip-event-prompts-scientists-dash-to-install-instrumentsh2

Over Queens Birthday, I had the opportunity to fly out to Cape Turnagain where I was most interested in noting the slips and movement. While in the air I had the awe of seeing the tower on Tautane Station from another angle which highlights the extreme difficulty in providing rural connectivity. I could see the line of power poles leading up to the tower. This has made a fantastic difference to this community – well done Connect Tararua and the RCG.



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3 – Meals for Families

We were given a great opportunity to give back to our community.

“The Trust Tararua” cook meals for families in need (Financial, Death in the family, New baby) within the Tararua area were calling for Volunteers. Staff at Council volunteered their time to help prepare the meals on 3rd and 24th June 2021.



4 – 2021 Citizenship Ceremonies

Tararua residents become new Kiwis at heart-warming citizenship ceremonies

There were hongis, hugs and handshakes as eleven Tararua residents realised their dream of becoming New Zealanders at ceremonies held in Pahiatua and Dannevirke. Hailing from all corners of the world, they completed their journey to becoming full citizens by pledging their oath and allegiance to New Zealand and HRH Queen Elizabeth II.

Unfortunately, COVID-19 restrictions meant last year’s citizenship ceremonies were unable to be staged. Both ceremonies were officiated by Tararua Mayor Tracey Collis, and Deputy Mayor Erana Peeti-Webber, with Councillors and Wairarapa MP Kieran McAnulty and friends and families of the new Kiwis in attendance.

Mayor Tracey gave a stirring speech about Tararua’s unique history. She presented the new Kiwis with a formal citizenship certificate and a gift from the Tararua District Council. They also watched a video presentation from Governor General Dame Patsy Reddy, welcoming them to New Zealand, and enjoyed heart-warming waiata by students of Tama Tu Tama Ora Kapa Haka, Tararua College, and Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Tamaki Nui a Rua. The citizenship ceremony in Pahiatua welcomed Natalia Koci from Brazil, Ajaib Singh from India, Junxiong Weng and Shuming Shen from China. In Dannevirke, Michael Tiemessen from the USA, Jeanne, Kelvin, Janika and Danielle Divina from the Philippines, and Kimono and Shuichi from Japan, were welcomed to become NZ citizens. Both in Pahiatua and Dannevirke the rooms were filled with family and friends supporting the new citizens as they took their oath and affirmations.



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5 – Rural & Provincial Sector Meeting

Environment Minister David Parker spoke on the RMA reform.
It was noted that the reputation of the RMA was about being complex, expensive to participate and difficult to work with.
The Strategic Planning Act will sit above Natural Environment Act.
Minimising environmental effects but small on cumulative.
Natural bottom lines - decomplicate consenting. Facilitate development and make consenting easier. Regional plan - catchment boundary.
Expert panel from local, regional and central with an iwi participant.
Local democracy is invigorated. Have discussions to give plans - less rule bound and more enabling so we can back our communities.
Urban planning, understanding the community, iwi, placemaking.
Unit standards on sediment control - national standards - level one, two and three.
Wanting a formal structure to work with local government - Think about what that might look like.

Dr Ashley Bloomfield

Thank you for the amazing work done in the last year and a half. Unpredictable global pandemic. NZ collective kindness crushed the curve.

Vaccination Programme

We have a reliable vaccine which is most effective with good supplies. Normal fridge temperature is good.

800,000 vaccinations 11% first dose and 5000 have received both vaccines. Steady progress is being made and this will be scaled up during July. Planning to be on target to all those eligible this calendar year.

Currently at 50,000 vaccines per day

Still much uncertainty with Covid. The focus is:

1. Keep virus out of NZ and no virus circulating in the community.
2. Vaccinate

All general practices and pharmacies will be able to vaccinate early next year.

Quarantine Free travel - Australia learning all the time and agile with incursions. If virus does get in, find it and get rid of it.

Variable plans with DHB - focus on no wastage - currently at 2%

Local government can disseminate some of the critical messages using local channels and local leaders.

Stuart Crosby - President LGNZ Update

Susan Freeman-Greene LGNZ Chief Executive

A remit will go to the LGNZ Annual General Meeting that the Young Elected Member on National Council be a full member.

We are in an unparalleled period of policy change which will all need to be bedded in. The RMA reform will have a significant impact.

He spoke about the role of local government in the next 30 years. This should have been the first discussion. We have the opportunity for blue sky thinking about what is possible. Be bold in our ideas and proactive in engagement of the Future of Local Government. The welfare of our communities is at the forefront of our minds. Sustainable local democracy is essential for our communities

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Road maintenance funding was discussed with recent roading policy changes. This has also been picked up by the media.

Housing and Urban Development will produce a factsheet on all the housing and infrastructure funding when it is announced.

Ray McMillan - Taumata Arowai

Consult and understand what that means for smaller supplies and the cost - Rural communities.

Bill reported back 11 August to parliament.

Te Mana o Te Wai - it is about restoring and preserving health, wellbeing and balance between water, the wider community and environment



6 – Queens Birthday Honour: Neville Jacobson

Congratulations to Neville Jacobson on receiving a Queens Service Medal for services to Fire and Emergency New Zealand and the community.

Neville has served as a firefighter for 58 years which is an incredible commitment to our communities safety. Neville has also been involved in Search and Rescue, St John, Red Cross, Cancer Society Relay for Life and Civil Defence. He has seen much in his 58 years' service and given back so many times to the Fire Service training others. He showed real leadership and foresight in championing defibrillators around Dannevirke. A truly well-deserved honour and we have much to be grateful to Neville for. A true Taranua Legend.



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7 – Matariki

Matariki is important to Māori as, for many, it heralds the beginning of the New Year.

The word Matariki comes from Ngā Mata o te Ariki, Tāwhirimātea (The eyes of the chief, Tāwhirimātea). Tāwhirimātea is the god of wind who was upset his parents Ranginui and Papatūānuku were separated by Tāne Mahuta (the god of the forest) so he tore his eyes out and threw them into the sky, creating Matariki.

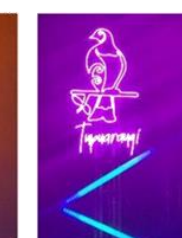
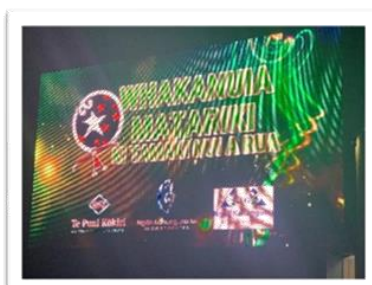
It is the Māori name given to the cluster of stars also known as Pleiades (its ancient Greek name) and is celebrated with remembrance of the dead and the planting of new trees and crops signalling new beginnings.

Matariki is the mother of the cluster, encouraging people to gather, with families and friends reflecting on the past, celebrating the present and planning for the new future. The other stars in the cluster are, Waipuna-ā-rangi who watches the skies, rains and sleets which nourish the earth and contribute to the water cycles. Ururangi is the winds from the north, south, east and west, Tupu-ā-rangi represents cultivation from the forest, trees, and birds, Tupu-ā-nuku represents the earth with healthy soil, Waiti watches over the fresh water environments and everything living in it, Waitā, represents the seas and oceans and everything living in it, Hiwa-i-te-rangi is known as the wishing star, where you cast your dreams and hopes for the New Year and Pohutakawa is the star of remembering our ancestors, family and friends who have died.

The star cluster of Matariki is known worldwide and treasured in Aotearoa New Zealand.

With its special significance in New Zealand, on Friday, June 24, 2022 we will celebrate our first Matariki public holiday. The date of the public holiday will move each year, similar to Easter, but will most likely always fall between June and July.

Congratulations on a very successful Matariki celebration by Ngāti Kahungunu ki Tāmaki nui-a-Rua. The highlight for me was two young tamariki tugging on my coat to wish me a happy matariki.



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8 - Bush Multisports Loose Parts Play Park

Mark Curr and Whitney LeCompte of Sport NZ and Sport Manawatu, made a presentation at the March Tararua District Council meeting, initiating discussion about how “play for children” currently features in the district.

The Mayor, Councillors and Staff identified their most memorable play experiences throughout their childhood with outdoor play, hut building, exploring down at the river, skipping and hopscotch featuring high on the list of memories.

Play ideas, designed to help our communities engage in play, were shared by Mark and Whitney. A Play Trailer, Play Streets, Play Pods and community Play Hubs were examples of the types of activities which help attract children to healthy play. With funding received from Tū Manawa Active Aotearoa Fund, Bush Multisport in Pahiatua has opened a Loose Parts Play Park alongside the Wheel Park. The Park, believed to be the first of its kind in New Zealand, enables tamariki to use their imagination and creativity in a safe environment without any barriers to equity - it is free for everyone to use.

Play allows children to be innovative, improves physical well-being and helps define motor skills. The Tararua District Council has received funding from Tū Manawa Active Aotearoa to purchase a Play Trailer for the district. The mobile trailer will be administered by the Tararua Recreation Advisor Leah Sole and will be available for the community to borrow for use at events. It will contain sports equipment, as well as tyres, ropes, crawling nets, buckets, containers, pool noodles and tarpaulins to encourage imaginative free play.

The Play Trailer is not limited to these items and as the community comes on board it is hoped other donated items will be added to encourage its use. It is anticipated the trailer will be ready and operational within the next couple of months.

Council is also currently developing a Recreation and Play Strategy for the whole district and is also in the process of completing a feasibility study for a Dannevirke Multisport facility similar to that enjoyed in Pahiatua.

Our district is currently leading the way as Play Champion in New Zealand



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9 – Katie Brosnahan: Regional Commissioner MSD, Regional Public Service Lead- Manawatū-Whanganui

After 38 years of public service with MSD and its predecessor organisations, Katie has made the decision to make a significant lifestyle change, that will see her leaving MSD on 2nd July 2021.

Katie was a local Dannevirke lady and has worked hard for our district and the region in her roles. She has been a true friend of Tararua and made a real difference for many of our whanau and communities. Her leadership shone tremendously during Covid-19.

We wish her all the very best for the future and thank her sincerely for her years of dedication, commitment and care to our region.

Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much.

At the MSD partners event, another local Dannevirke man Craig Nash presented Accelerate 25 which is the Regional Growth Action Plan. The programme is about realising the short and long-term vision for a prosperous, strong and vibrant Manawatū-Whanganui region. This is currently being refreshed and they will present this to council at an upcoming workshop.



10 - Gold Star Award: Max Mayer

Congratulations to Max Mayer who received his Gold Star for 25 years' service to Fire and Emergency New Zealand. Max is the Chief Fire Officer in Eketāhuna.

We are extremely fortunate to have so many volunteers in the Tararua District who work tirelessly to ensure the wellbeing and safety of our residents and those in need.

Thanks so very much to all those who have put their hand up to help others.



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11 - Letters of Support, Condolences and Visits

Letters of Support

- Te Ringa Kaha Kapa Haka

Condolences

- Anne Berry
- John Ross

Letters/Cards of Congratulations

- Neville Jacobsen - Queen's Service Medal
- Joe Sweeney



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12 – Tararua Health and Wellbeing Governance Group

June Report to Council – Alison Franklin

Rachel Blacher, MidCentral Health Covid Vaccination programme Planning Lead presented to the Group with an update of data collected to date, and planning for the way forward.

- As at Monday 14th June, 1200 vaccinations had been delivered in the Tararua District with another 700 - 800 per week expected.
- Tier 3 (over 65's) has commenced and all should be contacted by the end of July with appointment times offered.
- There are 6 vaccine sites across the District.
- Uptake has not been as good as expected, despite comms in all print media. Misinformation is a major issue.
- The Manawatu Region has sufficient vaccine supply.
- Tier 4 (rest of population) will follow at the completion of Tier 3.

Mana Whaikaha representatives Nutella Ward and Peter Grey spoke with the Group about this Disability Support Programme, previously a trial and now permanent.

- Based in Palmerston North providing a holistic support.
- The base criteria states that a person must meet the DHB definition of "disability".
- People can self-refer
- Current waiting list is 2500 - promotion by Mana Whaikaha to the wider community has identified people and families not previously supported.
- The organisation is not able to help with funding but can assist with navigating the system.
- Currently building a Community database

Anglican Services representative Peter Barton spoke of the high demand for counselling.

- Current waiting list of 40 people.
- Counselor provide service in person or via Zoom or phone.
- Will be recruiting extra staff.
- Major issue for Mental Health, is the ability to access services.

The Trust Tararua's manager Kelly Wylie reiterated Peter's concerns

- Similar issues as Anglican Services.
- Haven't had a Counsellor available since the beginning of the year.
- Support provided by Anglican Services and Peter, greatly appreciated.

Food Secure Plan

- Emma Elliott of Eketahuna has been employed to pull together the data.
- Need for food is now a political issue.
- Huge need in the community that is "hidden".
- Trust prepares 100 meals a week that are given freely to the community.

Woodville Community Representative Turia Brackenbury

- Currently building a robust Civil Defence Team.
- First Aid Level 2 being offered locally - 20 participants.
- Tararua REAP and Horizons "Work ready Week" was a resounding success.
- Food Secure initiative - 1st sod will be turned on new Woodville Community gardens early next month.

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Rangitāne o Tamaki Nui-a-Rua - Stacey Hape

- Rangitāne working with Te Puni Kōkiri on critical housing repairs.
- Training on-going for Emergency Response team.

DHB - Angela Rainham

- Locality newsletter due out.
- Health system reforms high on agenda.
- Research on health needs, population, services, housing etc being completed.
- Annual Plan being finalised.
- Nurses strike - no resolution at this date.

Tararua District Council Rep - Alison Franklin

- Age on the Go Expo postponed as a result of Covid will now proceed in March 2022.
- Council focus is on growth in the District.
- Housing Strategy being prepared.
- Newly formed Community Development team seeking new staff.
- New CE has bedded in well and fulfilled his first 100-day plan tasks.
- Focus on the Four Wellbeing's reintroduced to Council.
- Annual Plan almost complete - will be signed off at Council meeting 30th June.



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13 – Events Attended by the Mayor

Mayor Tracey Collis: 2021

Committee and Portfolio Representations:

- Forestry Committee
- Weber/Wimbledon/Herbertville Liaison
- Citizenship Ceremonies
- Civic Honours
- Mayor's Taskforce for Jobs



Date: 2021	Event/Attendance
27 May	Breakfast meeting with Minister Stuart Nash - Economic Development NZ Te Ahu a Turanga Manawatū - Tararua Highway Site Visit Three Waters Meeting - zoom MSD Focus Group Meeting – Palmerston North
29 May	Riders Against Teenage Suicide
30 May	Woodville Radio Interview
1 June	Iwi Blessing of Pahiatua Main Street Upgrade Emergency Management Joint Standing Committee Meeting – Palmerston North Regional Transport Meeting – Palmerston North Regional Chiefs Meeting – Palmerston North
8 June	Iwi/TDC Governance Meeting
9 June	Strategy and Policy Committee Meeting Economic Development and Marketing Committee Meeting
10 June	Rural and Provincial – LGNZ Conference – Wellington
11 June	Rural and Provincial – LGNZ Conference – Wellington Whakanuia Matariki – Ki Tamaki Nui-a-Rua
12 June	Gold Star Presentation – Max Mayer
15 June	Pahiatua Citizenship Ceremony
16 June	Work's Liaison Committee Meeting Finance Committee Meeting Dannevirke Citizenship Ceremony
17 June	Mayor's Taskforce for Jobs Group Meeting
21 June	Infometrics Meeting
22 June	Audit and Risk Committee Meeting
24 June	ELT Strategy Meeting Three Waters Update Zoom Meeting
25 June	LGZ Meeting
28 June	Bush Multisport Trust Annual General Meeting
29 June	Regional Transport Meeting Tararua Plantain Project – end of project summary Manawatū-Whanganui Regional Disaster Relief Fund Trust AGM - Zoom Tararua College Meeting
30 June	Iwi/TDC Governance Group District Strategy Meeting Tararua District Council Meeting After 5 Event: Dannevirke Chamber of Commerce

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13 – Councillors Portfolio Reports for April 2021

Deputy Mayor: Erana Peeti-Webber

Attendance at all committee meetings as per Councillors schedule

Committee and Portfolio Representations:

- Dannevirke Community Board – Wheel Park and Multi Sport Meetings

Date 2021	Event/Attendance
27 May	Dannevirke Community Board catch up
1 June	Iwi Blessing of Pahiatua Main Street Upgrade
2 June	Dannevirke Multi sport complex meeting
8 June	Iwi/TDC Governance Meeting
	Dannevirke Community Board Meeting
9 June	Strategy and Policy Committee Meeting
	Economic Development Meeting
10 June	Rural and Provincial – LGNZ Conference – Wellington
11 June	Rural and Provincial – LGNZ Conference – Wellington
15 June	Pahiatua Citizenship Ceremony
16 June	Work's Liaison Committee Meeting
	Finance Committee Meeting
	Dannevirke Citizenship Ceremony
22 June	Audit and Risk Committee Meeting
27 June	Woodville Radio Interview
28 June	Dannevirke Multi sport complex meeting
29 June	Community Board coffee morning with the public
30 June	Iwi/TDC Governance Group District Strategy Meeting
	Tararua District Council Meeting

Carole Isaacson

Attendance at all committee meetings as per Councillors schedule

Committee and Portfolio Representations:

- Safer Communities
- Norsewood/Ormondville Community Liaison

Date 2021	Event/Attendance
14 June	Hovding Hall AGM Meeting
16 June	Work's Liaison Committee Meeting
	Finance Committee Meeting
	Dannevirke Citizenship Ceremony
22 June	Audit and Risk Committee Meeting
30 June	Iwi/TDC Governance Group District Strategy Meeting
	Tararua District Council Meeting

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Alison Franklin

Attendance at all committee meetings as per Councillors schedule

Committee and Portfolio Representations:

- Safer Communities
- Pahiatua On Track

Date 2021	Event/Attendance
1 June	Iwi Blessing of Pahiatua Main Street Upgrade
2 June	Carnival Park Meeting
2 June	Pahiatua On Track Meeting
3 June	Safer Communities Meeting
4 June	Connect Tararua Meeting
8 June	Council/Iwi Governance Meeting
9 June	Strategy and Policy Meeting
	Economic Development Meeting
14 June	Tararua Health & Wellbeing Governance Meeting
15 June	Pahiatua Citizenship Ceremony
16 June	Works Liaison Meeting
	Long Term Plan Workshop
22 June	Audit and Risk Committee Meeting
30 June	Iwi/TDC Governance Group District Strategy Meeting
	Tararua District Council Meeting

Kerry Sutherland

Attendance at all committee meetings as per Councillors schedule

Committee and Portfolio Representations:

- Forestry
- Works Liaison Chair

Date 2021	Event/Attendance
8 June	Iwi/Council Governance Group Meeting
9 June	Strategy and Policy Committee Meeting
	Economic Development Meeting
16 June	Works Liaison Meeting
	Finance Committee Meeting
22 June	Audit and Risk Committee Meeting
30 June	Iwi/TDC Governance Group District Strategy Meeting
	Tararua District Council Meeting

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Peter Johns

Attendance at all committee meetings as per Councillors schedule

Committee and Portfolio Representations:

- Forestry: Lead
- Woodville Districts' Vision

Date 2021	Event/Attendance
1 June	Iwi Blessing of Pahiatua Main Street Upgrade
4 June	RCA Forum
9 June	Strategy & Policy Meeting Economic Development Meeting
10 June	Te Apiti Governance Meeting
15 June	Pahiatua Citizenship Ceremony
16 June	Work's Liaison/Long Term Plan Meetings Dannevirke Citizenship Ceremony
22 June	Audit & Risk Committee Meeting
23 June	Three Waters Meeting – Zoom
30 June	Iwi/TDC Governance Group District Strategy Meeting Taranua District Council Meeting

Raylene Treder

Attendance at all committee meetings as per Councillors schedule

Committee Representations:

- Eketahuna Community Board

Date 2021	Event/Attendance
1 June	Iwi Blessing of Pahiatua Main Street Upgrade
9 June	Strategy and Policy Committee Meeting Economic Development Meeting
14 June	Eketāhuna Community Board Meeting
15 June	Pahiatua Citizenship Ceremony
16 June	Work's Liaison Committee Meeting Finance Committee Meeting
17 June	Bush Multisports Loose Parts Play Park opening
22 June	Audit & Risk Committee Meeting
23 June	Three Waters Meeting - Zoom
24 June	Passenger Transport Workshop - Regional Public Transport Plan
28 June	Zoom - Passenger Transport Workshop - Regional Public Transport Plan Bush Multisports Trust AGM
30 June	Iwi/TDC Governance Group District Strategy Meeting Taranua District Council Meeting

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Sharon Wards

Attendance at all committee meetings as per Councillors schedule

Committee and Portfolio Representations:

- Akitio/Pongaroa Community Liaison
- Strategy and Policy Chair

Date 2021 Event/Attendance

27 May	Meeting with Kieran McNulty, hosted by Chamber of Commerce
29 May	Discussion on Akitio River weirs with Horizons Regional Council
1 June	Woodville District Vision Committee Meeting
3 June	Strengthening Families Network Meeting
8 June	Iwi/TDC Governance Meeting
9 June	Strategy and Policy Committee Meeting and Economic Development Meeting
22 June	Audit and Risk Committee Meeting
30 June	Iwi/TDC Governance Group District Strategy Meeting Taranua District Council Meeting

Shirley Hull

Attendance at all committee meetings as per Councillors schedule

Committee and Portfolio Representations:

- Makuri Community Liaison
- Pahiatua Upgrade Committee
- Economic Development Chair

Date 2021 Event/Attendance

27 May	Meeting with Metalform re Pahiatua MSU
28 May	Iwi Blessing of Pahiatua Main Street Upgrade
1 June	Economic Development Meeting
3 June	PMSU Storyboards Meeting
8 June	Iwi/TDC Governance Committee Meeting
9 June	Strategy and Policy Committee Meeting Economic Development Meeting
11 June	Pahiatua MSU Project Team Meeting
16 June	Work's Liaison Committee Meeting and Finance Committee Meeting Dannevirke Citizenship Ceremony
22 June	Audit & Risk Committee Meeting
24 June	ELT Strategy Meeting
30 June	Iwi/TDC Governance Group District Strategy Meeting Taranua District Council Meeting

Comment:

The Pahiatua Main Street Upgrade is at the almost finished stage, and planning for the 'launch' is underway for the 13th August 2021. What a journey our town has been on for two years, and a personal journey for ten years.

The districts Long Term Plan is finally 'under our belt', it's a huge work load for staff... and a huge cost to the community every three years to make sure everyone has an opportunity for input and that Council set the right direction for business as usual and projects on communities behalf, democracy in action.

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14 - Wairarapa Times Age Column: Mayor Tracey Collis

Huge changes have been afoot led by the Government's belief that councils cannot deliver everything that communities require to function. The Government started a Three Waters Review in mid-2017, continued with a Three Waters Reform Programme in June 2020, and more recently set up Taumata Arowai which will become the new water services regulator.

"Three Waters" refers to drinking water, stormwater and wastewater, and these infrastructure assets are currently owned by local councils, paid for by your rates to deliver services to our communities.

The Three Waters Reform Programme is moving at pace and these services are critical to New Zealand's health, safety, environment and prosperity. However, while the review has finished and the reform continues, it would be nice to have some news to inform our public as to the details of what will happen with these assets and who in the future will pay for them.

The team at council worked incredibly hard last year to meet a tight deadline to supply information about our infrastructure, in return for \$5.02m in Covid-19 Three Waters stimulus funding, to be used to maintain and improve our three waters infrastructure.

Last week, a report was released which showed that \$1.4b had been spent over the last five years by councils throughout the country, and this investment is set to double annually for the next ten years according to the Long-Term Plans of councils.

The report indicates, despite the level of increase in future spend, modelling suggests it will still create a shortfall in investment. New Zealand's proposed Three Waters model is based on the Scottish water infrastructure model, which includes regional economic outcomes. While in NZ, these infrastructure and supply costs are met through rates, the Scottish model takes a user-pays system and charges customers directly.

Infrastructure has been underfunded for decades due to pressure to keep rates down, not only in Tararua, but throughout New Zealand, and to upgrade and meet increasing regulatory requirements will be challenging for rural councils like ourselves. An analysis of our infrastructure data is expected towards the end of June and will help us understand the investment required to continue to meet regulation.

Many mayors and councillors are concerned at having to make decisions under tight timeframes without sufficient data and have continued to ask for detailed information to inform our council and better consult with our communities. For Tararua, there will absolutely be affordability challenges in meeting planned infrastructure renewals, unprecedented population growth, new environmental standards and increased compliance costs. We continue to ask where the local voice will be in making local decisions around all our water services.

The report states that every region is expected to be positively impacted by the reform in terms of GDP and employment growth, but where these are located within regions remains in question. Naturally, our water and wastewater staff are worried about where their future employment and location will be, however, it is also very clear that there will be plenty of career opportunities in this area for our young people currently considering their future training and employment.



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Council's finance team are concerned at the wider implication of stranded assets when the Government pushes for centralisation of the services. Tararua ratepayers have water infrastructure assets worth \$164m, with a combined debt of \$23.2m, and our community will want to know if we will be unduly disadvantaged for the work already done.

With the potential removal of the Three Waters from Local Government and the current reform of the Resource Management Act, it was necessary to consider the Future for Local Government and what this will look like over the next 30 years.

Te Arotake i te Anamata mō Nga Kaunihera was announced to consider this and engagement is due to start between June and September, and we look forward to meeting with the panel appointed. They will look at opportunities to strengthen the well-being of communities, key trends and of course funding, with interim reports due with the Minister in September this year.

There is plenty of work being done at an incredible speed and it is imperative that we take our communities on this journey to ensure that there is always a local voice involved in decisions affecting local people. Without it, small districts with large geographical areas and a low ratepayer base like ours, will struggle to receive our fair share in comparison to the big cities with large compact populations.

Our aim is to keep residents informed as we tackle these significant challenges.



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