

COMMUNITY UPDATE

24 JUNE 2022



Mayor Malcolm Campbell and Tūwharetoa Kaumātua Te Haukakawa (Boycie) Te Rire plant the first tree at the Kawerau Cemetery during the Matariki community planting day.

▶ From the Mayor

Recognising and celebrating Matariki this past week has been a privilege and highlight.

When the Matariki star cluster appeared on Tuesday June 21, we honoured those who have passed away with a special community-planting day at the Kawerau Cemetery.

As with all our Matariki events, Tūwharetoa Kaumātua Te Haukakawa (Boycie) Te Rire was there to mihi our team and visitors and open with a karakia. Thank you Boycie.

It is heartening to see the result of the efforts to make this a beautiful resting place. A special mention to the rangatahi from Tūwharetoa Ki Kawerau Hauora's Te Ara Mahi programme who assisted with the planting.

On Wednesday, we held the inaugural Matariki Morning tea with the Mayor at Firmin Lodge. Attended by more than 105 seniors, this was a fantastic event recognising the contribution of these folk to our community. It was also a great opportunity for many people to reconnect.

We look forward to this becoming an annual event on Council's Matariki calendar to celebrate those loved ones who are still with us.

On Thursday we held a guided Matariki Hikoi (walk) from the Kawerau i-SITE to ninesignificant areas in Kawerau. People can also complete this hikoi in their own time, just head into the Council Offices or the I-SITE and collect a brochure.

I wish to thank all our Council staff who have supported these Matariki community events.

Looking ahead, we are adopting the Annual Plan on the 28 June. I know the rates increase is a bitter pill to swallow for ratepayers. Council has opted for a middle ground approach, whereby the rating share is changed.

The replacement of the water pipes in the central business district continues, and we apologise for the disruption. This is a complicated project including replacement of some sewer lines - it will only be short-term.

We are continuing with the water pipe replacement projects, as if the government's Three Waters Reform goes ahead, we do not want to lose those depreciation funds with the assets. We prefer to renew the infrastructure, rather than risk being at the back of a very long queue as part of mega entity B with 22 other councils.

We know the delays in rebuilding the netball courts are frustrating. Council has removed the asbestos contaminated soil and is waiting for the contractor. The shortage of GIB is affecting this project.

We are also aiming to complete the pools' entrance soon and apologise for the disruption.

Finally, it is timely to announce that I will not be standing for Mayor again in this year's elections. After 27 years on the Council, with 21 years as Mayor, it is time for the succession plan to take effect. I plan to remain in Kawerau and continue supporting our community and the Eastern Bay.

- Mayor Malcolm Campbell

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HAVE YOU APPLIED FOR A RATES REBATE?

Applications for a rates rebate for the 2021-2022 year close on 30 June 2022. Please contact Council on 07 306 9009 or call in to talk with our customer services team.

This is a government-funded scheme to assist people on low or fixed incomes.

ANNUAL PLAN 2022-2023 DELIBERATIONS

Spreading the load of the rating shortfall was the reason Council will change the rating differential.

At the Extraordinary Meeting on Tuesday, June 14, Council considered the submissions of residents and those representing the industrial and commercial properties.

With the aim to find some middle ground, Council discussed changing the rating share or differential to 48% for residential properties and 52% for commercial/industrial properties.

This helps to spread the load of the \$1 million rating shortfall following the reduced valuation of Norske Skog (formerly the district's largest ratepayer) after it closed in June 2021 from \$75m to \$20m.

WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF A 48:52 RATING SHARE?

Residential:

With a base rates increase of 6.2%, the additional rating share of the shortfall brings the average rates increase to 13.6% for residential properties (this will vary depending on the revaluation amount for individual properties).

Example: A residential property in Domett Street now valued at \$310,000 this will equate to a rates increase of approximately \$358 per annum, or \$7 extra a week.

Example: For a residential property in Cobham Drive with a new valuation of \$450,000 this equates to an approximate increase of \$444 per annum, or \$9 extra per week.

Please Note: All figures are approximate, and rates increases will vary in properties due to the revaluation variations.

In addition, the Council resolved to increase the uniform annual general charge from \$600 to \$750 per property.

Commercial/Industrial:

25.5% average rates increase for commercial/industrial ratepayers (again which will vary depending on the revaluation).

Example: An Islington Street commercial property now valued at \$240,000, will have a annual rates increase of approximately \$1,990 or an extra \$38 per week.

Example: An Islington Street property now valued at \$1.09m will pay approximately \$7,299 extra each year (and \$140 extra per week).

Secure Asbestos Containment Site

At the extraordinary meeting held on Tuesday 14 June, Council decided to budget \$50,000 to complete detailed plans, provide more information and continue consultation as part of the Resource Consent process.

Council will then revisit whether or not to establish a site for the disposal of asbestos containing material for the Kawerau region only, or for the Eastern Bay region.

There were 38 submissions in favour of establishing the site and 31 against, with two submissions in favour of the disposal of Kawerau material only. Seven submitters were undecided.

The impact of not going ahead with the secure asbestos containment site means an additional 1.8% to the rating increase. This is due to the anticipated surplus of \$200k that was put into the annual plan budget.

Three Waters Update - Talk to Your MPs

Council is encouraging people to talk directly to the three Members of Parliament (MPs) who represent the Kawerau and Eastern Bay. It is Central Government which is mandating the Three Waters reform, so they need to hear the voices and concerns of the people.

Council will remain a member of Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ). They are our family and there is strength in that.

Our community has once again said they wish to retain ownership of Kawerau's Three Waters assets. In response, Kawerau District Council joined the 'Communities 4 Local Democracies' with 31 other Councils last year.

This group of Councils all agree with the need for reform. But we do not agree with the current reform model whereby the ownership and management of Council's Three Waters assets are centralised into mega entities.



Council's Matariki activities included the District Library donating Matariki-themed book packs to Kawerau schools. District digital support librarian Janice Tekii is pictured with the delighted tamariki at Kawerau Preschool after receiving their books.

MĀNAWATIA A MATARIKI

Celebrate the rising of the new year

21-29 JUNE 2022



MATARIKI 2022 COMMUNITY EVENTS

Community Planting Day

On Tuesday 21 July, a Community Planting Day was held at the Kawerau Cemetery. Tūwharetoa Ki Kawerau Kaumātua and Council Cultural Advisor Te Haukākawa (Boycie) Te Rire started the day with a mihi and karakia. After the blessings, the community got stuck in and began planting the native trees and tulips. There was a good turnout from the community who all got actively involved alongside the Mayor, various Councillors and Council staff. This event was significant to Matariki, as it was in commemoration of loved ones that have been lost.

Matariki Morning Tea

Mayor Malcolm Campbell invited the kaumatua (elderly) residents of Kawerau to join him for morning tea at Firmin Lodge on Wednesday 22 July. With over 100 members of the community in attendance, it was a wholesome moment to acknowledge the first ever Matariki public holiday in Aotearoa. Mayor Malcolm Campbell said, "This is the perfect opportunity for our seniors to reconnect with each other after a trying few years with the pandemic. It also allows us to celebrate Matariki together and look to the future." A pop-up Covid-19 and Influenza (flu) vaccination van was set up on the day by the District Health Board (DHB) in case any of the attendees needed to receive one of the available immunisations.

Matariki Hikoi (Walk) - Kawerau i-Site

A guided hikoi (walking) tour of nine significant sites in Kawerau was conducted by the Kawerau i-Site team on Thursday 23 June. Each of the nine sites correlated with one of the nine Matariki stars. As the tour group arrived at each of the nine sites, the tour guide explained both the meaning and history of the site in Kawerau, and then gave information on the respective Matariki star. If you missed the guided tour, brochures with a map and information about the sites and Matariki stars are available from the Kawerau i-Site so you can conduct your own 'self-guided' tour.

From Left: Amenity Gardens Leading Hand, Tania James, Tūwharetoa Kaumatua and Council Cultural Advisor, Te Haukākawa (Boycie) Te Rire, Deputy Mayor, Faylene Tunui, Councillor, Berice Julian, Tūwharetoa Rangitahi, Paeroa Erimana, Councillor, Carolyn Ion, Tūwharetoa Rangitahi, Te Omeka Reid, Tūwharetoa Kaimahi, Shona Hohepa, Mayor, Malcolm Campbell, Team Leader Animal Control & Compliance, Lisa Singfield, Parks and Reserves Team Member, Steve Houia, Tūwharetoa Rangitahi, Calim Te Riini, Community Member, Grace Ngarimu.



MATARIKI MORNING TEA WITH THE MAYOR



Flu and Covid-19 Vaccinations

Covid-19 and Influenza vaccinations are available from the Kawerau Pharmacy. Open Mon – Fri, 8.30am - 5pm. Closed Sat, Sun.