

# Kawerau District Council Annual Plan 2022-2023

## Engagement process

**The Annual Plan 2022-2023 is year two of the Long Term Plan 2021-2031.**

The purpose of consulting with the community is to inform residents and ratepayers about the plans for the coming year, changes and challenges.

### FAQs:

#### Questions from the Public and Stakeholder engagement meetings:

##### Consultation Topic 1 – Rates Increases

**Q. Will these rates increases cause businesses to leave the town along with new businesses not coming in? What are Council going to do about it?**

*As part of the Annual Plan 2022-2023 engagement process we are talking to our major industries and also commercial operators for their feedback. At this stage it is too early, but we are encouraging residents and commercial ratepayers to make submissions to inform the Council's decision-making.*

**Q. What feedback has the council heard in regards to the rates increases from the business and commercial sector?**

*The engagement process has only just began, but there has been some concern raised by both residents and an industrial organisation.*

**Q. How do we compare to other nearby districts regarding rates for residents and commercial properties?**

*Residential rates for Kawerau properties are amongst the 25% lowest of all Councils in New Zealand. It is difficult to precisely compare rates for commercial and industrial properties unless the valuations and services provided are exactly the same. However, with the rating share for commercial and industrial businesses at 55% this means they may be higher than some other regions (where a 50:50 split is in place). This is partly due to the historic nature of Kawerau being formed to service the pulp and paper mill, and that it is a small district that has major industry.*

**Q. Has Council considered reducing services that are running at a loss?**

*We encourage people to put in a submission on this.*

**Q. Will Norske Skog Tasman still have to pay rates?**

*Yes, however, the value of Norske Skog Tasman has reduced significantly now that it is no longer operating. The rates it will pay are based on the business being valued at \$25 million (as at Oct/Nov 2021 after it closed).*

**Q. If Kawerau does attract more industry and commercial business, will that mean that the rates then go back down?**

*If the rates share remains at 55:45 with the industry and commercial sector having the great 55% share, and new businesses came into town, this would likely mean that the residential rates would go down (eventually once they were all operational).*

**Q. What new industries are likely to want to set up at the Pūtauaki Trust land?**

*There are a variety of land lots available at Pūtauaki Trust's 80 hectare development. The roundabout and access roadways are now completed. It is going to be adjacent to the inter-modal railhead (Kawerau Container Terminal) which means efficient transport of goods directly to the Port of Tauranga. One example of an operation, is a pet food business that moved out of the Mount industrial area to the Hawkes Bay.*

**Q. When will the Kawerau Container Terminal be up and running? Will they become a significant ratepayer?**

*Council believes it is on track, and that the designs are finalised. It is now likely that the owners will be looking to purchase the land for the KCT. Yes, we believe the KCT will be a significant ratepayer, and be a hugely valuable conduit for businesses in Kawerau and throughout the Eastern Bay.*

**Consultation Topic 2:**

**Q. Can we destroy the asbestos, rather than bury it in the whenua?**

*Asbestos is not able to be destroyed, hence it has been a great material in use for many decades in the building industry. The only safe way to dispose of asbestos or asbestos contaminated material and soil is to wrap it in secure 'hazibags' (or similar wrapping) and bury it in a secure containment site.*

*Asbestos is not soluble in water, so it will not leach. However, any new secure containment site would be fully lined and the asbestos material wrapped given added protection against any other harmful contaminants that may leach.*

**Q. How much asbestos have we disposed of so far?**

*There is an existing secure containment area with asbestos that was used as an emergency disposal site (and approved by the Bay of Plenty Regional Council). There is capacity within that existing cell to add more contaminated material.*

**Q. Will the asbestos have any impact on any surrounding areas, particularly residential?**

*No. Asbestos is not soluble in water, so it will not leach.*

*However, any new secure containment site would be fully lined and the asbestos material wrapped given added protection against any other harmful contaminants that may leach.*

*The existing asbestos cell and the proposed site are between the existing landfill and historical landfill. This entire area is subject to strict resource consent requirements that include quarterly ground water monitoring and a full ecological report every five years.*

**Q. Could we have a description of where the asbestos will be buried exactly and why has this site been chosen?**

*This site has been chosen as there is already historical landfills in this area that Council monitors regularly in accordance with Resource Consent requirements from the Bay of Plenty Regional Council.*

*It means that the existing groundwater monitoring sites will continue to be used, which will save many thousands of dollars in set-up costs. It is not viable financially or environmentally to consider any other alternative sites due to the existing monitoring and also the historical landfill sites.*

**Q. Who owns the land where the proposed secure asbestos containment site is proposed?**

*Council, the Kawerau District, own the land where the former landfills are situated and the current Transfer Station is.*

**Q. Who will monitor the Resource Consent for the landfill if it goes ahead?**

*All Resource Consents are monitored by the Bay of Plenty Regional Council. Currently, the historical landfill sites are under resource conditions that require groundwater borehole sampling and monitoring every three months. Plus, a full ecological report every five years.*

*The proposed asbestos landfill will have specific conditions that Council must test and monitor for the BOPRC.*

**Q. How much material are we talking about on Council land that may be contaminated with asbestos?**

*It is difficult to know where further contaminated areas may be. Currently, there are 8 lots in the Central Cove residential development that did have contaminated material. The cost to remove the soil, is \$220m<sup>3</sup> and this is a considerable cost.*

**Q. Will Council still make a profit from this development after the asbestos is removed?**

*Yes, but it will be a smaller profit, as the disposal costs are considerable.*

**Q. Can we just have the proposed secure asbestos containment site for material from our own district?**

*It is not viable for our small district to develop such a facility, when we are not certain of the volumes here in the district. We are simply too small and unless we open it for our Eastern Bay neighbours it will simply become an expense.*

**Q. Is there asbestos already in the area where the site is proposed and what about in the two old landfills that are full and not used?**

*Yes, there is already a small cell that Council had to use for an emergency. There is some capacity to fill that cell.*

*Yes, there will be a considerable amount (likely thousands of tonnes) of asbestos contaminated material in the two old landfills that are in the area that is monitored, and adjacent to the proposed site.*

**Q. Can we be certain there will be no contamination in transporting the material, or once it is in the ground?**

*Yes, modern landfill standards, resource consent conditions and Workplace Safety Standards mean all aspects of any secure asbestos containment site must be strictly adhered to. There are rigorous licensing standards for everyone involved. Asbestos is now wrapped prior to being transported, and placed into the landfill. This will not be open to the public.*

**Q. How much would be transported into the landfill on any week?**

*We would run the landfill as a commercial venture, and operators would have to pre-book in advance. It is not likely that the landfill would be open every day, so there may be one or two truckloads each week.*

**Q. How long would the landfill be operational?**

*This would depend on volumes received, but it is likely that it would be operational for 20 years. Once it was full, it would be capped and sealed to modern landfill standards.*

Site map:

## Proposed Secure asbestos containment site on top of existing cell



### Three Waters Reform Questions and Answers

#### Q. What is the impact of the government's Three Waters Reform going ahead?

*The Three Waters Reform would see Kawerau's drinking, wastewater and stormwater operations being controlled by Entity B. Kawerau has one of the lowest water costs in the country and modelling (by Council and also the reform body) shows that these costs would likely increase under the new operational model.*

*Council cannot project exactly what these costs would be with the information we currently have from the government.*

*Council listened to the feedback from the district in 2021 that said 'no' to joining Three Waters. Unfortunately, the government has since mandated by legislation that Councils must join. However, Kawerau has also joined with 31 other councils in the Communities 4 Local Democracies organisation which is seeking a pause on the current government reform and alternative solutions to the Three Waters Reform.*

#### Q. Will the new water regulator (Taumata Arowai) make the cost higher for residents?

*Taumata Arowai will effectively take over the current duties of the District Health Board (DHB) so we can presume that those costs would be transferred to the new regulator.*

**Q. The water situation is looking grim, health is paramount. As a property owner I cannot see business coming here. I understand everyone is on edge –**

**the government hasn't been very kind. Drinking water with chlorine in it – what has happened to humanity? I haven't seen much in the way of pipe replacements despite the 2.9M spent.**

*In 2021, the considerable areas of drinking water and other pipes were replaced in the district. Council is on track with the drinking water pipe replacement project. In 2022, the 8kms of drinking water pipes along River Road will be replaced as planned. In addition, 1.5 km of stormwater pipes will be replaced in the central business district. There is also \$900,000 budgeted for wastewater pipes in 2022-2023.*

**Q. Who's fault was it when the people died in Havelock North due to the water?**

*Council understands that there campylobacter bacterium that entered one of the drinking water inlets that fed the district in Havelock North. The official government enquiry found there were a number of reasons for the failure. This outbreak which sadly resulted in four deaths and thousands of people becoming ill, prompted a government review of the way Three Waters was managed by Councils and regulated by Regional Councils and the District Health Boards.*

*The full government enquiry on the Havelock North drinking water incident can be sourced here: <https://www.dia.govt.nz/Government-Inquiry-into-Havelock-North-Drinking-Water-Report---Part-1---Overview>*

*The second stage report of the government enquiry which prom-ted the Three Waters Reform can be found here <https://www.dia.govt.nz/Report-of-the-Havelock-North-Drinking-Water-Inquiry---Stage-2>*

### **General Questions and Answers**

**Q. Why has the Bay of Plenty Regional Council made the decision to rate separately? And will this mean we pay more rates overall?**

*Council cannot speak for BOPRC and suggest that people contact their Regional Councillor to ask that question.*

*BOPRC will rate once a year starting from October 2022.*

*It does mean that Kawerau will no longer receive the \$70,000 payment for collecting the rates on behalf of the Bay of Plenty Regional Council.*

**Q. How many meetings are being held and how have you advised ratepayers? ‘**

*We have run two public meetings to date, with another two planned. In addition, Council is meeting with Iwi and stakeholders throughout the consultation and engagement process.*

*The Annual Plan 2022-2023 consultation document has been delivered to residents in the Kawerau District. The latest Council Community Update outlines the two consultation topics and also outlines the upcoming public meetings at the Kawerau Markets 12 May – 9am to 12noon and on Monday, 16 May at 2.00pm in the Kawerau Town Hall.*

*We are also posting information and questions and answers onto our Council social media channels, and there all the documentation is available to view on the Council website.*