

MAYORAL COLUMN



Mayor Craig Little

Attending last week's Christchurch based Local Government New Zealand conference highlighted how Wairoa's issues are the same as the rest of the country.

Most small towns are facing the same struggles and mostly, like the Wairoa District Council, the local authorities are doing all they can to provide the best services within the limited resources available.

Rates was a hot topic of conversation with mayors and councillors welcoming the Government's inquiry into new ways of funding councils, including

targeted rates and local taxes.

We are told that rates rises typically outstrip both inflation and income rises in a relatively low wage economy.

Christchurch's recently approved Long Term Plan is based on a 53 percent increase in rates over the next decade with Hamilton the same and Dunedin indicating a 59 percent increase.

Local Government New Zealand president Dave Cull said nationally infrastructure spending has fallen behind and, in most cases, rates rises are about the essentials, not the nice to haves.

He said looking forward the costs associated with climate change will fall disproportionately on councils and is suggesting a better way of funding councils that is not so dependent on ratepayers.

Nationally, 60 percent of councils' incomes is from property rates, this is high by international standards.

He is calling for a rebalancing and his mantra is that 88 percent of rates and taxes are collected by central government and 12 percent by local authorities in New Zealand.

A long and winding road

Driving around the South Island reinforced the importance of sealing SH38.

Time and time again NZTA tell us how difficult it would be to seal SH38 yet there are far more challenging roads that have been sealed in the South Island.



Unsealed section of SH38

Having seen these South Island roads first hand has dispelled the myth that it is too hard to seal SH38. I was amazed at how much money is being spent on roading down south and I look forward to more funding for roads in our region.

We will continue to push to have SH38 sealed and hope NZTA will

come on-board with the regional provincial growth fund, so we can achieve what should have occurred decades ago.

All main highways in New Zealand should be sealed and the lack of sealing on SH38 is a limitation for our district.

Salute Wairoa

The recent presentation of a second Salute Wairoa touch table is a huge gift that will be enjoyed by present and future generations.

This is the second table to be gifted to the community. The first table was donated to the library and the second one to the museum, with the dedication service held last Saturday.



Mayor Craig Little speaking at the Salute Wairoa touch table dedication.

The Salute Wairoa team of Dennis Munro, Liz Greenslade and Sue Wilson along with Andrew Hume and Sheryl McNabb, should be very proud of themselves with their work creating a huge legacy for Wairoa.

The table was built by Andrew Hume and his team and the supporting timber frame was put together by Wairoa craftsman Chris Wilson.

These touch tables hold records of nearly 1000 of Wairoa's World War 1 veterans. It is a great achievement to have this information



Pā Karaitiana Kingi blessing the Salute Wairoa touch table.

collated to ensure it won't be lost to future generations.

I think you would be hard pressed to find someone in Wairoa without some connection to these heroes whose stories are now preserved forever in history.

The research to gather the information will make sure no one forgets the sacrifices these veterans made for their country or the horrendous conditions they had to endure, especially the ones who lost their lives and never returned.

There are so many stories held in the touch tables and they can now be accessed free of charge - a significant gift to our community.

I urge anyone who has World War 1 records or information that hasn't yet been recorded to please contact the Salute Wairoa team.

These tables and the information they hold is a huge tribute to these heroes of Wairoa and we must never forget what they went through.

DIGITAL APP LAB COURSE A SUCCESS FOR WAIROA

It was a full-on two weeks of learning and sharing for the 30 champions who took part in the level five certificate in Digital Media 1 paper through AUT University, right here in Wairoa.

Earlier this month, the 30 grassroots Wairoa champions learnt their way around Adobe InDesign - the software used to make apps - the newest OSMO camera, drones and other high-tech digital equipment. The knowledge they learn will go towards their own stories that will be published in an app at the end of this year.

The 30 people have enrolled in a level five Certificate in Digital Media 1 paper which is delivered by the Faculty of Māori and Indigenous

Development, Te Ara Poutama at AUT University.

Local woman Amiria Te Amo-Mitchell, who is a student in the course, says she loves the programme because it's something she has never done before.

"This is where the world is heading, in terms of technology, and it's great to have the opportunity to learn something new and interesting," Mrs Te Amo-Mitchell said.

"I believe a programme like this will greatly benefit our rangatahi and the community as a whole."

FOR YOUR DIARY

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 31 July: 1.30pm

FINANCE, AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 7 August: 1.30pm

MĀORI STANDING COMMITTEE

Thursday, 9 August: 12.30pm

COUNCIL FORUM

Tuesday, 21 August: 1.30pm



CONTACT US

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