

Chair's report – February 2020

Waiheke Local Board

Ngā mihi Waiheke

My special thanks on behalf of the board to the Piritahi Marae whanau for hosting the Waitangi Day 2020 event. It was a warm and heartfelt day of wānanga and manaakitanga. Thank you also to those who performed, cooked, attended and ngā ringawera. Tēnā Koutou katoa.

Water, drought and contingency planning

The chair and deputy chair met with water suppliers and council's Healthy Waters team on Tuesday 11th Feb to assess the status of the water supply measures in place.

- Healthy Waters clearly stated that the aquifer is not at risk at the current rate of draw down from all sources.
- The suppliers have been operating on an approx. 40 day wait list and have stopped taking orders while they clear the backlog.
- Emergency supplies have been hampered by the number of people booking emergency water but still holding back-up levels of water in their tanks.
- CAB has a referral process for those residents who need special assistance.
- The two Healthy Waters potable water stations are working well with 60 -70 people per day filling containers. That number is likely to escalate.
- Those stations can't refill large tankers if required as the draw isn't sufficiently fast.
- Healthy Waters has been asked to look at alternative emergency water suppliers to take the pressure off the four companies including looking at capacity of alternative council bores.
- Private suppliers who are not licensed may be selling water from untested private bores. Residents should be made aware by the sellers of the risks of buying non-potable water.
- Significant numbers of people are queuing to use the showers in the sports pavilion at Onetangi Sports park.
- The chair thanked the suppliers in attendance for their long hours and their service to the community.
- Healthy Waters is taking responsibility for the public communications on water supply issues.

Local Board Plan

The board and local board staff are starting work on the new Local Board Plan that will guide the board's agenda for the next three years. Our aim is to widen the net as far as possible to maximize inputs from our communities. We commend the local board team for their commitment to an extensive consultation exercise across Waiheke and Rakino which begins the week of writing this report. Everyone who has an interest in the issues the local board should focus on, and the projects we should execute for the community, is encouraged to participate and find out which events they might attend.

Hauraki Gulf Forum

The Chair attended the first of the Hauraki Gulf Forum meetings for 2020 on 17 Feb accompanied by board member Kylee Matthews who will second for the chair when necessary. Waiheke has one position on the board designated within the Act. I am pleased to advise that Cr Pippa Coom, Councillor for Waitemata and the Gulf Islands, was elected co-chair. In a striking

innovation the HGF voted to adopt a co-governance arrangement with Tangata Whenua. The Tangata Whenua representatives on the forum will appoint the other co-chair. I'm hopeful this will help move the forum forward to fulfill its governance role in the Gulf and in particular to fast forward its commitments to restoration of the ecology of the Gulf and of its Mauri.

This month marks the 20th anniversary of the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park and the formation of the Hauraki Gulf Forum. There are events being planned by the Minister for 27th Feb to mark that occasion.

Retrofit Your Home programme.

Council has operated this programme for a number of years, offering some home improvement funds to ratepayers who pay off loans through their rates over a number of years. Recently council tendered an extension of the programme to local suppliers to include installation of solar panels and other home energy efficiency measures. At the time of writing the new programme has been temporarily suspended as it is subject to some financing changes. It is not known at this stage if the planned roll-out for Waiheke mid-March will be able to proceed as scheduled. The matter is being closely monitored by the board reflecting our level of concern at the postponement. The interest in the programme reflects the local board's commitment to a zero carbon future.

Export Businesses

The chair attended the official opening of a new processing and distribution plant for Te Matuku Oysters in Tahi Rd. It is heartening to see the expansion of local employment opportunities and an export business in development. Te Matuku already employs 25 staff and that number will grow over time. Sir Rob Fenwick, his co-investors, family and staff team are to be commended for their relentless focus on environmental sustainability and their commitment to Waiheke.

Similarly the refurbishment of the Harbormasters' building at Matiatia by Esme and Nick Pfaff, with their commitment to the same quality values in both tourism and export, demonstrate the ability of high value local niche businesses growing the Waiheke economy beyond the traditional bases.

Cruise Ships and Ferry Movements

Following a week of peak-hour commuter delays for people travelling from Waiheke to the city and vice-versa the chair spoke with media and with other agencies, then attended an urgent meeting called by the Mayor, involving AT, the Harbourmaster, Ports of Auckland and Fullers on 22 January. Waiheke's local MP and Councillor, Hon Nikki Kay, and Pippa Coom also attended.

At the Mayor's request a task force of the four entities was set up to resolve the issue of the cruise ships movements in the ferry basin and the resultant propeller thrust (or risk of that) impeding ferry movements. Subsequently and successfully the cruise ships have been docked much earlier and the impacts for the Waiheke-Auckland run have been minimized to one sailing leaving 10 minutes earlier than scheduled. The chair commends Fullers for putting safety of passengers and vessels first in this instance.

Fullers Residents' lane

Whilst it has been a long time coming, it is certainly timely now to thank Fullers for meeting with the chair and board member Robin Tucker several weeks ago, along with AT, and being open to

making some changes to the way the residents' lane was operating. It is a welcome change to have an announcement now that the residents' lane will open first before the visitors lane on the city side, and for Fullers staff to be ensuring as best they can that Waiheke residents do get on board when vessels are crowded.

Electric Island

Electric Island Waiheke is endorsed by the Waiheke Local Board. They are among other parties hosting a national conference here on Waiheke next month. 'EVs and Beyond' promises to cover the full spectrum of clean fuel alternatives from EVs through to solar power from the 16th through 17th March. There are two public open days beforehand with a display of cars and new technologies at the causeway on Saturday 14th March followed by a day of world record setting events on Sunday 15th March. This will no doubt be popular with the people of Waiheke thinking and planning for a clean fuel future, as well as those who have already committed to EVs and/or alternative power generation.

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