



Mayor Bernie Warden

Message from the Mayor

I have not had one visit into the Council building or any face to face meetings for over a month.

It certainly has been strange but nevertheless very busy. Council has continued to maintain and deliver essential services as well as plan on how we can transition through the different levels. We are also focussing on the role that Council can play as we look to recover from this pandemic.

There are a number of plans and strategies that are being formulated to assist in managing the challenges that we will all face in the future.

Next week Council will hear submissions to the Annual Plan. This will play a big part in ensuring we understand what the community is looking for in the coming year and what we can deliver to meet those expectations. The Annual Plan Hearings take place on Wednesday 13 and Thursday 14 May, and will be live-streamed. You can view the meetings from Council's website.

It has been very encouraging that we have received over 140 submissions this year and I would like to acknowledge all those who have taken the opportunity to submit to the Plan.

Thank you for listening to messaging regarding not putting wet wipes down the loo. There has been a noticeable reduction in the number of sewer pump blockages which our infrastructure team are very grateful for.

I look forward to getting out and interacting in the community again once we move down the Covid-19 levels.

Stay safe.

Bernie Warden

Council services during Alert Level 3

Horowhenua District Council is continuing to provide as many services as is safely possible at Alert Level 3. The table below contains key information about our services at New Zealand's current alert level.

Should the Government announce a move to Alert Level 2, we will publish updated information about Council services at Level 2 as soon as possible on the dedicated COVID-19 page on our website, www.horowhenua.govt.nz/COVID-19. You can also check this page for information about how to access welfare support, links to frequently asked questions, key Council news related

to COVID-19, and information on agencies you can reach out to for services and support during the pandemic.

If you are unable to access the internet, you can't find what you're looking for on our website, or you'd simply prefer to talk to us directly, you are welcome to contact our Customer Services team on 06 366 0999. Our main call centre hours are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 9am to 5pm, and 9:30am to 5pm on Wednesdays. Phone calls outside these hours will be answered by our afterhours service.

Customer service contact centres

Although our customer service centres are closed to walk-ins, our fantastic Customer Experience team are continuing to work remotely.

You can contact us by email at enquiries@horowhenua.govt.nz or by phone on 06 366 0999. We also have lots of services and information on our website, www.horowhenua.govt.nz

Rubbish and recycling services

All kerbside rubbish collections will continue.

Kerbside recycling collection services have resumed. Collections continue to follow the normal schedule. To find out when your next collection day is, please visit www.horowhenua.govt.nz/MyNeighbourhood

If you do not have a kerbside rubbish and recycling collection service, please contact our Customer Experience team for advice about your area.

Transfer stations are open to the public for general and green waste but not recycling. Restrictions apply: no more than two vehicles in at a time, no cash payments available. Car registration numbers will be recorded for contact tracing.

Static recycling stations remain closed.

You can buy Council rubbish bags from the supermarket and Shannon Four Square.

Water supply, wastewater and stormwater services

These services will continue.

Governance and decision making

Council, the Foxton Community Board and committees of Council are continuing to meet and make decisions remotely.

Public engagement and participation in Council decision-making is still welcomed and encouraged through remote means. If you would like to participate, please contact Council on 06 366 0999 or email enquiries@horowhenua.govt.nz

Civil defence and emergency management

These services will continue.

Parks, reserves, cemeteries, playgrounds and public toilets	Parks, reserves and cemeteries remain open, but playgrounds, sports grounds and most public toilets are closed. Mowing and general maintenance have resumed. Litter bins will continue to be emptied.
Library services	Although our physical libraries are closed, we have a world of e-books, e-audio books, and fascinating databases for you to discover with Your Library online. If you're not a Libraries Horowhenua cardholder, you can sign up for e-membership online. Visit tetakere.org.nz/Your-Library to explore what's on offer. Our Homelink delivery service is now available. For more information, visit tetakere.org.nz/Your-Library or contact us on 06 368 1953. We've extended loans on all books, magazines, DVDs and jigsaws, so please keep any items you have on loan at home. There will be no fines for any items returned late while our community centres are closed due to COVID-19.
Swimming pools	Levin Aquatic Centre and Foxton Heated Pools are closed. As Foxton Heated Pools is close to the end of its open season, it will be closed until September.
Community centres	Te Takeretanga o Kura-hau-pō, Te Awahou Nieuwe Stroom, and Shannon Library are closed.
Animal control	Animal control will respond to priority calls. The dog pound is closed to the public but remains operational. Please keep dogs on a leash when out walking them.
Planning (resource) consents	We are continuing to process resource consents where possible. Site visits can be arranged if appropriate measures are in place. Please contact us on 06 366 0999 or enquiries@horowhenua.govt.nz for more information.
Regulatory, licencing and compliance	We are continuing to process licence applications and renewals. Food verifications and alcohol compliance inspections may be carried out remotely. A Council officer will contact you if this is required for your business. Officers will attend to complaints where there is imminent risk to human health. You can contact us on 06 366 0999 or enquiries@horowhenua.govt.nz
Building consents	We are continuing to process building consents. Building inspections can be arranged if appropriate measures are in place. A Council officer will contact you to arrange site visits and discuss safety requirements. To book an inspection, call 06 366 0927. For general enquiries, contact us on 06 366 0999 or enquiries@horowhenua.govt.nz
Noise control	We are continuing to receive and respond to noise control complaints 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
Roading services	Routine road maintenance and roading projects have resumed, including works on the Queen Street/Cambridge Street roundabout.
Parking	Parking services have stopped. Parking is currently free. Please avoid touching or using parking meters. If you have parking compliance complaints, please contact us on 06 366 0999 or enquiries@horowhenua.govt.nz
Strategic planning	You can still contact us to discuss our draft Annual Plan, Community Plans, and Master Plans. Email enquiries@horowhenua.govt.nz or telephone 06 366 0999. Annual Plan hearings will be held on 13 and 14 May. The hearings will be held via audiovisual links and will be livestreamed (see p.4 for details).
Finance	You can still contact us to discuss any enquiries you have about Council financial matters. For enquiries about rates invoices, payments, rebates, or if you are experiencing hardship, please contact us on 06 366 0999 or enquiries@horowhenua.govt.nz so we can help you.
Information management services	Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act, Land Information Memorandum (LIM) and Property File requests are continuing to be processed. Please visit www.horowhenua.govt.nz or contact us on 06 366 0999 or enquiries@horowhenua.govt.nz for more information.
Community halls	Council-owned community halls are closed.
Community development	Community support is continuing remotely. Network meetings may take place. Please check www.horowhenua.govt.nz or contact us on 06 366 0999 or enquiries@horowhenua.govt.nz for more information.

Annual Plan Submissions hit record high

Horowhenua District Council is pleased with the high level of public engagement in its Annual Plan 2020/2021 consultation.

Submissions closed on 24 April, with 142 submissions received – more than for the previous two Annual Plans combined. There was also plenty of informal feedback on social media, which is captured and analysed to identify themes.

Strategic Planner Tiffany Gower said some of the most popular topics were the splash pad, COVID-19, rates and suggestions for the 2021-2041 Long Term Plan, which Council will begin developing later this year.

She said it was a great result, given the limitations the consultation team and subsequently the public had to work with due to lockdown.

"COVID-19 meant we had to change the way we engaged with our community. In addition to online engagement through Council's website and social media, we took telephone submissions, contacted community and ratepayer groups by telephone, advertised on the radio and distributed a flyer to every household throughout the district," she said.

The next step in the consultation process is public hearings, which will be held remotely using Zoom on 13 and 14 May with almost 40 submitters wishing to speak, followed by Council deliberations in early June.

Mayor Bernie Wanden said Council would carefully consider the public feedback so the final Annual Plan can best reflect the needs of Horowhenua.

"We drafted and adopted the Annual Plan consultation document and supporting information before COVID-19 affected the daily lives of everyone in our district, so we expect the draft will look different to the final Annual Plan," he said.

The Annual Plan 2020/2021 sets out the services Council will provide, the projects it will undertake, and important financial information for the 2020/2021 financial year.

**We received
142 submissions!**

It's a big 'thank you' from essential wastewater workers

Essential workers who maintain Horowhenua District Council's wastewater services are thanking residents for taking on board the message to flush only the 'Three Ps' – paper, pee and poo.

Alex Fawcett, Planned Works Coordinator for Horowhenua Alliance, which looks after the district's wastewater services, says the number of pump blockages and wet wipes coming into Council's wastewater treatment plants has dropped significantly.

"There's been a 60% reduction in the number of wet wipes we have to remove from wastewater coming into the Levin Wastewater Treatment Plant. The number of sewer pump blockages has dropped too – from as many as three blockages in one morning early in lockdown to six blockages over two weeks since people have been flushing fewer wet wipes.

"It's made a huge difference to our workers as they keep our vital wastewater network running during Alert Levels 3 and 4. Our message to residents is 'Thank you, and please keep up the good work!'," he said.

Wet wipes are only one of the products that cause problems when they're flushed down your loo. Paper towels, rags, nappies, tampons and sanitary pads also cause blockages.

"Some of these products are marketed as being flushable, but that usually just means it can go down your toilet bowl. What they can't do is disintegrate quickly like toilet paper does when they reach our sewer pipes, and that's why they cause blockages," Mr Fawcett said.

"The simple message to remember is to flush only the 'Three Ps': paper, pee and poo. Everything else should go in your bin."



Sewer pump blockages have decreased significantly as people flush fewer wet wipes.

No let-up during lockdown for pool and library staff

Libraries and swimming pools may be closed at Alert Level 3, but the dedicated staff who run these facilities aren't letting up.

Librarians are busy emailing newsletters to almost 7,000 customers, and contacting over 6,000 customers by telephone to touch base and tell them about library services available while physical branches are closed.

These services include a wide range of e-books and audio-books you can access through the Libraries Horowhenua website, www.tetakere.org.nz/Your-Library/Digital-Resources

"All you need is your library card number (the one starting with W000) and your password. If you're not a Libraries Horowhenua cardholder, you can sign up for e-membership online by visiting tetakere.org.nz/Your-Library and explore what's on offer," says Community Engagement Librarian Pam Coleman.

You can sign up for e-membership by completing the form at www.tetakere.org.nz/Your-Library/Digital-Resources/eBooks

If you have physical items on loan, there's no need to worry about accruing overdue charges – the library has waived them until branches re-open.

Now we're in Alert Level 3, Libraries Horowhenua has resumed its Homelink service. This service allows customers to have books of their preferred genre and format selected by a librarian and delivered to their home. It's proving popular, with 65 people signing up recently.

The library also offers affordable home internet access through Skinny JUMP, and has helped 94 people get online so far. Skinny JUMP is a flexible, pre-paid broadband package that costs only \$5 for 30GB of data and provides a free modem. There are some conditions, so contact Libraries Horowhenua on **06 368 1953** to check your eligibility.

The library's Facebook page is a great place to go for creativity and connection while you're at home, with the adult storytime event Tea & Tales, crafts activities, and the weekly quiz moving online. If you haven't liked the page yet, you can find it at www.facebook.com/te.takere

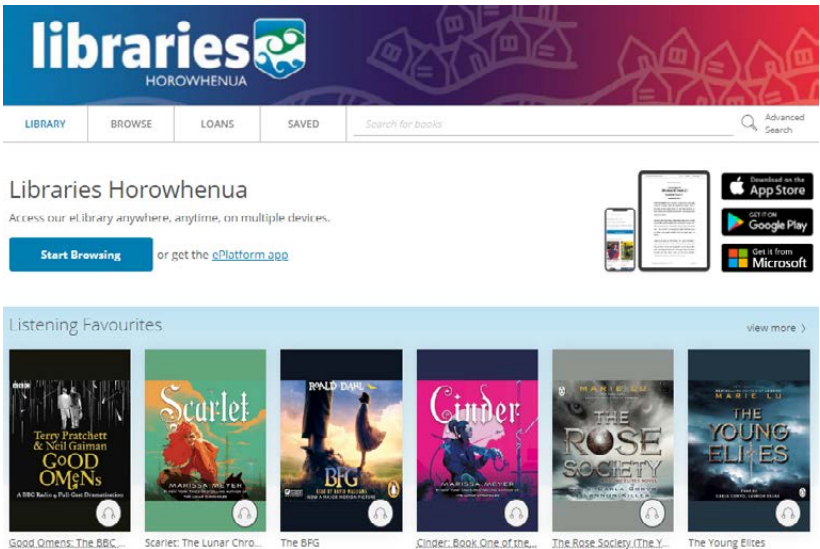
Meanwhile, at Aquatics Horowhenua staff are making the most of Alert Level 3 to carry out a maintenance programme.

The programme requires the Levin Aquatic Centre (LAC) to remain closed for about four weeks, so kicking it off now will help to minimise disruption to the public and reduce the need for further closure in the future.

Major works at LAC will include replacing the main pool sealant, replacing broken tiles and repairing grouting. Work will also begin on other maintenance, including reconditioning pool pumps; fixing filters; replacing old and faulty valves; upgrading the showers in the changing rooms; servicing heat exchange systems; servicing the boiler, seals and booster pumps; touching up paint and refreshing some tiling and carpentry.

Work will also take place at Foxton Heated Pools, which is now closed for the winter season and will not reopen until September.

The Aquatics team are working with local service providers where possible to complete the work.



Wheeters, one of the e-book collections available through the library's website.



Waste-free Living workshop to go online

The Waste-free Living workshop with Kate Meads, scheduled to be held in Council Chambers on Monday 11 May, will take place online due to COVID-19 restrictions.

The workshop will be offered through eventfinda.co.nz as a pre-recorded workshop that will be viewable for seven days from 11 May.

Participants will receive their gift-pack of waste minimisation products by courier.

Waste-free Living with Kate Meads provides ideas and advice on ways to minimise waste at home that is suitable for all types of households, ages and stages of life.

Tickets for the online workshop cost \$27.12 and are available at www.eventfinda.co.nz

Horowhenua
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Rates Rebates Reminder

If you haven't yet applied for your rates rebate for 2019/2020 rating year, Council encourages you to do so now

Rebates of up to \$640 may be available to eligible residents

For information about eligibility and applying for a rates rebate, please telephone Horowhenua District Council on ☎ 06 366 0999 between 10am and 4pm, Monday to Friday, or email ✉ ratesrebates@horowhenua.govt.nz

Council Meetings

These meetings may be held via audiovisual links due to COVID-19 restrictions. Meetings of Council and the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee are live-streamed at www.horowhenua.govt.nz/councilmeetingslive

Community Wellbeing Committee

Tuesday 12 May, 1pm

Council (Annual Plan hearings)

Wednesday 13 May, 1pm

Thursday 14 May, 2pm

Foxton Community Board

Monday 25 May

Horowhenua District Councillors



Bernie Wanden
(Mayor)

Jo Mason
(Deputy Mayor)

David Allan



Wayne Bishop

Ross Brannigan

Todd Isaacs



Sam Jennings

Victoria Kaye-Simmons

Robert Ketu



Christine Mitchell

Piri-Hira Tukapua

Foxton Community Board



David Roache
(Chair)

Tricia Metcalf
(Deputy Chair)

Trevor Chambers



John Girling

Ngaire Newland