

Community Connection

Issue 228 NOVEMBER 2025



Bernie Wanden

Message from the Mayor

Kia ora Horowhenua,

No matter how often I do it – and this is the fourth time – there's a particular thrill about an inauguration ceremony that never seems to fade.

Part of it is the pomp and ceremony, which reminds us of the seriousness and importance of the roles we are taking on as elected members. But for me it's more than that. It's the sense of potential that hangs in the air, the feeling that colleagues new and old have won the trust of the electorate and are now preparing to roll up their sleeves and get on with the job.

The old hands know what's ahead of them and are keen to get back to work where they left off. The new members are crackling with excitement, and sometimes a touch of nervousness. I remember that feeling myself. Taking up public office is no small step – it's a leap into a new world of community engagement, meetings, reading, talking, and above all thinking, all the time, about what is going to be best for the community.

And that is what each of the elected members whose faces you see on the next page have in common: a dedication to serving the community - not just those who voted them into office, but every resident of our district. I thank them and I wish them well.

There is, as you know, a great deal to do. Councils around the country are facing unprecedented times, with costs continuing to spiral, new laws and directions from the Government, new ways of delivering services under Local Water Done Well, to say nothing of the uncertainty of climate change and a perilous geopolitical scene.

We don't know what the Government's rate-capping policies will mean, or the implications of being asked to focus on 'core services'. The proposed code of conduct for elected members nationwide is also an unknown quantity.

We face our own challenges in our district too: continuing growth, which is an opportunity as well as a challenge; multi-million-dollar projects to replace aging

infrastructure such as the Levin wastewater treatment plant; and some of the particular problems which affect generally low-income communities as costs continue to rise. We take these challenges seriously and are working hard to address them.

Thank goodness serving the community isn't all government directives, price spirals and broken pipes.

For me a highlight of the job is the many wonderful community events I get to attend – the Waiopahu College Senior Prizegiving, Horowhenua College Services Academy awards, Ōhau Community Hall 125th Jubilee, Foxton Volunteer Fire Brigade honours night. I always feel welcome at these and wonder if I'd feel so much a part of the community if I was a big-city mayor.

It's also heartwarming to congratulate the many local businesses who won prizes at the Electra Business and Innovation awards, and to acknowledge the decades of service of Geoff Kane, local farmer and community leader, whom we've inducted into the Horowhenua Hall of Fame.

It all goes to show yet again what a lovely community we all live in. It's a timely reminder that serving that community isn't just a responsibility – it's a joy. And joy was what I saw on the faces of our elected members, new and returning, at that inauguration ceremony.

Incidentally, have you ever wondered what actually happens behind the scenes at Council? How projects come to life, or what goes into the everyday services that keep our district running?

If so, I'd like to invite you to join us for the Council Expo and meet the people who maintain our roads, protect our environment, support our community and bring local facilities to life. Have a look at the graphic on the next page for time and date.

Because at the end of the day, we're just people working together to make a difference.

Ngā mihi

Mayor Bernie Wanden

Council Meetings



Council Meeting
(First full meeting of new Council)

Wednesday 10 December 2025, 11am
Council Chambers, 126 Oxford Street, Levin
(Live streamed)

Meeting dates and times are subject to change. Please refer to horowhenua.govt.nz/Council/Council-Meetings for the full meeting schedule, minutes and agendas.

In the Works

Work on replacing the main inlet pipe at the Levin wastewater treatment plant on Mako Mako Road is going at pace. We're about to start on the second stage, from the corner of Adkin Avenue and Collingwood Street through to Tiro Tiro Road north of Trafalgar Street.

We're also upgrading the headworks, which is the first stage of treatment when the pipe enters the plant. The work is urgently needed as the plant is now more than 70 years old, is deteriorating, and needs repairs and upgrades to ensure it meets current needs and is able to accommodate future growth in the region.

We're in the final stages of replacing water and wastewater mains on MacArthur Street in Levin. The work has been going since January and has now reached the Fairfield Road end of the street. We're on track to finish in December.

Unfortunately some disruption is inevitable while this important work takes place. Please take notice and follow the temporary traffic management as it might change from day to day, and thank you as always for your patience.

New Mobile Recycling Centre Shannon

We've installed a beautiful new mobile recycling centre outside the Shannon waste transfer station on Thompson Street. It's big, clean and easy to use, and it has steps on one side for people who have trouble reaching the recycling slots. So come on, recycle your bottles, cardboard and plastic – there's no excuse not to! See our website for more details about what you can and can't recycle.



Water conservation

Why do mother kangaroos hate rainy days? Because the kids have to play inside.

Actually water's no laughing matter – it's one of our most precious resources. And even though it has been raining for what seems like forever it's never too early to start saving it.

That way we're not spending so much of your rates money treating drinking water which is literally going down the drain. Did you know that providing safe and reliable water services accounted for more than 85 percent of the rates increase this year?

If we all get into the habit of saving water now it'll be kinder to the environment, and it will make life much easier if we have to bring in restrictions during the warmer months.

So go on – hop to it!

Meet your Councillors and Te Awahou Foxton Community Board Members

Councillors



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Some photos were not available at time of print, but you'll soon be able to find them on our website under the 'Council' tab.

COUNCIL EXPO 2025

ENABLING WHAT MATTERS

10am - 2pm | Wednesday 19 November
Te Takeretanga o Kura-hau-pō

Ever wondered what actually happens behind the scenes at Council?

Here's your chance to find out.

Meet the people who maintain our roads, protect our environment, support our community, and bring local facilities to life.

horowhenua.govt.nz/events

horowhenuadc