



Ōpōtiki District Council
STRONG COMMUNITY STRONG FUTURE

Pānui

Issue 81 // April 2020

Keeping you up to date with Ōpōtiki District Council

From the Mayor

It is certainly in the most unusual circumstances that you will receive the Panui from Council this quarter. It has been a difficult few weeks for all of us and I'd like to thank you all for your commitment to the national rāhui – our national Level 4 household isolation rules that have seen us stick to our household bubbles, staying home and ensuring we are not a vector for the virus.

The standout phrase for me during this time has been: "you may be self-isolating, but you are not alone."

Ōpōtiki, you have shown that to be so true over the past few weeks. I have heard so many stories about neighbours looking out for neighbours, iwi groups and community services organisations coming together to call around and check on vulnerable people, Te Whānau Apanui taking the extra step of restricting travel through their rohe to protect the vulnerable up the east coast. And so much more. I am incredibly proud of our communities at this time. I know we will come through this stronger as a community together, really looking out for each other.

Please keep up the hard mahi still – we need to be as strict as ever with maintaining our bubbles and sticking to our now-familiar hygiene protocols. Wash hands, keep a distance, only travel if it is absolutely necessary. That is our job until we beat COVID-19.

I'd also like to thank the staff who have done an incredible job switching to this new way of working and keeping our essential services going even when we are all social distancing and many of us are safe at home. Thanks to the people working with



I have had to learn some new skills quickly as I have been doing regular videos on Facebook during the lockdown. Thanks for all your feedback and patience!

our water, rubbish and sewerage to make sure these essential services continue. And those looking after our internet, phones and IT, now more important than ever! Also to the civil defence people who have worked long shifts and done so much work to keep us all safe. And thanks to the local doctors, nurses, pharmacies and supermarkets who have kept working to make sure we are safe and well at this time. I speak on behalf of the community when I say that we all really appreciate your commitment.

At council, we are already planning for recovery mode and making sure we get back on our feet as quickly and sustainably as possible. There are still hard times ahead but I think in many ways Ōpōtiki is better prepared to weather the storm – we have some very large infrastructure projects that are coming on line in the coming months such as the harbour build, Te Tāhuhu o Te Rangi, a new technology hub, new funding for irrigation and intensive horticulture in our coastal settlements like Raukōkore and Te Kaha. And we have resilient industries that we expect to continue to perform strongly through the international downturn such as kiwifruit, forestry, farming, mānuka and aquaculture.

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You may be self-isolating, but you are not alone.

Call **0800 884 222** for local support if you are experiencing hardship and need help accessing essentials



From the Mayor continued

This Panui arrives with the final quarterly rates notice for the 2019/2020 year. I know that this may be a difficult time with so much uncertainty for some households. If you need to, please talk to council about your options if you think that you may have difficulty paying at this time. In addition to central government support through wage subsidy schemes and benefit changes, there is other support for rates such as setting up a payment plan, the government's rates rebate scheme, rates remission and even postponement in exceptional circumstances. So much of what council provides for the community is essential to healthy communities. You'll see from the graphic on this page just how much of your rates is spent on the necessities like wastewater, rubbish and roading and those costs continue for everyone. Be assured we'll be keeping costs as affordable as possible. We realise things may be difficult for the next year or so to come and we need to be prepared for that. As always efficiency is front of mind in all we do.

But I also wanted this Panui to remind you that we will stand back on our feet, we will have a chance to celebrate some of the incredible successes that we announced just a few short weeks ago (doesn't it feel like months?). We have funding for a harbour! We have a brand new community digital hub in our town centre. We are about to build Te Tāhuhu o Te Rangi. The Coast has some exciting news about large-scale irrigation and horticulture. We have more LED lighting going up and new footpaths and curbs to install thanks to funding from NZTA. So please, over the coming days, take a moment to look through these pictures of our news, our celebrations and plan with us for coming out of COVID-19 in strong recovery mode together.

Lyn Riesterer, Mayor

Where your rate dollar goes



From last year's annual plan figures, this is how each \$1 of your rates is spent in the Ōpōtiki District.

This graph represents the average rates spend across the whole district but individual charges will differ by location and which services are provided (for example whether you are in the urban waste collection areas).

- Land transport 15¢
- Water Supplies 12¢
- Wastewater 12¢
- Solid Waste Management 10¢
- Parks & Reserves 9.5¢
- Leadership 9¢
- Stormwater 6¢
- Harbour Development 4.2¢
- District Library 3.9¢
- Community Development 3¢
- Property 2.4¢
- Tourism Promo / Info Centre 2.3¢
- District Plan 2¢
- Public Toilets 1.8¢
- Cycleway 1.7¢
- Building Control Services 1.7¢
- Playgrounds 1.5¢
- Animal Control 1.5¢
- Economic Development 1.1¢
- Investments 1¢
- Other 2.9¢ (Emergency Management 0.9¢, Compliance 0.8¢, Env Health 0.6¢, District Plan Imp 0.4¢, Liquor Licencing 0.8¢, Cemeteries 0¢)

Lock down library

For people isolating alone or for people with their school age children, families with toddlers or people with limited vision who enjoy audio-books... the library has been a saviour for many during the long weeks of household isolation.

Over recent weeks, the library has seen a big surge in use of their digital platforms. Many people dug out dusty library cards and figured out how to access the treasure-trove of online resources. People reactivated their memberships and called the library staff for support with the app or the portals. New resources have also become available for Ōpōtiki library users because publishers and suppliers around the world have lowered prices or made access free during the global pandemic.

And the community events that the library is famous for continued as well, although in quite a different form. Zoom book group meetings brought people together, and even an Easter Bonnet Parade! The Arts on Tour schedule has continued with Zoom and Facebook live streaming so if you want to know more about how to access that, give the library a call.

A big thank you to the library team for their hard work during the national Level 4 restrictions.





Ōpōtiki Harbour celebration

We promised dancing in the streets when we received the funding for the build of Ōpōtiki Harbour and we delivered. On 14 March we celebrated with live music from the incredible Sons of Zion, other amazing local musicians, food stalls, games for the kids, a few speeches and some well-deserved congratulations. The smoke bubbles were a hit! Thanks to some clever photographers including Kent Dunston, Jakob Carter and Aidan Donald for these lovely snaps.

Digital hub

In March, we were thrilled to announce central government funding of \$400,000 for Ōpōtiki’s new digital hub. The space will allow existing businesses and new entrepreneurs, community groups and students of all ages to share services and a platform to thrive in the digital world.

The digital hub will initially open on a smaller scale in an existing council-owned retail unit on the high street. The spot on Church Street in the middle of town is an ideal location being two doors down from the proposed redevelopment site and almost directly opposite the existing library. The full scale digital hub will open in Te Tāhuhu o Te Rangi when the build is complete next year.

In brief...

Keep up with the news at www.odc.govt.nz or follow us on facebook @OpotikiDistrictCouncil

Toi EDA and the EBOP Chamber of Commerce have joined forces as the **Eastern Bay COVID Business support hub**. They are working to help connect businesses in essential industries to people with the right skills currently looking for work. They are also working to help connect businesses to the support they need through this time. Check out their Facebook page for more details.

to opt in to receive your rates notices by email www.odc.govt.nz/doitonline

If paying online via bank transfer, credit card, debit card or automatic payment is not an option for you and our reception areas are still closed due to COVID-19 restrictions, let us know and we’ll help you find a non-contact way to pay.

the protections that Te Whānau a Apanui has put in place with the support of NZ Police on their Facebook page.

Don’t forget that you can **pay your rates online** – it saves time and makes it easier to remember each quarter. We may be in touch in the coming weeks to make sure we have up to date contact details including emails and phone numbers. You can also update your details through our website and use our easy online form

Te Whānau a Apanui have placed restrictions on movement through their rohe during the COVID-19 pandemic in order to protect Kaumātua and the vulnerable in the remote east coast location. That means that for the coming months, the **150 Pōtaka bus** will not be running through from Ōpōtiki to Pōtaka. You can find out more about

Download the free mobile app, **Antenno**, to receive notifications and alerts about places you care about – things like community events, changes to rubbish collections, road works and more. Antenno also makes it easy for you to submit feedback or report issues such as a damaged footpath, road pothole, graffiti or to submit feedback or an idea to Council.



NZ Sign Language

Throughout this crisis, it has become common to see hardworking New Zealand Sign Language interpreters standing alongside politicians and scientists as they translate complicated concepts to ensure our deaf community can also understand these important messages.

We just wanted to acknowledge this work and remind people, if they want to learn New Zealand's third official language, you can learn through the online portal at www.learnnzsl.nz.



COVID-19 Support

There is support available for you online and on the phone:

- For the latest news, information and advice, visit www.covid19.govt.nz
- **Healthline** 0800 358 5453 for health-related concerns about COVID-19
- **Government helpline** 0800 779 997 (8am–1am, 7 days) for information on government help that is available
- **Bay of Plenty CDEM Group Call Centre** 0800 884 222 (7am to 7pm, 7 days) for help getting home essentials like groceries or picking up prescriptions.
- **Need to talk?** Text 1737 to talk to a trained counsellor
- **Essential business enquiries**, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or phone 0800 22 66 57
- **Reporting breaches of any Level 4 Alert restrictions** www.police.govt.nz/105support
- For **financial or employer wage subsidy assistance**, contact WINZ on 0800 40 80 40

Keep safe Ōpōtiki
Stay home, save lives!

Protect yourself and others from COVID-19

Wash your hands with soap and water often (for at least 20 seconds). Then dry.

Cough or sneeze into your elbow or by covering your mouth and nose with tissues.

Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects, such as doorknobs.

Don't touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean.

Put used tissues in the bin or a bag immediately.

Stay home if you feel unwell.

For updates and more information on keeping yourself safe, visit Covid19.govt.nz

New Zealand Government

Unite against COVID-19

PROTECT_A4_20/03

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