

NEWSLINE

DECEMBER 2022



MAYOR'S COLUMN



Mayor Craig Rowley

As we turn the corner to Christmas and the summer months, how many of us are shaking our heads in wonder that it is almost the end of 2022 already? It's been another challenging year for many, and with increased costs of living and the latest news around rising OCR rates, it appears there's no letup anytime soon.

Last month, the Future for Local Government Review released its recommendations, with several suggestions making the headlines.

Some of these included lowering the voting age to 16, extending the local electoral term to four years and increasing the salary of elected members to attract a "more diverse range of people" to consider standing for election. While there is still a lot of unanswered questions, Council will be putting forward a submission and as always, we will communicate any significant changes that may have an impact on our district.

Submissions are open until 28 February, and will help shape the final report due to be delivered in June.

For more information on this, visit futureforlocalgovernment.govt.nz

As the holiday season creeps closer, it's a time to step back from everyday business, enjoy some downtime with family and friends and make some new memories. Whether that's time up at the stunning Waimate Lakes, travelling further afield or staying put and resting up in the comfort of your own home, festive wishes to you all. Newsline will be taking a short break next month, and will return in February. Until then, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

WATER NOTICE LIFTED IN LOWER WAIHAO

Residents on the Lower Waihao (including Waikakahi East) rural water scheme can now return to consuming water directly from the tap, with Council officially lifting the "do not consume" water notice last week (1 December).

Scheme users (approximately 600) have been without potable water since early August, following a significant rain event in late July when nitrate levels were detected above the maximum acceptable value (MAV) of 50mg/l NO₃. The current nitrate concentration is 38mg/l NO₃.

In response to that situation, Council immediately installed water tanks in Glenavy and Morven and an additional water tap at Victoria Park, ensuring all residents had access to safe drinking water, compliant with the New Zealand Drinking Water Standards. In addition, Council committed to introducing a denitrification process, expected to be complete by mid-2023 – adding to their existing plans to establish a new treatment plant in the area.

Council's Asset Group Manager Dan Mitchell says despite the reduced nitrate levels, the existing water tanks will remain in place for the next few months – ensuring all residents continue to have access to safe drinking water in the event of another surge, or spike in nitrates.

"It's an important measure to ensure the tanks remain in place until final decisions are made around the operational arrangements and the commissioning of any solution," Mitchell said.

Council will be discussing possible denitrification options with the community and affected residents, talking through the supporting science and working towards a preferred solution.



NEW DISC GOLF COURSE UNDERWAY

Waimate's Knottingley Park and Arboretum will soon be home to one of the South Island's longest disc golf courses, with construction now underway.

Following a proposal to Council by Waimate2gether in August this year, the concept of establishing an international grade 18-hole disc golf course was welcomed by Councillors - subject to external funding from the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA).

This funding, of approximately \$55,000 has now been approved by the DIA, and work has begun installing the 18 baskets and launching pads (tee-pads) throughout the area – spanning more than 1,900 metres.

The course is expected to be a drawcard for players of all skill levels, though a nationally endorsed tournament in April 2023 will help bring some of the sport's biggest names in New Zealand to Waimate.

As part of the project, Waimate2gether has signed a Memorandum of Agreement with Council, pledging to maintain the surrounds of the tee-pads and baskets, and keep things in the area to a high standard of cleanliness.

Throughout the project, both Waimate2gether and Council have engaged with the Waimate Pony Club and Waimate Cricket Club, consulting with the club committees to ensure mutual support for all sporting codes.



For the safety of park users, Knottingley Park will have signage signalling the area as an active disc golf course, pointing out the ongoing hazard of flying discs. The Disc Golfers' Code of Conduct will also be on display and will also feature on the scorecards for further reinforcement – the same code adhered to internationally.

The course completion is on track for Saturday 10 December, with an official opening expected to be in April next year – aligning with a New Zealand Disc Golf Association sanctioned tour event, currently proposed.

HAVE YOUR SAY Queen Street speed limits

As part of the Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency's Interim State Highway Speed Management Plan (the Plan), a section of Queen Street (State Highway 82) is proposed to have a variable speed limit of 30km, when school children are present.

Council's preference is to have a permanent 30km limit on Queen Street (from Leonard Street to Glasgow Street) for the following reasons and will be submitting on these points:

- Lower speeds protect everyone, especially vulnerable people like children, cyclists, pedestrians, the elderly and people with disability.
- Parking activity - vehicles back into the traffic flow from angle parking.
- Significant reduction in harm in crashes when the speed is reduced to 30km.
- Large amount of heavy vehicle traffic using Queen Street, includes dairy tankers, logging trucks and stock trucks. Reducing the speed of these vehicles significantly lowers the distance that these vehicles take to stop.
- Contributes to amenity value - more pleasant for users when traffic slower, less noise and dust.

Council is encouraging business owners and residents to use the Waka Kotahi open consultation to have their say on highway speed limits.

If you agree, or wish to have your say on this suggestion (or any part of the Plan), visit nzta.govt.nz/safety, and click on Interim State Highway Speed Management Plan. A copy of the consultation document can also be viewed at this link.

All submissions must be received by Monday 12 December 2022 at 5pm.



Holiday Hours

The Waimate District Council and several Council facilities will be subject to holiday hours from Thursday 22 December 2022 to Thursday 5 January 2023. For a full rundown of hours for the main office, Waimate Event Centre, Waimate District Library, Norman Kirk Memorial Swimming Pool and the kerbside rubbish and recycling – please refer to waimatedc.govt.nz and go to Public Notices.

