

NEWSLINE

MARCH 2022



MAYOR'S COLUMN



Over the next few months, we are expecting a number of people in our district to contract the Omicron variant of COVID-19. At the Council, we have been planning for this likely event for quite some time. We have been working closely with our Government, social sector providers and local agencies to ensure that we are as ready as we can be.

We are a highly vaccinated community and what we know about Omicron is that vaccinations will make a significant difference to how the vast majority of people in the community experience this illness. Many people in our community will experience a mild to medium illness with Omicron and it is important that we all follow the advice, stay isolated and follow the official health advice while we, or people in our household are infected, so we can reduce the impact on our community, safeguard the vulnerable and ensure that our health services can continue to function for all those in the community.

The most important thing we can do is look out for and after each other. Make a plan with family, neighbours and friends about how you will check in and support each other if someone is unwell or needs help. This is especially important for our older people, those who don't have family supports, live alone, have young families or are health vulnerable.

For any Council enquiries, I strongly encourage you to phone 03 689 0000 or email council@waimatedc.govt.nz. Many Council staff will be working from home during the Omicron peak and will be largely unavailable in person.

In other news, Council are calling on submissions on a proposal to join the Local Government Funding Agency (LGFA). Put simply, membership to the LGFA will allow Council to borrow funds at lower interest rates, with more certainty and flexibility to manage its borrowings.

Refer to the information on the right, have a look at what we're proposing and let us know your thoughts. Submissions close Wednesday 16 March at 4pm.

We look forward to hearing from you soon.

WATER MATTERS - LOOKING AHEAD



As a Council, we are dedicated to providing a high quality drinking water service that is kind to the environment. To ensure this, a key part of our strategy is to reduce water loss from the drinking water network and improve good management and use.

So looking ahead, how can this be done?

Over the coming months, we will be installing up to 1,400 new water meters throughout select urban areas within the district to help us achieve these objectives. These new water meters will help us understand how our water is being used or lost, so we can better plan where our resources should best be placed to manage growth.

The Waimate District is growing and demand on our water supply is placing a strain on our natural environment, so before we spend time and money meeting this growing demand, we need to make more efficient use of our existing water resources. Our in-ground pipe renewal programme that is highlighted in the 2021-2031 Long Term Plan is an important part of this work, but it is only part of the solution. Understanding other water losses such as private property connections will greatly assist Council understand and manage those losses.

Urban Water will continue to be charged through targeted rates, in addition to bylaws and fees and charges. We'll be in touch if there are any expected changes.

The new water meters can be used by you (the consumer) to monitor for leaks within your property and control water usage, this can be a fun exercise and involve the whole family. In the meantime, look out for more information and educational resources in the coming months, as we help you understand this vital transition and important step forward for our district and the way we use water.

COMMUNITY HEROES RECOGNISED AT ANNUAL AWARDS



(Above): Community Heroes, from left; Individual recipients Chris Paul, Valmay Rayner, John Stevens, Mayor Craig Rowley, Mandy Tangney, Group recipient Michael Horne (President Rotary Club of Waimate) and Youth recipient Kate Melville.

Last month marked a time to celebrate and reflect on the efforts of several deserving volunteers throughout the Waimate District, as the 2022 Waimate Civic Award recipients were acknowledged at the prestigious function held at the Waimate Event Centre.

Every year, dozens of individuals and groups are nominated for the awards, with many reluctant to step in to the spotlight, instead happier to remain behind the scenes. However, with volunteering at the heart of the community, the awards serve as a special occasion to recognise the ongoing work many have done and continue to do.

In his address to the recipients, Waimate District Mayor Craig Rowley said people like the ones that were honoured are the reason the Waimate District is such a special place to live, work, visit and play.

"We see them driving our community car, delivering meals on wheels, holding fundraising events, tending our walking tracks, running sports events, working in charity shops, organising our popular events, catering, entertaining and plenty of other wonderful things," Mayor Rowley said.

"Largely, they work quietly, usually unrecognised and behind the scenes, but this work and dedication helps keep our community active and alive. So, while our recipients may not like the recognition, they say they volunteer for that "do good feeling, the feeling of helping someone, or just because they want to "give something back" – it's important we do recognise these people, if only to give the people that benefit from their service the opportunity to acknowledge and thank them publicly."

Since its inception, which is now 12 years ago, 50 adults, seven youth and six groups or organisations have been recognised.



About joining the Local Government Funding Agency

By joining the Local Government Funding Agency, Council has a great opportunity to borrow funds at lower interest rates, with more certainty and flexibility to manage its borrowings.

Take a look at what we're proposing and let us know if you agree or disagree. **Submissions are now open.**

Submissions close
4pm, Wednesday 16 March

For more information, a copy of the Consultation Document and all Supporting Information, go to waimatedc.govt.nz

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES NOW OPEN

Council invites applications for financial assistance from clubs, groups and organisations within the Waimate District for the following:

1. Creative NZ Communities Grant

Eligible projects should have an arts or creative cultural focus, take place in the Waimate District and have a completed application form with supporting information, as required.

Application forms and information are available from the Waimate Event Centre and at waimatedc.govt.nz - all enquiries can be made to the Grants Administrator on 03 689 7771.

All applications must be received by midday Tuesday 22 March 2022 and sent to Grants Administrator, PO Box 122, Waimate 7960, emailed to info@waimatedc.govt.nz, or delivered to the Waimate Event Centre, 15 Paul Street, Waimate.

