

# NEWSLINE

## 12 SEPTEMBER 2024



**Waimate**  
District Council

### MAYOR'S COLUMN



Hello, and welcome to another edition of Newsline. I would like to start by expressing my sadness at the passing of former Councillor David Anderson. David was a popular and well respected member of the Waimate District who gave so much to the urban and rural community over many years. I especially note his exceptional work as a Councillor from 2014 to 2019 in the Pareora-Otaio-Makikihi ward. He contributed much at the Council table, and we valued his deep wisdom and his dry sense of humour, along with his intense knowledge of the rural sector and farming in general. Our thoughts are with his family during this difficult time. He will be missed by many.

Mayor Craig Rowley

You may have seen in the news recently that Prime Minister Christopher Luxon made some comments about how councils should be operating and how to spend their money. While I agree with his point that these are challenging times and councils need to spend appropriately, I do not think it is up to the Government to dictate this when we are elected by our own community, and many of our cost pressures are coming from that very organisation.

Government's new water legislation, the Water Services Preliminary Arrangements Act, received royal assent on 2 September 2024. This means that councils have 12 months to develop a water services delivery plan which details how they will meet higher drinking water standards, investment and regulations.

To prepare for this piece of work, Council is undertaking a viability and sustainability assessment to inform Council's decision on whether to prepare its own water services delivery plan on a standalone basis or whether to work with neighbouring councils to explore larger scale service delivery models. The final assessment is expected to be presented to Council later in the year.

For those of you reading this in the newspaper, here is a reminder you can sign up to receive Council news directly via email by subscribing at [waimatedc.govt.nz/notifyme](mailto:waimatedc.govt.nz/notifyme).

Until next time, take care.

### HERITAGE GRANT FOR KNOX CHURCH

Council has approved a \$1,000 Heritage Grant for the Waimate Knox Presbyterian Church ahead of its 150th anniversary.

The funds will be used to print 150 books detailing the history of the church, which will be distributed to attendees at the 150th anniversary celebrations on 21 and 22 September. Members of the Church's committee are compiling the book, drawing from historical records, photographs, and oral histories. Copies will also be given to the Waimate Museum and the Waimate District Library. Council approved the grant during the Ordinary Council Meeting on 20 August.

Council's Heritage Grant supports projects involving archaeological and traditional sites, buildings and locations with Historic Place classifications, notable and heritage trees, and other sites or structures deemed worthy of preservation. It also covers the documentation of any aspect of the district's heritage.

There are two funding rounds each year, in February and August. A maximum of \$1,000 plus GST is available, with no more than 50% of the total project cost covered by any single grant.



### REMINDER TO DOG OWNERS

Waimate District Council has received several recent complaints relating to dogs being off leash in Garlands and Naylor's Tracks, places not designated dog exercise areas. Council stresses that under the Dog Control Bylaw, all public places in the Waimate District are classified as controlled public areas, where dogs may go when on a leash.



Exceptions to this are prohibited dog areas, where dogs are not allowed without an exemption and dog exercise areas, where dogs are not required to be on a leash (but must be under continuous effective control of the owner or person in charge).

Regulatory and Compliance Group Manager Dylan Murray said Council has not issued any fines yet but has the power to do so should some owners continue to act irresponsibly. "Our first action is to educate and encourage dog owners, before enforcement," Dylan said.

"While owners may believe their dog is friendly, not all people are comfortable having dogs run up to them, and those people have the right to feel safe in public areas. A responsible dog owner knows where dogs are prohibited and where they can be on or off leash. If in doubt, keep your dog on a leash."

For more information about the Dog Control Bylaw go to [waimatedc.govt.nz/services/dogs](http://waimatedc.govt.nz/services/dogs).

### GRANTS COMMITTEE REFRESH

New community representatives were appointed to the Creative NZ Communities Scheme and the Community and Sports Committees at the Ordinary Council Meeting on 20 August. The two committees administer grants to individuals and groups on behalf of Council. The committees are generally refreshed every three years, and in July Council advertised for members of the community who had an interest to put their names forward.



For the Creative NZ Communities Scheme Committee, the new members are Penny Proudfoot, Elizabeth Tonkin, Zuni Steer, and Rosie Staite.

For the Community and Sports Committee, the new members are Marilyn Anderson, Chris Mercer, Jayne Smith, and Lynne Rooney.

These new representatives will join the existing members and meet twice a year. Council also expressed its gratitude to outgoing members, Hazel Fish, Alistair Boot, Cheryl Vaughan, Peter Vendetti (pictured), and Toni Oudemans, for their contributions.

### DID YOU KNOW - LGOIMA

Under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (or LGOIMA for short), any person, group or organisation may request information held by any local government agencies, including our Council.

The purpose of this act is to increase the availability of official information held, promote transparency and the open and public transaction of business at meetings, to enable more effective public participation in decision-making and also promote the accountability of members and officials.

Generally, the requests under LGOIMA, are fully complied with but occasionally, if there are valid reasons, councils may withhold access to certain limited information. The most common reasons for this are protecting people's privacy, to maintain legal privilege and commercial sensitivities.

During the 2023/2024 financial year, our Council received 97 LGOIMA requests. We have noticed the quantity of requests has generally increased over time, possibly due to increased public interest in Council activities. Of these requests, 83% came from outside of the Waimate District, with the rest from local residents. The topics of the requests were many and varied, ranging from information on solar farms in the Waimate District, to nitrates in the town and rural water supplies, to data on Council's entertainment and catering expenditure.

Managing and responding to LGOIMA requests requires staff time to: receive, acknowledge and clarify requests as required, source the requested information, review and respond to the request, document and above all else, ensure we are compliant under the act to respond to the requester within the 20 working day deadline. While there is no cost to request the information, in some cases a charge may be made for supplying the information where considerable staff time or resources are required, based on Council's current fees and charges. A lot of useful Council information is already freely available on our website.

For further information on the LGOIMA process, go to [waimatedc.govt.nz/council/oia](http://waimatedc.govt.nz/council/oia).

