



Call for Annual Plan submissions

Whanganui District Council’s 2020/21 Annual Plan is open for consultation and we’re keen to hear your thoughts. The annual plan consultation document outlines the Council’s work programme, explains funding allocation, provides key project updates and sets property rates.

Mayor Hamish McDouall says preparing an annual plan allows councils to revisit the big picture of their long-term plan and make necessary adjustments: “This year we are faced with a level of uncertainty around the global and local impact of COVID-19. We are conscious that the Council is a key part of any economic recovery and we want to respond to the needs of our community.”

What’s the focus in this year’s consultation document?

- **Continuing our work programme** – By continuing our work programme, which includes a number of significant projects, the Council will continue to provide jobs and economic stimulus in the district.
- **Reassessing our operational expenses** – The Council will reassess its operating expenses in light of COVID-19 to identify opportunities for more affordable ways of delivering its service. Any potential savings will be identified prior to adopting the final budget in June.
- **Reducing the rates increase and penalties** – In response to COVID-19, the Council proposes to reduce the proposed rates increase from 3.9% to 2.3%.

The Council also propose to reduce the penalty on late rates payments from 10% to 5%, to ease the burden on those unable to pay on time. Rates remission and postponement policies will be consulted on at a later date.

Rates for each individual property will vary, particularly in a revaluation year where some larger changes will occur because of relative valuation adjustments. To see how much your rates will be with the proposed increase, please visit the Council’s website and use the rates calculator: www.whanganui.govt.nz/rating-information-database



- **Additional funding for climate change, housing and digital connectivity** – Additional funding for climate change, housing and digital connectivity has been included in the draft annual plan. Mayor McDouall says the importance of progressing these strategies “has only become more apparent as we respond to the COVID-19 crisis”.
- **Waste minimisation funding** – The Council also proposes allocating funding to support the Whanganui Resource Recovery Centre Trust as the cost of recycling fibre (paper and cardboard) has escalated recently because of market saturation.

How to have your say? For a submission form and to view the annual plan consultation document and supporting information, please visit www.whanganui.govt.nz/annualplan You can either complete a submission form online or email your submission to: annualplan2020@whanganui.govt.nz

Paper forms are not available this year because of the current necessity to maintain social distancing. If you’re unable to make a submission online, call (06) 349 0001 and ask to make your submission over the phone. There may also be an opportunity to speak in support of your submission via a Zoom meeting – please indicate this option when making your submission.

Submissions close at **4.00pm on Friday, 15 May 2020.**

Infrastructure upgrade

Partial closure of Somme Parade

Work on the Gloucester Street infrastructure upgrade has restarted with the move to COVID-19 Alert Level 3.

To allow contractors to work safely, a section of Somme Parade between Halswell and Glasgow streets will be closed again until 6.00pm on Monday, 25 May 2020.

Gloucester Street from Glasgow Street to Somme Parade will also be closed because of heavy machinery in this location.

Please note:

- Access for residents and emergency services only will be provided at all times to properties on Somme Parade and Gloucester Street – NO other public access is allowed.
- All trucks and buses must detour using Pitt and Glasgow streets – light vehicles ONLY to use Halswell Street.

Community Awards

Closing date extended

The closing date for nominations for the Whanganui Community Awards has now been extended until further notice because of the current COVID-19 situation.

For information about the awards and to make a nomination, please visit: www.whanganui.govt.nz/community-awards-2020

Consultation extended

Review of Keeping of Animals bylaw

Whanganui District Council has extended the closing date for submissions on proposed changes to the Keeping of Animals, Poultry and Bees bylaw.

The proposed changes include:

- Introducing a maximum limit of four cats per premises with desexing where they are not intended to be kept for breeding purposes.
- Introducing a maximum limit of two hives per premises within the “urban area” and within 2km of Whanganui.

All consultation information is available at: www.whanganui.govt.nz/have-your-say

Submissions close at **4.00pm this Friday, 8 May 2020.**

Council meetings

Rescheduled meeting

Council Meeting	1.00pm Tuesday 26 May	via Zoom
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- Please note: This meeting replaces the Council Meeting scheduled for 12 May

This meeting will be livestreamed online – for more information, please visit Whanganui District Council’s website at: www.whanganui.govt.nz/live-council-meetings

The meeting agenda will be available at: www.whanganui.govt.nz/agendas

Apply for Creative Communities Scheme funding now!



What do Shakespeare, pro-wrestling and jazz have in common? They all received Creative Communities Scheme funding in Whanganui last year. The Creative Communities Scheme is a partnership between Whanganui District Council and Creative New Zealand to support arts projects that benefit our local community.

Whanganui Creative Communities Scheme administrator, Cath Watson, says the scheme’s funding has resulted in some great success stories here in Whanganui.

“One example is last year’s whakapapa quilts workshop, organised by Teena Lawrence. In the workshops, tutor Maungarongo (Ron) Te Kawa showed participants how to use the art of quilt-making to tell stories about their heritage,” she says.

This round of funding is for projects that will take place between 13 June 2020 and 13 June 2021. The deadline for applications is **12 noon on Thursday, 14 May 2020.** For more information and an application form, please visit: www.whanganui.govt.nz/creative-communities-scheme