



Community Link

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Red-tape accusations don't tell full story says CE Kym Fell

The Council's Chief Executive Kym Fell is hitting back at claims that the Council is an overstaffed bureaucracy.

In an article published in the Wanganui Chronicle on April 26, a Whanganui couple expressed their frustration at having to apply for a building consent to install automatic fire doors in their commercial building, claiming the Council was over-staffed and full of red-tape.

Mr Fell says the building consent application lodged by a contractor on behalf of the couple was assessed and issued within 10 working days, which is well within the statutory 20 working days required by law.

Mr Fell says it was also unfortunate that the Wanganui Chronicle's post-Anzac Day coverage and editorial on April 26 turned "a positive story about Whanganui's well-organised Anzac Day commemorations into a fictional account about a supposed war with bureaucracy".



Chief Executive Kym Fell has made a point since he began at the Council of cutting through red tape

Mr Fell says the way the recent stories are reported bypasses a more important story, which is the change taking place at the Council.

"Whanganui District Council has undergone radical transformation in the past 12 months, with a restructure resulting in labour cost efficiencies amounting to \$1.4 million per annum. This Council is more efficient, more approachable and better equipped to serve its community than it has ever been.

"I'm absolutely ready to accept and address valid criticism, but I am not prepared to allow the progress we've made to be side-lined by stories which are not substantiated by facts.

"Whanganui can be proud of its Council. The culture of customer service we are building is continuously improving and our processes and expertise are ahead of many councils in New Zealand.

"We recently won a Minister of Local Government Innovation in Asset Management Award, while our livestreaming of Council meetings is arguably the most professional and cost-effective in the country.

"We have moved to an online platform for building consent applications, which is just one of a substantial number of cost and time-saving initiatives.

"We're reaching a 100 percent rate for meeting the 20 working day statutory requirement for issuing consents.

"Almost every example of so-called bureaucratic red-tape described in recent Chronicle articles and in its April 26 editorial references government legislation which may be required, but is not created by the Council.

"The new health and safety legislation, for example, is something every organisation in New Zealand must deal with proactively. Your council can help you navigate these requirements as a small business or local event organiser.

"I encourage people to engage with the Council at an early stage to ensure that they're fully informed and to minimise unnecessary roadblocks."

Reminder - Annual Plan 2017/18 Consultation

Have your say
Kōrero mai

There's only a week to go before submissions close on the 2017/18 Annual Plan Consultation Document.

If you would like to have your say, visit www.whanganui.govt.nz/annualplan for the Consultation Document, supporting information and a submission form.

Hard copies are available at our Municipal Office Building at 101 Guyton Street and the Davis Central City, Gonville Café and Mobile libraries.

Council staff will also be at the River Traders Market by the River this Saturday, May 6, from 9.00am to 1.00pm with hard copies of the documents and to have a chat and answer your questions about proposed projects.

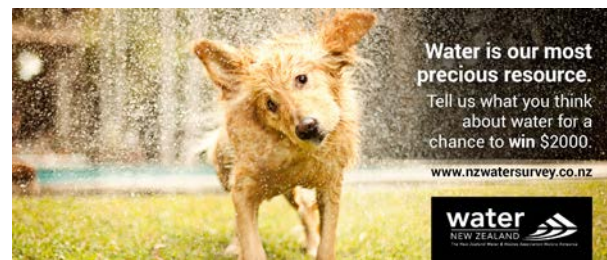
Consultation on our 2017/18 Annual Plan also gives us a chance to hear from you on funding and fee changes and other changes of interest. Submissions close at **4.00pm next Wednesday, 10 May 2017.**

Have your say on water quality

The first comprehensive national water survey, launched by not-for-profit organisation Water New Zealand, aims to gauge New Zealanders' attitudes and concerns about water issues. The survey covers sustainability and quality, how to manage ageing infrastructure and the increasing amount of people living in urban areas.

The results will be available on a region-by-region basis and will help inform councils on how to delivery services to best meet customer needs.

The survey, at www.nzwatersurvey.co.nz will run for six weeks and should take about 10 minutes to complete. You can also enter a draw to win \$2000.



Planned works

May 2017

- Pavement maintenance:** Whanganui River Road, Mangamahu Road, Rangitatau East Road, Rangitatau West Road, Kauangaroa Road, No 3 Line and Koatanui Road
- Minor improvements:** The roundabout on the corner of Rangitikei Street and Kitchener Street
- Pavement renewal:** Eastown Road (Wilkie Street to Benefield Street)
- Kerb and channel renewal:** Liverpool Street (Keith Street to Harrison Street), Willis Street (Anzac Parade to Ikitara Road)
- Footpath renewal:** Liverpool Street (Keith Street to Harrison Street), Parsons Street, Tregarth Street
- Pavement reinstatement:** Liverpool Street (Keith Street to Harrison Street), Willis Street (Anzac Parade to Ikitara Road)
- Vegetation treatment:** Willis Street (Keith Street to Ikitara Rd), Ahu Ahu Valley Road, Watershed Road

City to North Mole Shared Pathway

The next stage of work on the three metre wide City to North Mole Shared Pathway, from Balgownie Avenue (behind AFFCO) to Gilbert Street, near Q-West Boat Builders, is expected to begin on Wednesday, May 3. The existing pathway will be closed until the end of June. Users of the pathway can use the detour provided via Heads Road.

Grazing land available

Former Balgownie Landfill

We have a grazing licence available for the former Balgownie Landfill from 1 November 2017 for a three-year period. The available land is 28.5 hectares and for cattle only. We invite people to make an offer for the annual licence fee. If you are interested, please email elana.macdonald@whanganui.govt.nz or call 349 3096.

Council meetings

We welcome members of the public to attend our meetings.

Wanganui Rural Community Board	3.30pm, Wednesday, May 10	Committee Room 2
Council Meeting (Annual Plan submissions)	9.00am - 1.00pm, Tuesday, May 16 and 9.00am - 1.00pm, Wednesday, May 17	Council Chamber
Draft Local Alcohol Policy (hearing of submissions)	9.00am, Monday, May 22 and 9.00am, Tuesday, May 23	Council Chamber
Youth Committee	4.00pm, Monday, May 22	Council Chamber

Property and Community Services Committee	Items will be carried over to the next meeting on Tuesday, 20 June 2017 (Originally advertised for 1.00pm, Tuesday, May 9)	Cancelled
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Agendas are available at the Customer Services Counter, Municipal Office Building, 101 Guyton Street, Whanganui and the Whanganui District Library two working days prior to the meeting.