

# Southlink

He karere tā te Kaunihera o Taranaki ki te Tonga  
News from the South Taranaki District Council



Unite  
against  
COVID-19

## Council's Covid-19 Relief Measures – Proposes Zero Rate Increase

The South Taranaki District Council (STDC) released a number of initiatives it is working on, aimed at bringing relief to residents and businesses in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

South Taranaki District Mayor, Phil Nixon says; "Council has developed a range of measures aimed at bringing relief to residents and businesses, some of which can be actioned immediately while others are more long term and will require additional planning before being rolled out. In particular we are looking at initiatives and projects that can get the economy going by using, where possible, local businesses and contractors." One of the key proposals Council is working on is achieving a zero % rate increase for the 2020 – 2021 financial year which begins on 1 July.

"Following the Council's Long Term Plan, rates were projected to increase by around 3.36%. However, given the financial burden COVID-19 will place on many families and businesses our Council is proposing to have a zero % rate rise," says Mayor Nixon. "In addition to the zero rates increase the Council is proposing a freeze on fees and charges and is offering payment plans and remission of rate penalties for those experiencing financial hardship," he says.

STDC Chief Executive, Waid Crockett says the Council is able to achieve the zero rates rise due to the prudent and effective financial management of the organisation by staff and elected members over many years.

"As a result, this Council is in a sound financial position and we are able to look to our Long Term Investment Fund to realise this proposal."

"There will be no planned drop in levels of service and we will continue to meet our current and future infrastructure needs without compromising future plans or our financial position," he says.

Mr Crockett says these measures are just the first of a number of initiatives the Council will look to develop over the coming months.

"These are just our initial measures. We will look to work closely with businesses, Iwi and other partners to develop further measures that will support the ongoing welfare of our district," he says.

Ratepayers can contact the Council about rate relief payment plans on 0800 111 323.

### Key measures the Council is implementing include:

- **Zero % rate increase:** We propose to reduce our projected 3.36% rate increase for the 2020 – 2021 financial year to a zero % rate increase.
- **Nil Increase to Fees and Charges:** We are proposing to freeze Council fees and charges for the new financial year.
- **Payment Plans and Rate Penalty Remissions:** We will set up payment plans and remit penalties for those experiencing financial hardship (providing a payment arrangement has been agreed in advance).
- **Rent Relief:** Council will excuse tenants of commercial properties it owns from paying rent while they are unable to open.
- **Pay Local/Smaller Suppliers Faster:** Standard practice in the industry is for payments to be made on the 20th of the month following an invoice but we can help local, smaller businesses by paying weekly.
- **Government Financial Assistance:** We have applied for Government financial assistance for six significant 'shovel ready projects'.
- **Business Support Service:** We've strengthened the support we can offer business through advice, information, networking, advocacy and co-ordination etc.
- **Professional Services Grant for SME's:** Through Venture Taranaki we have assisted with funding a professional services grant to support our district's small-medium enterprises (SMEs - those with fewer than 50 staff) giving access to much-needed professional services advice and support.
- **Ongoing Economic Recovery Measures:** Working with businesses, Iwi and other partners we will look at how we can support longer term economic recovery by doing things such as bringing some of our capital projects and other development initiatives forward (such as the Hāwera Business Park, associated infrastructure and the smaller town centre upgrades) and using, where possible local businesses/contractors, to stimulate growth and employment.

### Other relief measures include:

- **Cancelled Library Fines:** Until normal services resume, we've decided to remove fees on overdue items at our libraries and extend current loans.
- **Green waste Extension:** Green waste stickers will remain valid for five weeks past their original end date of 30 September 2020, up to and including 4 November 2020.

## Keep up-to-date

**Websites** - [www.covid19.govt.nz](http://www.covid19.govt.nz) and [www.southtaranaki.com](http://www.southtaranaki.com)

**Facebook** - like 'South Taranaki District Council',

'Uncovid - South Taranaki' and 'Unite Against Covid-19'

**Antenno** - join Antenno! Visit [www.southtaranaki.com](http://www.southtaranaki.com)

## Payments in Level 3

The next rates instalment is due on Wednesday 27 May 2020 and water by meter rates is due on 20 May 2020. The options you have for paying these rates have changed slightly. While we are in Level 3 of lockdown, all Council facilities (including the LibraryPlus centres and Hāwera Administration Building) must remain closed. If possible, please pay your rates by one of these contactless methods (go to [www.southtaranaki.com](http://www.southtaranaki.com) to find out how):

- Pay online with your Credit Card
- Internet Banking
- Bank Transfer (you can ring your bank and request this)
- Send your cheque by post or drop it into the slots at any LibraryPlus centre or Hāwera Administration Building

If you have no other option but to pay by Eftpos, please call our Contact Centre on 0800 111 323 to make an appointment to come into the Hāwera Administration Building.

### Financial Hardship

If you are experiencing financial hardship and can't pay your rates, please contact us on 0800 111 323 or email [rates@stdc.govt.nz](mailto:rates@stdc.govt.nz) and so we can discuss your individual situation and arrange a manageable payment plan.

## Level 3 Solid Waste

### KERBSIDE COLLECTION

- **General waste (red-lid)** wheelie bin collection will continue on normal collection day.
- **Mixed recycling (yellow-lid)** wheelie bin collection will resume on normal collection day. *Please note; everything in this bin will be going to landfill at this stage, we encourage you to continue to stockpile your recycling if possible.*
- **Glass recycling (blue crate)** collection will resume and the glass will be recycled.
- **Green waste (large green bin)** collection will resume on normal collection day and will be sent to our green waste processing facility. *Please note; Green waste stickers will remain valid for five weeks past their original end date of 30 September 2020, up to (and including) 4 November 2020.*

### TRANSFER STATIONS

- Transfer stations will open as per their normal operating hours to accept the usual general waste, glass and mixed recycling and green waste.
- To ensure there is no physical contact payment is by EFTPOS or account only.
- 24-hour recycling will not be available at any transfer station.