

Tuia te Taitonga tāpiringa

Southlink Extra

Spring 2021



Welcome to Southlink Extra

Welcome to the Spring edition of *Southlink Extra*. This quarterly newsletter complements our Council *Southlink* publication, which appears weekly in the Taranaki Star and provides another way for us to keep you informed about what the Council is doing in our District.

Council expresses serious concerns with Three Waters Reform Proposal

In September, Council formally expressed its concerns to the Government about its Three Waters Reform Proposal after being given only eight weeks to analyse the proposal and provide feedback.

Central Government is proposing to set up four new entities nationwide to take over the service, delivery and management of water, wastewater and stormwater (three waters) infrastructure currently undertaken by councils.

For South Taranaki, this would mean that our three waters assets (as well as the debt attached to these assets) would be taken over by a new entity (Entity B) that would include 22 councils across the Waikato (including Hamilton), Bay of Plenty (including Tauranga and Whakatāne) and Taranaki Regions and the Ruapehu, Whanganui and Rangitikei Districts.

South Taranaki Mayor, Phil Nixon says the Council is not convinced of the case for wholesale change the Government is proposing.

"While we acknowledge that better regulation of the water sector is needed, we are seriously concerned about the impacts a 'one-size fits all' and centralisation approach will have on our communities," says Mayor Nixon. "Effectively we'll have no direct control over the proposed water services entities and we can't see how the new entities will be responsive and accountable to our communities. The complex accountability framework, with performance overseen by regulators, guidance coming from a national policy statement, oversight from a regional representative group, board performance oversight from an independent selection panel and regulatory oversight from regional councils, is nothing short of unnecessary bureaucracy."

The Council also questioned the assumptions used by the

Department of Internal Affairs which concluded that, with their reforms it would cost the average household \$1,220 per annum for Three Waters by 2051 compared to \$7,460 per annum without reform.

"We need to know more about how the Government came to those figures because I doubt that they will guarantee that any new entity will have water accounts not exceeding \$1,220 per annum in 30 years' time," he says.

One of the biggest concerns Council expressed was how local priorities could be met and delivered in a large entity.

"We are gravely concerned that our growth and development aspirations, albeit small compared to other high growth areas, will have to wait in line."

Councillors also expressed concern about the potential future privatisation of the water assets.

"No matter how many safeguards the Government puts in place, once these are in the hands of a new centralised entity the path to privatisation will be easier."

Mayor Nixon says once the Government has considered councils' feedback, they will need to outline the mechanisms for community consultation.

"The assets we are talking about have been paid for by our communities and as such we expect that the Government will, or at least will give us the ability to, effectively consult with our communities before any decisions are made on whether to support these reforms or not."

For more information about the Proposal, you can go to the Department of Internal Affairs website www.dia.govt.nz/ThreeWaters-Reform-Programme or www.southtaranaki.com.

Phil Nixon, South Taranaki District Mayor

Whakapā mai / Contact us

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Leaders challenge residents to get Taranaki over 90% fully vaccinated

Our Region's leaders are urging Taranaki residents to get vaccinated to protect ourselves, our families and our health care workers.

The Taranaki Mayoral Forum is made up of South Taranaki Mayor Phil Nixon, Stratford Mayor Neil Volzke, New Plymouth Mayor Neil Holdom and Taranaki Regional Council Chair David MacLeod.

Taranaki Mayoral Forum Chair Phil Nixon says the Forum is putting out the challenge for the region to become 90% fully vaccinated.

Mayor Nixon says the Forum is supporting the Taranaki District Health Board through the pandemic as part of its commitment to the wellbeing of Taranaki people and understands how

critical it is to achieve more than a 90% vaccination rate to avoid the rationing of healthcare services that is occurring internationally.

"If we can get over 90% vaccinated, we will take the pressure off our health workers who have been working extremely hard to support all New Zealanders since COVID-19 first arrived in the country 18 months ago. We have heard how concerned our medical professionals are about COVID-19 and we have to respond by stepping up, getting vaccinated and playing our part," he says.



Get your bin latches today!

FREE

If you are a resident on one of the kerbside collection routes, you can pick up a set of two bin latches (one for each of your yellow-lidded recycling and red-lidded landfill wheelie bins).



Scan this QR code to find out how easy it is to install your new bin latches, as well as some trouble shooting tips!

Pick up your set from your local LibraryPlus centre, or the Hāwera Administration Building.

*One set per property.

Summer - blast -

Raumati Manawareka

South Taranaki LibraryPlus centres are bringing Summer Blast back with a twist.

The Summer Reading Programme, created for kids aged 5 - 12, has been changed after your feedback over the last couple of years.

"This year we're happy to be offering both a reading-based section and an activity-based section," says South Taranaki District Council's Community Outreach Librarian Katherine Bosworth. "So we're pleased to be catering it to everyone - no matter what their interest." Katherine is pleased to be bringing fun activities and reading back into summer - with the addition of some fun workshops and finale parties.

"Of course, with the way of the world at the moment, we've 'COVID-proofed' the programme so children can still take part whether we're in Level 2 or Level 4," she says.

Visit www.southtaranaki.com/summerblast to find out more.

Representation Review Update

On 11 October, Council considered the submissions received on its initial proposal regarding representation arrangements for our District for the 2022 local body elections.

The Council received 39 submissions on its proposal. Twenty-two supported the initial proposal, five supported some changes to boundaries and the number of councillors and six did not support the proposal.

Any person may lodge an objection to the Council's final proposal. An objection must specify the matters to which the objection relates.

Appeals and objections must be made in writing and must be received by the Council no later than 5pm on Friday 26 November 2021.

Appeal/objection forms are available from www.southtaranaki.com/repreview, the Hāwera Administration Building or any LibraryPlus.

