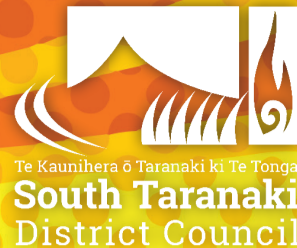


# Tuia Taitonga Southlink

DOG REGO  
DUE  
31 JULY



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

## 23/24 Annual Plan Approved

Against a backdrop of steadily rising costs South Taranaki District councillors formally adopted the 2023/24 Annual Plan at this week's ordinary meeting including a 7.19% rate increase. South Taranaki Mayor, Phil Nixon says councils around the country are facing similar rates increases, in some cases double digit rate increases. But by undertaking a range of cost cutting measures and redirecting some government funding, the Council had managed to keep the rate increase around the rate of inflation, without cuts to any services.

"Like households and businesses across the country, council is facing increased costs for the things we buy," says Mayor Nixon. "Local Government inflation has risen by around 20% over the last two years, for things like fuel, bitumen, and electricity. Contractors' costs have increased by 16%, insurance and compliance costs driven by government requirements have increased considerably and interest rate increases have raised the cost of borrowing and financing debt," he says.

Previously in its Long Term Plan Council had anticipated a 4.72% rate increase for 2023/24.

"As a Council we are always very conscious about keeping costs to our ratepayers down and over the last seven years we've had a relatively modest average annual rate increase of 2.59%, including a zero % increase in 2020/21 when we were trying to help businesses and households affected by the Covid lockdowns," says Mayor Nixon.

"This year we've worked hard to minimise the impact of cost increases on ratepayers as much as possible by undertaking a number of measures such as not increasing our funded depreciation, reducing training budgets, accounting for staff



vacancies, increasing user fees and charges, spreading capital projects over a longer period of time and using reserves where available. As a result, we've been able to get our rate increase below local government inflation without cutting any of our service levels," he says.

Some of the user fees and charges to increase include the kerbside rubbish and recycling collection fee going from \$195.50 to \$220 and the dog registration fee going from \$155 to \$175. Mayor Nixon says the Council has also applied to the Department of Internal Affairs to redirect \$1.12 million of the Government's \$4 million Better Off funding to go towards its Digital Transformation project and District Plan Review.

## Community Initiatives Fund opening soon Applications being taken in the month of July

The Community Initiatives Fund (CIF) replaces the previous practice whereby groups applied for money during the Council's Long Term and Annual Planning process.

Organisations can apply each year from July and will be allocated grants from a set pool of money. The Fund is designed to support community initiatives and activities that will make positive contributions to the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of the community. Applicants should also see this as a complementary funding source, not a primary one, and priority may be given to applicants who can demonstrate they are

seeking other sources of funding.

The pool of money available in the Community Initiative Fund is established every three years through the Council's Long-Term Plan budget-setting process. This year the Fund has \$62,600 available to distribute (from an original pool of approximately \$240,000) due to previous grants being allocated over a two or three year period.

Further information and application forms for the Community Initiatives Fund can be found online at [www.southtaranaki.com/funding](http://www.southtaranaki.com/funding). Applications close at 5pm, Monday 31 July 2023.

## Mayor Thanks District Volunteers at Rotokare

South Taranaki Mayor Phil Nixon welcomed 60 volunteers from various organisations across the District to a special thank-you event on the morning of 20 June at Rotokare Scenic Reserve. The annual event was held as part of National Volunteers Week which ran this year from June 18 to 24.



"Volunteers contribute a huge amount of personal time and resource ensuring the activities and support people often take for granted, whether social, cultural, sporting or other, are able to be offered in our communities. Putting on a morning tea was just a small way Council could show our appreciation for the effort these volunteer organisations and individuals make to the wellbeing

of our District," says Mayor Nixon. "The impact volunteers have on keeping our communities functioning cannot be underestimated, they truly are the glue that holds our District together." The volunteers were treated to a morning tea followed by indoor, outdoor bush classes and an informative session on their extensive pest trapping program.

Rotokare Scenic Reserve is Taranaki's only pest free reserve and is itself a great example of success thanks to the amazing efforts of the staff and teams of dedicated volunteers.

### Upcoming meetings

**Te Hāwera Community Board**  
Monday 10 July, 11am  
Hāwera Senior Citizens Association,  
81 Victoria Street, Hāwera

**Pātea Community Board**  
Monday 10 July, 4pm  
Hunter Shaw Building, Egmont Street  
Pātea

**Eltham-Kaponga Community Board**  
Wednesday 12 July, 10.30am  
War Memorial Hall, Victoria Street,  
Kaponga

**Taranaki Coastal Community Board**  
Wednesday 12 July, 2.30pm  
Te Kiri Hall, Eltham Road, Te Kiri

**Te Kāhui Matauraura**  
Wednesday 19 July, 10am

**Environment and Hearings  
Committee**  
Wednesday 19 July, 4pm

**District Plan Review Committee**  
Wednesday 19 July, 6pm

*Unless already specified, meetings are held in the Council Chamber, Administration Building, Albion Street, Hāwera*

### Puanga Programme

Check out what's happening in South Taranaki for Puanga. Head to [www.southtaranaki.com/puanga](http://www.southtaranaki.com/puanga) to find out more.



### School Holiday Programme

The school holidays are coming up next week! Head to [www.southtaranaki.com/happeningholidays](http://www.southtaranaki.com/happeningholidays) to see what's happening in Council facilities around the District.

**SOUTH TARANAKI  
HAPPENING HOLIDAYS**  
*Puanga*

[www.southtaranaki.com](http://www.southtaranaki.com)

Ph: (06) 278 0555 or 0800 111 323