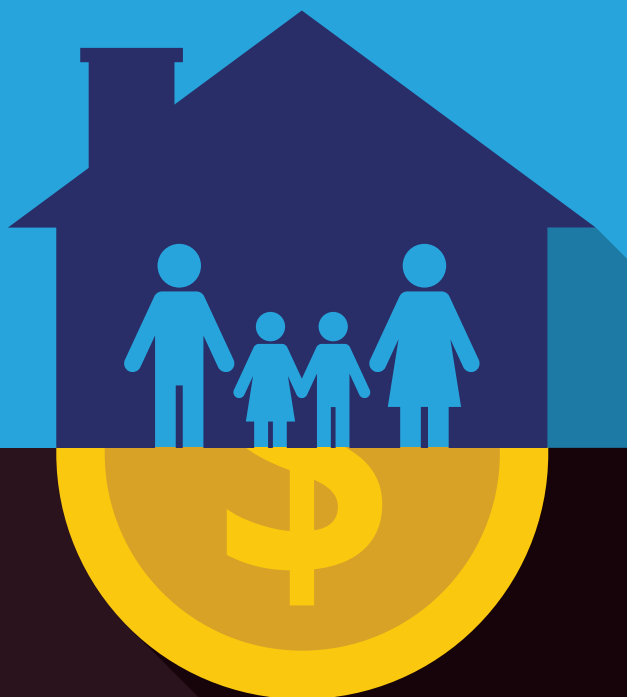


RATED GOOD VALUE

YOUR WAITOMO DISTRICT
RATES NEWSLETTER

JULY 2017




Waitomo
District Council

*Creating a better future with vibrant
communities and thriving business.*



Welcome to your rates newsletter for 2017, which provides information about the Annual Plan 2017/18, our planned projects, and the rates revenue required to provide good value services to our community.

Council adopted its Annual Plan on Tuesday 2nd May 2017. The plan covers year three of the Long Term Plan 2015-2025 (LTP) for the 12 months from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 (our new financial year).

The total rate revenue required for the 2017/18 financial year is \$19,571,000 (excluding GST) which is an average overall **2.7% increase** over the current year's total rate requirement. This is substantially lower than the 3.88% increase forecast in the LTP 2015-25 for the 2017/18 year. We achieved this reduction by prioritizing key projects, obtaining favourable interest rates, and having less public debt than forecast in the LTP.

We continue to make excellent progress in our focus areas; Community Connectivity and Development, Economic Development and Good Asset Stewardship, and we remain on target to achieve the forecast debt reduction of **\$21 million over the life of the LTP**. The public debt forecast at the end of this financial year is **\$2.5 million less** than the forecast for the corresponding year in the LTP.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ANNUAL PLAN

- **\$10 million** of capital expenditure across various projects like the upgrade of the Te Kuiti Water Treatment Plant to ensure that we provide quality drinking water that meets public health standards.
- An increase in our Reserves balance of **\$2.38 million**. This places us in a good financial position should unforeseen issues arise with essential services such as roads and water supply.
- We begin a major project for WDC to review our **District Plan**. You will begin to hear more from us about this project over the coming months.
- We continue to develop a marketing campaign for the **Timber Trail**, to bring visitors to our District.
- We reach the final stages of a phased upgrade of one of our most valuable community assets – the **Les Munro Centre**, by upgrading the bathroom facilities.
- To ensure that we provide safe, usable access to the public and visitors to our town, we are improving the **Brook Park** entranceway.
- We support the implementation of the **Waitomo Village Structure Plan**, with the aim of encouraging growth and enhancing the area for both local residents and visitors.

WASH YOUR CAR

FOR ONLY



...and do your dishes, wash your clothes, shower the kids, have a bath and water the garden too.

You may be surprised to know that the average person in Te Kuiti uses 500 litres of water per day just to do everyday things like doing the dishes and watering the plants. If you were to buy the equivalent amount of bottled water at the supermarket it would cost you around a staggering \$400 per person, per day.

We believe in value at the Council and your water rates cover all of this and ensures we can provide safe water supplies that meet drinking water standards.

GOOD VALUE? WE THINK SO.

Waitomo District Council provides our community with many important services that keep our towns functioning and make them a great place to live, work and visit.

It costs a lot of money to run our towns. For this financial year we require around \$28 million to maintain our levels of service for residents and ratepayers, and to improve roads, water and wastewater assets so they continue to work as they need to.

Every dollar you provide in rates is divided over the cost of the services and facilities that Council provides. Waitomo District's ratepayers provide about 69% of the money used to fund all of our services and facilities. The balance is obtained from fees and charges, reserves, and loans.



TAKE IT AWAY

FOR JUST



Every week we collect your rubbish, plastic, cans, glass and cardboard from right outside your homes and businesses.

We take it away for just \$1.12 per week. That saves you having to work out what to do with it and saves our environment from being overloaded with litter and rubbish. You may be surprised to know that the average property in Piopio puts out 16kgs of rubbish and recycling every week?

If you were to pay for a private service to take away your rubbish and recycling it would cost you around \$3.90 per week.

We believe in value at the Council and your solid waste rates cover all this and more.

RATES PAYMENTS

To assist ratepayers in the payment of their rates, the Council operates a system of payment by quarterly instalments. Rates for the financial year commencing 1 July 2017 are payable in four equal instalments.

INSTALMENT 1 » DUE 31 AUGUST 2017

INSTALMENT 2 » DUE 30 NOVEMBER 2017

INSTALMENT 3 » DUE 28 FEBRUARY 2018

INSTALMENT 4 » DUE 31 MAY 2018

PENALTY FOR OVERDUE RATES

A penalty charge of 10% will be added on any part of an instalment which remains unpaid after 5pm on the due date for payment of that instalment. A further penalty charge of 10% will be added on any part of any rates assessed before 1 July 2017 that remains on 1 July 2017, to be added on 6 July 2017.

RATES PAYMENT OPTIONS

You can pay your rates in the following ways:

- Easy Pay Direct Debit,
- Direct Credit
- Automatic Payment,
- Cash or Cheque (can be post-dated)
- Eftpos or Credit Card

Rates payments will be allocated to the oldest debt first.

Council's recommended payment method is direct debit

Choosing this method ensures that no penalties will be charged, and that means there are no due dates to remember during the rating year. If you are not currently on Direct Debit, Direct Credit or Automatic Payment, you can post your payment cheque or alternatively, come in to Council Office, Queen Street, Te Kuiti. Our customer services team will be happy to assist you.

Are you having difficulty paying your rates invoice?

There are a variety of payment options available for customers to help them pay their rates and pay off rates arrears if they are having difficulty meeting payments. Please contact our customer services team to find out how we can help.

RATES REBATE SCHEME

Applications are now open for rates rebates for the 2017/18 rating year.

The Rates Rebate Scheme available from Central Government benefits ratepayers who are on lower incomes and pay rates for the home in which they live. The amount of rate rebate depends on a combination of your income, the amount of rates you are charged and the number of dependants you have. For example, the income abatement threshold for 2017/18 is \$24,790.

The threshold is increased by \$500 for each dependant living with the ratepayer. This is not an absolute cut-off point but the point at which the rebate value is reduced in proportion to excess income.

What this means is that although a person's income might be greater than the income threshold, a rebate could still be available depending on the rates amount and the number of dependants living with the ratepayer. Ultimately, the ratepayer's rebate must be calculated to determine the amount of any rebate to which they will be entitled.

The maximum rates rebate available to a legal ratepayer for the property that was their home on 1 July 2017 is \$620.

If you are not sure if you qualify for a rates rebate please contact our Customer Services Team to discuss.

If homeowners meet additional criteria, they can apply for a new rates rebate from 1 July 2017 for the 2017/18 rating year.

RATES REMISSION POLICY

Council has a Policy for the Remission of Rates which outlines the circumstances where it may remit rates. The following remission categories are available:

• Remission of Rates for Properties Used Jointly as a Single Unit.

Available where two or more separately rateable properties are used jointly as a single rating unit.

• Remissions for Community Organisations, Clubs and Societies, Organisations providing Care for the Elderly.

Community Halls, Art Galleries, Museums, Pre-Schools, Marae, Churches and not for profit organisations which exist principally for the provision of emergency services, not for profit sports/recreation clubs or societies and charitable organisations that provide Rest home/hospital level care are eligible for 100% remission of rates excluding one targeted rate charge set for water, sewerage and solid waste collection services.

The Policy provides for other remission categories such as:

- Remission of Rates on Maori Freehold Land.
- Remission of Penalties
- Remission of Rates for New Residential Subdivisions
- Remission of Rates in Cases of Financial Hardship

For a full copy of the Rates Remission Policy, application forms and due dates for applications are available on the Council website at www.waitomo.govt.nz or contact our Customer Services Team for a paper copy to be sent. Please be aware that all rates must be paid by the due date regardless of the status of your rates remission application.

RATING INFORMATION DATABASE

As a property owner your details (your name and postal address) are made public on Council's rating information database. You have the right to request that this information is treated as confidential and withheld. To do this you must give notice in writing and your details will be withheld.

The Rating Information Database also contains details about your property that Council uses to set and levy rates. Information such as the number of separately used or inhabited parts of each property influences the rates levied. It is important that this information is correct.

If you believe that the information Council has about your property is incorrect it is important to notify us so it can be investigated. There is a 'Request to amend rating information database' form available on Council's website for this purpose.

PROPERTY INFORMATION ONLINE

Your property and rating information is available on Council's website as well as access to our online GIS mapping system. Here you will be able to see information such as your annual rates, the property valuation, aerial photography and much more.

Look for the Property Information link under Rating Information on our website and search for property information using your valuation number or address location.

CONTACT

For further assistance please contact our friendly Customer Services Centre. Our office hours are Monday - Tuesday 8am to 5pm. Wednesday 9am to 5pm. Thursday - Friday 8am to 5pm.

Address: Waitomo District Council, Queen Street, PO Box 404 Te Kuiti 3941

Phone: (07) 878 0800
Freephone: 0800 932 4357
Fax: (07) 878 7771
Email: info@waitomo.govt.nz

Subscribe to our newsletter Waitomo Way: waitomoway.buzzit.co.nz/subscribe




Waitomo
District Council

Creating a better future with vibrant communities and thriving business.



www.waitomo.govt.nz