

Waitomo District Council Exceptions Annual Plan

2014-2015



Creating a better future with vibrant communities and thriving business.

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**Waitomo**
District Council

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Message from the Mayor and Chief Executive

The 2014/15 year is the third year of the Long Term Plan 2012-22 (LTP) and the Exceptions Annual Plan 2014/15 (Plan) contains plans for the 2014/15 financial year.

This Plan follows the direction set out through the LTP for the 2014/15 year on the whole, with a few exceptions. The changes are not material and are mostly in response to external drivers which have required a tactical change.

As has been the case for the past few years, Council is still closely adhering to the principles of financial sustainability and efficient delivery of services. This Plan forecasts an average rate increase of **2.9%** for all properties in the District, against the original LTP forecast of 7.6% for the 2014/15 financial year. This has been made possible by taking advantage of opportunities on various fronts like favourable interest rates, lower insurance premiums and also more efficient service delivery through better delivery options.

Council's vision for our District is **"Creating a better future with vibrant communities and thriving business"** and we have been working steadily towards this. The Council, elected in October 2013, has set out some objectives to guide the effort in working for achieving this vision. These objectives are:

- Create economic development opportunities
- Continue with essential infrastructure upgrades
- Further develop community engagement
- Drive community connectivity
- Support stakeholder relationships and
- Be part of regional leadership

The 2013 census figures show that the population of our District has decreased slightly since 2006. It is crucial for the future of our communities that we create a vibrant and thriving environment where people would choose to come and live, work or visit. Council intends to maintain its focus on economic development, which needs sustained effort over a longer period. Some examples of what we are working towards are leveraging arising tourism opportunities like the Timber Trail and Hairy Feet Waitomo, improving signage in the district and identifying and promoting the range of job opportunities available within the district. We continue to support the work being done in the social sector trials, and our own Youth Council to give our youth a sense of pride and purpose and belonging to our district.

It is equally important to have good infrastructure in our communities in order to maintain its live-ability and we will continue working on essential infrastructure upgrades required. We are very pleased to have now completed one of the largest infrastructure projects undertaken in our district, the Te Kuiti Wastewater Plant rebuild, and to report that it is performing exceptionally well. Further much needed upgrade work is planned to Te Kuiti and Mokau water supplies in the 2014/15 year and some other upgrades essential to better asset performance.

Our goal is to work closely with all our key stakeholders in our district, including our local Police and other government agencies along with numerous community groups in Te Kuiti, Waitomo, Piopio and Benneydale to make our communities a better place to live in. We will also be working collaboratively with other local authorities to ensure that the interests of our district are well represented and so that we are able to influence the future, to some degree at least.

We all have a role to play in growing and developing our district.



Brian Hanna
MAYOR



Chris Ryan
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

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