



## From the Mayor Meng Foon



*Tena koutou katoa, kei te mihi atu ki ratau kua wheturangitia, haere, haere, haere atu ra.*

A busy few months coming up for us. We have decided on a budget for the 2009-2010 year. Overall, Council expects to collect 7 percent more in rates this year. Some properties will pay more than this, some less.

The overall rise mainly comprises depreciation and inflation costs. There is not a lot of new works. Council knows that the maintenance of the current infrastructure is number one to its main business.

We're aware the global economic turmoil could filter down to you. This is why we have been prudent. Your assets are still going to be in good nick, but we are slowing down on building new capital items.

We will be consulting soon on our Draft Ten Year Plan.

Our wastewater treatment plant consent is on track. We thank the WORG team for their support. Once we have consents, we hope to achieve a \$20m government grant for the \$45m project.

Councillors and I are pleased to hear so many positive comments about our new riverside walkway. We want to continue this to Midway Beach and beyond one day and link Bright Street to the Botanical Gardens.

Council has issued two large retail consents – Bunnings on the former Gisborne Milk site and Mitre 10 on the old gas site. We look forward to the commissioning of these businesses. I wrote to the former asking them to use local contractors and services as much as possible.

We are always working for you. Our task is not always easy but it is a pleasure to do our best.

Our doors are always open, *kia kaha koutou i roto i o koutou mahi, kia hapai tatau whanau whanui, kia ora*

Meng

## More capabilities with revamped website

Want to search cemetery records on line? Make a submission? Maybe check the rainfall figures or what's happening with the river near your place?

These and more services will be available on Council's revamped website [www.gdc.govt.nz](http://www.gdc.govt.nz) over the next few months.

Work has been going on behind the scenes for some months. Now Wellington website designers SilverStripe, which has been responsible for designing various local government

**WEB TIP – Did you know that you don't need to type in the www. part of a website address? Nor do you need to type in http:// All you need to do, for instance, is type in [gdc.govt.nz](http://www.gdc.govt.nz) and press enter and you're there.**

websites, will put the new-look site into action.

Council's website administrator Karen Hadfield says the fresh new site will be launched on 26 March in conjunction with the release of the Draft Ten Year Plan.

"It will be basic initially but will gradually gain more interactive capabilities. People will be able to make Requests for Service by filling out a form on line and even pinpoint on a Google map where a particular problem is sited."

The long-requested capability to search Council's cemetery records is expected to be working within the next few months.

"We will be making the property search feature easier to use too.

*Continued on page 3*



The Teneti family – Kelvin, Louise and their children Jakob and Kelsey – are the faces of Gisborne's Draft Ten Year Plan, featuring on the cover below and throughout the plan itself. The summary Draft Ten Year Plan will be delivered to all residents and ratepayers from early April.

## Hot topics in Draft Ten Year Plan

Would you like to see the city's cycle and walkways extended along Waikanae Beach and the Taruheru River? What about further enhancing the inner harbour?

Should Council develop a multi-purpose civic space in the city centre and upgrade the War Memorial Theatre? How about getting a mobile library service for our rural communities? And then there's planning for the Olympic Pool and Recreation Centre, and extending the library?

If you are hot – or cold – about any of these issues and more,

check out Council's Draft Ten Year Plan 2009-2019, available from late March. A summary version of the plan will be

mailed to all residents and ratepayers from early April.

The draft plan, also called the Community Plan and the Long-Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP), sets out what Council is planning for the next 10 years and how it expects to pay for those plans.

In developing this Draft Ten Year Plan, Council has been strongly influenced by its 40 or so plans and strategies including reserve

management plans, township plans, its community outcomes document Tairawhiti By Choice and the Draft Urban Development Strategy. Council was also affected in its thinking by major issues including affordability, economic conditions, climate change and new legislation.

Included in the plan are some major projects to which Council has already committed itself. These include the Gisborne city wastewater project, community wastewater solutions for Wainui and Makorori, Ruatoria flood protection and the Regional Land Transport Programme. These projects have been consulted on before and Council is now committed to putting them into action. *Continued on page 4*



## Gradual introduction for new Council branding

Most people will notice little difference. And – in the interests of cost – it will be some time before people even see Council's updated sun and squiggle logo on vehicles, signage, stationery and uniforms.

Nevertheless the new sun and squiggle logo will begin infiltrating its way into the community from late March. Stationery will be updated when it has run out, signs redesigned when they need replacing or repairing and vehicles branded.

Chief executive Lindsay McKenzie says the update was timely as over the years many inconsistencies in the logo's look and use had crept in. A

survey of 600 people showed strong support for the logo, as long as it was made more contemporary, the colours were changed and cultural elements were included.

Rees Morley of URBAN-i modernised the logo with more appropriate colours and a strong connection to the region's culture. A manual will be created to ensure the logo is used in a consistent way.

Mr McKenzie says a consistent, professional look will help build pride and efficiency within the organisation.

"The image and brand of an organisation

are important because people give more when they are proud of the entity they work for, what its values are, and

how it presents itself. Being visible – which is something that a strong brand ensures – drives performance and accountability.

"Using standard templates from the brand manual will reduce staff time spent on redesigning new versions for each document, brochure or new items of stationery."

Council's coat of arms will still be used in a ceremonial capacity rather than to identify Council and its business.



## Community the key for Kaiti girl in new manager's role

Council's new community planning and development manager Nedine Thatcher has been around.

The one-time Kaiti girl, who has tribal affiliations to Ngati Porou, studied her heart out over 10 years, often while working, to arm herself with degrees in education from Victoria University and an MBA. She took a roundabout journey into management, working first as a special education adviser, researcher for Child Youth and Family then as an evaluator for Education Review Office. But it was her role at the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology, where she was investment, business and then strategy manager responsible for \$18m of government funding, which helped this mother of two into the Council job leading a team of 12. She is the first woman to join the corporate management team.

She and partner Hiki Swann, who met as students at Ilminster Intermediate, moved back from Wellington last year to new jobs – Hiki as PGG Wrightson's finance manager; Nedine as head of Tairāwhiti Polytechnic's business, computing and foundation school. However, when Nedine saw the opportunity to lead in an area she was passionate about, she quickly snapped it up.

The new Council role combines the economic development, community development and strategic/social policy units.

"The aim of the role is to coordinate activities across these units and provide strategic policy support at an organisational level and most importantly maintain good relationships with communities. I expect us to have a better face within the community, and coordinate our responses with respect to community agencies, networks and neighbourhoods.

"I would like to see stronger resilient neighbourhoods,



Not far from her old stomping ground in Kaiti's London Street, new community planning and development manager Nedine Thatcher says community initiatives like KaPai Kaiti and E Tu Elgin help create pride and a sense of ownership.

building on great initiatives like E Tu Elgin and KaPai Kaiti. They show how neighbourhoods can determine their outcomes which in turn helps create pride in place and a sense of ownership. Everyone benefits.

"We have a key role in supporting township activities such as the Township Plans and other community activities and will be making an effort to engage people in the whole region."

She says there are clear benefits in having the "warm fuzzies" of community development. For example, getting youth involved in action programmes such as the Youth Activity Week may help build a sense

of trust, and show youth that they are valued in this community.

Live on the Lawn concerts, popular among all ages, help create a sense of belonging.

"Activities like these encourage people to live here, families to come back and ultimately this all contributes to economic development and wider community outcomes."

Nedine hasn't given up on study yet. With gewürztraminer planted on their 4ha block at Makauri, she is studying part-time for a Certificate in Winemaking through EIT.

## Project-spreading helps limit rates take

After much soul-searching, Council expects to collect 7 percent more in rates for the 2009-2010 year.

This rise – mainly the cost of servicing existing capital investments through depreciation, interest costs and inflation – was not reached easily. And, chief executive Lindsay McKenzie says, it is higher than Council is comfortable with in this environment.

A zero rates rise would mean removing about \$3m of rates-funded costs or finding other revenue.

Not many will see a 7 percent rise. Residential properties in the city may be higher than last year, and those at Wainui might be lower because values have dropped.

"To keep rates down, we have deferred non-essential spending on capital beyond the first three years of the plan.

"The Ten Year Plan relies on reducing operating costs by \$1 million which means some wind-back

of services, otherwise rates would be 2.5 percent higher. It is impressive that, over the life of the plan, \$45 million is invested in the new wastewater plant without a noticeable peak in rates requirements. That's because we have spread out projects, capital expenditure, and therefore debt."

But he says that despite global economic conditions, the demand for goods and services hasn't changed. "We are trying to do this without affecting levels of service. We are planning for a return to better times and that's where investment in community infrastructure comes in. We believe we should retain services that people rely on to assist the economy to function such as infrastructure for roading and wastewater.

"Personally I don't think the recession will be too bad for New Zealand and Gisborne. The key is retaining jobs. Council has a role in that like anyone else."

## Full of meaning

There's more to it than initially meets the eye.

The sun and squiggle reflects the region's primary icons – sun and water. The sun's seven rays parallel the district's seven electoral wards; their shape recognises the region's navigation heritage as boat and waka silhouettes. The semi-circle of the sun is Council itself. The burnt orange is the colour of the sunrise, the new day.

The logo's active water shows direction and purpose. As waves, the icon highlights the district's geographical fame and lifestyle. As a river it talks of our hinterland bringing its bounty to the port and the rest of the world, and recognises the communities that form around our rivers and unites each of them at our shared shoreline.

For the full story behind the brand see <http://www.gdc.govt.nz/Council/NewLogo.htm>

## Consent applications bring wastewater plant a step closer

A date has been set for mid-May to hear resource consent applications to vary the existing consents for the city's wastewater project.

Council already has 35-year resource consents to build a wastewater treatment plant, using the biological trickling filter process, and to discharge the treated wastewater to sea via the existing 1.8km marine outfall pipe. The resource consent applications support the reconfiguration of the proposed wastewater treatment plant and its relocation to the Council-owned site in Banks Street. Submissions close on 4 April.

Gisborne District Council project manager Peter McConnell is confident that the consultation with neighbouring properties around the Banks Street site regarding odour and visual effects will

minimise potential objections to the proposed plant. Consultation with the Wastewater Options Review Group resulted in a reduced scope of treatment and proposed consent conditions. A pre-hearing will be held at the end of the submission period, ahead of a hearing before a Special Hearings Committee scheduled for the week starting 18 May.

Council's engineering and works department is the applicant; its environment and planning department is the regulatory or consenting authority.

"The Minister of Conservation agreed to the Council making the decision on this application. This approval depends on Council appointing, as a commissioner, the Minister's representative to the earlier wastewater hearings," Mr McConnell says.

In the interests of community affordability, the

scheme was reduced in scope to have one biological trickling filter tank instead of two, and at a Council-owned site in Banks Street instead of the designated Aerodrome Road site. This effectively halved the proposed cost to \$45m.

Consulting engineers CH2M Beca expect to have the treatment plant commissioned by the end of 2010, with UV disinfection following within two years.

On commissioning, the plant's performance will be closely monitored. This will be overseen by a Technical Advisory Group, comprising scientific experts, and representatives from Council and specific interest groups. After three years the group will make a recommendation to Council about the adequacy of the process and whether any further treatment process is required.

## In short

### Premium sought in any Treaty deal

Council has resolved to talk to the Crown about the possible purchase of Tauwhareparae Farms Ltd for use in the settlement of Ngati Porou's land claim.

Chief executive Lindsay McKenzie said the go-ahead for discussions had been given although some councillors and people in the community were not keen to sell.

"If discussions are to proceed to negotiations, then Council has indicated it wants certain conditions met. These include ensuring a premium is paid to the community for making the asset available for sale. That premium should be borne by the Crown not the claimants."

If there is a sale, Council will need to look at how it protects the capital such as through a special investment fund. Any proposal would be incorporated into a future draft Ten Year Plan. Council and the Crown continue to discuss how the Advanced Meats site and Watson Park could be part of a Treaty settlement.

### Turn off the lights for Earth Hour and celebrate

Get a crowd together on 28 March and turn out the lights for Earth Hour from 8.30pm. Celebrate the second to last weekend of daylight saving, host a barbie, or an intimate candle-lit dinner and play I Spy in the dark. You will be among illustrious company as 50 million people across the world turn off their lights to show their commitment to climate change.

Environmental educator Anne Lister says world attention will be focused on New Zealand as the first country in the world to hit 8.30pm.

"Gisborne is committed to the celebration this year. Last year thousands of people in Christchurch participated with neighbours across the city celebrating Earth Hour with candle-lit dinner parties. As the city's lights were dimmed, the strength of its community shone brightly."

### Have your say through Facebook or at market

Councillors and staff will have their work cut out for them during April as they cover the district to talk about the Draft Ten Year Plan 2009-2019.

In a bid to meet the people at their place rather than Council's place, their roving consultation schedule involves 23 meetings, starting at the city's Farmers' Market on 4 April and ending at Tiniroto on 30 April. Most townships are covered in the schedule with a few new areas, like Elgin and Kaiti, brought in to the mix to extend the reach. Council will also use social networking sites like Bebo and Facebook, and display information at local venues and manned stands at events.

### Pay less for photocopying, more for illegal parking

Council's new proposed schedule of fees and charges is a mixed bag. Many fees are rising by 3 percent but there are a few notable exceptions. The charge for parking illegally in a disabled carpark will rise from \$40 to \$150; the trade waste discharge fee will rise from 1.1c per cubic metre of wastewater discharged to 30c per cubic metre. Community housing rentals will rise gradually over the next few years to better cover operating costs. And the good news decrease ... photocopying, scanning and printing at the library will drop from \$1 to 20 cents a sheet.

## Valuation objections not a trivial affair

Most Gisborne ratepayers seem happy with their new property valuations issued late last year. Fewer than 400 mainly residential property owners objected.

Information officer Simon Jeune says that in previous years up to 1900 objections have been received.

"This time many of the objections were from people who wanted their values increased because of renovations that didn't need a building consent. But people need to realise that putting in a \$25,000 kitchen will not necessarily increase a property's valuation by an equivalent amount.

"Some try to talk down the value of their property in the hope that their rates will reduce. However, the effects of objections on rates will be relatively minor compared to the overall shifts in value, for example coastal properties, and the decisions of Council on the levels of service and the way Council costs are apportioned."

Objections are passed to Landmass Technology Ltd and reviewed by a valuer. If the objector and valuer fail to reach agreement on the values, the objection can be heard by the Land Valuation Tribunal.

Mr Jeune warns that the tribunal is not a trivial process. It is a court of law, with the same emphasis on

evidence to support a case. Objectors have to prove the valuation is wrong, and this may involve getting an independent registered valuer's report. The Justice Department recommends considering the assistance of a lawyer or getting legal opinion on the likelihood of the success of an objection.

Costs may be awarded against an objector if the case is frivolous or they do not turn up to the hearing.

### Rates rebate time again

Gisborne people know a good thing when they see it. That's probably why Gisborne has one of New Zealand's highest take-ups of the rebate that provides up to \$530 off rates.

Senior rates officer Fiona Scragg says rebates are granted to about 2000 Gisborne ratepayers a year. But there could well be more people on low incomes not yet applying.

"Even people whose rates are not up to date can apply for the rebate. I hate to think of people who can't afford things, and up to \$530 off your rates can make a big difference."

People have until June 30 to apply for a rebate for their 2008/09 rates. Rate rebates claimed for the 2008/09 year already total \$720,000.

The rebates need to be applied for each rating year.



New construction continues around the city including here on the Back Ormond Road.

## Consents for plenty of work ahead

It's too early to say whether the global recession is affecting Gisborne's building industry.

But, construction consents administrator Ian Petty says, plenty of spin-offs are expected in the short-term from the planned Hikurangi mill, \$2m Gisborne Boys' High School gym and Mitre 10 developments. "Consents for residential properties may have dropped slightly in February but commercial are still moving along. Some builders are known to have work lined up for the next two years."

Although January was a good month with 65 consents lodged – more than most Januarys for the past seven years – February looked to be slowing down and unlikely to reach the average 90 or so consent applications received.

"If Hikurangi starts on schedule, I don't think there will be a building slowdown. This will generate a lot of spin-offs. The Mitre 10 development on the former gasworks site has been granted building and resource consent but we are awaiting word on when this work will start.

"People at the top end of the market are still building. In 2008 nearly 1500 building consents were processed. Of these, 130 were new houses with a value of \$30m. In 2007, consents for 200 new houses worth \$37m were processed.

"So even though there were 70 fewer houses, they were only \$7m down in value."

Work continues to flow in for earthquake-affected buildings yet to be repaired including St Andrew's Church and the Lyric and Melbourne Cash buildings.

Even if there is a slowdown, there will be plenty of catch-up work for the consents team thanks to a backlog of work resulting from 2004 changes to the Building Act. This requires building consents to be either extended or finalised within two years.

Mr Petty says that some consents issued between 1992 and 2004 have yet to get the final tick-off, a process that would be at no cost to the building owner if only the original scheduled inspections are required.

### All-hours website saves staff office time

From page 1: The aim of the revamp is to get more people going to our site rather than ringing or visiting Customer Services. In many instances, the information people seek is on the website and is available to them 24 hours a day not just during office hours. Using the website for information saves staff time and the cost of printing brochures."

The site will enable RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feeds which enable updates on particular news, job vacancies or plan changes to be emailed to interested people directly. Many news-related sites,

weblogs and other online publishers syndicate their content as an RSS Feed to whoever wants it.

"Our news page will be able to have more items at a time and an archive facility will keep the news available rather than just dropping out of the system."

Council's website currently has about 50,000 hits a month. The news and events section takes the most hits with property searches and job hunting the next most popular. And in winter, road conditions are a top hit.

## Little critters come out to play

Have you seen a busy column of small, brown ants rampaging up the side of your house or up trees and across your kitchen bench? Chances are you have a colony of Argentine ants in your midst.

These aggressive insects, whose bites can cause a reaction, appear to be taking advantage of this season's dry weather to multiply at an alarming rate. The problem is widespread from Manutuke to the central city and out to Wainui.

So what can you do? Don't use regular insecticide sprays or ant bait – these can encourage new nests to break off from the main colony and worsen the problem. If you suspect Argentine ants, take a sample – in a tightly sealed container – into Council's Customer Services for identification.

Pest and plants controller Phil Karaitiana says that with about half a million ants in each nest, it's the sheer number of ants that causes the problem for people.

"Once the ants are confirmed as Argentine – and most samples are – residents can either buy the poison bait at cost from Council or employ a pest controller to do the job.

"If one property is infected, it is likely that neighbours will have them too. We advise persuading your



neighbours and their neighbours to bait at the same time so a large area is covered."

The ants generally are transported by humans, with vehicles, pot plants or timber.

One pest controller reports that Argentine ants comprise 60 percent of his work this year, up from 5 percent last year.

Meanwhile, a new ant species has been identified in Kaiti. Darwin's ant is similar to the Argentine ant in colour, size and the way it forms large colonies, but does not bite.



## Views sought on urban strategy

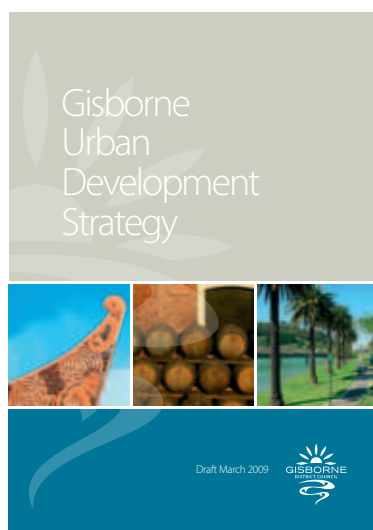
From page 1:

Council's Draft Ten Year Plan, due for release in late March, also gives people the chance to comment on the Draft Urban Development Strategy and the Draft Regional Land Transport programme. These strategies are already available on Council's website, or through its offices and the public library.

Any relevant submissions received on the Draft Ten Year Plan will also be used to help Council refine the Urban Development Strategy which guides the future of Gisborne city.

The draft strategy sets out aims and actions for each of seven

key directions including compact city; quality environment; strong neighbourhoods; vibrant culture; articulation of Maori cultural landscape; and



support for economic development. As an example, the aim of "compact city" is to focus development in and around existing urban areas or neighbourhood hubs. This key direction includes improving cycling and walking networks and public transport.

The full documents and the summary Ten Year Plan will be available from Council offices or the website [www.gdc.govt.nz](http://www.gdc.govt.nz)

Remember that Council wants to hear your views in support of various options as well as those in opposition. If you love the idea of extending the city's walkways, and

any of the other plans, please let Council know by making a submission by 1 May 2009. Have a say in our future.



The artwork by Champion's Isabella Vita (above left) was overall winner of a competition aimed at providing illustrations for Council's Ten Year Plan. Other winners included (centre) Girls' High student Kamara Pere, (second in High School section) and Ilminster student Kayla Matete (third in intermediate section).

## Artworks give youth a face to our future

If you think you could be seeing double over the next few weeks, rest assured... you will be.

Winning artworks from some of the district's students have been incorporated into the summary and full versions of the Draft Ten Year Plan. The plan, sometimes called the Community Plan or Long-Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP), sets out what Council is planning from 2009-2019 and invites you to have your say.

The summary version of the plan will be mailed to all residents and ratepayers including ratepayers out of the district. The full version is available from Council

offices or the public library.

Champion College student Isabella Vita was overall winner of the competition which called for artworks on the theme of "Gisborne growing up - what will Gisborne be like in 10 years time". Isabella was also first in the intermediate school section.

Open to primary, intermediate and secondary school students, the competition was a way to recognise and use the artistic talents of local youth in a document that will guide their future.

The full list of winners is available on <http://www.gdc.govt.nz/Council/ArtCompetition.htm>

## Report confirms our climate is a'changing

Drier winters and springs, fewer cold temperatures and frost days, more frequent extreme rainfall events and more high temperature episodes are predicted for the region over the next 90 years.

An Update on Climate Change, a new report for Council by Louise Savage, also says Gisborne's annual mean temperature is expected to increase by 0.9° by 2040 and by 2.1° by 2090.

The report updates her overview of climate change and possible consequences for the Gisborne district released in 2006. It also looks at new developments in climate science and legislation since 2006, and suggests that concerns Gisborne is poised to become "New Zealand's carbon sink" are justified.

"The Gisborne district is at least carbon-neutral, and probably quite a major carbon sink already without any more forests. A major criticism of the Emissions Trading Scheme is that it remains too easy for polluters to continue polluting, and offset their emissions by buying in carbon credits," the report states.

Ms Savage says talk about working to reduce emissions has been overshadowed by talk about generating cash through investment in carbon sink activities, such as commercial forestry.

The report says temperature changes are likely to be smallest in spring, compared to the other seasons. Westerly winds are expected to be more persistent in winter and spring. While average annual rainfall is expected to decrease, reduced westerlies in autumn and particularly summer could see an increase in summer rainfall by as much as 10 percent to 15 percent on the East Coast by 2090. Autumn rainfall could rise by 5 percent to 7.5 percent by 2090.

Winter will still be the wettest season but rainfall for winter and spring could be down by 10 percent. Pasture production is expected to increase over summer with pasture likely to grow earlier in late winter and early spring as the climate warms. The full report is available on Council's website [www.gdc.govt.nz](http://www.gdc.govt.nz). Search for climate change or go to [www.gdc.govt.nz/CDEM/PlansAndReports.htm](http://www.gdc.govt.nz/CDEM/PlansAndReports.htm)

## Support for quake policy

Council's draft Earthquake-Prone Building Policy, which targets parapet strengthening in the short term, is only a few steps from being put into practice. Four submissions were received on the policy, mostly in support of the proposed changes.

The draft policy, yet to be formally adopted, proposes that parapets on pre-1976 buildings be strengthened within two years of the policy being approved, possibly about March 2011. Parapet collapse caused the bulk of damage in the inner city during the December 2007 earthquake.

Construction consents administrator Ian Petty says the revised policy also clearly sets out the requirement to strengthen a building to two thirds of the current building code. This, he says, future-proofs buildings for any change of use, such as residential apartments.

Mr Petty says the NZ Historic Places Trust commended Council's pragmatic approach towards rural churches, which come in for special treatment in the policy. "We will look at these churches with low occupancy rates on a case-by-case basis and, if quake-prone, see how any danger can be mitigated in a cost-effective way. We want to make them safe but retain them for future use. In that way we will help retain the historic fabric of our community. We don't want communities to have to sell or demolish these churches because they cannot afford strengthening."