

Council

**Wednesday, 21 December 2005
Commencing at 5.30 pm**

REPORT OF THE MAYOR

**SUPPLEMENT TO THE AGENDA FOR A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL TO BE HELD IN
THE CIVIC CENTRE, 6 WAIPAREIRA AVENUE, LINCOLN, WAITAKERE CITY,
ON WEDNESDAY, 21 DECEMBER 2005, COMMENCING AT 5.30 PM.**

PART C - REPORT OF THE MAYOR

THE YEAR THAT WAS

At this time of the year I like to stop, take a breath and look back on what we have done and achieved. The weeks and months just seem to whiz by, indeed the time seems to go more quickly every year, so I find it somewhat therapeutic and definitely enlightening to revisit our working year.

Usually I am a man of letters but I have been thinking about numbers for some reason. Maybe that because in the past year I have attended around 800 meetings and that must be a record for even my somewhat overcrowded diary. And that doesn't include time spent on the phone and answering emails. I must be one of the few truly accessible Mayors in New Zealand and if my minders and handlers had their way I would be a bit more elusive. But really that's not my style.

I believe the time invested in those meetings is time well spent. We have been involved in some very interesting projects, initiatives and issues this year and thinking about all those meetings has helped me pinpoint some of the highlights. So here they are:

Honours

Once upon a time the west never got much of a look in when it came to the Honours' Lists. In fact knighthoods and damehoods never came this way. Maybe it was because no-one was nominated but I have a feeling that there was belief no-one was worthy. I remember we awarded our own knighthoods in the 1990s to see our best and brightest honoured and acknowledged.

Well, things have changed. Our local MPs are now more than willing to receive nominations. Obviously they take them forward because the result is westies formally recognised for their hard work. You can never have enough of heroes so in January I was delighted to see the New Year's Honours' List here are their names once more.

Jonathan Hunt, Richard Bellamy, Gary Taylor, Beverley Harris, Irish Donaghue, Ian Mower, Elizabeth Malo, Matakite Malo and Kenneth Catt.

And later, ***Queen's Birthday*** - Beatrice Faumuina, Ashokbhai Darji, Colleen Waugh, David Gillam, Murrie Haliday, Stanley Hall and Michael Ralph Mosby.

It is also fitting under this section of the Mayoral Report to make special mention of another hero, Waitakere parking warden Pes Fa'au who, on Monday, 28 November, was going about his normal business in Railside Avenue, Henderson. The events of that day have been well documented so I won't go over them again. However, on that day Pes acted like a real street hero. He took spontaneous action and tackled a knife wielding man who was very clearly a threat to a policeman's safety. Without a thought for his own personal safety Pes acted in an incredibly brave and courageous way.

This was not the first time Pes had acted as a hero. In the course of his work with Waitakere City Council several years ago he helped nab two thieves and rescued two children from a sweltering car - in one afternoon. Three days later his persistence in identifying an abandoned car revealed it had been stolen from an inner-city rental firm.

Pes is undoubtedly an asset to the Council and the Waitakere community in general and it gives me great pleasure to present him with a Certificate of Appreciation at this December 2005 Council meeting.



Waitakere Ranges Protection Bill

This issue has been our longest running and most fraught. Tensions have run high and at times the debate has been heated. But we got there in the end and the bill is now due for its first reading in parliament early next year. Thanks to this forward thinking Council the ranges will be protected from 'death by a thousand cuts' and that's something we should all be extremely proud of.

Buildings

This year we have completed and opened two fantastic new libraries, in Glen Eden and New Lynn. Both buildings are sustainable as well as beautiful to look at. And early next year we will open the new Unitec / Henderson Library complex in Ratanui Street.

It's also been great to watch the new Waitakere Central complex rise out of the ground and quite quickly at that. I was excited when the cranes first went in there, the first in Henderson for far too long, but watching the building's progress has been even more satisfying.

In another milestone event the Prime Minister Helen Clark opened our NOW house in New Lynn. The NOW house is a prime example of what can be done with sustainable materials to build an economical and sustainable living space.

It's certainly been a stunner of a year building wise.

Hiroshima and Ningbo

In August I attended a Mayors' for Peace conference in Hiroshima which coincided with the 60th anniversary of the dropping of the atomic bomb. It was, needless to say, a particularly poignant and moving conference which reaffirmed for me just how vital working for peace is - at a local level and globally.

Following the conference I visited our sister city Ningbo in China and as a result Waitakere is leading a delegation of business people to the Chinese city's Trade Fair in June next year. Everyone wants to do business with China and I am pleased our sister city relationship has this year borne economic fruits. The relationship is certainly to our benefit.

London Connection

Not very long after the peace conference the world was shocked by the underground bombings in London and Waitakere lost one of its own, Shelley Mather. This event and loss made the peace message even more important.

As a tribute to Shelley I organised flowers to be laid at the London memorial service by New Zealand's High Commissioner and former Waitakere MP Jonathan Hunt on behalf of the Council and Waitakere City. Jonathan had left earlier in the year to take up the position. I was particularly pleased we inducted Jonathan to the Waitakere Walkway of Fame and gave him the Key to the City before he left.

Election

And speaking of Jonathan, let's not forget that little thing that happened called the election. We said goodbye to some MPs, hello to some new ones and hello again to others.

I would like to acknowledge here John Tamihere's commitment to the Whenuapai Airport project. You'll often hear us talking on Radio Live as I tend to be a regular on his programme. I have written to all the MPs asking them to be more available for our regular meetings. They haven't been well attended over the years, somewhat of a disappointment, so I'd like to try and turn that around. In the meantime, I am sure all of our local MPs will all be working in the best interests of Waitakere and its residents.



Maori Representation

I personally was very pleased to see the newly formed Maori Party have so much success at the polls. Pita Sharples is an astonishing man who has tirelessly worked all his life for the good of his people in this city. He is already making his presence felt in the corridors of power.

In politics (as in comedy), timing is everything and it was no coincidence that around the same time as the election we as a Council were considering Maori representation. As you know I was personally disappointed we did not go down the Maori ward or wards route however I am pleased we subsequently said yes to appointing a Taumata Runanga representative to our City Development Committee. Maori must have a real say in this City and I am confident Maori representation on our standing committees will continue to increase. It's the beginning, I think, of more dialogue with our community and as local government evolves I believe we will look back and say this was a time when we opened up our table to hearing community views from all quarters.

Load of Rubbish

It's difficult to talk about elections and politicians without being a tad cynical about just how much rubbish is spoken. I'm not going to point any fingers but I do wish some of our local MPs would come to us before going to the media and spouting off about issues they know nothing about. This continued to be a problem throughout 2005 and I can only hope 2006 (not an election year) is better in this regard.

Which brings me to another highlight - the introduction of wheelie bins for recycling materials. At the time this was introduced many people moaned and groaned about the change but in reality the introduction went smoothly and now no-one can remember what we used to have before. Ain't that the way!

Quality of Life

I do believe Waitakere residents are generally very happy people and it's always nice to have that verified. The 2005 Quality of Life Survey showed 86 percent of our residents rated their quality of life as good or extremely good. The survey was a joint effort between the Ministry of Social Development and the 12 Quality of Life Project Cities and is part of an ongoing series of research exploring quality of life and well-being issues in cities throughout New Zealand.

Events

I want to make special mention of four very successful 2005 events.

Going West and Trash to Fashion celebrated 10 years of existence this year and both did themselves a huge credit. The Trusts Stadium is a great venue for the Trash to Fashion extravaganza which received a huge amount of publicity this year and I think the 2005 Going West Festival was the best yet with a simply outstanding programme.

The other two special events were Anzac Day and the Charter Parade in Te Atatu as part of Armistice Day. It was pleasing to see even more young people attending both emotive commemorations. Believe me we have a lot of people to thank for making the Charter Parade so successful. From our own staff to Elizabeth Grimmer and all those in between who made this such a fantastic day including the perfect flyover.



Laureate Awards

As you know I have long talked about a Laureate programme for this city so I was very pleased to kick this off in 2005. We have selected 12 Laureates across a variety of mediums and in 2006, as part of Waitakere Central's opening celebrations I will hold a special dinner for these extraordinary people. I am also hoping to arrange an exhibition of their various works at Corban later in the year. I am currently developing a programme for the opening of Waitakere Central and will report on that in my next Mayoral Report. Trust me, it's going to be fantastic.

Other

M1-M4

- Our film industry continued to flourish with the release of *The Lion*, *the Witch and the Wardrobe* that was shot in Henderson and the highly acclaimed *In My Father's Den*. We also had news another Disney project, *The Bridge to Terabithia*, would be shot out west. In order to give you a full picture of just how good things are I have attached at pages M1 to M4 a copy of an article which featured in a recent *Entrepreneur Magazine*.
- Auckland Mayor Dick Hubbard and I signed a Memorandum of Understanding which will see us working together closely for the good of the two cities and the Auckland region as a whole.
- We opened two fabulous new jetties on Henderson Creek – one at Tui Glen and one just downstream from the stadium. These aren't just bridges; they are works of art and wouldn't look out of place on the Seine or the Danube.
- After a 40-year wait we finally got a full service hospital and that was certainly a day for huge celebration.
- Prince William thoroughly enjoyed his visit to Waitakere and the West Wave Aquatic Centre. He told us so in a letter to me after the trip. We thoroughly enjoyed having him. There's nothing quite like having royalty in town.
- We officially named Studio One at the Henderson Valley Film Studios as the Cameron Duncan Studio after our brilliant young filmmaker Cameron Duncan who died from cancer in 2003.

Roll of Honour

At this time of year I also like to remember those who are no longer with us. I would like to acknowledge those people here and my apologies if I have inadvertently overlooked anyone.

Mick Shanahan - a hugely loved New Lynn identity who gave his business career to the people of the west and whose Irish Westie wit will never be replicated or forgotten.

Arthur Brake - the longest serving diving coach at our pool and a man who taught the love and art of diving to hundreds of Waitakere youngsters.

Bryce (Briz) Mills - one of New Zealand's top skateboarders tragically killed in a car accident along with his long-term partner and daughter. We planted a tree at the new Te Pai Skate Board park as a tribute to him and this sad loss to our young community.

Harry Holborow - one of the city's earliest butchers and a well-known identity who served with the Henderson Volunteer Fire Brigade and a life member of the Waitemata Rugby Club.

Doreen Finlayson - a woman actively involved in so many organisations it's impossible to name them all but some were Civil Defence, St John Ambulance and Henderson Riding for the Disabled.

Mary Hardwick-Smith - esteemed potter and an incredibly talented woman.

Jay Hoby - Titirangi Library's first paid librarian who even after retirement continued to be active in public affairs.



Keith Kuno - Lincoln Road's wheelchair bound character who had a wave for everyone.

Sir Tom Clark - a true son of the west, an entrepreneur and businessman extraordinaire. Tom's long career in potting, yachting, export and his love of the west and its history was a celebration of a life well lived. We gave him the Key of the City a few weeks before he died, something he truly deserved.

Doris Pearce - one of Piha's grand women who kept swimming until she was nearly 90 and vice-president of the Piha Surf Club, widow of Tom Pearce and mother of Helen and Sandra.

Barry Craighead - Green Bay High School founding member.

Betty Pearce - a woman with star quality renown for her acting and singing ability as well as her great impersonation of English poet Pam Ayres.

Kevin Chambers - Neighbourhood Support Waitakere stalwart.

Ron Aitken - Deputy Mayor Carolynne Stone's beloved father and a lifelong member of and advocate for the Oratia community.

Vivien Shapcott - Kelston Girls' College teacher and anti Painted Apple Moth spraying campaigner. Vivien firmly believed her declining health was a result of the spraying campaign.

Michael Erceg - one of the west's most successful businessmen who never forgot his heritage and the family vineyard Pacific Wines in McLeod Rd. New Zealand was drawn into the search for his downed helicopter. The search was led by his brother, esteemed businessman and builder of super yachts Ivan.

Pearline Ferguson - Piha and Glen Eden peace activist and prolific letter writer and campaigner for human values and rights.

So there you have it. 2005 in review. As you can see it's been another huge year in Waitakere and my thanks go to all Councillors and Community Board members. You are to be congratulated for your dedication and hard work. In particular I acknowledge the support from my Mayoral colleagues, the Deputy Mayor Carolynne Stone and Council Chairs.

I would also like to say thank you to our Chief Executive Officer Harry O'Rourke and his hard working team of staff and officers. As elected members we appreciate the sound advice you give us and the endless tasks you carry out for the greater good of this wonderful City.

I would also like to thank my hard working and tireless team in the Mayoral Office - PA and diary keeper extraordinaire Vanessa Sherer, who manages always to keep calm no matter what crisis is looming, and speech writer and strategist Fiona Cunningham. I thank them both sincerely. Thanks also to Fia Afitu and Irene Wickliffe for their backup support. Sadly Irene is leaving us and we will all miss her smiling face.

I wish everyone a safe and happy festive season and I look forward to seeing you all again in 2006 which I am sure will be even busier (and better) than this year.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Report of the Mayor be received.

RA Harvey, QSO, JP
MAYOR OF WAITAKERE CITY