

Council

**Wednesday, 27 April 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, 27 APRIL 2005, COMMENCING AT 5.30 PM.**

PART B - REPORT OF THE MAYOR

Calling the Cops

What does Peter Jackson know that we don't? Or maybe we do. The master of Lord of the Rings, the genius of special effects, has made it very clear to Mayor Kerry Prendergast and anyone else that will listen that New Zealand is fast becoming one of the most dangerous countries in the world.

Peter, who recruits some of the world's best talent in special events and acting, is now becoming distressed at the lack of safety for international staff and talent. Why? Because it's so. New Zealand's streets, Wellington and Auckland, are suffering huge, unreported crime. It's not good to keep hearing about our streets being more dangerous than New York or Los Angeles but it just may be true. It's the unreported crime, the beatings, the theft, that are causing us the most concern and what does it come down too? The lack of police visibility. Many people simply feel there is no point in calling the cops. This is really about the heart of the huge concern being felt by New Zealanders. It's about perception. And many of us may not be as famous as Peter Jackson but we know there is an absolute fear out there of crime and being involved accidentally in a confrontation or a street altercation.

Only last year, walking back to the car from a movie in Queen Street, I saw the most dreadful, unprovoked attack. A young man walking ahead of me was suddenly smacked to the ground by four youths for no reason other than he was walking alone on a Friday night. The shock of seeing such an attack brings the reality home. Our streets are dangerous.

It will be interesting to know what the studio audience comes up with at a major TVNZ special debate on police perception and the numbers due to be filmed and screen live within the next couple of weeks. George Wood will be carrying the flag for the Auckland Mayoral Region - after all he's a former Police Commander of North Shore and like me an advocate for police numbers. The Minister of Police, I understand at the writing of this report, will be in the audience as will New Zealand Police Association President Greg O'Connor. Hopefully, a result of the televised debate will be that Government heeds what we have been asking for and wishing to have addressed.

I have been advocating for more police resources for some time now but in recent months, and with similar comments coming now from other Mayors, things are getting some traction. In the past I have been castigated by various parties for my suggestion local authorities are in a position to help but despite the flak I am not going to stop, especially now when it looks like we may be getting somewhere.

The way I see it is simple. New Zealand needs more front line police officers. I don't think we're getting the full picture from the Wellington police bosses; however, I must pay respect right up front to local boss Superintendent Roger Carson who I meet with regularly and who tells me the crime stats are coming down. He delivers for Waitakere and what he tells me is pleasing.

M1 – M17 However, I'd like to share with you a clear set of stats that show just what we are missing out on (pages M1 to M7). They are the worksheets of Mr O'Connor, and they are not rocket science. They show exactly how major cities are just not getting the police numbers to combat crime. I have also attached another keynote paper from the Police Association that is worthy of perusal. (pages M8 to M17).



I keep a close watch on trends in criminal behaviour working with a number of sworn police and media reporters. I get regular feedback on where and what the issues are.

New Zealand right now is seeing a terrible rise in drug trafficking. The ongoing Civil War in Myanmar (Burma) is seeing rebels fuelling their war effort by exportation of drugs through Asian networks into the gang systems in New Zealand and Australia.

If you think the gang network is elsewhere you are very wrong, despite the fact we had been told they had moved up north. The gang headquarters' flag (it's tin) rises over the industrial area of Henderson. How the gangs operate is clearly detailed in the excellent NZ Herald's series on gangs and drugs. It makes horrifying reading and while I am loathe to say it, it looks like the war on drugs is over. As Time Magazine says drugs have won!

My intelligence tells me many districts are understaffed. On a shift in a busy city the maximum number of staff is 11. Two are likely to be away on leave or at court or training and two are in the station. That leaves only three or four doubly staffed cars to deal with any priority calls that come in (and believe me they do).

At the same time those front line police are supposed to be preventing crime by various means such as patrol presence and targeting trouble areas. When they come back from say a domestic violence incident they have to fill out no less than a dozen forms – by hand – which can take up to two hours. If they get called out again the paper work mounts up. A 10 hour shift regularly becomes a 14 hour shift and it's still not enough.

I believe police in Waitakere are at stress point. They are working long hours, having to ignore more petty crime in order to action more serious crime; they are dealing with dangerous criminals and when they have any spare time, which certainly isn't much, they are trying to live normal lives.

The public doesn't really understand but people do believe all is not well. They just want a car to turn up when something goes wrong in their lives – and rightly so. People expect and deserve a good service from the police. But the blue line is simply way too thin.

Both Mayor Wood and I have raised issues around the 111 number. We are not going to let this go until we are reassured the system is overhauled and the checks and balances are in place.

The Police Minister and the Police Commissioner continually tell us there is no shortage of officers yet night after night on the news we hear about unassigned cases in Manukau, taxis being sent to pick up young women in trouble – the list goes on and on.

On a positive note I was pleased to hear from Roger Carson that the "last drink" survey is being reintroduced. I always felt it a very strong link back to the premise which sells to intoxicated patrons. After all accidents or arrests the police check where the offender was last served. I can't stress strongly enough that the Council needs to be proactive in its leadership on the expectation we have for the city. In the weeks ahead you will be seeing more road checks by both day and night – expect to be stopped on the way home and you will be breath tested.

This may seem at odds with lack of staff but it's core business for our police. If drugs are a problem most sworn officers will agree on one thing, alcohol is at the cause of 80 percent of the problem in this city at any given weekend.

In conclusion, it's time we heard the truth. And it's time something was done. Yes, the solution will require money, what doesn't, but the solution is not difficult. We must have more front line police. The time has come for action. No more blurring of the truth, no more pontificating - just do it.



We live in hope next month's budget delivers what the speculation thinks it will – an increase in police numbers. In the meantime, and beyond if necessary, I will continue to lobby in all the relevant forums. We owe it to our citizens and our police officers.

M18 – M26 I have attached a copy of a transcript from my Linda Clark interview earlier this month as well as a letter I wrote that was published in the New Zealand Listener (pages M18 to M26).

Waitakere Ranges Protection – A Way Forward

M27 I was in Wellington chairing a Local Government New Zealand meeting when my mobile phone started to ring. The subject was the Herald editorial – a clear picture of the state of play and I thought a very logical and wise summation of the story so far. The editorial which is attached in this report at page M27 clearly sets out our responsibility to our community and although I have a great respect for the debate and the issues raised I also believe we have a responsibility to deliver to future generations.

I'm pleased that many Councillors who initially felt unhappy about a bill are now working with Graeme Campbell and presenting new ideas on how such a bill may be changed, addressed or better balanced. Believe me, this is how I feel it should be. I've urged all Councillors to sit with Graeme one on one to understand what the proposed bill is on about and to make sure Councillors do not hold an agenda of misinformation. It's important all Councillors realise the responsibility of debate and knowledge. And so the Herald editorial was not negative in what the bill is perceived to be about but rather urging Councillors to make sure they were up to speed and to vote in favour of progressing the bill to Parliament. Clearly there will be many opportunities before the bill becomes law for input and fine tuning and I fully intend to take part in that process as I hope all my colleagues will. After all, the debate around the Waitakere Ranges has been ongoing throughout my tenure as Mayor.

I want to take the opportunity here to say that in the past and in the present many people have chosen to focus the debate on what can't be done. The tension is between the continued creation of suburbia, that is cutting the ranges into smaller and smaller blocks, and the need to preserve this iconic landscape for future generations.

No one is focusing on the "*potential of protection*". Within the framework of existing regulation or the proposed legislation there are opportunities to establish economic uses of this land. Many argue they should be able to subdivide and develop their land as they can no longer make a living from the land that has been in their family for many years.

Well you don't have to look very far to see there is an alternative. Right around the fringes of Auckland there is a growing presence of business that could fit within the ranges and that is already provided for. I'm talking about the lifestyle businesses that cater for day trippers from Auckland and tourists.

When the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment, Dr Morgan Williams, was investigating issues around the ranges and suggesting ways forward a few years back he spoke of his experiences in Europe. Indeed the legislation we are currently considering is a direct result of his observations and draws on these European examples. European heritage areas are seen as areas that not only enhance and protect environmental value but where people live and where people are welcome to visit to enjoy the environment.

The Waitakere Ranges is also such a place and activities that are compatible with the environment are, and will continue to be, provided for. These include accommodation, placed sensitively within the environment, restaurants, wineries, galleries and craft outlets.



Recently I have become increasingly interested in the Matakana area of Rodney District where you can find all sorts of small business fitting in with the environment and which build on the natural character and advantages of that area. We need to promote the potential of the ranges and particularly the foothills for such business.

So I would like to propose that this Council be a bit more proactive about supporting and promoting these kinds of business. In appropriate locations, and sensitively placed and designed, I believe such activities will enhance the appreciation of this special place and provide those wishing to subdivide with an alternative economic use for their land that would add to and enhance the value of the ranges.

I don't think we need to do much, but there are a couple of actions I think could provide a catalyst and start people thinking about the "*potential of protection*". Firstly I'd like your support for a small flagship project. I would like this Council to provide some seed funding for the creation of a farmers' market in Oratia. I want to talk to the people who do the Matakana Farmers' Market about the opportunity and see where that leads. Then we'll need to encourage local 'farmers' to take part and support the initiative.

Secondly I would like to request that officers report back with proposals on what the Council could do to enhance awareness of the "*potential of protection*" to people who may be considering establishing lifestyle businesses.

I would like to recommend the funding put forward for the development of a business incentive package at last year's Annual Plan now be applied to this project.

I therefore request your support for the following recommendations:

1. That Council support Mayor Bob Harvey's exploration of a farmers' market in Oratia and provides seed funding of \$15,000 to move the project forward.
2. That officers report back to Council on proposals for enhancing awareness and promoting the potential for business to establish in the ranges and foothills as provided for in the district plan and that would continue to be provided for under any proposed legislation.
3. That the funding put forward for the development of a business incentive package at last year's Annual Plan now be applied to this project.

M28 – M37 I have attached at pages M28 to M33 a Weekend Herald article about the Matakana region and at pages M34 to M37 an Otago Daily Times piece on Organicland Farm for your enjoyment and enlightenment.

M27 I have also attached as mentioned above at page M27 an excellent editorial published in the New Zealand Herald on Tuesday, April 19. As I told the editor, this is an extremely well considered, thought out and presented editorial. The writer successfully pin pointed the issue and the resulting message is well-merited and blatantly clear. As I also told the Herald, the \$500,000 we have spent on the project is half the price of a coastal section at Karekare or Piha – not a big price to pay for an environmental legacy second to none in New Zealand.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all of the Council officers who have been working very, very long hours and tirelessly on the public consultation regarding the ranges, a task not made easy by a very vocal opposition hell bent on not listening to the facts and stonewalling us at every corner. I can only hope, and trust, that when the vote is taken next month on whether to progress the bill Councillors see the wood from the trees. As I have said before it is the intent of the bill that is important. The detail will be worked through at select committee level.



Milestones

Obituaries

Mary Hardwick-Smith

It is with much regret I report the passing of esteemed potter Mary Hardwick-Smith; however, amid the sadness of her sudden death I am pleased to let the Council know Mary has bequeathed a wonderful ceramic and pottery collection to the Council and Waitakere's future. Mary's collection will be part of the Heritage Ceramic Collection we want to place at Clark House when it becomes the Natural Ceramic Museum. Mary was an incredibly talented woman and we send to her family, friends and the arts' fraternity our deepest sympathy.

Jay Hoby

I would like to acknowledge the passing of Jay Hoby, a well known Titirangi identity who died aged 87. She was Titirangi Library's first paid librarian and even after retirement in 1979 she continued to be active in public affairs, especially as a volunteer and committee member of the Titirangi Community House. Jay was disabled as a result of tuberculosis in her childhood; however, her disability never held her back and she was renown for finding the right book for any Titirangi reader.

Keith Kuno (the man in the wheelchair)

Anyone who has travelled along Lincoln Road, and let's face it who hasn't, will mourn the passing of the friendly wheelchair bound Keith Kuno. Keith always had a friendly wave for motorists while he sat in the sun outside Carnarvon Private Hospital where he had lived since 1999. He suffered a stroke in 1993 and had to have both of his legs amputated four years later due to poor circulation. Survived by his wife and three children, Keith and his wave will be missed.

Corban Revell's New Look

It was with real pleasure I opened Corban Revell's new extension to its offices in the old Council Chambers and Sport Waitakere's Henderson offices. The makeover and extension features six conference rooms and art by local artist Caroline Viesnik and is stylish and business friendly.

It is always exciting when we see business growth in Waitakere and this extension is particularly relevant because Corban Revell, the largest law firm in the city, has had a presence in Henderson for nearly 30 years.

At the opening I paid rightful tribute to the firm's founders Brian Corban, QSO and Philip Revell and their commitment to the city over the years.

Quality of Life

It was particularly pleasing to see just how happy Waitakere residents are. In the recently released Quality of Life Survey the majority (86 percent) rated their quality of life as "good" or "extremely good" while an overwhelming majority (98 percent) of the city's residents have had some positive contact with people in their neighbourhood.

The survey's results also showed about 80 percent of Waitakere residents took part in regular physical exercise and the same percentage is satisfied with life in general. More than half (54 percent) had confidence the decisions the Council made were in the best interest of the city, above the national average and that of other cities in the Auckland region.



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. The information is used to help inform central and local government policy, particularly for cities undertaking monitoring of progress toward achieving community outcomes under the Local Government Act.

Survey interviews were conducted over the phone with 7800 people and Waitakere's results were similar to those of the larger cities in New Zealand, particularly those in the Auckland region highlighting the issues that face residents of large urban areas are very similar.

The overall purpose of this study is to identify common issues facing urban communities with the objective of working together with central government, community organisations, businesses and residents to improve the lives of people living in cities. I am pleased with the results and think we all should be.

Parramatta Visit

The visit to Waitakere by Parramatta's Lord Mayor and some of her senior councillors and staff went very well indeed. They had a full on day but learned a good deal about Waitakere and how we do things here. They were formally welcomed at Hoani Waititi Marae and visited a number of sites including The Trusts Stadium, Harbourview Estate and the Henderson Valley Film Studios. They also viewed a number of strategic presentations about Waitakere as an Eco-City and our Asset Management and Economic Development plans and processes.

Officials explained how we developed our Chinese sister city; they are interested in establishing one of their own, and the delegation also looked at our Waitakere Central and CBD revitalisation project as they are involved in a similar town centre and transport hub project, although the cost of their project is A\$1 billion.

M38

All in all a very successful visit and one which was deemed important enough for coverage in the Australian media, the Daily Telegraph to be exact. The story even featured in the NZ Herald and a copy is attached at page M38.

Cameron Duncan Studio

Studio One at our Henderson Valley Film Studios is now officially the Cameron Duncan Studio, named after brilliant young local filmmaker Cameron Duncan who died from cancer in 2003.

About 100 family, friends and film industry representatives attended the ceremony which also featured a message from director Peter Jackson and a video of some of Cameron's work. The ceremony was particularly poignant in that it was held on what would have been Cameron's 19th birthday. Cameron made a significant contribution to film and Waitakere and it was only fitting he be honoured in this fashion.

Te Pai Skate Park

It was with pleasure I opened the new Te Pai Skate Park and unveiled a memorial plaque to Bryce (Briz) Mills, his partner Philipa and their baby daughter Mercedes who were tragically killed in a car accident earlier this year. Bryce was one of the country's top skateboarders and following a request by his friends, Council organised the plaque in his memory. It was a fitting ceremony and the plaque is in exactly the right place. On the opening day thousands joined in the festivities and every time I've driven past youngsters are having a great time.

This is a great example of a council and a community working together to get something done. The park is the biggest skate park in Waitakere so is bound to become a regional attraction and local and regional competitions can be held there and that's very exciting.



Coming Up

Sunday, 15 May is a Global Day of Prayer and Waitakere Pray-ers, organised more than a decade ago by Christine O'Hanlon, will mark the occasion with a prayer session for each continent between 1.00 pm and 5.00 pm. Peoples from each continent will be encouraged to take part in the session at the time of 'their' continent to pray for it and its people. I unfortunately cannot attend; however, I am sure you will join with me in wishing the group and those who take part all the best in their endeavours.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Report of the Mayor be received.
2. That Council support Mayor Bob Harvey's exploration of a farmers' market in Oratia and provide seed funding of \$15,000 to move the project forward.
3. That officers report back to Council on proposals for enhancing awareness and promoting the potential for business to establish in the ranges and foothills as provided for in the district plan and that would continue to be provided for under any proposed legislation.
4. That the funding put forward for the development of a business incentive package at last year's Annual Plan now be applied to this project.

RA Harvey, QSO, JP
MAYOR OF WAITAKERE CITY