



New proposal for annual and long-term planning

Council is changing its annual and long-term planning to streamline the process, find greater cost efficiencies and improve the region's long-term outcomes.

A report presented by Chief Executive John Boswell and Chief Financial Officer Geoff Blake to the Economic, Finance and Community Committee was supported by the mayor and councillors.

"Our traditional annual and long-term planning process has limitations, reducing the time available for Council to identify opportunities to be both more effective and efficient in delivery of services," Mr Boswell said. "The new process means we will engage with the public earlier, giving ourselves time and space for a broader assessment of options and more focused analysis of fully costed activities and outcomes."

The new Annual Plan process proposes:

- Starting this year with the 2025-26 Annual Plan, Council will provide an extended opportunity for public input - primarily online - from November 2024 to January 2025 (dates to be confirmed)
- For the 2026-27 Annual Plan, Council will provide a similar opportunity for public engagement in late 2025
- For the 2027-37 Long-Term Plan, the third year of the revised planning cycle, Council will provide an opportunity for early engagement and undertake full consultation with public hearings

Mayor Nadine Taylor welcomed the new approach.

"A formal Annual Plan consultation with hearings each year is onerous for both Council and the community. There is actually no requirement under the Local Government Act for a formal consultation each year, unless a significant change is proposed to Council budgets. However, Council does consider it important to continue to provide the community an opportunity to have input into the process."

The proposed new process is subject to ratification at the full Council meeting on 31 October.

Calling all Picton seniors

Nau mai, haere mai – welcome to the inaugural Picton Seniors' Expo.

Building on the success of the annual Blenheim-based event, Council's Community Partnerships team are bringing the seniors' expo format to Picton's Port Marlborough Endeavour Park Pavilion for the first time on Tuesday 12 November.

Community Partnerships Advisor Jodie Griffiths said the Picton event, from 10.30am to 12.30pm, was aimed at older people in the Picton and Sounds community to help them find out more about services and activities for seniors.

Council's library and customer services staff will be on hand as well as the Marlborough Community Vehicle Trust, Picton Flower Ladies, Churchill Trust, Age Concern Marlborough, Grey Power Marlborough, Marlborough Community Law, Hato Hone St John and more. "It's a trial run for us in Picton and we are really pleased with the support from stall holders with around thirty-five different stands signed up for the expo. There will be a performance, homemade scones from Marina Cove with complimentary tea and coffee and entry is free," Ms Griffiths said.



Calling all Picton seniors – you are invited to come along to an upcoming expo

Awatere Valley Road slip

Recent rain and high river levels in the Awatere River have caused a large underslip on the Awatere Valley Road.

A gabion wall has collapsed along with part of the hill between the road and the river, about two kilometres past the Jordan Bridge.

Marlborough Roads Manager Steve Murrin said options for repairs were being assessed but it was likely there would be road closures in future.

Currently the road is open to one lane with a 30 km/h temporary speed limit.

Travellers using the upper part of the Awatere Valley Road are urged to use caution.



Passion for planting natives

Planting natives on a 30 hectare Arapaoa Island block has become a passion for Toni Halliday (pictured below).

With the help of Council's Hill Country Erosion Programme, Toni, and her young neighbour Micaela Bowler, planted 500 natives this year including cordyline, mānuka, kānuka and tōtara.

Jointly funded by Council and the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI), the programme supports farmers, enabling them to combat erosion on marginal farmland.

The fund provides advice and financial support to landowners.

The Hallidays bought the property in Te Awaiti Bay in Tory Channel/ Kura Te Au, in 2005, building a house there 10 years later.

Toni had links to the area as her father had been an engineer at the former whaling station in the 1950s and 60s.

The block was regenerating native having once been farmed and in 2022 the Hallidays fenced off previously grazed areas which had become prone to erosion.

"In heavy rain the creek would run brown with sediment," she said. "Already we are noticing a difference with young plants popping up in the fenced off areas."

Toni works closely with the Arapaoa Island Kiwi Trust which traps stoats and rats and has noticed an increase of native birds in recent years.

"Our philosophy is to leave the land in better condition than we found it and part of that was planting more trees to stop erosion and improve water quality," she said.

If you're interested in finding out more about the Hill Country Erosion Programme, please contact Jenny Buck at jenny.buck@marlborough.govt.nz



Opening Hours

Mon to Fri: 8.30 am - 4.30 pm
Closed Wed 12.30 pm - 1.30 pm
03 520 7400 | mcd@marlborough.govt.nz

15 Seymour Street, Blenheim 7201, New Zealand
PO Box 443, Blenheim 7240, New Zealand

For careers at Council go to:
www.marlborough.govt.nz/your-council/careers

