

## Voter interest in community polls

VOTING closed at noon today in the two community polls aimed at gauging the level of interest in proposed wastewater and water supply schemes at Himatangi Beach and Rongotea.

Progressive election returns at 9am yesterday showed that 194 of the 297 eligible voters in Rongotea (65 percent) had cast a vote, while 243 of the 442 landowners at Himatangi Beach (54 percent) had returned their voting papers.

Manawatu District Council sent out voting papers three weeks ago asking voters to indicate whether they supported the implementation

of their particular scheme or not. The poll involved one vote per property.

Manawatu District Mayor, Ian McKelvie, said he had been hoping for a good turnout and the figures indicated a great deal of voter interest in the schemes.

"If we get that kind of turnout in local body elections we would be pretty happy," he said.

Mr McKelvie said Himatangi Beach voting could well total more than 60 percent, while Rongotea was on track for a return approaching 75 percent.

Voters were also advised of the following methodol-

ogy to be used by council in making a decision:

- If less than 40 percent of the valid votes cast vote "yes", then the project would not proceed.

- If more than 60 percent of the valid votes cast vote "yes", then the project would proceed.

- If between 40 percent and 60 percent (including 40 percent and 60 percent) of the valid votes cast vote "yes", the council would determine whether to proceed or not.

Results of the polls are expected to be posted to the MDC website by 2pm on Monday, April 12.

## Break follows busy period

THE Easter break provided a welcome spell from an extremely busy two months for many at Council, with much of the strategic thinking we have been doing in the past five years or so coming to a head as we lead up to Local Body Elections in October.

Good progress is being made regarding the former Sanson Hotel site and a positive report to Council by Gordon Campbell, who specialises in this type of work throughout New Zealand, means it is likely that further development will be made on this project at no additional cost to the ratepayer in the next financial year.

The work with the City around the boundary issues continues with the report due back to Council in late May-early June, while work continues on the Regional Economic Development Strategy that is likely to morph into a new and exciting Regional Development Strategy.

Council is in the process of

putting together a proposition around the Makino Aquatic Centre. There is much work to be done and discussion yet to be had on the future of the Makino. What has been done to date is around the financial



MAYORAL COMMENT  
by Ian McKelvie

viability of a different mix of pool types to meet growing and changing demand.

The 50-metre pool has some wear and tear problems due to its age and a complete review of its viability has been undertaken, the results of which will be considered

in the proposal assembled for public consultation.

Council is well aware of the public interest in this project and will be extremely cautious in its approach to the redevelopment of this critical community asset, ensuring that everyone who is interested has an opportunity for input into the outcome.

Other key decisions for Council involve the potential Coach House Museum move, the future requirements of Manfeild Park and the ongoing discussion being led by the Community Trust around the proposed Medical Centre.

One last thing: Having spent a few days in Hawke's Bay over Easter, I continue to be frustrated by the ever-increasing number of walking, cycling and recreational tracks available to that community when we appear to be dragging the chain badly in this area. It is the future of community recreation, fitness and wellbeing and we must catch up or miss out!

## Park's value appreciated



FEILDING High School students, from left, Thomas Gilchrist, Charles Goldstone and George Perigo, conduct a grid identification study at Kitchener Park.

KITCHENER Park is increasingly becoming a popular destination for schools seeking a practical, hands-on educational resource for their students.

Fifty-six year 12 and 13 students from Feilding High School recently spent time at the prized native bush reserve on the outskirts of Feilding undertaking environmental assignments as part of a science project.

FHS's visit follows a similar study trip by senior Freyberg High School pupils from Palmerston North earlier in the year. Other schools are also planning to

visit the 13-hectare park in coming weeks.

Kitchener Park Curator, Gavin Scott, said it was rare for such a reserve, recognised as one of the few remaining areas of lowland

semi-swamp forest in the district, to be located so near a town.

"It means the students don't have to go to Tongariro or somewhere like that to study, it's actually all in our own backyard."

Mr Scott said the students were appreciating the value of the reserve and what it contained and the importance of it to Feilding.

Plant identification, light and temperature studies, preferred growing conditions and measuring the circumference of trees were among tests conducted by student groups.

"It's good to have them here; who knows, there might be another David Bellamy among them," said Mr Scott.


Parks and Reserves Manager, Albert James, said it was pleasing to see more schools using Kitchener Park as an educational resource and was a trend that would receive council encouragement and support.

## Expressions of interest welcomed

MANAWATU District Council is seeking to appoint two trustees for the five-member Manawatu Community Trust. The vacancies are due to the ex-

piry of the first term of appointment and part of a rotation process. The incumbents intend to reapply but expressions of interest are also welcomed. For further

information please phone Community and Strategic Development Officer, Tracey Hunt, on (06) 323-0000. Closing date is Monday, April 19.



### Statement of Proposal

#### Manawatu District Council Draft Annual Plan 2010/11

#### Including the Transfer of Totara Reserve Regional Park to Horizons Regional Council

Under Section 83A and 85 of the Local Government Act 2002, the Council's Draft Annual Plan 2010/11 is released today, 8 April, for public consultation. The purpose of the Draft Annual Plan is to inform the public of:

- Council's proposed budget and funding impact statement for the financial year 2010/11
- What Council proposes to do in 2010/11
- Level of rates for 2010/11
- Proposed variations to the 2009-2019 Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP)

**How to get information**  
Copies of the Draft Annual Plan (and a Plan Summary) are available (free of charge) from:

- Manawatu District Council Offices, 135 Manchester Street, Feilding. Phone: (06) 323-0000.
- Feilding Public Library, corner of Bowen and Stafford Streets, Feilding.
- Makino Aquatic Centre, Council Place, Feilding.
- Manawatu District Council website ([www.mdc.govt.nz](http://www.mdc.govt.nz))

**Submissions**  
The Draft Annual Plan is available to allow public consultation and submissions to be made before Council finalises the Plan. The submission period is:

- **Submissions open:** Today (Thursday, 8 April)
- **Submissions close:** Monday, 10 May, at 5pm

Those making submissions have the opportunity to be heard by the Council. Hearings will be conducted during May. All deliberations will be at meetings open to the public. The Council may incorporate changes to the Draft Annual Plan in light of any submissions received.

**Consultation**  
One public meeting has been arranged for the following location. Elected members and staff will be in attendance.

Meeting Date	Time	Venue
Feilding Thursday 29 April	5.30pm	Council Offices

Community Committees are also organising the following meetings where members of the public are welcome to attend:

Community Committee	Meeting Date	Time	Venue
Halcombe	12 April	7.30pm	Halcombe Memorial Hall
Kimbolton	12 April	7.30pm	Kimbolton Hall
Rongotea	12 April	7.30pm	Te Kawau Memorial Centre
Marae Consultative Committee	13 April	7.30pm	Manawatu District Council
Rangiwahia	15 April	7.30pm	Rangiwahia Hall
Bunnythorpe	21 April	7.30pm	Methodist Church Hall
Longburn	21 April	7.30pm	Longburn Hall
Sanson	28 April	7.30pm	Sanson Community Hall
Cheltenham	4 May	7.30pm	Cheltenham Fire Station
(to be confirmed)			
Himatangi Beach	4 May	7.30pm	Himatangi Beach Community Hall
Pohangina	4 May	7.30pm	County Fayre

**Lorraine Vincent**  
Chief Executive