

Louis Toorenburg members report to Kaikohe Hokianga Community Board – February 2020

A new year and a new term, hoping to achieve much this year, would like to finally see a number projects completed.

Ward Tour

It was great to get most Councillors and many senior staff come to our patch of the Far North and had an opportunity to express our concerns, answer our questions and get to see the bigger picture. It was a pity that the bus got a flat tyre early on the trip and we lost an hour visiting places we had hoped to see.

Broadspectrum Depot – I found this worthwhile although I would have liked to visit the wastewater plant nearby, but apparently the bus would not be able to get down the track. Maybe something we can do on our Board tour of our ward.

I was able to get some answer to some of my questions with regard to the operation of the plant mainly to the treated wastewater that ends up in the Hokianga Harbour, not only from the Kaikohe community but also the dewatered waste from Kerikeri and Russell and the septic tank waste collected from a large part of the Far North. My concerns, what ends up in the Hokianga.

What happens, 3 or 4 truckloads from Kerikeri and a couple more from Russell of partially dewatered sludge a week get transported to Kaikohe, where it is deposited in their sewerage ponds, for further treatment before the treated wastewater is released into the nearby stream before ending up in Hokianga. The solid waste eventually being removed by desludging of the ponds and stored.

It was also interesting to see as we were driving past the different colours of the Taheke River (treated waste water goes through here to Hokianga) and the nearby Waima River.

Omanaia Water Treatment Plant – now operational and finally providing a clean, safe, treated water to the residents of Omanaia, instead being of previously supplied untreated water. A really big step forward for this community, this plant also supplies the Rawene Community. The increased storage capacity also a big bonus for these communities all made possible by a large subsidy from Ministry of Health.

Opononi and Omapere Seawalls – paid for by the National Land Transport Fund, parts off State Highway 12 were in danger of falling into the sea, areas of the highway had been undermined and footpaths were falling into the sea. Closure of this tourist Twin Coast Discovery Highway would have had a severe impact on the social and economic wellbeing of the area.

However NZTA are only protecting the parts of the foreshore that if eroded away would impact on their highway. Meanwhile it is up to local residents and FNDC to protect their own properties, some residents have done so and concerns have been raised on the legality of these works.

Meanwhile FNDC have done no protections on the land they own, like the many Council reserves, under threat is the Freese Park Playground area, an area that is now less than half the size it used to be. Concerns are being expressed that protection work needs to be undertaken, to protect the public toilets and playground area. See attached photos.



Freese Park Omapere, white line boundary, red line I have drawn is roughly where foreshore is now, house in between the two parts of Freese park is now gone, the concrete slab over the bank, below before erosion already a problem and after photos



The talk from Council on site was about retreat and relocation. Council has also cut down most of the pine trees along the foreshore, probably more than the 22 originally planned, that were of safety concerns and in danger of falling onto the beach. I have had people complaining about not enough shade.

One of the problems created by this is that access is now much easier to the beach by vehicles; Council may need to look at placing bollards or large rocks to stop this happening. It has also created security issues at the Council Pensioner Housing at Omapere, one of easier access to the beach and one of the residents has put in a complaint about security and theft issues at the pensioner housing.



Pensioner housing Omapere trees cut down and people parking on dunes

I have put in an RFS about the number of trees cut down and access created for vehicle on the beach.

The new seawall has improved the car parking in Opononi as well improvements to the footpaths along the foreshore, I understand there is going to be considerably more work done by NZTA on improving the footpaths along the foreshore.

Rawene Campus - Sadly this stop was skipped on our Ward Tour, because of the flat tyre. This is a very important issue for the people of the Hokianga as well as further afield. There is significant interest and need for this facility being returned to the community to be run as wananga/educational/learning centre.

Te Puna a Kupenuku, a strong wide based community group is interested in leasing or taking over the Rawene Campus and wants an opportunity to speak to our Board at this meeting. They have already had a meeting with Mayor, Cr John Vujcich, and our chair Mike Edmonds and myself, including senior FNDC staff including the CEO Shaun Clarke, as well as a number of public meetings with the community. I would like to recommend the following:-

- **That the Kaikohe – Hokianga Board discuss the Rawene Campus proposal at this meeting, after listening to the deputation from Te Puna a Kupenuku and formulate steps to make it happen, and to make recommendations to Council to expedite the matter.**

Footpaths

I am wondering where the footpath work in our Ward is at, expecting a lot of the footpaths in the Hokianga to be done this coming year. Can we get a report of what is happening.

- **Recommend that the Board request a report back to our board for our next meeting on the progress being made in getting footpaths in our Ward.**

WATER

A number of issues need resolving

Waiotemarama Intake - Since August 2019, council has been required by its resource consent to leave 14 litres per second (up from 10lps) in the stream for stream health and downstream users. This is normally not a problem unless we get to drought conditions, something that is happening earlier this year because of the lack of recent rainfall. To achieve the increase in flow Council was required to modify the weir, work that was going to be done months ago when river levels dropped. I would like the Board to request info at what stage this work is at.

Smoothy Road Bore - Council recognised the need for more water from other sources and have applied for resource consent to NRC to take water, from a bore at Smoothy Road, concerns have been expressed by users 6, who take water from springs in the same area on the effect that the bore may have of their domestic and farm supplies.

- **Recommend that the Board ask for an update on work to the Waiotemarama Weir to comply with consent conditions to increase water flow in stream and ask for an update on the status of the Smoothy Road Bore.**

Wastewater – Opononi and Omapere

Council has applied for Resource Consent and has been working with a local liaison group on concerns from the community. There have been some legal issues raised and Council has temporarily stopped working with the group. There are now concerns that Council will be able to expedite issues without the community watch group, which includes board members Allan Hessel and myself.

New Public Toilet – Opononi

Far North Holdings has applied for resource consent for the new public toilet in Opononi in August 2019, wondering where this is at, and also wondering why as local Community Board member why I wasn't notified about this.

I have an RFS in about notifications to board members about RC in our areas, something that has been happening since I have been on the board and why ones that maybe controversial seems to be omitted. Expecting a reply by the end of January.

Council Website

Another enquire about Council website, it is not very user friendly, I have troubles locating things, and somebody from the Rawene Hall committee has just come in concerned that people are no longer able to find details about booking the Rawene Hall, most enquires now come in by phone instead previously by email, and he is concerned they are losing potential bookings for hall.

Louis Toorenburg – 17 January 2020