

**Name:** Councillor Ann Court

**Date:** March 2023

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### **Portfolio Update: Transport**

Automobile Association:

In February I was formally appointed onto the Automobile Association's Northland Council. Mayor Cocurullo from Whangarei, Councillor Gordon Lambeth from Kaipara, Far North Reap and Northland Road Safety Partners also sit on the Council. I have attended the AGM and two overnight Council meetings in Whangarei.

Concurrently I have been co-opted to participate in a 'Motoring Affairs' led multi-district roading maintenance advocacy group. The draft work programme includes:

- *Work with Motoring Affairs (MA) to get together info / data / research required, potentially making combined OIA requests*
- *Work with MA to generate advocacy materials (factsheets, media releases etc.) making use of core standardised AA positions, local knowledge and content tailored to individual Districts (e.g. using region specific member survey info, region specific road quality data)*
- *Jointly plan / coordinate advocacy: media, letters to respective local MPs and local government, taking similar approaches with Waka Kotahi in submissions*
- *Combined approaches to ministers or other influential people, for example, something like a letter to the Minister for Regional Communities signed by a number of Districts*

One notable take home message from the first meeting of the working group. HCV's pay 50 of total RUC yet contribute to only 10% of the damage

### **Clean Car Up-Grade Scheme and Social Leasing Car Scheme.**

The Government has recently announced the abandonment of the Clean Car Up-Grade Scheme. At \$568m, that policy along with the Social Leasing Car Scheme \$19m when announced 10 months ago boldly stated that these two schemes would reduce carbon-equivalent emissions by 11.5m tonnes, it is therefore of some interest that in early March the Prime Minister announced the two schemes would be abandoned as in total they would only reduce carbon-equivalent emissions by 7000 tonnes (that's 0.06% of the predicted 11.5m tonnes). And that "These are relatively small contributions and there are actually better ways of achieving emissions reductions."

This raises questions in my mind about the integrity of some of the information that is informing transport related planning and investment decision making in Wellington.

### **Government Policy Statement on Land Transport 2024 (GPS 2024)**

Colleagues will be aware that transport officials in Wellington were working towards the 2024 GPS with a focus on emissions reductions as the no.1 priority. Projects that achieved a reduction in emissions would be the first tranche to secure NLTF moving forward.

To achieve this the GPS signalled the way road maintenance funding was applied would shift, with a focus of funding towards more cycle ways and bus lanes in our larger metropolitan areas in a move to encourage commuters to shift from their reliance on single occupancy vehicles. This was signed off by Cabinet late 2022.

Due to the devastating impact of Cyclone Gabrielle the Government has now announced a refocus on the policy, with an 'emergency-style' approach that will respond to the resilience and maintenance needs of the network as its first priority. It is deeply concerning that it took a national emergency to make this seismic shift in the minds of the decision makers and planners.

No final decisions have been made regarding changes to fuel excise duties or road user charges following extensive consultation by the Ministry last year.

As an aside. We are often told that the GPS is a binding statutory document. It is not. It is not a legal document! It is not gazetted! Some agencies hide behind this. It is a made-up construct. Yes, they have to give effect to it but is not legally enforceable.

### **Special Funding Assistance Rate**

The Government has allocated \$250 million for emergency works for local roads, KiwiRail and state highways in response to the January flooding and Cyclone Gabrielle through to 30 June 2023.

The Waka Kotahi Board considered options on how best to allocate funding for local roads and approved a one-off special funding assistance rate (FAR) - an Approved Organisation's normal FAR, plus 40%. Our approved FAR is 69%.

This special FAR is:

- for immediate response activity only
- to alleviate short-term financial stress, and
- there is no threshold for qualifying requests for the special FAR.

The Board also made allowance for further bespoke FAR adjustments based on financial hardship to a maximum of 100%. The intention with this higher bespoke FAR is for a limited period, for an immediate response to these unprecedented events.

It is anticipated the special FAR will only be applicable for work completed before June 2023 and/or once additional Crown funding is used up as we may need to revert to our conventional Emergency Works Policy before that date.

### **Road Side Drug Testing**

Councillors may be aware that in 2023 the Government passed legislation to introduce roadside drug testing as is seen in Australia and many countries in Europe.

Since 2017 there have been close to 100 deaths each year involving a driver or rider with drugs in their system. Drugs, alcohol, distraction and/or speed factor in nearly every recorded crash in New Zealand.

It has been recently announced that the testing devices are not 100% accurate and have the potential to produce false positives. Whilst this was well known in the formation of the legislation and has been addressed by a requirement for a second test and/or subsequent blood test if requested. Crown Law has advised that the devices should not be introduced unless they could achieve a level of accuracy that no devices on the market can currently reach.

Officials are not looking to re-work the legislation in a similar process to Victoria to hopefully resolve the legal interpretation issue.

### **Speed Limit Reviews**

In response to the Prime Ministers announcement that the speed limit reduction programme will be significantly narrowed to focus on the most dangerous 1% of the State Highway network, Waka Kotahi have advised:

“We will review our state highway speed management plan to ensure that the highest risk state highways are prioritised, alongside targeted changes to speeds around schools, marae and in townships which state highways transit. Waka Kotahi will await guidance from the Ministry of Transport on specific amendments to Land Transport Rules.”

### **Te Puawaitanga**

Since 2012 Council had been considering the provision of additional sport fields for the greater Kerikeri/BOI area. (A sport needs assessment, commissioned in 2019 identified a significant shortfall in sports fields).

Council subsequently purchased a dairy farm, 46.77 hectares adjoining State Highway 10 in Waipapa, of which 13 hectares has been set aside to develop the new sports hub.

Thanks to a significant grant from the Provincial Growth Fund alongside Recreation Reserve and Rate Funding a working group of some sport code representatives was established to agree a preliminary design concept for the ultimate facility and to recommend a proposed governance structure to Council.

Current funding has been expended on obtaining the resource consent and all the required permits. Upgrading the state highway to obtain access has been completed. Staff and contractors are currently working on the heavy site works which include extensive drainage and levelling to enable the establishment of five fields, a basic ablution block, wastewater disposal and parking as part of stage 1. The weather gods have not been kind this construction season which will inevitably see the completion date pushed out by a playing season.

Further stages will be required to be funded to see the 13 hectares fully developed. It is anticipated that external funding sources will be maximized where possible to enable this to happen in planned and staged phases.

No decisions have been reached on what will happen with the residual allotment noting that Council has recently commissioned a revised sports needs assessment to inform the spatial planning processes.

Whilst the TOR have now been extinguished, the working group is keen to continue and see themselves playing an integral role in managing the facility and overseeing future development. A number of meetings have been held this year with the working group on how this may eventuate. It is a difficult balance between being community enabling and led whilst retaining regulatory and governance control of what will ultimately be the most expensive asset on Councils books.

Whilst ultimately the final decision on this will be Councils. I wish to acknowledge the incredibly helpful role Ngati Rehia and our amazing volunteers have played in getting us to where we are today.

### **Liquor Licensing**

Year to date 117 applications have been received.

Two hearings have been held.

- Sovrano Winery Limited (Granted on a truncated renewal period)
- Sandpit Pool Room and Bar Limited (Granted)

Hearings pending.

- Castle Management Limited
- Two Managers Certificate Applications (names withheld for privacy reasons)

All other applications were granted within 3 working days





- Stage 1
- ① Multipurpose Fields (x5)
  - ② Car park
  - ③ Changing room/clubhouse building
  - ④ Entrance driveway
  - ⑤ Wastewater disposal field and reserve area enclosed by fence
  - ⑥ Waste water treatment plant
  - ⑦ Constructed wetland
  - ⑧ Existing pipe culvert
  - ⑨ New open Drain



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- Future full development
- a Hockey turf
  - b Multipurpose field (x1)
  - c Car park extension x2 (TBC)
  - d Cricket nets
  - e Cricket wickets
  - f Playzone
  - g Possible shareway path
  - h Gymnastics
  - i Clubrooms
  - j Indoor facility
  - k Croquet lawns
  - l Dog training area
  - m Viewing area
  - n Perimeter pathway
  - o Lighting. Refer to S&T Lighting documentation

