

# Ngā pārongo hou

## Latest council news

Poutū-te-rangi March 2024 | Putanga Issue 41

## Water restrictions remain for now

Level 2 water restrictions applied to four council water supplies in February as a precautionary measure to reduce demand and protect our water sources, will remain for the time being.

The ban on outdoor sprinklers and irrigation systems affects Kerikeri-Waipapa, Kaikohe-Ngāwhā, Paihia-Ōpua-Waitangi and Ōpononi-Ōmāpere. The same restrictions were applied to Ōmanaia-Rāwene in January and remain unchanged. It brings the total number of water supplies at Level 2 restrictions to five in the Far North.

Ōkaihau, Kaitiāia and Kawakawa-Moerewa water supplies stay at Level 1 (no restrictions), but customers are asked to always use water sensibly.

The council's Water Shortage Management Committee (WSMC) continues to monitor the health of water sources and water demand and meets regularly to reassess restriction levels.

Current water restrictions are a response to high summer temperatures in the Far North, a lack of substantial rainfall in the forecast, and several council-operated water treatment plants operating round-the-clock to meet high water consumption.



The Warehouse at Waipapa is one of a number of retailers helping to share details on water restriction levels.

Large Save Water Now signs have been installed in key locations around Kerikeri, Kaikohe and Paihia to highlight the change in water restriction levels. Billboards at Ōpononi and Ōmāpere, displaying the

Be Water Wise water glass image, have also been changed to raise awareness about Level 2 water restrictions in that area. To stay up to date with current water restriction levels, head to [www.fndc.govt.nz](http://www.fndc.govt.nz)

### Hub wins funding top-up

The much-anticipated opening of Te Hiku Sports Hub is a step closer after the council approved an additional funding request to get the project across the finish line.

Te Hiku Sports Hub Incorporated requested \$610,916 to complete the facility. It cited the impact of inflation on construction costs following the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent supply chain slowdown as the cause of delays and increased costs.

Project Manager Mark Osborne told councillors that Te Hiku Sports Hub Incorporated had raised more than \$11 million from various sources to build the multi-sport and aquatic centre. The request was considered in public exclusion during the council's meeting on Thursday 8 February due to the commercially-sensitive budget information being discussed.

The facility is expected to open in late April.



The hub will provide clubrooms, a gym, and new pools.

### High-speed fibre on the way



Kāeo residents can look forward to getting high-speed fibre soon.

State-of-the-art broadband is coming to parts of Waipapa, Taumatamakuku and Kāeo, as a national programme to roll out fibre and ensure high-speed, reliable broadband reaches more communities.

The fibre-build started on Monday 26 February along a section of Waipapa Road from Waitotara Drive to just before Bunnings. Taumatamakuku near Moerewa is next, with work due to start in May. Two areas in Kāeo will follow in July, with the town centre around Leigh Street to be connected as well as homes over the river on Cemetery Road, Turner Street and Omaunu Road.

Extending the fibre network is another step in reducing the digital divide between town centres and non-urban areas and supported by Northland Digital Enablement Group (DEG) of which FNDC is a member. The group's focus is supporting and enabling digital connectivity across Te Tai Tokerau. Nothing But Net is FNDC's key programme to achieve this. The first phase of this project is expected to be completed by mid-2025.

### Speed limits stay on track

Planned speed changes in the Bay of Islands and Kerikeri have been given the green light by elected members following the government's decision to halt blanket speed limit reductions.



At the council's 8 February meeting, it was decided to continue with the changes recommended by the Bay of Islands-Kerikeri Speed Limit Review, as the work was underway before the announcement, and \$800,000 in funding had been allocated. That allocation includes a 69 per cent share from Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency, and 31 per cent from the council.

Far North Kahika Moko Tepania says he met with Waka Kotahi officials earlier this month seeking clarification about the current speed limit review. He was assured it should not impact what the council had already agreed on.

### Open Spaces Strategy

The council is developing the district's first Open Spaces Strategy, which will set the direction for how parks, reserves, cycleways, beaches, rivers, playgrounds, and cemeteries are provided and managed. The community is invited to provide feedback on how they use open spaces in the Far North, what's important about them, and what barriers (if any) they have in accessing them. To have your say, complete the survey at [www.fndc.govt.nz/openspaces](http://www.fndc.govt.nz/openspaces) by Thursday 14 March.



### Bay of Islands on the crest of wave as tourists cruise in

Cruise ships are back in the Bay of Islands with tens of thousands of visitors coming ashore at Waitangi this summer. It will be a busy time for tourist attractions, markets, and stores. So what are the benefits to the local economy? Watch our video where we ask business owners how important the cruise ship industry is to them. Go to our 'latest news' webpage at [fndc.govt.nz](http://fndc.govt.nz) to find out more.