

Kāpiti Coast
Older Persons' Council
A Voice For Our Community

INFORM - ADVOCATE - EMPOWER

The Kāpiti Coast Older Persons' Council is concerned about a fundamental assumption in the the consultation document, which states that “*Cost increases are largely based on inflation (1.8% to 2.5%).*” Statistics New Zealand report that the Consumers Price Index (CPI) rose 0.2 percent in the three months ending March, and the annual rate was 0.4 percent. This disconnect between council and actual figures continues with the projected average rates increase of 4.3%, over 150% higher than the increase in NZ Superannuation and Veteran's Pension rates.

The Kāpiti Coast Older Persons' Council:

- Does not support the proposed one-off \$50,000 grant to Wellington Free Ambulance for its new Kāpiti station as on page 3 of Kāpiti News on April 20 it is reported that the funding is already in place for the new ambulance station. The Kāpiti Coast Older Persons' Council of course supports the aim of having best possible Ambulance service to be available for our community. If grant has already been recorded as a “promise” in the reported successful fund raising total, the Kāpiti Coast Older Persons' Council would support that donation - but then asks why it is being consulted on if the commitment has already been made.
- Supports bringing the management of the Paraparaumu i-Site service in-house
- In response to the proposal to no longer fund small business support, the Kāpiti Coast Older Persons' Council would appreciate more detail on the benefits this support has produced in the past, and similarly proof of overall benefits to the community that businesses enjoy through the lack of differential rating that applies in most of the region. We appreciate that these are difficult times for local businesses, but business people realise that investments should be scrutinised and, in the absence of proof of benefit, be at risk.
- On the proposal of reducing the budget for big events, the Kāpiti Coast Older Persons' Council comments that any events supported should benefit the wider community, not just those that can afford high ticket prices. If there is a continuation of the trend of not supporting gold coin admission events but supporting events with a \$90 entry, the Kāpiti Coast Older Persons' Council would advocate reducing the budget for big events. KCDC needs to support older persons' active participation in Kapiti community, and high fees are a barrier to such participation.
- Does not support reducing one-off community grants by \$50,000. Our district is still financially immature in that it has not developed financial entities that provide the benefactor role in other areas. A strong sense of community will improve our image as a desirable residential district – one that cares about the day-to-day life of its residents.

Key initiatives

The Kāpiti Coast Older Persons' Council remains unconvinced about the timing and scope of the Town Centres project. It asks if there been an economic evaluation of the project, and if so what was the outcome? If there has not been an an economic evaluation, why not?

These Town Centres must include adaptations to reflect the Kapiti Coast demographic.

Some examples –

Adequate disability parking. According to information from CCS Disability Action 1000 mobility parking certificates have been issued to residents on the Kapiti Coast. The number of disabled persons Parking slots does not reflect this. With the Town Centre upgrade it is essential that this information is used when planning parking, access to buildings, seating, ramps and railings etc.

There needs to be safe walkways for pedestrians from the car park to the nearby buildings. In addition it would be great to have some designated “Elderly Preferred” parking – there are places here that have “family preferred” parking – indicated by a baby-buggy.

The Kāpiti Coast Older Persons' Council supports constructing a wider shared pathway/cycleway on the southern side from Ngahina Street to Arawhata Road, and also advocates for the provision of seats along walkways. Many older members of our community struggle to keep walking without a regular break. It is so important to enable those less mobile people to keep active and engaged. The Kāpiti Coast Older Persons' Council would also support the proposal to investigate a targeted rate to supplement the Regional Council's building of bus shelters and seats in Kāpiti.

Increases in Fees and Charges:

Special consideration needs to be given to older persons for the following reasons.

1. The Govt. wants older persons to remain in their own homes as long as possible, therefore costs relating to the elderly need to be kept as low as possible.
2. There is evidence showing that older persons now have a higher level of indebtedness and a lower level of Assets.
3. Older persons need to be encouraged to keep moving to maintain fitness and keep their independence.
4. Elderly receiving only Government Super need support – could fees be dropped for, as an example, elderly with Community Service Cards?

All the above support the need for elderly to be shown consideration in the way we structure fees and charges.

Housing

The Kāpiti Coast Older Persons' Council supports investigation of alternative ways of managing the KCDC housing stock, including the example set in Christchurch of a Community Trust that could access central government funds to improve and expand on the housing stock.

Parks

If KCDC goes ahead with the Waikanae Park Upgrade then it would be appropriate for the upgrade to include the required "Disabled Persons" adjustments – level entry, disability toilets with door handles at the appropriate height and that open easily. Disability designated car parking will be necessary.

Kāpiti Coast Older Persons' Council would appreciate clarity on the proposed major development of a sports and recreation facility at Otaraua Park and how it relates to, or is affected by, the Waikanae Park changing rooms upgrade (now projected to be \$500,000) and Te Ātiawa Park hard courts resurfacing.

The consultation document proposes a long term plan "rather than doing reactive work to repair or renew infrastructure" at Maclean Park. The Kāpiti Coast Older Persons' Council comments that it may be too late as there appears to have been some ineffective, possibly counter-productive, work done in recent months on Maclean Park which has not enhanced one of our major destination parks. Any solution should be realistically costed and minimise disruption in the tourist season of 2016/2017.

One minor enhancement should be considered earlier. The consortium of organisation that has taken over the Maclean Park kiosk is under pressure because of a lack of water supply to the kiosk. Water is available close to the kiosk, so hooking it up should not be expensive.

The Older Persons' Council supports calls for including in playgrounds exercise equipment suitable for use by senior citizens. This would enhance intergenerational opportunities, and mean that grand parenting duties could produce some well-being benefits for all generations.

The Kāpiti Coast Older Persons' Council is concerned by the reported dismissal of such suggestions - because exercise equipment for seniors could be retrofitted later - as being against the principles of Age Friendly Communities, and not supporting this statement from Page 72 in the Long Term Plan:

"We want to help enable people of all ages to actively participate in community activities. The ageing population of Kapiti will lead to a greater demand for social, health and community services. Community resilience in an age-friendly district is a key priority is a key priority for the council and we aim to make the district a place that works for young and ageing people alike. Activities, dedicated work-streams and policy reviews will be a focus to ensure the district becomes an age-friendly and accessible district."