MARLBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

Only Marlborough

He korero no te Kaunihera o Wairau

NEWS FROM THE MARLBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

Last call for feedback on Middle Renwick Road cycle lanes

Marlborough District Council and Marlborough Roads are considering extending cycle lanes along Middle Renwick Road between Blenheim's Westwood Business Park and Murphys Road/Battys Road.

The proposed upgrade would provide painted cycle lanes for cyclists, with a painted buffer between the cycle lane and traffic lane. The proposed extension would provide a safe and convenient route for cyclists, and add to the overall urban cycle network.

Public consultation closes at 5.00 pm on Monday 14 December. People are encouraged to view the designs and submit their feedback.

Call into the Council office at 15 Seymour Street or the Blenheim Library.

Go to the project page at https://bit. ly/MRRCycleLanes

The Council's Sustainable Transport Manager Braden Prideaux said so far 15 submissions had been received.

"I'd like to thank those who have shared their views with us already, but I'd encourage anyone who lives or works locally or who travels by bike in the Springlands area to have their say."

Council retains AA Positive rating

The Council's 'robust financial management and relatively low debt' has contributed to it retaining its "AA Positive" long term credit rating by rating agency S&P Global.

The S&P Global assessment takes into account the financial position of the Council Group, which includes MDC Holdings Ltd, Port Marlborough NZ Ltd and Marlborough Airport Ltd.

S&P Global said: "The COVID-19 economic shock has had only a minor effect on Marlborough's finances, though we expect elevated capital spending to lead to modest after-capital-account deficits during the next few years."

"The Council has plans to ramp up its infrastructure spending, with a large volume of projects having recently gone to tender or contract."

S&P Global noted the Council's debt burden will remain low relative to its peers.

"Marlborough's fiscal processes are credible and well established. The Council's treasury management polices set prudent limits on external borrowing and interest rate risk, and all borrowing is in local currency."

Mayor John Leggett welcomed the update.

"S&P Global has again recognised our strong financial management and governance, good fiscal processes and moderate debt levels."

"While the Council continues to invest in water, sewerage, transport and community infrastructure to support Marlborough's growth, residents and ratepayers can have confidence that the Council's books are in great shape," he said.

Bus service changes announced

The Picton to Blenheim trial bus service has been extended and the Blenheim East commuter service cut in changes announced recently.

Operating on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 9:00 am and 2:00 pm, the Picton to Blenheim service has proven popular with an average usage of 240 passengers per month. It was introduced in August 2019 and was due to come to an end in February 2021, but will now be extended to June 2021.

There is a change in where the bus stops – it will now stop at the Picton i-SITE but not at Grovetown and Tuamarina because of low patronage there.

Due to low use, the Blenheim East commuter bus service has now been suspended. The trial service was introduced in February and was impacted by the lockdown forced by COVID-19.

The Council's other trial bus services - Renwick to Blenheim return and the Blenheim West commuter service - will continue to operate under the trial period until June 2021.

Ritchies Transport Blenheim bus driver Joanne Clark, who regularly drives the Picton to Blenheim route, celebrates the extension of the popular service until June next year

To view the bus timetables visit: https://www.marlborough.govt.nz/services/blenheim-bus-services

Shopping for Marlborough this Christmas

Mayor John Leggett walks the talk when it comes to shopping local.

"I have always been a strong supporter of local business and buy local whenever I have the opportunity," he said.

With many Marlborough businesses in the midst of, or emerging from, tough financial times due to COVID-19, his advice is simple – if you can buy local, please do.

"Marlborough businesses are run by our friends, our families and our neighbours. When you shop local this Christmas you are not only giving a gift to a loved one, you are also giving our business community a gift of support," he said.

Mayor John Leggett and Mayoress Anne Best are shopping local this Christmas

Sub-committee chews over submissions

Marlborough's dog owners are passionate, well-informed and value our region's parks and open spaces to enjoy time with their four-legged companions.

That was clear during public hearings last week on the Council's proposed Dog Control Policy and Bylaw. The policy and bylaw is being reviewed in accordance with the Dog Control Act 1996 and Local Government Act 2002.

Councillor Jamie Arbuckle, who chairs the Animal Control Sub-committee, said there was a need to provide clearer guidance on where dogs can be on and off their leash around Marlborough.

"It was evident from the public submission process that our dog owners are well-informed. They are also passionate about their pets and they value Marlborough's parks and open spaces as a place to enjoy with their animals. We understand the need to provide for this, in balance with other users, and in keeping with Council's statutory responsibilities," he said.

The proposed policy and bylaw review received 679 submissions and also a petition signed by 699 people opposing dogs being on leash along the Taylor River Reserve.

"The hearings gave an opportunity for submitters to highlight and explain the issues raised in their written submissions and for the Committee to make enquires to understand their position," said Council Animal Control Manager, Jane Robertson.

The Hearing Committee, consisting of Chair Clr Arbuckle and councillors' Nadine Taylor, Thelma Sowman and Barbara Faulls, also did some site visits prior to the hearings.

"The Committee will now consider all the written submissions alongside the additional comments heard during the hearings. Some additional site visits will also take place early next year," said Jane.

Recommendations in the form of a final draft policy and bylaw will be presented for adoption to the Council's Environment Committee in early 2021, before it is ratified by the full Council.

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