

Ngā pārongo hou

Latest council news

Haratua May 2023 | Putanga Issue 20

New property valuations further delayed

Property revaluations for Far North ratepayers have been further delayed and will now be posted on 24 May — nine days later than previously advised by the council.

The extended timeline is due to audit delays beyond the control of the council or Quotable Value (QV), which was appointed to undertake property revaluations in the Far North.

All properties in New Zealand are revalued every three years, with the latest Far North revaluation undertaken in October 2022 by QV valuers. They assess how much land, capital, and improvement values have changed over the past three years.

The council uses updated land value information to help 'strike' rates for individual properties and must complete this process before the start of the new financial year on 1 July. Property owners can object to the QV assessment if they believe their property has been under or over-valued. However, this latest delay will further compress the time required for QV to make decisions on property owner objections.

Janice Smith, Group Manager — Corporate Services for Far North District Council says that decisions on objections are usually made by QV well ahead of council striking rates for the next financial year.

She says the council is required by the Local Government (Rating) Act 2002 to send out the first rates invoice based on the property value held at that time. She also points out that land value is just one



New valuations will now be posted to property owners on 24 May.

Revaluation process



factor used to calculate rates for individual properties. "If an objection is successful after we strike rates on 1 July, the council will send out an amended rates assessment to the property owner.

"If you haven't received your revaluation notice by 1 June 2023, please contact QV directly. The council will also upload the entire District Valuation Roll to our website to help property owners locate their October 2022 revaluation. This will be available from 17 May."

Anyone without internet access can use public computer terminals at any of the council's six Far North Libraries to view the District Valuation Roll. Property owners who wish to object to a revaluation are advised to do so directly to QV at: www.qv.co.nz/services Printed objection forms can also be obtained from council service centres and libraries.

Objections to QV must now be made by 29 June 2023.

\$48,000 in travel grants for sports



More than 30 junior teams have received travel grants.

Getting to training and tournaments should be easier this year for more than 30 rural junior sports teams after the district's three community boards granted over \$48,000 towards travel costs from the Rural Travel Fund.

The fund subsidises travel outside of school time for rural teams aged 5 to 18 years old. The aim is to remove travel cost as a barrier to participation in sporting competitions. The fund is part of the Active Aotearoa Programme and is administered in the Far North by community boards. Two funding rounds take place each year, usually the first round is for winter sports and the second round at the end of the year is for summer sports.

Te Hiku Community Board granted \$9,325 towards six local sports groups.

Kaikohe-Hokianga Community Board made 15 grants totalling \$18,530 to 14 local sports groups.

It also provided a \$10,000 top-up to the rural Travel Fund from its own funding pool to improve sports opportunities for tamariki in its area.

Bay of Islands-Whangaroa Community Board made 13 grants totalling \$20,695 to 11 sports groups. A full list of the sporting groups to receive funding can be found on the FNDC website.

Local libraries pulling in crowds



The popular mobile library service is back in action.

In just one month, more than 43,000 people visited our six Far North Libraries — a 25 per cent increase in foot traffic for March when compared to February.

Library staff say the increase over the last month is due to our libraries increasing the focus on fun activities for the whole family, including arts and crafts, robot coding and creation, Minecraft (building worlds and completing challenges) Lego creation, story times and more.

During March, library staff ran 214 programmes with a total of 1430 attendees across all six libraries.

Another important service, the mobile library, is hitting the road again. The roving 'library in a van' will be visiting many of our remote communities soon. To find out where the van will visit, go to 'latest news' on our website.

The mobile library offers library members a selection of books, magazines, DVDs, and talking books to borrow and also takes returned items.

Coopers Beach bridge made safer



Upgraded handrails and adjoining paths make the bridge safer.

Accessing Coopers Beach playground is now easier for pedestrians and others using a road bridge footpath on State Highway 10, thanks to safety upgrades undertaken by Waka Kotahi.

A wooden footpath on the beach side of the bridge was recently upgraded to remove an awkward bend at each end that made it difficult for those using mobility scooters or prams to negotiate the pathway.

Safe access on and off the bridge was completed with the addition of new concrete paths and handrails.