

Reports pleasing

WAITOMO and Otorohanga district council staff have presented their half-yearly financial reports to councillors.

Both reports, which contain interim figures for the period, highlight the positives of each councils' financial performance.

WAITOMO

Waitomo mayor Brian Hanna says the 'treasury report' prepared by national financial advisory company Bancorp Treasury Services Ltd, along with the council's own financial report, "speaks volumes about the financial management of the council".

The treasury report states the cost of borrowings for WDC continues to be lower than most other local authorities.

"A lot of this success is down to the work by the finance team led by [group manager corporate services] Vibhuti Chopra," says Mr Hanna.

"As a council we have been able to spend about \$13 million on capital works like water and wastewater while at the same time maintaining our debt level. WDC has taken advantage of subsidies which have been available from central government in order to carry out work required."

Key aspects of the council's report include:

- a net operating surplus for the six months of \$867,000 compared to a year-to-date budget of \$64,000;
- total revenue was up on budget by \$122,000; while expenditure was down \$681,000; and,

- total liabilities decreased by \$2.6 million for the six-month period due to a general decrease in payables and borrowings.

OTOROHANGA

Otorohanga mayor Max Baxter is also happy with his council's financial results in the first six months.

"All operations are within budget and we are retaining a positive cash flow. The debt of \$9 million is as forecast, and all capital projects are on target so far for the year," he says.

"The focus has been on reducing debt while ensuring the services provided to the district remain at a high standard. I believe the staff are performing an admirable job providing quality service to our district."

Chief executive Dave Clibbery, in a statement attached to the report, said: "The most significant movement is in property, plant and equipment and the revaluation reserves."

"This is due to the revaluation of assets taking place during this last financial year. Changes were not included in the report as the revaluation had not been completed."

LGNZ ANALYSIS

In December, a high level financial analysis commissioned by Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) found that local councils throughout New Zealand are managing ratepayers' money prudently.

Pumpkin weigh-in set for Sunday

PLUS-SIZE pumpkins are vying to be the chosen one in Mitre 10's annual 'The BIG Pumpkin' contest.

Mitre 10 Te Kuiti owner Rochelle Wheeler says Mitre 10 stores throughout the country sold the pumpkin seedlings in October.

"I remember it was only a couple of months ago these pumpkins left our store as little seeds and they have all been nurtured to maturity. The motivation is to encourage kids to get outside and in the garden, plant a seed to nurture and care for, have some fun, knowing you might win a prize along the way."

TOUGH CONTEST

She is expecting the competition to be "hot" especially with prizes and medals on the line in three categories.

The ultimate prize is for the heaviest and biggest pumpkin. The other two categories are for the ugliest and



HEAVYWEIGHT: Karen and Amber Jones from Piopio show off their Giant Atlantic Pumpkin, which was fed on worm manure since November, to Mitre 10 staff member Jo Chandler.

the best dressed pumpkins.

"There is no shortage of entrants for the ugliest category, but also plenty in the best dressed," says Mrs Wheeler.

HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMP

She says the heaviest pumpkin grown in New Zealand was a whopping 721kg, just a little lighter than the world record holder – 824kg.

Big Pumpkin' competition entrants will be weighed-in at Mitre 10 Te Kuiti at 11am on Sunday.

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