

WDC says no to LED lights for now

WAITOMO District Council (WDC) has decided to wait before switching on to LED street lighting.

Rather than “rush into” replacing its 986 sodium lamps at an estimated cost of \$900,000, the council will first investigate the benefits of LED through a collaborative effort with the Road Asset Technical Accord (RATA).

RATA is a Waikato Mayoral Forum roading governance group (which WDC is a part of) focusing on road asset planning within local authority networks in the Waikato region.

A report to the council on Tuesday stated the 25-30 year LED lifespan is “unproven” and the initial purchase and installation costs, are “substantial”.

BENEFITS

However, the benefits include using about 50% less power than sodium lamps, reduced maintenance and financial assistance from the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) who would cover up to 59% of the installation costs.

Roading manager Johan Rossouw says assur-

ance of funding assistance from NZTA should be secured beforehand to make the project economically viable.

“It is recommended that the council act conservatively, given the considerable expense that this upgrade would carry, until such time the results of the RATA research for the region-wide project are available.”

WDC chief executive Chris Ryan agreed and requested a more in-depth business case be completed before any decision is made.

“We’re not going to Lone Ranger this and with your [councillors] endorsement we should act conservatively because going it alone probably would be more expensive than actually working collaboratively with other governance groups across the Waikato.”

Mayor Brian Hanna said waiting for RATA’s findings would be the pragmatic approach.

“They’ll be looking into the scale and price of projects such as this, and if the business case does stack up consumption wise, then we’d probably do it.

“But until we have that information, I don’t think we should rush into any decision.”



NO RUSH: Waitomo mayor Brian Hanna is not convinced yet about the benefits of LED street lighting.

Bennett to speak at Nats dinner

MINISTER of Social Development Paula Bennett and National’s Taranaki-King Country candidate Barbara Kuriger are guests of honour at a party dinner in the North King Country next week.

Mrs Kuriger says Ms Bennett’s mantra is ‘self-belief with a dose of hard work can make anything possible’ and she will be an entertaining speaker.

“Paula is passionate about ensuring a brighter future for all New Zealanders,” says Mrs Kuriger.

“She believes she has been given a great opportunity to affect positive change in people’s lives, their families and their communities.

“Those attending the dinner can expect her to fully engage with her audience with a mix of high energy, depth of feeling and humour.”

Mrs Kuriger says she has a strong

focus on regional development and her background of working for rural and regional people gives her the experience to represent the region well.

“I have spent several months travelling the region finding out as much as I can about each area so I can be an effective link with central government.”

She says she and National is working hard for Taranaki-King Country and New Zealand building a stronger economy that creates more local jobs, supports higher incomes and more people in an affordable way.

The dinner is at The Big Apple at Hangatiki on Thursday, September 4.

For more information, see the display advertisement on P2 of this issue.

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