



MAJOR PIECES: An artist's impression of the new \$60,000 playground the Waitomo District Council is installing at Centennial Park in Te Kuiti next month. IMAGES SUPPLIED

\$60k upgrade for popular local park

ONE of Waitomo district's most visited playgrounds is about to undergo a \$60,000 upgrade.

Waitomo District Council is replacing outdated playground equipment at Centennial Park in Te Kuiti with two major pieces of equipment ready for installation next month.

An audit completed by Park Central Consultants identified that the playground was past its "useful life" as the deck frames were badly rusted and it was not cost effective to repair.

Eleven playgrounds in the district were audited to rate their condition and measure how well WDC is complying with New Zealand Safety Standards.

Community services group manager John De Luca says after the audit, the council received an assessment of how well the playground equipment is being maintained and recommendations for

improvement.

"The audit shows that almost all of the playgrounds are in very good condition, are being well maintained and the level of compliance of the playground safety is high. This is great feedback for our parks and facilities team here.

"The playground at Centennial Park is one of the most visited and used playgrounds in the district, especially during weekend sports events and training evenings."

WDC allocated funding in its capital budget for the 2011/12, 2012/13 and 2013/14 financial years to allow for the purchase and installation of the new playground equipment at a cost of \$61,615.

The budget was spread over three years to support the council's affordability principle set out in the Long Term Plan. Extra climbing equipment at Redwood Park has also been approved.

Oto awards entries to open next week

THE search is about to start for Otorohanga's best businesses.

Nominations open on Tuesday, July 29 for the district's annual Best in Business awards.

Organised by the Otorohanga Business Association (OBA), the awards are an opportunity for the community to say which local businesses should be recognised for exceptional customer service, quality, sustainability, and innovation.

Marketing and human resources consultant Kylie Mouat was elected OBA chairperson at the association's annual meeting last week.

Peter Burton is vice chairperson, Val Phillips is secretary/treasurer and John Haddad, Wynn Cole and Ike de Boer were elected to the executive committee. Committee members are Adelle Martin, Richard Scott, Dave Hamilton, Katrina Christison and Noeline Watts.

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Snow bites



ON ICE: Paddocks, hills and roads at Ngapaenga and Mairoa near Piopio on Tuesday were testament to an icy week as overnight temperatures plummet as low as -2 degrees Celsius. In the past eight days Te Kuiti residents have woken to five frosts with sub-zero mornings. National weather forecaster Chris Brandolino says weather throughout the country may feel colder than normal due to a warmer June. "Temperatures were higher than normal at the beginning of July, but as we get into the second half of the month with colder days, the mean average temperatures levels out to be near normal." PHOTOS SAM BOROEVICH



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