

Landowners & Contractors Association

PO Box 323 Warkworth 0941

lcpainc2021@gmail.com

lca.org.nz

Mayor Brown's Meeting At Warkworth on the 13th March 2023

Landowners & Contractors Association Main points of interest

We are a prominent organisation representing Landowners and Contractors alike, both within the Rodney area and further afield.

We are grateful to Mayor Brown for including us today and welcome his visit to North Rodney. We feel this has resulted from our recent and successful Mayoral Candidates meeting in Wellsford which we co-hosted with Wellsford Plus. We also thank you for being instrumental in our reappointment to the Rural Advisory Panel. We are sure we can make a positive contribution to the Panel's work.

Bullet Points:

Rural Infrastructure;

Rodney is a huge geographical region with by far the most unsealed roads in the Auckland Council area. These include main arterial routes, production roads and tourist routes all of which are severely lacking maintenance and future planning. It is clear that the present maintenance plan isn't working.

We need a complete review of roading and drainage programmes across rural Rodney.

There are far more culverts blocked and not working than those performing adequately. There are many dysfunctional main drains contributing to blocked outlets and washouts, sunken roads and dangerous surfaces.

The areas involved are the "Rural Powerhouse" of Auckland. However landowner's rates bills keep increasing, whilst the standard of their roading and infrastructure is decreasing. There is also the added pressure from tourism and the consequences of urban drift.

Our Proposal:

To investigate a move away from the AT system of calling contracts for scheduled maintenance, towards a trial scheme run as a Pilot programme whereby responsibility was directed towards Local Contractors who both know the roads and soil types, drainage catchments, etc.

Local knowledge is invaluable in these situations.

A return to the historic system of an appointed "Clerk of Works" who took responsibility, scrutinised the work, adhered to budgets and signed off on projects.

This Appointee would be fed information by a team of well qualified and respected locals in each area of Rodney North, South, East and West. Funding would be allocated accordingly direct from AC not AT. Clearly the present system is broken and needs major changes.

A sealing programme could be resumed, as was in place with the former Rodney District Council where we saw an equal length of seal laid within the same four above directions.

We are very keen to meet to further discuss this change of direction for the good of Rural Auckland and we would welcome a visit from the Mayor to Wellsford and environ.

Governance:

It's timely to highlight Governance issues now with our new Mayor.

We value his business and governance experience. We also value our experienced, fair and well respected Rodney Councillor. And we hope for a more balanced and open operation of our Local Board!

Rural Rodney has felt completely disenfranchised by a south loaded urban-centric Board who blocked votes on key issues affecting our lives and livelihoods.

A system change is urgently needed where power is returned to elected representatives namely our Cr Greg Sayers.

We want to have a more direct line of communication with senior Council Officers, promote common sense ideas and provide workable solutions to the ever increasing problems outside the role of the Rodney Local Board.

Why is it so hard to get information out of Council, why aren't resource consent decisions all freely available on Council's website? And why all the apparent inefficiencies and hefty costs associated with Council projects?

People live in fear of unfair compliance decisions forced upon them either by Council contracted Consultants or by ill experienced bureaucrats seeking another step up the ladder that Council culture has now fostered.

We would propose to participate with helpful and meaningful discussion in the Mayoral office over such issues.

The "Gordon Levet" proposal:

Our senior and extremely respected local Romney Stud Breeder , Scientific Researcher and District icon Gordon Levet has devised a "Right of Appeal" paper for us to present on his behalf.

This again places difficult compliance decisions back to a board of key experienced individuals, I'm sure this could be of huge help in the future to assist a present system that is intimidating, frustrating and seemingly dysfunctional