



THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

MEDIA RELEASE – 24 August 2021

Westport Long-Term Plan drop-in session cancelled

The recent COVID-19 outbreak, and Government's decision to place New Zealand into lockdown, has forced the Regional Council to cancel their drop-in session in Westport on Thursday, 26 August.

Regional Council Chairman, Allan Birchfield, acknowledges that this may be of most concern to the Westport residents affected by the recent floods, but wanted to assure those who had been considering attending the drop-in session that these proposals were not new.

"The options presented in the Consultation Document are based on the two most favoured from consultation undertaken with the Westport community in 2017," said Chair Birchfield. "We have presented these again to confirm which of these the community wants to progress."

Instead of the drop-in session Council will be putting up a specific Westport Facebook post on Thursday. The information presented, the same as is already available on Council's website, will provide easy access to viewing the flood modelling videos and the protection the options presented can provide. This modelling has been validated by closely emulating the actual event of July 2021.

"We know this doesn't replace a face-to-face meeting with staff and Councillors but we are trying to provide a range of options for people to find out more, ask their questions and get the clarification they may need to make their submission."

After reading the Consultation Document, and/or viewing the modelling information, questions can be answered by:

- posting your question in the 'comments' on our Westport Facebook post
- talking to one of your local Regional Council Councillors
- calling our office to discuss with staff
- emailing your question to feedback@wrc.govt.nz

Council made the decision to post a copy of the Long-Term Plan Consultation Document to every ratepayer and Chair Birchfield noted that there had been delays in getting this out to ratepayers.

"Unfortunately, the Level 4 lockdown started during the printing process. We have been fortunate that our printers are an essential service and have worked above and beyond in these challenging times."

NZ Post have also indicated that as a result of additional safety procedures they are also experiencing some delivery delays. Despite these delays, the Long-Term Plan Consultation Document will start arriving in letterboxes this week.

In the interim, the LTP-CD can be viewed and/or downloaded from the Council's website at www.wcrc.govt.nz/community/consultation. An online submission form is also available to provide feedback.

"The one thing Lockdown has given many of us is time," said Chair Birchfield. "We're urging everyone to consider the issues and proposals and let us know what they think. The best way to have your views heard is by making a submission."

Submissions close Wednesday, 4.00pm 8 September 2021, with the Council to hold a hearing on 15 September for those wishing to present their views in person.

ENDS

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