



**Report**                    **05.338**  
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**Committee**            **Council**  
**Author**                **Ian Buchanan Chairman**

## **Chairman's Report**

As seems to be the norm at this stage, very little of my “out of meeting” activity has not already been reported to Councillors in some form. Brief highlights of the last period follow.

### **1. Arbor Day**

I attended plantings by local school children at Queen Elizabeth Regional Park and Battle Hill, together with a number of other Councillors (at QE Park). These are excellent examples of community involvement in making a difference and the enthusiasm and dedication of our Parks staff for these on-going programmes is to be applauded. All Councillors should attempt to diary these events each to get a hands on feel of how we contribute to community and environmental well being through such programmes.

### **2. Waitangirua Farm**

A proposal for joint funding to purchase the bulk of this farm, as a regional park, is now with Government for officials’ analysis and Cabinet consideration. It is difficult to get a feel for the outcome of this but I feel we have done all we possibly can to get a positive response. Time will tell. I will continue to take every possible opportunity to keep this momentum going with Government politicians.

### **3. WRS**

Strategy development continues with some lively questioning of possible outcomes by some members of the Forum. This is healthy and not surprising as we all come to grips with what the overall strategy may mean for the various constituent authorities. The collaborative spirit of officials and political levels remains strong and excellent progress is being made forward producing the first consultative documents on a Growth Framework for the strategy. Papers for this should be with Councillors for consideration of approval of the draft framework at the 19 July Council meeting.

#### **4. Transport matters**

To say that transport issues have taken up a considerable amount of my time over the past month or so, is somewhat of an understatement. The Western Corridor funding package was obviously high on this list and all Councillors are aware of the outcome. I must say that an \$885 million injection of additional Crown funding over 10 years into development of this region's transport network seems a fairly good result. I would like to acknowledge the effort and key role of our transport division officials in achieving this outcome. Their dedication and professionalism has been outstanding.

At the same time, work continues in deciding the tender for the Wairarapa carriages (Toll NZ), refurbishing Johnsonville units (now rolling out) advancing the long term rail contract through LTNZ (frustrating) and working through trolley bus contact negotiations with Stagecoach. Details of all of these will be reported by officers as they come to fruition.

#### **5. Local Government New Zealand**

Councillors will have noted my election (unopposed) to the National Council of LGNZ. I replace Cr Margaret Shields as Regional Affairs Committee (RAC) representative on the Council. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge Margaret's contribution as RAC representative and Vice-President of LGNZ during the last triennium. It was during her tenure that the new local government legislation evolved and passed into law, and Margaret played a major role in advancing local government interests in this legislative development. Thank you Margaret on behalf of us all.

#### **6. Leave**

I beg Councillors' indulgence for a long planned short holiday with my wife. I will be away from 2-12 August 2005.

#### **7. Recommendation**

*That the Council:*

*(1) receive this report.*

Report prepared by:

**Ian Buchanan**  
Chairman