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Submission on the Draft Gisborne District Council 10 Year Plan

INTRODUCTION

This is a submission on the LTCCP 2009-2019 made by KaPai Kaiti Trust. It was compiled after consultation with Kaiti residents including the five KaPai Kaiti Trustees (aged 29-69 years), 19 members of the KaPai Kaiti Working Group (aged 27 to 69 years) and 120 young people (aged 10-12years) who live in Kaiti and/or attend school in Kaiti.

We wish to be heard on this submission.

Congratulations to the CEO and his staff on producing a much better LTCCP than its predecessor. Granted, this is the second iteration of a 10 Year Plan for GDC, but the process for developing it has been a significant improvement on last time.

Having said this, we still have serious concerns about the plan development process and are disappointed that recommendations KaPai Kaiti representatives made to staff and Councillors in 2006 and 2007 about improvements for the community engagement process to increase ownership of the Plan do not seem to have been implemented to the level necessary. Subsequently it seems we still have a draft 'community' plan that is almost exclusively a GDC work programme and a draft plan that remains inaccessible to most residents of the region because they do not have a copy of it, do not understand it and/or do not see how the activities included and omitted will impact on their lives, the environment and future generations.

PREVIOUS SUBMISSIONS

We draw your attention to previous submissions made by Manu Caddie and KaPai Kaiti in 2003, 2006 and 2007 on Annual Plans, LTCCP and Urban Development Strategy documents and ask Councillors and staff to note that some of the recommendations in those submissions have been addressed by GDC but many are still awaiting inclusion in Council plans and processes or a reasonable explanation as to why they cannot be included.

Please also note the contents of the attached KaPai Kaiti presentation from 'The Right Debate' workshop last year.

COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Social Equity Issues:

We recommend the following:

- 1.1 That GDC undertake an Equity Impact Assessment for the LTCCP to identify and mitigate any adverse effects¹ resulting either from the activities included in the plan, and the omission of any activities from the plan, on populations in the region that are already socially, economically and/or culturally disadvantaged in relation to other sectors of the community.
- 1.2 That GDC amend its value/mission statements to include clearly articulated statements that support policymaking that takes into account equity, fairness and historic institutional bias.
- 1.3 That GDC make an explicit commitment over the next 10 years to ensure that every policy enacted reflects democratic principles of equity and fairness, giving particular regard to the fact that significant sectors of the population have historically not been properly engaged in public planning processes and many of their decedents have inherited an ambivalence about the value of participating in the planning processes of public institutions.
- 1.4 That GDC acknowledges in its 10 Year Plan that public institutions can play a negative role in issues of class, gender and cultural equity.²

¹ One definition of 'adverse effects' suggests it means the totality of significant individual or cumulative human health or environmental effects, including interrelated social and economic effects, which may include, but are not limited to: bodily impairment, infirmity, illness or death; air, noise, and water pollution and soil contamination; destruction or disruption of man-made or natural resources; destruction or diminution of aesthetic values; destruction or disruption of community cohesion or a community's economic vitality; destruction or disruption of the availability of public and private facilities and services; vibration; adverse employment effects; displacement of persons, businesses, farms, or nonprofit organizations; increased traffic congestion, isolation, exclusion or separation of minority or low-income individuals within a given community or from the broader community; and the denial of, reduction in or significant delay in the receipt of, benefits of programs, policies, or activities. (http://discovery.wcgmf.org/resources/sps_resource_728.pdf)

² Low-income and cultural minority groups have been traditionally victimised by institutional bias and discrimination. Studies by a wide range of organisations and researchers have shown that local government policies play a significant role in this victimisation by enacting policies that exacerbate and/or maintain inequity. For example see: Lowndes, V. and Wilson, D. *Social Capital and Local Governance: Exploring the Institutional Design Variable* in *Political Studies*, Volume 49, Issue 4, Pages 629 – 647, Political Studies Association, 2001; Quail Hill, K. and Leighley, J.E. *The Policy Consequences of Class Bias in State Electorates* in *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 36, No. 2 (May, 1992), pp. 351-365; Wolman, H. *Local Government Institutions and Democratic Governance in Theories of Urban Politics* (ed. David Judge), London, Sage, 1995.

- 1.5 That GDC commit to proactively and positively addressing present day patterns of bias and discrimination in a way that truly creates equitable opportunities for all of the region's residents.³
- 1.6 That GDC assign responsibility for establishing data monitoring mechanisms for mapping trends in equity across the region, the likely impacts on equity from draft plans and proposals and the actual impacts on equity from major regional initiatives to one of the existing standing committees.

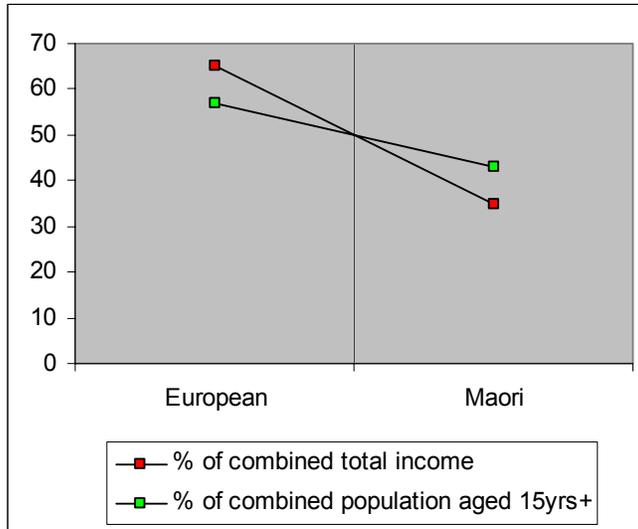


Fig. 1: Income disparity in Gisborne by ethnicity (Census 2006)

2. Major Issues:

2.01 **Affordability:** KaPai Kaiti acknowledge that a key issue for Council is getting a balance between having affordable rates and providing essential services, especially considering our large, sparsely populated area, low socioeconomic population and modest population growth. We support the plans of Council to address affordability by pursuing alternative sources of income and actively pursue grant funding for major projects.

Recommendations: That Council support the establishment, either within Council or a body like the Tairāwhiti Development Partnership, of a regional advocacy position that focuses on building robust arguments based on empirical evidence and mutually supportive relationships to secure external public and private investment in social, cultural, economic and environmental projects that benefit the region and that are prioritised through public input.

That, to reduce the massive fluctuation in rates changes and increase the ability of residents to plan for rates changes, Council design and implement a policy that keeps

³ For examples see: Ross, M. *Local authority consultation with Māori: Perceptions of representatives of the ART (Āti Awa ki Whakarongotai/Raukawa/Toa) Confederation*, unpublished Masters Thesis. Otaki, Te Wananga o Raukawa, 2007

the maximum difference between annual rates changes to less than 5% between the averages of the highest 10% and lowest 10% of increases/decreases.

2.02 Economic Conditions – recession/credit crunch: We support Council efforts to mitigate adverse impacts from the economic challenges facing the region and the efforts to minimise rates rises by putting off nonessential projects and having strict spending criteria. We also recognise that some initiatives have substantial externally-funded subsidies available at present and Council should take advantage of these opportunities as they may not be available in the future.

2.03 Economic development/positioning: We do not agree with some of the recommendations from the Tairāwhiti Development Partnership sponsored regional economic development strategy. We do not think the consultants placed enough weight on the importance of attracting high value, knowledge-based industries and business to the region. Low cost high volume exports like wood and wool will become increasingly marginal as countries with lower labour and land costs increase their exports to the markets New Zealand has traditionally served. We would like to see a clear plan for how this region is going to attract businesses and individuals who are world leaders in scientific research, innovation and enterprise. These organisations and people may base their services and products on the traditional commodities produced by the region but they may also be based in new sectors and technologies. The point is that Gisborne has huge potential as a lifestyle choice location for these entrepreneurs and innovators but we need to do a much better job at attracting their attention and promoting the benefits of being based here. The city's general 'look and feel' are factors in attracting people and investment capital but other issues like the natural environment, quality of social life, connections through broadband and air travel, land and building costs, cultural life and progressive political landscape are all equally important considerations.

2.04 Housing affordability: We disagree with the passive approach Council proposes to "keep an eye on how current economic conditions may affect housing affordability". If Council are not prepared to be the leading provider of social housing solutions, we do not believe Council should be a direct provider of affordable housing.

Recommendation: That the role Council should take is one of community leadership in facilitating discussions, planning and development for affordable housing. Working with Housing NZ, iwi authorities, other government agencies and interested community organisations, Council should be proactive in facilitating, perhaps with the Tairāwhiti Development Partnership, a community housing forum with the view to exploring the opportunities to develop housing cooperatives, housing trusts and other mechanisms that support families who may not otherwise be able to, move into some form of home ownership and reduces the need for large numbers of homes in low-income areas to be owned by a few private landlords.

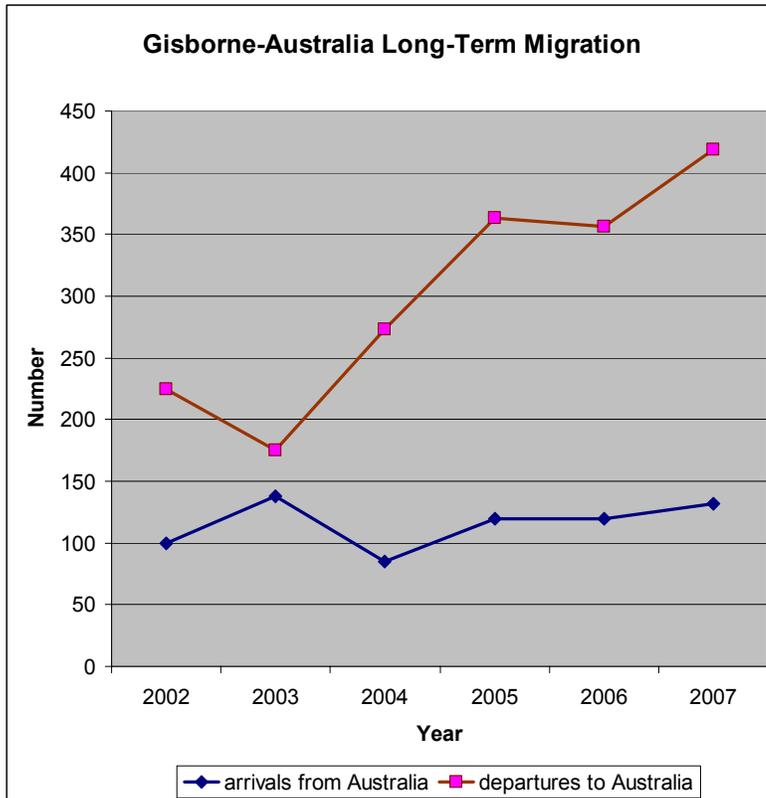


Fig. 2: Net long-term migration between Gisborne and Australia (Statistics NZ)

2.05 Treaty settlements: We agree that settling Treaty claims within the region will be positive for the district. We were disappointed that the Mayor made unilateral decisions about the value of the Tauwhareparae Farms and the negotiating position of Council with the Crown on the basis of a text message that did not eventuate into a concrete offer to purchase. In addition to the poor process and lack of judgment by the Mayor that this kind of action reveals, there seems to be very little consideration within Council of the opportunities to improve relationships between Council and local Maori that being presented within the interest expressed by the Crown. We would support a proportion of the proceeds from any sale to the Crown being used to fund existing capital works projects such as the new wastewater treatment system. We would like to see a Council policy on how deliberation about major asset sales includes the views of residents and how decisions on sales take into account these views.

2.06 Hazardscape: We support the Draft Ten Year Plan providing funding for Emergency Management activity, including Civil Defence and at this stage not providing funding for the impact on the community that emergency events may cause. If they do not exist already, we suggest that agreements or memoranda of understanding between central government and local government be established if they have not been already, that provide guidance on what each can expect of the other in the event of a regional emergency including some indication of the resources central government have available to deploy for emergencies and what threshold or criteria they use to determine the level of response made to an emergency. We also suggest that similar agreements could be negotiated with organisations such as the NZ Red Cross and other NGOs with expertise in disaster relief and emergency management.

2.07 Climate Change: If Council is “continuing to allow for predicted climate change in its planning and work programmes” we would like to know what the plan is for water supply to households on the East Coast given the predictions contained in the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report for the East Coast that the region will be so dry by 2050 that growing trees and farming will become marginal at best and human habitation may also become marginal as water tables decline and rainfall decreases. We would also like to know what level of commitment (indicated by the range and depth of initiatives being undertaken) Council is making to reduce CO₂ emissions in the district. For example: Do all Councillors now agree with the international consensus that current climate change is a result of the impact of human activity on the planet? Does Council have a replacement policy on its own vehicle fleet that places priority on maximum energy efficiency levels, minimum CO₂ emissions and/or hybrid vehicles that are now commensurate in price to petrol/diesel vehicles? Does Council have a commitment to promoting cycling as the preferred mode of transport for those who are able to use a bicycle instead of a car to travel within the city?

2.08 New Government, New Legislation: Gisborne needs an independent advocate who works between Wellington and Gisborne. Our MPs are too locked into adversarial party politics and look for ways to score points for their party rather than building relationships and advocating on behalf of residents and organisations/businesses in our region. We need someone who can consistently make robust arguments for Government policy and resourcing decisions that will benefit this region. The position could be funded with assistance from ECT and the Tairāwhiti Development Partnership. The person would need to have strong relationships with a wide range of stakeholders in Tairāwhiti, access to good quality (accurate, timely, relevant) information and be confident articulating our issues and proposed solutions to Cabinet Ministers, Select Committees, senior bureaucrats, business leaders, academics/researchers, national news media and philanthropic funders. Their performance would be judged on what policy changes for the benefit of the region they can influence, how much they can increase the profile and influence of our region at a national level, and how much support they can generate for initiatives and organisations located in the Tairāwhiti region.

2.09 Environmental Issues: We support Council working with landholders to enable the district’s worst-eroding land (Overlay 3A) to be planted with effective tree cover as part of the Sustainable Hill Country Project. We would like to see Council work more closely with organisations like MAF and WWF (who have the Habitat Protection Fund) that can support initiatives such as fencing riparian waterways to prevent stock contaminating and silting streams and rivers. The Kopuawhākapata Stream is still a popular dumping place for rubbish and run-off from roads and the truck wash that continues to be used in the Port area next to the Balance fertiliser storage shed. We would like to see more effort by Council and local residents to keep the Stream clean.

We note that Ilminster School students have identified the need for more plantings of native trees in Kaiti and would like to see Council support (via funding proposals to philanthropic and/or central government organisations) for a community nursery established within Kaiti, potentially in partnership with Te Poho o Rawiri Marae and/or local schools, that can germinate and grow native seedlings and fruit trees for planting on public and private property around the community.

2.10 Waste: We would like Council to be much more proactive in promoting waste minimization as opposed to waste management and celebrating our levels of recycling. Does Council have a policy of encouraging people to reduce their consumption, minimise waste and/or reuse instead of just recycling and discarding? Does Council have ideas on how central government funding available for these purposes will be utilised? Has Council exhausted investigations with private enterprise and community groups to look at the viability of recycling enterprises that could be based in the Gisborne district?

2.11 Energy: We agree that the district has some of New Zealand's highest energy costs and, in some rural areas, the least reliable supply. Council's Energy Strategy promotes energy efficiency, effective use of resources and investment in small generation technologies.

We would like to see more details on how the Regional Policy Statement is being measured and monitored in regard to Council's stated commitment to taking an *"advocacy role for renewable energy on the grounds that a reduction in dependency on (finite) fossil fuels is in the best long term interests of the region."* And what plans are in place for a full review of the Regional Policy Statement by 2012.

We recommend that Council take a more proactive role on advocating for subsidies from Government and/or Eastland Community Trust for solar and micro-hydro energy generation in the Gisborne region.

2.12 Changes to land transport funding: We support Council taking advantage of the current subsidies of up to 85% on roading projects in partnership with the NZ Transport Agency. We would like to see a timeframe put on the addition of a cycling/walking track attached to the rail bridge from Kaiti and work around the Esplanade / Kaiti Beach / Wainui Road intersections to improve safety for cyclists and pedestrians negotiating those roads.

3. Other Issues

3.01 Te Poho o Rawiri Marae: We would like to see greater recognition in the Urban Development Strategy and other Council plans of Te Poho o Rawiri as a cultural centre-piece for the region. Probably the second-most visited site in the region (after Titirangi Maunga / Kaiti Hill) for visitors and tourists, Te Poho o Rawiri has the potential to be a vibrant cultural and social hub for Kaiti, Gisborne City and the whole region.

We would like to see Council designate staff members to form a working group that meets with the Marae Committee at least quarterly to develop and implement a work plan that identifies priority needs for the marae and opportunities for Council to support the maintenance and development of the marae facilities and associated social, cultural and economic activities with resourcing from third party funders.

3.02 Democratic Process: We agree with the 873 local submitters who signed a petition calling on Council to use the Single Transferrable Vote (STV) system at the next Council election in 2010. We recommend Council change its position on this and choose the fairer system that will reduce confusion between the two systems used at present for GDC and TDHB elections and is likely to increase the diversity of Council as new candidates from sectors of the population not well represented on Council at present have a better chance of gaining a seat, particularly in the City Ward.

We urge Council to get more involved in educating the public about Council election processes through workshops, public meetings, community groups, neighbourhood events, radio interviews/advertisements, multimedia and printed resources and other methods to reach those areas with low voter turnout at the last election as evidenced by the GIS map produced by Council staff highlighting voting and non-voting households.

We would like to see in the LTCCP a calendar of annual training and development plans for Councillors on democratic theory and processes including the strengths and weaknesses of common mechanisms associated with deliberative, participatory and representative democratic models.

3.03 Kaiti Community Board: Recognising the comparatively low level of participation in Council consultation, election and decision-making processes from Kaiti residents, we would like to see Council support the establishment and operation for three Council terms of a Kaiti Community Board that is democratically elected from Kaiti residents and meets as a formal committee of Council to consider issues of interest to Kaiti residents and make formal reports and recommendations to Council. This could serve as a demonstration model for other communities in the region to learn from and emulate or adapt successful aspects of the mechanism.

3.04 Kaiti Neighbourhood Plans: Recognising the value of local community planning (as opposed to regional/district planning) in terms of residents taking responsibility for their own issues, we recommend Council support the development of Neighbourhood Plans in at least two areas of Kaiti. Outer Kaiti and Kaiti South are neighbourhoods that have the highest levels of deprivation in the country and have not been served by housing developers, town planners⁴ and Council investment decisions.⁵

⁴ McCallum, L. *Demographic, Social & Economic Characteristics of Sherriff Block Residents*, in Planning and State Housing unpublished Masters Thesis, Massey University, 1972.

The thesis talks about how poor planning meant that trees could not be grown because (a) the top soil from the subdivision had all been scraped off and put on the area that is now Waikirikiri Reserve; and (b) sewer and water pipes were placed under the grass verge so tree roots would have wrecked the essential service pipes.

It also reveals that the 'reserve contributions' (funds that housing developers pay to Council to establish parks and recreation areas for residents) were used to purchase and develop the Heath Johnston Park on Wainui Road which is much further away than the recommended distance for residents to have to get to if they want to use the park.

At the time of the research, a high school was planned to be built by 1980 on what is now the Waikirikiri Reserve.

The research also shows that there were established principles for state housing that required them to be of high quality construction, as good or better than the houses of 'ordinary citizens'. State housing was also supposed to 'be considered individually' and 'every attempt was to be made to avoid the label of Government mass-produced house'.

⁵ For example the lack of consultation with Kaiti residents about the location of the proposed multisport complex even though provisions for a multisport complex are included in the *Waikirikiri Reserve Management Plan* (1999) and the value of such a facility was identified through the research undertaken as part of the *Kaiti Social Cohesion Report* (2005) project supported by GDC.

- 3.05 Cultural Integrity: We recommend that Council undertake two policy projects over the next three years: (1) an Official Languages Policy with a focus on including Te Reo Maori in public signage and official documents in recognition of its status as an official language of New Zealand and that the Gisborne region has the highest proportion of speakers of Te Reo Maori in the country and it is something Council should be proud of, celebrate and encourage; (2) the establishment a Cultural Advisory Group in recognition that Gisborne is going to become increasingly culturally diverse and GDC should have representatives from new immigrant cultural groups, Tangata Whenua and Tangata Tiriti (New Zealanders of European ancestry) to deliberate and provide feedback on what Council are doing well in terms of creating an inclusive community - with a particular focus on Council processes, policies and practices.
- 3.07 Youth Participation: We draw attention to the four points made by Tairawhiti Youth Workers Collective submission on the LTCCP in 2004 and suggest that Council formalise its commitment to youth participation in Council decision-making processes and that more effective mechanisms are developed to ensure Council processes, policies and practices are not inconsistent with the principles of positive youth development.⁶
- 3.08 Titirangi Footpath: We would like to see a footpath installed adjacent to the road over Titirangi Maunga (Kaiti Hill) as the road is used by hundreds of walkers (including many with prams) every week and cars going up and down the road come around blind corners very fast. It is hard to push prams off road and very difficult to move quickly to avoid speeding vehicles.
- 3.09 Gisborne Public Library: We support the vision for Gisborne Public Library identified through the recent survey of users and support the need to extend the building to provide more room for research and computer use and the proposed expansion of mobile library services to rural areas and suburbs like Kaiti.
- 3.10 Olympic Pool Complex: We recognise the need for significant repairs and upgrades required at the Olympic Pool. We would like Council support to fully utilise the existing community pools, particularly the one at Ilminster School that needs Council support to provide an affordable, accessible, safe and secure swimming facility for Kaiti families. It costs approximately \$10,000 to open the pool over summer – we would like Council to contribute 0.25% of the estimated cost of redeveloping the Olympic Pool and pay \$5,000 per annum toward the cost of running Ilminster Pool over summer.
- 3.11 Multisport Complex: We do not support the proposal to locate the multisport complex at Churchill Park or anywhere other than in Kaiti. Our neighbourhood has no significant community recreation facilities other than some average quality sports grounds. Given the likely costs of using such a facility, it should be based close to the largest population of people who have the least disposable income to reduce the additional costs of transport and travel time – and it would send a signal to Kaiti residents that Council recognise we has been poorly served by town planning decisions in the past but things are changing.

⁶ www.myd.govt.nz/YouthDevelopmentStrategyAotearoa/theprinciples.aspx

3.12 Skate Bowls: We support the need for Council to maintain the modest level of investment it has made in the Alfred Cox Skate Park to provide youth worker supervision during peak use times. This facility is probably the only public space that young people feel some sense of ownership of, it is mainly used by young males for positive recreation and controlled risk-taking activities. The park is recognised nationally as one of the best designed and best kept skate parks in the country and something Council and the community can be very proud of. To maintain this high standard continued support is required for the groups that use and supervise the park. We would like to see serious consideration by Council of areas around the park developed as a 'youth precinct' that may include youth health services, youth training providers (such as Turanga Ararau), recreational opportunities and information and advocacy/support services for young people.

We draw attention to the aspirations of the 100+ Ilminster students involved in a facilitated submission-making process who identified the Kaiti Skate Bowl as a public asset they would like to see further developed and made safer through supervision.

3.13 Community Development Role: We would like to participate in a formal review of the community and social development functions of Council that is undertaken in conjunction with the wider community to ensure that this aspect of Council activity is being as effective as it could be and that it is taking leadership roles in places like the Tairāwhiti Development Partnership Social Development Forum to coordinate and improve the effectiveness of significant central government investment in regional social development.

3.14 Council Leadership in Economic & Social Development: Consistent with the Local Government Act and identified Community Outcomes, we would like to see Council strategic leadership and facilitation to help address, with the involvement of a wide range of sectors, organisations and groups, the most pressing social issues for our region including: (a) increasing disparities in social, health, education/training and economic indicators across different sectors of the population; (b) increasing levels of social isolation and intergenerational disconnectedness; (c) increasing levels of violence and anti-social behaviour; (d) the high rates of suicide, unplanned pregnancies, alcohol and drug abuse.

4. Major Projects

4.01 We support Council's plan to extend the city's cycle/walkways along Waikanae Beach and Taruheru River but we believe other parts of the city should benefit from the investment before these areas. We would like to see the cycle/walkway extended across the train bridge to Kaiti, a track linking Kaiti Beach to the top of Endcliffe Road and a cycle/walkway exercise loop around Waikirikiri Reserve.

4.02 We support Council's plan to proceed with design and feasibility work for an extension to improve library services.

- 4.03 We support Council's plan for a Mobile Library Service for Gisborne's rural communities.
- 4.04 We support Council's plan to develop a Civic Space in the city centre but first we would like to see Council negotiate management responsibilities for Kaiti Mall as a priority civic space designed to foster positive interactions between local residents of all ages and cultural backgrounds.
- 4.05 We support Council's plan to upgrade the War Memorial Theatre but first we would like to see Council support, in partnership with the Marae Committee, an upgrade of Te Poho o Rawiri Marae buildings and lands. As one of the most important historical buildings in the country the Council should be making a specific and sustained investment in this cultural treasure and community asset.
- 4.06 We support Council's plan to go ahead with planning for a multi-purpose pool, but only if 0.25% of the project planning, development and maintenance costs are assigned to a public swimming facility in Kaiti. We do not support Council's plan to go ahead with planning for a multi-purpose recreation centre unless proper consultation and engagement has been undertaken with Kaiti residents and a Whanau Ora Health Impact Assessment completed prior to decisions being made about the final location of any such facility.
- 4.07 We support Council's plan to work with Eastland Infrastructure to enhance the inner harbour to economic and recreational benefit but only if Ngati Oneone and other hapu/iwi with historical connections to the inner harbour are involved and retain the power to determine whether or not a planned activity should proceed if it is considered to have a significant impact on the cultural integrity and/or historical value of an area or object.
- 4.08 We may support Council's plan to have water meters for all domestic and commercial consumers to manage water demand provided that an average use is determined and that amount is not charged for separately but paid for within rates – anything above average use may be metered and paid for but it would also be useful to develop a mechanism for water used for growing food domestically as opposed to water used for swimming pools and other non-essential activities. Council or other entities subsidising rain water collection and storage equipment may be another option to reduce demand on public piped water supplies.
-