

Gerald Ponsford – Waikanae Ward

Economic Development

- 1. What is your understanding of the Kotahitanga Board and the role that they play? Should they be independent?** To facilitate the future economic well-being of the Kapiti District with particular reference to growing the local economy and improving local employment and business outcomes.
- 2. Kāpiti Chamber values town centres as vital contributors to our local economic system. What examples of benefits have you seen from town centres?** Our town centres are very much the heart of our communities. The stronger and healthier the heart, the stronger and healthier our communities will be. Apart from their contributions to the local economy and jobs, our town centres are essential to our health social well being and provide a much needed focal point where locals, meet, shop, socialise and share.
- 3. How do you plan to support and grow town centres, and their relationship to the economic development team and wider business community?** Town centres need to be strongly connected and interconnected if they are to thrive and grow. While some areas of the Waikanae Ward have undoubtedly benefitted from the Expressway, Waikanae Township has lost a lot of its previously enjoyed connectivity from the south & north. Access for the likes of Peka Peka and Waikanae east residents requires an extra 7 km round trip and businesses delivering to Waikanae Village now require to use residential streets as the primary access. Heavy articulated trucks, such as construction and logging trucks are required to do the same. The village now misses out on passing traffic and the environmental consequences and additional time to access the village and impacted communities is becoming of increasing concern. Peka Peka needs a full interchange and Otaihanga a partial (south on and north off) to solve this. It will also restore passing, spur-of-the moment traffic to Southwards, a big tourism drawcard.
- 4. What is your understanding of the purpose of the Tourist Advisory Board and their relationship with Wellington NZ and KCDC?** An excellent initiative with a group focussed on developing tourism and increasing visitor numbers to Kapiti. This is just what our district needs and it's is great to see it will work with KCDC and the wider Wellington region to coordinate activities.
- 5. What are the opportunities around tourism in Kāpiti?** Eco tourism is clearly a main one for our district. Our coastline, many unspoilt natural areas & sanctuaries, our rural expanses and river environs already provide good drawcards as does Southwards. Working with our communities on enhancing current opportunities and developing new is key as is leveraging off the many other reasons visitors come to our district, such as for weddings. We need to develop add ons so that newly married honeymoon here and guests stay longer and enjoy our multiple recreation facilities.

Better Infrastructure

- 6. What role do you think KCDC plays in the Peka Peka Interchange?** KCDC must do more to enhance access to the Expressway. It is critical for future economic & tourism developments particularly around Waikanae, Reikorangi and Peka Peka and essential to minimise our current carbon footprint. KCDC cannot limit its role to just the Peka Peka interchange it must also secure a partial interchange at Otaihanga (south on & north off) to restore previous accessibility, address business impacts and mitigate the extra emissions and other environment implications on key areas since the Expressway opened. Peka Peka and Waikanae east residents for example have to travel up to 1400 kms each per year just because these interchanges don't exist. Likewise logging trucks servicing say Reikorangi are required to do significant extra kms through residential streets and waste 15 minutes per journey because these interchanges don't yet exist. An Otaihanga interchange will also ensure Southwards is able to once again become an easily accessible tourist drawcard.
- 7. KCDC has been making strategic housing purchases. What are your thoughts on KCDC as a housing provider or facilitator? What does intensification mean to you, and how do you think it could change Kāpiti?** I am in favour of this BUT it must also go hand in hand with the development of a similar plan for business and employment opportunities. There is no point solely focussing on social housing the overall housing needs of a growing population, if they all have to travel outside the district for work & business opportunities. We need a business park, commercial buildings, big format retailers and large employers and the like to establish themselves in Kapiti to capture & maximise the benefits of growth for the local economy & employment. All new builds , housing and commercial should also be incentivised to embrace solar power.
- 8. As it stands, KCDC has funding to move forward with Te Uruhi. This has been a big talking point in our business community and membership. Assuming it goes ahead, what impact do you foresee the gateway having on business and community wellbeing in the Kāpiti region?** Like a good number of Kapiti residents I do not believe Te Uruhi will have a positive impact on business and community wellbeing. At best it will be neutral. I believe the \$7.5 million could be used elsewhere with far greater value for business and the community.
- 9. What do you think are the opportunities for business if the Kāpiti Airport stays an airport, or if it gets developed?** I see potentially more overall benefit if the airport land was available for a mix of housing, drawcard big format businesses, hig tech centre of excellence for the Wellington region, government departments and the like. Definitely needs a lot more thought, discussions with stakeholders and consultation/ engagement with the Kapiti community

Future thinking

- 10. What actions should KCDC be taking to support businesses to become climate friendly?** Solar and EV fleet adoption would be a good start along with lobbying for incentives from central government to facilitate.

- 11. How do you envision the relationship between local iwi and KCDC operating in the future?** I envision that KCDC relationships with all stakeholders, Iwi, residents, ratepayers, businesses etc, improves and enhances over time. It is essential to us all capturing the benefits of the growth opportunities ahead of us, as well as working through the many challenges we will face as a consequence.
- 12. Summarise your understanding of the following reforms: Three Waters Reform and Local Government Reform. How do you plan to keep Kāpiti's voice strong throughout these changes and advocate for our business community?** Three Waters: ensuring the delivery of high quality drinking water, waste water and storm water solutions to all New Zealanders. Ensuring these solutions are sustainable, future proofed, well maintained & fit for purpose and provided at a cost local communities can afford. In essence de-risking the current local ownership model. Local Government Reform. A much needed look at ensuring the current governance model will be suitable and provide the best optimal solutions over the next 25 years. It may well be that the current model is retained but considerable value and economies of scale could be unlocked through amalgamations and the like. Strong communication and engagement with business & residents and representing their views will be key.
- 13. What is your vision for Kāpiti, and how do you intend to implement it? Name three visionary actions you aspire to implement?** My vision for Kapiti is that it becomes recognised as the best district to live, work and play in the Wellington region. A district with a growing & dynamic local economy, well connected & interconnected and with engaged residents and businesses. An important part of this vision is having a council that aspires to be recognised as being the very best & doing the very best by it ratepayers, residents, business and other stakeholders. Looking back from 2059, a district that has worked together to solve many of the challenges it faced; growth, coastal inundation and connectivity to name a few examples.
- a. Conduct local body elections every three months – the initiatives and ideas that come out of the process will probably best anything from a consultant and it's free. Joking aside, engage & involve our residents more in developing and owning the vision. Locals know best & if we can unlock the many skill sets we have amongst residents how awesome that would be. The Kapiti Kaizen approach.
 - b. Solar power initiatives that would see Kapiti houses & business premises all generating 75% of their energy needs, including for vehicles. Plus considerably enhanced public transport and inter connectivity, potential even on demand.
 - c. A futures plan defining the business types we want to see in Kapiti in 10, 20 & 30 years and then a programme designed to encourage those businesses coming to Kapiti. Goal is to have at least 50% of our residents working locally by 2040.
- 14. How do you plan on being a visible and accessible leader for our council and community?** There is no substitute to be seen out and about in all areas the Waikanae Ward engaging with locals. If I am entrusted as being on of the two

councillors I will regularly be at the library, attending community resident groups, community board, visiting local businesses, chamber of commerce meetings and the like. Social media also has a big part to play particularly with a good number of existing Waikanae & Kapiti pages to interact with. Also intending to facilitate the development of strategic future plans for the individual residential communities within Waikanae Ward plus separately for businesses along the lines of the Waikanae Beach Futures Plan. The development and ongoing implementation of those places will provide good opportunities for leadership in the community and council.