

## Jackie Elliot – Districtwide Candidate

### Economic Development

- 1. What is your understanding of the Kotahitanga Board and the role that they play? Should they be independent?** Kotahitanga Board (E.D.K.B.) I supported the formation of the independent advisory board and the terms of reference in 2020 and had the pleasure of appointing Chair Neil McKay and the new meeting board members to provide Governance and over sight of Kapiti's Economic Development, as part of the 2020 - 2023 Economic Development strategy. We are lucky to have such group of inspiring, successful entrepreneurial people put their hands up and give their time and energy to bringing fresh thinking, expert networking skills to our district. They provide a cohesive way forward for E.D. with clear outcomes identified for economic growth. They are future thinking in focusing on a higher education and skills training to capture all the potential our community has to offer. I hope the continued use of such a board is part of the new E.D. Strategy after 2023. I think having an Independent board has been successful.
- 2. Kāpiti Chamber values town centres as vital contributors to our local economic system. What examples of benefits have you seen from town centres?** Town Centre's are included in the District Plan as commercial zones to create hubs so the community can find shops, goods and services in one place so that is an obvious benefit especially when serviced by reliable public transport and provide for a variety of transport modes. They provide an opportunity for our villages to showcase their individual character, are a natural gathering place for the public of all ages, should provide seating, trees and gardens, safe spaces for pedestrians and cyclists and inviting spaces to meet, relax, catch a performance as well as shops and carparking.
- 3. How do you plan to support and grow town centres, and their relationship to the economic development team and wider business community?** Some of our major town centres have been severely affected by stalled re-design work for the state highway revocation programme. I plan to support town centres by lobbying for protection from the disruption of upgrades. I do not want any further infrastructure projects to be commenced unless contracts stipulate a penalty payment for all affected business for any projects not completed by a set deadline, and I want the current ones completed under urgency. I also want KCDC to be more proactive in ensuring the state of privately owned public carparks and access ways is kept to a safe standard. I would encourage our smaller town centres to form a membership board and make themselves part of our many creative and cultural events, by hosting activities and I would supply them all proper Christmas decorations and lights.
- 4. What is your understanding of the purpose of the Tourist Advisory Board and their relationship with Wellington NZ and KCDC?** The Tourist Advisory Board is an off-shoot of the E.D.K.B. With tourism focused members and other well suited members of the public on it, although I can think of two more locals with the expertise to be included and was surprised they weren't involved. It was formed to implement the

Destination Management Plan by providing strategic frameworks to strengthen the visitor economy, build the destination Kapiti brand with identified outcomes in the terms of reference. There has been much disappointment in the city centric activities of GWRC ratepayer funded Wellington NZ including Kapiti ratepayers as a tourism agency for our region, and an agreement two years ago was made to improve the direct flow of investment in the wider region including Kapiti.

- 5. What are the opportunities around tourism in Kāpiti?** KCDC should fully support the building of the Whalesong project and Wharemauku Park as a new destination attraction. As an Ecotourism guide on Kapiti island for over 5 years I saw and completely understand the high esteem in which Kapiti Island is held through out the world as a native flora and fauna reserve. It amazes me that many locals simply do not value the Island as much as our visitors do. That is definitely an opportunity for domestic market growth. I see huge potential for growth as travel times from the city, Hutt Valley and Wairarapa have been improved by the opening of Transmission Gully. There is much here that can be found in every other town so focusing on our unique features is important. Our weather is way better than where they are from especially up in Peka Peka and north, we should be promoting this and sorting our currently limited access to the Otaki Forks and Southern Crossing with more tours, stay away and recreational opportunities in our bush.

## **Better Infrastructure**

- 6. What role do you think KCDC plays in the Peka Peka Interchange?** Councils role is to face off with Waka Kotahi and make continued current access north and south for residents of Peka Peka and Te Horo after the opening of the Peka Peka to Otaki expressway. However it does not have to be a full interchange and I had thought the language had changed around this to - a slip road. The land is there ready for it and the cost will be nowhere near the \$29M first quoted for an interchange. It is KCDC's job to support residents in their call and KCDC's role to effectively lobby for this simple short slip road. Recently PP20 project management staff assured KCDC councillors that there would be no loss of current access points. I won't believe that until I see it and frankly many of us thought he had made a mistake interpreting the plans. Cr James Cootes, as Transport Portfolio leader has been making real progress negotiating this.
- 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?** KCDC are well placed to facilitate the predicted growth through planning tools and partnering with social housing providers, as a partner with land, not cold hard cash for the provision of more social housing. We could not help being named a growth area, by the Government, rather council are legislatively bound to give effect to the National Policy Statement Urban Development and council has to use all its tools to shape growth that does not take away our character, green fields, or degrade our water or lifestyle quality. KCDC needs to keep initiating plan changes in the future that ensure future development

protected and enhances our green spaces and is carefully guided by natural features. To be honest I have yet to see any evidence of how and why 30,000 more people will be coming to Kapiti, and have seen similar predictions over previous decades when actual growth was neutral. I am extremely proud to be one of the first councils in New Zealand to enable the development of Papakainga developments on ancestral Maori land through recent planning document updates and the district growth strategy.

- 8. As it stands, KCDC has funding to move forward with Te Urihi. 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?** Te Urihi is something that has been planned for over 20 years because fit for purpose bio security facilities are needed for the visitors to Kapiti Island. It will bring an opportunity to showcase our incredible Maori / settler/ whaling history and cultural art. Why should my children have to go to Foxton or Porirua to learn about our Iwi? Why should their children? Five years ago we were daily protecting the island from Rainbow skinks, Argentinian Ants, flora and fauna poachers, Kauri gum dieback disease and Dutch Elm disease alongside the introduction of unwanted pest plants and rodents. Te Urihi will be a destination in itself, it will bring important visitor money into the district. However- The project is now different to the one originally voted on and costing \$3M more. I believe the cost increase will continue to skyrocket and am prepared to wait out this attempt at building it in the hope the state of the construction industry will improve. This is why I tried to have the project deferred for up to two years in the 2020 LTP. This was not supported by the council table. I don't support the development of Te Urihi. However should the project be canceled. I will, yet again, propose budget for a small stand alone biosecurity facility to be built at the marine transport operators departure point, in the 2023 Annual Plan process. Around in a circle we go again.
- 9. What do you think are the opportunities for business if the Kāpiti Airport stays an airport, or if it gets developed?** The potential of the airport land is huge. It is big enough to provide an entire new community with stand alone services, schools, wetland restoration, recreational opportunities all connecting to and enhancing the existing commercial retail and businesses activity along Kapiti Road. The continued improved management of the Wharemauku stream will have to be taken into consideration and the airport developers whoever they will be, will have to be good neighbours to the existing community. The airport is proven to be fiscally non viable and I challenge anyone who thinks it can be viable to put their money down and try and buy it to prove it. The contextual analysis of the airport land outlines just how lucky we are to have such a large piece of land virtually locked in a time warp for the past 80 years and as a lifetime Kapiti Coaster, I am kind of keen to see the gates locked again for another 100 years, but I know that is unrealistic.

## **Future thinking**

**10. What actions should KCDC be taking to support businesses to become climate friendly?**

More EV charge points are planned and needed, even in multi unit residential developments. Quite simply the Government now has a requirement on any business or agency they enter into a contract with to have a 'Climate Change Action policy implemented. KCDC, as a Local Government body has the same requirement. I reminded representatives of the Local Government Funding Agency (LGFA) of this eighteen months ago, and its roll out was a feature of their last annual report. It would be up to the Government to legislate the same requirement on businesses. However locally KCDC are putting considerable funding resources towards waste minimisation education and waste plans are now required for all large developments as part of consenting requirements. Council can moderate the thresholds independently. The council can encourage business owners and staff to have an active role alongside residents in the C.A.P. Process and access funding for further contestable grants for business initiatives and innovation for climate change adaption initiatives.

**11. How do you envision the relationship between local iwi and KCDC operating in the future?**

KCDC has a 25 year old partnership between Governance and Iwi. This has recently been enhanced and all three Iwi stated in the 2021 Representation Review, they preferred the continuation and strengthening of Te Whakaminenga to having Maori ward seats in KCDC as a way to take part in engagement and enable better outcomes for Maori. I like this. I have been a partner in Te Whakaminenga for 10 years and our ability to develop every single strategy, policy or plan from the very first workshop side by side with Iwi has proven to be an amazing experience and an effective method of enabling smooth project implementation compared to the outdated scenario of an organisation near completing a draft then having to start again after failing to get Iwi buy in. It has also enabled those non-Maori to be able to see our work through the lens of Maori world view values. This is something a previous Iwi representative and I noticed especially in national 3Waters reform presentations, that was missing in other districts. Creating a very confrontational environment with many feeling too marginalised to contribute, this will not create positive outcomes for anyone. Covid stopped us last year, but we both hope to present our model to the forum of the Society of Local Government Managers and other Local Government forums, we feel so strongly about it as a model of very positive Iwi engagement. Like all partnerships, its not all smooth sailing and we do sometimes hit rough spots, but we all learn so much just by going through the process of rebuilding and improving the relationship. The opportunity for a Maori ward will come in the next representation review.

**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?**

I was present at the first presentation of the 3waters Reform programme at a Local Government conference. Mayors, Managers and elected members walked out on the Minister and many of the concerns they caucused still have yet to be addressed. I have kept up to date with the rollout, noted the concerns of KCDC Management

and Independent reports back to KCDC highly critical of any of the D.I.A. assumptions for 'a better off Kapiti' and I have joined those at the KCDC table in complete opposition to the 3Waters Reform programme. It might be different if I was a councillor for Havelock North, but I'm not, I represent the people and district of Kapiti. Unfortunately KCDC has been loathe to publicly express any negative views about the reform programme for the last three years because the outgoing Mayor and three councillors are active Labour Party members unable to oppose Labour Party policy. They have been working for the party for three years, not the people they were elected to represent on this important issue. By the way, through all this, you have been denied the KCDC referendum you are entitled to under our standing orders (9.16). Every single candidate for every seat should honestly state their party affiliations because some in Kapiti simply haven't.

- 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 all who live here have a fair chance to live their best lives here. It means different things for different people, that the marginalised are supported, so homelessness is something KCDC has a role to play in. Providing the necessities for healthy day to day living in public places, like hot public showers, clean toilets and supporting food bank, KYS and our support agencies. That everyone has the opportunity to be educated to be productive members of the community through better access to local higher education. That our soils and water are protected so we are productive and innovative growers. And actively challenging the rules and contracts thousands of elderly Kapiti residents are tied into with off-shore owned retirement village giants who are just sucking up the intergenerational wealth of our elderly. We need better timely and affordable access to emergency and other healthcare services right here. No more driving to regional hospitals. Whether I am a councillor or not, shouting about the shocking state of the health system, 27000 on surgery waiting lists, unacceptable waiting room delays and lobbying the Government to respond accordingly to the health crisis they have perpetuated is the number one way right now, in August 2022 that I can use my voice to advocate for my Kapiti community.
- 14. How do you plan on being a visible and accessible leader for our council and community?** Whether having my Councillor, wife, mum, daughter or nana hat on, being available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to the public by phone or email or sometimes a chat at the shops has been the way of life for my family and I for ten years. I enjoy it and find it natural to stop what I am doing to listen, identify the concern, seek advice from staff and follow up diligently. I always take the time to develop a good relationship with council staff and management and it helps in getting quick and full responses to concerns that only they can answer. Often as an elected member we see things that need the urgent attention of staff or a contractor so it helps them do their job too, and reduce public hazards before they happen. I have been able to develop this sort of openness with the public as I am very down to earth and approachable, whether at my other normal job, on the netball court sideline, at my local for the big game or in the supermarket queue and it is the most

enjoyable part of the job for someone whose nature is to be caring and concerned about the well being of the community.