

Michelle Lewis – Mayoral Candidate

Economic Development

- 1. What is your understanding of the Kotahitanga Board and the role that they play? Should they be independent?** I would like to thank Karl and Martin for briefing me on this. However, my understanding is limited. I like to seek out information till I have no questions remaining and then to work out with others how we take an idea forward and what elements we need to line up to move it. I'm a planner so knee jerk reactions don't work for me. A structured approach applying good practice and that has funding and a timeline and clear governance in place. I'm yet to be convinced on the need for independence, why is this not covered by the Strategy committee at council, why does the delivery team not report quarterly? Do we really need another governance body? Very often in my work I find groups set up without a clear focus or that overlaps with that of others. I do see some potential here at the moment and during my campaign I'd like to find out more so that when elected I will have a clear position on this. Also through my conversations I've found that not everyone is aware of the board..so we have work to go.
- 2. Kāpiti Chamber values town centres as vital contributors to our local economic system. What examples of benefits have you seen from town centres?** I want to see our small centres thrive, retain their individual values and identities. Local centres that are easily accessible to our communities will thrive especially where cyclists alongside cars are encouraged. NZ research shows that per trip a cyclist spends more than a car driver. As a business owner, I would be supporting getting more cycle facilities up to my building. I was one member of the committee that set up the Waikanae Easter and Labour Weekend Market. I see local centres as a place where communities can gather and events bring in local and out of town people. When worked through by community and businesses together it can create new experiences that support both volunteer and professional services. Both need to work together in harmony for a successful community
- 3. How do you plan to support and grow town centres, and their relationship to the economic development team and wider business community?** Community led initiatives. Identify the barriers. Work out what council can do to facilitate conversations. Work with council staff and other councillors to facilitate change and connections. Do not support individual agendas.... I'll come down hard on people in my team that do this....its all about team work not individuals
- 4. What is your understanding of the purpose of the Tourist Advisory Board and their relationship with Wellington NZ and KCDC?** As a community member for over 16 years I've never heard of the Tourist Advisory Board. Communication and marketing are important not just to the out of district people, but more importantly to the locals. Lets make Kāpiti a great place to live, work and play first for those who live here. From there the district will sell itself, and boom...
- 5. What are the opportunities around tourism in Kāpiti?** Through my conversations I've heard of tourism activities on the water, glass bottomed boats, kayaking etc....

Let's sell experiences with minimal infrastructure before we invest in large costly infrastructure. I'm looking for low cost - high value solutions to drive economic development. When we get this right, we will have the numbers flowing through from locals to out of towners....we are focused too much on attracting out of town and internationals before we provide for those on our doorstep..... Lets use our community facilities like parks and open spaces to create events...let council be the facilitator who enables this rather than requiring traffic control and pushing costs on the community... lets think smarter about how and what we do.....lets have drive in cinemas, Brewtown, go karting, paint balling and other activities, lets have pop up events in our town centres - young people leading, supported by business

Better Infrastructure

- 6. What role do you think KCDC plays in the Peka Peka Interchange?** KCDC advocates for the community. When the Peka Peka interchange was put in, the community did not want to expand. They didn't want traffic volumes to increase in their area. They wanted to retain the rural feel. As the KCDC Road Asset Manager at that time, I worked with senior managers to meet this aspiration. The north facing ramps was the result of the negotiations. I'm experienced in this aspect and know the challenges and all levels of engagement that are needed to get the outcome the community want. I cannot do this justice in a few sentences after years of working on the expressway projects but am happy to expand through face to face discussions. KCDC needs to work at all levels from governance through to technical advice. They can not sit back and let NZTA do the work. KCDC staff need to be actively working and commenting on designs and pushing back where expectations are not met. KCDC should have a Memorandum of Understanding with clear community deliverables as a minimum. Monitoring of impacts would be an added bonus
- 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?** Kapiti needs different types of housing to allow different groups to come into our district and increase its diversity and vibrancy. Our traditional housing stock meets the needs of only certain groups in society. My work in the UK and here has focused on centralisation of services and urbanisation including intensification. We actually don't need to travel as much, we do need to make housing designs and options more variable to cater for all of society. We need social housing, in the UK it has long been a requirement to have new housing developments with 5-10% of social housing units within them. Some developers do not like working here. It's too hard. I've found it too hard working with council as a transport professional I will change this because it doesn't have to be like this. I've done it before from the inside, I know what do to and how to make it happen. Higher density around train stations - traditional overseas thinking, we need to think differently. This is okay if all trips to wellington but isn't that a climate -

emissions issue, don't we actually want to let people be in 15 minute neighbourhoods, does our local public transport support this ? Currently not...

- 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?** So my experience is looking at assumptions..... This might not win me a single vote tonight, but it might land me a job in writing beTer business cases for the next design. Te Uruhi doesn't stack up as a business decision, there is no long term growth potential, the current assumptions are flawed, the project has been poorly run within council and the assessment at the council table has been poor. I have read all the council papers. The options analysis is not well presented, the preferred option doesn't stack up. It's not a business decision I could support. I don't believe it would in its current form add value to the business or community. It needs to be stripped back to the principles of what it was trying to achieve and work openly with the community and business on what this could look like going forward. The PGF just added to the chaos, lets stop chasing government money and focus on our local needs and from there find the funding that will support what we need to do at the right time, rather than, as in this case, try to piggyback another project onto an existing project because some money might be available.
- 9. What do you think are the opportunities for business if the Kāpiti Airport stays an airport, or if it gets developed?** We need jobs here. Let's work together on how we can leverage the value the airport and its location has for the benefit of everyone. Let's get proactive and start to look at what the future could be, let's get things lined up let's get council working for the community so that when key decisions have been made the remainder of the process flows without any hiccups. Either way the opportunities for business are many, its up to the people to work through this and for the new mayor to be a driver of change, to facilitate creativity and innovation, to add value through the engagement, to be targeted in how and when they engage whilst supporting community outcomes. This is what I would bring to the role.

Future thinking

- 10. What actions should KCDC be taking to support businesses to become climate friendly?** Your next mayor needs to be a change maker, someone who knows how to apply good practice in a cost-effective way to drive economic development and growth in a way that is climate friendly. Council needs to be proactive - remove barriers, connect people, support a business where it clearly links to climate action.... As an example of current issues, the planning process makes it easy to do what is known, the unknown is far harder to get through the process. If we are to adapt, we need a planning process that is responsive to creative ideas. We have to be proactive to allow things to happen, and monitor where we may be unsure of the outcomes, with an option to make changes later under the same consent

- 11. How do you envision the relationship between local iwi and KCDC operating in the future?** Relationships are critical to everything we do and what we achieve. Listening and valuing what each iwi has to say is important to me and how I take and use that information to bring about change is even more important. As an example : I've just finished leading the National Data Investment Plan - where we surveyed 28 Iwi and Māori organisations representing over 500,000 individuals. It wasn't a perfect approach, but it was a start and has given me a much better understanding of iwi and Māori data needs. We need to do this more of this if we are to drive through real change in the next three years. My values are to be all inclusive and I'm open told we won't make progress if we do all this just get a representative sample. That's not me, I want to hear from everyone. This takes more time in the short term but reaps huge rewards long term. My style is to slow down now to speed up later down the path.
- 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?** To date Council has only submitted on and been led by central government. This reactive approach does not deliver for the Kapiti community and we are now seeing this as legislation goes through. I take a proactive approach in my work. I energise people and take an active role in supporting and seeking feedback on how things are going. I step forward to make a change, I offer ideas and people with the right skills to help achieve the outcomes sought by the community. We need to come up with solutions for ourselves. There are probably more ideas in this room that I'd love to hear about after this
- 13. What is your vision for Kāpiti, and how do you intend to implement it? Name three visionary actions you aspire to implement?** VISION I would like to see Kapiti become the most Innovative district in the country. Breaking down traditional methods and taking the talent and ideas of our own community and embracing change, diversity and supporting local. Things I would do: Empower more community led initiatives that deliver on key outcomes - apply different models. Council becomes the enabler, the facilitator, the linker. Turn around our image. Change our culture within Council so that business owners and developers want to come and do business in Kapiti. Be proactive supportive support innovation and have processes and procedures that actively enable it. To achieve this we need to train and educate our people, bring in change agents drive new ideas. We need to remove the old or get them to change...average and mediocre performance is not okay.... I drive for quality and high performance.
- 14. How do you plan on being a visible and accessible leader for our council and community?** Visible to me means being face to face or online for anyone in the community to connect with me. It means getting out to events and meeting people, attending business meetings, having coffees with people who want to meet with me. It means sharing what I've been up to each week and who I've been meeting through the various media channels, it means keeping my door open and to give the direction to the CEO and be firm on what is expected. In practical terms I propose to have a couple of hours a fortnight where I would have a public access session where people can just turn up and have a chat. I'm sure the Health and Safety officer is cringing

now but to me its not an issue, I'm here for everyone and everyone needs to have access to me, just because you might not look or fit into what is the norm has no bearing on my desire to meet with you.