



## Have your say on Taupō-Wellington air service

Taupō District Council is seeking an air operator to provide services on the Taupō to Wellington route.

Air New Zealand announced late last year they will be cutting services on some regional routes, including flights between Taupō and Wellington, from April 2015.

The company based their decision on the poor operating economics associated with running their 19-seat Beechcraft planes. At the same time, it announced it would increase flight capacity on the Taupō to Auckland route by introducing a 50-seat plane.

An assessment of the economic loss to the district from not having the Taupō to Wellington air service is estimated to be between \$1.5 and \$2 million a year.

There are concerns about the potential impacts losing this air service might have.

There may be greater costs and inconvenience to residents and visitors who have to make alternative transport arrangements, over time businesses may choose to relocate to other towns, and there is the potential people won't move to

Taupō in the future because of the reduced connectivity.

On the other hand, people could choose to travel to Rotorua to fly to Wellington or fly via Auckland.

Promoting economic development is a key component of the Council's long term district strategy and it wants to do what it can to ensure the airport remains viable for the long term future.

The Council has decided to seek proposals from potential operators to offer flights from Taupō to Wellington, as some other councils affected by the withdrawal of regional flights have done with success.

Feedback is also being sought from the community on the importance of having flights to the capital and what support – if any – the Council could give to secure a service.

By running both processes at the same time, the Council is hoping to collect enough information to make an informed decision in early April before the current Air New Zealand service ends.



**It is important you have your say. We want your feedback by 5pm on Friday, 27 March.**

- A survey and more information is available online at [www.taupo.govt.nz](http://www.taupo.govt.nz).
- Hard copies are available from the council offices and libraries.
- Send your views via email to Gareth Green [ggreen@taupo.govt.nz](mailto:ggreen@taupo.govt.nz)
- Give us your feedback in writing. Drop it into one of our offices or post to Air Service Consultation, Taupō District Council, Private Bag 2005, Taupō Mail Centre, Taupō 3352.

## Thoughts on the future?

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the more than 1000 people who gave feedback when we presented the community some options to help guide our decision making for the draft 10-Year Plan in September. I sincerely thank you for your feedback and for taking the time to enlighten us, your council, of the issues important to you.



Secondly, I would like to take this opportunity to thank and congratulate my fellow councillors, the chief executive and all council staff that were associated with the latest draft 10-Year Plan. The consultation document, in my view has an eye for the future. It embarks on a sound long term financial strategy that shows prudent fiscal responsibility yet still takes into account the needs of the varied and many community sectors within our district.

Over the last few months we have collectively and thorough robust and sometimes challenging debate, proposed a draft long term plan that encapsulates Central Government's latest requirement of councils. It also has a major focus on affordability and sustainability issues, which is something the community asked for during the pre-consultation process.

I am acutely aware of our ongoing challenges but sincerely believe that we as a Council have taken into consideration what our communities have shared with us.

We have included the need to provide certainty, which is so important for long term planning, particularly for our business community.

We also need to ensure that our current assets and infrastructure are adequately maintained and catered for while at the same time preserving and building on our social and cultural investments.

The proposed plan forms the basis and foundation of our long term wellbeing as well as economic stimulus and a financial stability that will secure our community's need well beyond the current 10-Year Plan.

My last word on this subject is to ask you all to take a look at the Taupō District in 10 years consultation document on the council website [www.taupo.govt.nz](http://www.taupo.govt.nz) or call in and get a copy from the council offices or libraries. We want you to provide us your thoughts.

Remember that democracy can only function as intended if we all play our part and take our personal as well as social responsibilities seriously.

I am available to talk about any aspect of the plan at any time. Just give me a call.

*Bernhard*

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## Fire season now restricted

Rain and cooler temperatures have prompted the lifting of the total fire ban in the Taupō District.

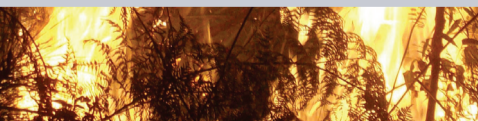
The district is now in a restricted season, which means a permit is required to light an open fire in a rural area.

The ban had been in place since January after hot, dry weather meant there was a high risk of fires getting out of hand.

We still encourage people to think carefully before lighting a fire, as the danger is not over yet.

Anyone intending to light a fire should ensure the material is dry and that smoke does not cause a hazard.

The Taupō District has been in a restricted or prohibited fire season since October and is unlikely to return to an open season until around late April or early May, depending on conditions.



## Neighbourly

### Networking with your neighbours

A new community website has officially launched in the Taupō District - [Neighbourly.co.nz](http://Neighbourly.co.nz).

Mayor David Trewavas signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the website organisers at the launch in the Council Chamber on Wednesday.

We are excited to have joined up to the new free and private website, which is a great tool for getting to know your neighbours, finding out what is going on in your street and connecting more closely with your community.

Neighbourly.co.nz is a useful platform for community organisations to create connections and build stronger, more resilient communities.

A number of other councils around New Zealand are also using Neighbourly.

You can learn about street barbecues and garage sales, search for a lost pet, find employment, discuss local issues or sell or give away items.

Neighbourly.co.nz is also a tool for crime prevention and includes a free text alert service for those who sign up to be informed about emergencies.

We're already part of Neighbourly.co.nz, so you can find out what we are up to too. Remember joining is free, so jump on board and check it out!

## What's on

- 14 Mar Chris Thompson in the Ora Garden
- 15 Mar 10-Year Plan consultation, 11am-1pm, Riverside Park
- 21 Mar Eddie Dawkins Ride for Dementia, Northcroft Domain
- 21 Mar Baches to Beautiful Homes Tour, Taupō
- 24 Mar Council meeting, Pouakani Marae, Mangakino

For more information on Taupō District events visit [www.GreatLakeTaupo.com](http://www.GreatLakeTaupo.com)

Email your elected members at [councillors@taupo.govt.nz](mailto:councillors@taupo.govt.nz)

For more information call 07 376 0899 or go to [www.taupo.govt.nz](http://www.taupo.govt.nz)

