

Hi, everyone

Some rural submitters met on 20 September to discuss next steps for the local government election and proposed district plan (PDP). Joan Allin, former Environment Court judge and a submitter on the Living Chapter and Coastal Chapters also attended. Because of her understanding of issues relevant to other KCDC zones, Joan was able to give us a very good idea of the level of concern about the structure and content of the PDP in the wider KCDC community beyond the rural sector.

It has become clear the problems with the PDP are pervasive. While parts of the community have different views about PDP details, there is an emergent view that it is fundamentally flawed in its structure and content. Submitters on each chapter have asked for substantive changes because the PDP is complex, error-ridden and lacks workability. Looking across the entire PDP, there is an important question about whether the PDP should be withdrawn so it can be fully reworked and significant errors in structure and content be addressed through an appropriate process. The flaws in the current PDP cannot be addressed through a Hearings process. Hearings Commissioners would not be able to recommend withdrawal of the PDP because the decision to notify and withdraw is a matter for the relevant Council.

Next steps

With the election pending, there is now an opportunity for all submitters (and non-submitters), to give a unified message to Council asking for the PDP to be withdrawn. This would put it on the agenda for consideration for the newly formed council after the election.

Our proposal is that people from different parts of the community (north, south, east and west), submitters on different chapters of the PDP (Rural, Living, Coastal, Working) as well as non-submitters, attend the last meeting of the current Council on Thursday October 3rd to request that the PDP be withdrawn. Potential speakers from different parts of the community have been identified to speak during the public speaking section of the meeting and make this request. The message each speaker will deliver will be focused on one theme: withdraw the PDP to enable it to be reworked. They will deliver their messages during the public speaking section of the Council meeting, which takes place at the start of the meeting, immediately after the welcomes have been completed.

The Council meeting will be held at the Council's office in Rimu St, Paraparaumu on Thursday 3 October starting at 9.00 a.m.. Because it is the last meeting, we anticipate there will be good media turn out.

Having a significant number of concerned people from across all parts of the district come to the Meeting for the public speaking section would not only support the message being delivered by the speakers but would also highlight the level of concern in the community about the PDP. It is intended that, once the speakers have made their requests, they and their supporters will then quietly withdraw from the Chamber to allow the Council to get on with its business. Withdrawal of a significant proportion of the public attending the meeting would also illustrate the level of community concern about the PDP. It would be great if you and other people in your network could attend to give a strong community presence to support the message.

We ask that, if you agree with requesting the PDP be withdrawn, you assist by:

- attending the council meeting on 3 October at 9am at the Council building on Rimu St, Paraparaumu
- telling your contacts (friends, neighbours, submitters/non-submitters) so that they also attend the 3 October meeting and asking them to email their details to this address if they wish to be included in future communications
- writing to either candidates for the council or letters to the editor to put these issues on the table (proposed key messages are below, and email addresses for candidates and newspapers are listed below)

The key messages are:

- Much of the community consider the PDP should be withdrawn (this includes members of rural, residential, commercial and coastal communities)
- The PDP is complex, error-ridden, and fundamentally lacks workability
- Council should withdraw the PDP (immediately after the election)
- Council should then engage meaningfully with the community to revisit the plan fully and make it workable (eg working parties)

Proposed community responses to issues councillors or council staff may raise are:

- 1) Issue council may raise: The council has to review the district plan within statutory timeframes and it will run out of time if the PDP is withdrawn.
- 1) Community Answer: The council has met its obligation to review the district plan by notifying the PDP. The council can legally withdraw the PDP (under clause 8D of Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the RMA) and it should do so. If the council thought it necessary it could extend the review period (under clause 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the RMA and s 37 of the RMA).
- 2) Issue council may raise: Concerns with the PDP can be dealt with in the pre-hearing meetings.
- 2) Community Answer: The pre-hearing meetings will not enable fundamental problems with the PDP to be resolved as they require substantive rework. The rework required to address structural and other weaknesses in the current document exceeds the scope of pre-hearing meetings.
- 3) Issue council may raise: it is normal for submitters to have concerns with PDPs but this does not mean it needs to be withdrawn.
- 3) Community Answer: Communities across the district have identified and raised the fundamental flaws in the structure of the PDP on a number of occasions. Council seems to prefer resolving fundamental flaws with the PDP in hearings rather than with the community. Communities would prefer to engage and work with Council to develop a more appropriate document. Many people with skills and knowledge relevant to the planning process have already volunteered their time and have indicated their willingness to form working parties (ie rural submitters) in conjunction with Council officers or carry out comprehensive reviews of the PDP provisions on behalf of the Council but these offers of collaboration have not been taken up.
- 4) Issue council may raise: it is unclear what are the “fundamental problems” that a few submitters are raising.
- 4) Community Answer: there are errors, inconsistencies and complexity within chapters, between chapters and across the PDP (ie definitions, many layers, and provisions) which creates a significant degree of uncertainty about its implementation. This makes the PDP unworkable. It was unfair to ask the community to submit on the PDP when it was so ill formed (and some felt unable to submit). Without substantive rework, the PDP will be burdensome for the council to administer and enforce, for the community to understand, and for applicants to use. This will impose high costs on the entire district.

Contacts for letters to the editors:

Kapiti Observer

Letters to the editor of the Kapiti Observer must contain the writer's name, address and phone number. The newspaper reserves the right to edit for brevity or sense.

Send to: Editor, Kapiti Observer, Box 110 Paraparaumu, fax 298 2073 or email editor@kapiti-observer.co.nz

KC News

Email your letters to: editor@kcnews.co.nz

Candidate email addresses:

(marilyn@atthelegends.co.nz);
acpsjp@extra.co.nz;
amesstreet@hotmail.com;
ammundsen.diane@gmail.com;
ant.lloyd@paradise.net.nz;
berniecares@gmail.com;
brandon.holman@extra.co.nz;
brian.hooper@paradise.net.nz;
cardiffcopartnership@clear.net.nz;
children1st@extra.co.nz;
christine.papps@extra.co.nz;
cs.hjpearce@extra.co.nz;
davidscott@ihug.co.nz;
denchfamily1@extra.co.nz;
ea_gregory@hotmail.com;
elliott4kapiti@gmail.com;
fiona.vining@gmail.com;
gollywog@paradise.net.nz;
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It is really important for the future of the Kapiti Coast District and the people who live in our communities that we have a District Plan that is workable and has the support of a majority in the community. It is becoming clear that a significant number of people are concerned about the very structure of the proposed plan and that, even at the end of the hearings process when all submissions have been heard and addressed, the level of concern about the plan's structure will continue to be significant.

Please join us in taking action to make sure our elected representatives understand there is a groundswell of concern and take the action needed to ensure Kapiti District has a workable District Plan. Please join us to attend the public speaking section of the Kapiti District Council meeting on Thursday 3 October at 9.00 a.m. to show your support for the speakers and their request that the PDP be withdrawn and reworked. Please also take steps to ensure the candidates for elected office are also aware of our concerns about the PDP and our wish that it be withdrawn.

Regards

Julie Browne