

Message to all Wellingtonians from Mayor Andy Foster

The Covid-19 pandemic is having a devastating impact globally. Thousands of people have already died, and many countries are in some form of lockdown. The global economy is being significantly disrupted. It is truly unprecedented.

We Wellingtonians have an incredibly strong community spirit and a resilient business sector that has been through tough times before. I'm seeing that spirit in the way we are responding to the lockdown. We need to keep that spirit of working together to get through this safely, and then to recover and rebuild our communities and our economy. By working together we will become an even stronger community, and we'll be even more proud to live in a beautiful city and be part of a people who constantly inspire in so many different ways.

In preparation for the lockdown, your Council's immediate focus has been to ensure that our most critical city services are safely delivered, our Civil Defence and Emergency Management responsibilities are fully met, that our most vulnerable citizens are swiftly looked after, and that the key functions that enable these important activities are operating 24 hours a day.

We have also ensured more than 2,000 City Council staff are able to work safely and effectively from their homes and continue to deliver many other services that our citizens value. The Council has been completely refocussed to ensure these services are delivered, whilst enabling work on our city's recovery.

There were already many challenges ahead, and they will get far greater, for all of us, because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Many local businesses are hurting and people are worried about their families and their future. Our Government's response has been swift and wide-reaching, and Government support and financial assistance will provide an essential lifeline for many. Council will also play a major role, working with local communities, the business sector, the wider region and central government. There are challenges but also many exciting opportunities we were working on. We will obviously need to rethink some plans but we absolutely want to remain positively the coolest little capital in the world, a place to be admired and loved.

We are working hard to lessen the financial impacts on our community and our ratepayers. The situation is evolving

incredibly quickly. Our 2020/21 Annual Plan is being completely reworked. We will all take the time we have available to make the best possible decisions. Councillors are being briefed this week on our city's finances and how best to respond. Our immediate focus is on options to alleviate the immediate impacts of rates and charges in the current financial year ending June 30. I will share the results of those discussions with you by the end of this week.

I am updating Wellingtonians with regular Facebook videos, also viewable on the WCC Facebook page.

In the meantime, thank you for the way you all are responding to the situation we find ourselves in. It has been truly inspirational.

Keep safe, stay home
and save lives



Andy Foster
Mayor of Wellington.



What we are doing to help: Wellington City Council's Pandemic Response Plan

1 Community wellbeing

Coordinating with outreach teams and support groups to look after the vulnerable members of the City. • Working with MSD and social agencies to ensure the City's homeless are housed. • Working with the City Mission to ensure continued delivery of food to people in need, this includes food banks and meals on wheels.

2 Council services

Scaled back the majority of our services like pools, parking wardens, libraries and recreational facilities as keeping our staff and the community safe is our main priority. • Ensuring the continued supply of critical services for the City for water, sewage treatment, storm water, rubbish collection, our landfill for trade waste, community welfare, cemeteries, public toilets. • Removing parking fees & fines during the lockdown period.

3 Supporting the economy

Working with our Council Controlled Organisations and commercial tenants on how we can support them over the next month. • Shortening payment timeframes for the suppliers who provide goods and services to Council. • Looking at options for managing timing of rates payments.

4 Collaboration with central government, local government and other key sectors

We are working with key government agencies and other councils and a number of Wellington organisations to ensure that our response is co-ordinated, that we are ready to go with key projects when restrictions are lifted, and that we are planning effectively for recovery.

5 Managing Council's finances

Forecasting the impact of the lockdown on Council's fees and charges income, as these help offset rates. • Ensuring that Council has sufficient cashflow to get through the emergency. • Reviewing the 2020/21 Annual Plan to get the balance right between the impact on ratepayers and ensuring that Council finances are sound.

6 Absolutely Positively Wellington

As a Council, we will be helping Wellingtonians feel connected, receive and offer assistance so together we can look out for each other during the next few weeks. We've put a twist on Absolutely Positively Wellington, highlighting the We in Wellington as a symbol of Wellingtonian's caring spirit and how we're supporting each other, including by staying at home to keep our community safe.

Message from WellingtonNZ

WellingtonNZ is working alongside Wellington City Council as it responds to this unprecedented situation. The measures being considered by Councillors this week will be an important element of this response, as will our continued call for Wellingtonians to #Love Local now and into the future. If you're a business looking for advice, you can also check out www.wellingtonnz.com/business/covid-19

While the focus right now is on addressing the immediate impacts, our attention is also turning to how we can work collectively, across the city and region, to prepare for recovery. This will require Wellington to pull on what have always been two of its greatest strengths - our creativity and collaboration. He waka eke noa - we're all in this together.

Lance Walker, CEO, WellingtonNZ

Council decision making during the pandemic

The resolutions made at the Emergency Council meeting on 23 March (see separate public notice for the full resolutions) and the amendment to the Local Government Act on 26 March now provide for effective Council decision-making during the COVID-19 emergency. These changes mean that the Mayor and Councillors can meet electronically, with attendees participating and voting online. There will be practical constraints such as availability of the appropriate staff, technology etc., therefore meetings will only be held for important and urgent business during alert 3 and 4 phases of the pandemic. Some meetings called may be extraordinary or emergency meetings and as such will have a shorter notification period than usual. Wellington City Council will endeavour to make any agendas and minutes for these meetings available as soon as possible. All scheduled Wellington City Council meetings* for March and April have been cancelled and a new meeting scheduled is being prepared. Any meeting that is called will be recorded for upload to our website, www.wellington.govt.nz

* This includes all committee, community board, advisory group and public hearings.

For the latest on Council services: wellington.govt.nz/coronavirus

WCC 24-hour contact centre: **04 499 4444**

For the latest health information: covid19.govt.nz

Feeling anxious or need someone to talk to? **Call or text 1737**

Message from the Wellington Chamber of Commerce

In less than a week, we've had to respond in ways we've never known before. I know there are many businesses who are uncertain whether there will be work or what work looks like, once we are through this. It's not easy, and it's going to get harder still - but I know it will get better.

Whether it's the City Council or Central Government, the Chamber is working to ensure Wellington finds its feet. We've had the Government's Business Support Package, with stop-gap measures to get us through the short to medium term. And we are working with Council now to do the same. We must "think wisely, plan boldly and act swiftly."

If your business needs assistance on how to manage your response, advice on the wage subsidy, or supporting your staff, please get in touch with us. You can speak to one of the team by calling our Adviceline 0800 800 632, or check out www.wccc.org.nz/covid19 for more.

John Milford, Chief Executive, Wellington Chamber of Commerce



We are absolutely positively all in this together.

Absolutely Positively
Wellington City Council
Me Heke Ki Pōneke



Absolutely
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Wellington
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