



Grounded in community: Shane Walsh’s commitment to Te Awamutu

Born and raised in Te Awamutu, Shane Walsh has always felt a strong connection to the community he now represents around the Council table.

After leaving town in his early 20s to build a successful corporate career, Shane returned home wanting to give back to the community that helped shape him.

Before being elected as a Te Awamutu and Kihikihi Ward Councillor and appointed to the Community Board, he was heavily involved in local organisations, serving as Chief Executive of the Te Awamutu Business Chamber, Chair of the Waipā Community Facilities Trust, and Chair of Destination Te Awamutu.

Those roles gave him regular interaction with Council and insight into the issues people were most concerned about.

“A lot of people felt Council was becoming disconnected from ratepayers, particularly around costs,” Shane said. “I wanted to help better align Council with the concerns of the community and ensure we’re delivering outcomes in the most affordable way possible.”

Shane’s Masters in Business Management and Administration, and strong business background, has helped him navigate the strong governance and financial side to the role.

He has been impressed by the shared commitment among councillors to make a positive difference.

“There’s a genuine desire around the table to improve things for the district. We’re a mixed group with different opinions, but that actually makes for a stronger and more diverse team.”

While Shane knows meaningful change in local government takes time, he is focused on creating momentum.

“There’s no expectation that you can suddenly fix everything overnight,” he said. “But you can get the wheels moving in the right direction.”

He believes most ratepayers understand the financial pressures councils are facing.

“There will always be external challenges that come up, things like fuel costs or economic pressures - so you focus on what you can control and keep making steady progress.”

Passionate about helping Te Awamutu thrive, Shane is particularly interested in projects that make the town more vibrant while also benefiting the wider Waipā district.

One initiative he supports is the proposed Pirongia to Te Awamutu cycleway.

“It’s a project that delivers on multiple levels,” he said. “It supports tourism, recreation, wellbeing and the local economy, while also creating stronger community connections.”

Outside Council, Shane has two sons, a daughter, and three grandchildren. He enjoys hosting friends and family, walking his dog, and taking part in a men’s book club.

What he values most about Waipā is its strong sense of community.

“The cafes, local stores, the library, the pools - those shared spaces are what make Te Awamutu special,” he said. “They add real value to people’s lives and create a sense of connection.”

Looking ahead, Shane is focused on strengthening the relationship between Council and the community.

“I want people to feel heard and know Council is listening,” he said. “If we can continue building that trust and making practical progress, then we’re heading in the right direction.”



Waipā's water services on track for July transfer

Waipā District Council is on track to transfer its water and wastewater services to Waikato Waters Limited on July 1.

Waikato Waters is a council-controlled organisation owned by six Waikato councils, including Waipā. Bringing water services together across the region means better long-term planning, stronger investment, and more resilient infrastructure for communities like ours.

For Waipā residents, day-to-day services will stay the same - water will keep running, and billing and customer contact remain with Council for now. Stormwater is staying with Waipā District Council for 2026/27. Behind the scenes, Waikato Waters will take over management of drinking water and wastewater pipes, treatment plants and long-term planning.

A total of 48 Waipā staff will transfer to Waikato Waters as part of the change, taking their local knowledge with them.

More information is available at letstalk.waipadc.govt.nz/waikato-waters-limited.

King’s Birthday – what you need to know!

Recycling collections will continue as usual on King’s Birthday, Monday, June 1.

Our two libraries and Council offices in Te Awamutu and Cambridge along with our Te Whare Taonga o Te Awamutu Museum will be closed for the day.

Your Elected Members Get in touch: waipadc.govt.nz/our-council/our-team/mayor-and-councillors

											
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