

PRESS RELEASE

Kāpiti College students call on council to go carbon-neutral

Friday 22 February 2019

A delegation of Kāpiti College students spoke to the Kāpiti Coast District Council on Thursday, urging the council to go carbon-neutral by 2025. Four speakers, Ben Carson, Francesca Griggs, Lucy Owens and Bree Renwick, expressed the group's concerns about what the future holds for their generation as a result of climate change. They were supported there by other students from the College Eco-Action group and from community group Low Carbon Kāpiti, who initiated the campaign.

Bree Renwick said this there is no economy, or indeed anything at all, without an environment, and that the situation with climate change is a global emergency.

The speakers talked about how the inaction of the older generation had imperilled their future and that of all young people, and that leaders needed to act right now to avoid the worst outcomes. she quoted the words of the 16-year old climate activist Greta Thunberg, founder of the global 'School Strike for Climate' movement, who said to world leaders 'I want you to act like your house is on fire, because it is'. They also emphasised the benefits of reducing emissions to both reduce climate impacts and to restore and protect Kapiti's precious natural environment.

They highlighted the petition for KCDC to go carbon neutral had already attracted around 1000 signatures, and that students would be back, demonstrating outside the Council Offices on Friday 15 March as part of the global School Strike for Climate.

Councillors thanked the students and asked questions. Cr John Howson said that he shared the frustration of the students, and that we needed to move far past awareness of the issue, asking for ideas how the council could actually achieve the reach the carbon neutral goal. The group responded explaining the actions that could be taken, such as using renewable power, electric vehicles, replacing boilers with heat pumps and planting native forests, previously submitted to council by Low Carbon Kāpiti as part of the 2018 Long Term Plan process.

Council has reduced their carbon footprint as an organisation by around 76% since 2009-10, but a report presented to Council at the same meeting attended by the students stated that council would fall short of its current target to reduce emissions by 80% by 2021-22 unless further action was taken.

Those wishing to sign the petition for council to become carbon neutral by 2025 can do so at tinyurl.com/kcdc2025. Information on the school strike for climate can be found at www.schoolstrike4climatenz.com

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For more information contact jake.roos@gmail.com or see <http://www.lowcarbonkapiti.org.nz>



PHOTO 1 CAPTION: Kapiti College Eco-Action Group and Low Carbon Kāpiti members outside the Council offices.

Back row left to right: Erin McKeivitt, Ben Carson, Stevie Shipman, Bree Renwick, Lucy Owens, Chad Wappes, Irene Thomas. Front row left to right: Millie Day, Pippa McCormack Wolf, Francesca Griggs, Joshua Patel, Deirdre Kent, Sarah Riegert, Levon Stone



PHOTO 2 CAPTION: Bree Renwick addresses council, calling on them to go carbon neutral as an organisation by 2025.

Photo credits David Yockney.

