Inauguration Speech

Adrienne Staples, Greater Wellington Regional Council

30 October 2025

Nga iwi o tenei rohe

E kui ma

E koro ma

Rau rangitira ma

toku whanau me oku hoa

Tena koutou, tena koutou, tena tatou katoa

As I stand here today, now with twenty-four years of local government behind me and nine elections under my belt, it is not lost on me, the enormity of standing for election, let alone actually winning.

Every three years a councillor must apply or re-apply for their job. A job often desired by many others who campaign very hard to convince the voters that they are the most-worthy of their support. It is a job interview conducted by a whole district or city. A normal job might have a job interview panel of three perhaps? We have to answer to thousands.

It can be a brutal experience that goes on for three months but, as far as I am concerned, coming out the other side, being here today, that makes it all worthwhile and the achievement of being elected should never be underestimated.

But getting in the door here is just the beginning. Every single one of us is different from the other. Age, sex, background, experience, politics, address, owns a dog, is owned by a cat, has a horse, is clean and tidy, is clean but not tidy the list goes on and on BUT we have to work to together to make governance decisions, for our region, as a whole.

And, like a big family, not everyone can have new shoes and a bike, every Christmas. Some family members may have to wait and that is not always easy when it's your family, or the new shoes are on order to arrive in five years' time.

So, the first challenge for us all is learning to live with each other's idiosyncrasies even if you can't quite bring yourself to love them.

The next is being able to bring the views of those that elected you to the table but then making a regional decision. That is not easy with a region as diverse as Greater Wellington.

Finally, don't be an island. Two heads are better than one. Fourteen, plus our back-up crew of talented staff, should be unstoppable.

Before I close, I would like to acknowledge on all councillors' behalf, the role of family and friends in getting us all to this table. For me, I could not have done it without the rock-solid support of my husband Don. Behind every great councillor there is always a support crew. It may be small and perfectly formed or large and noisy – it doesn't matter as long as we acknowledge its value to us all.

So, to finish - thank you for having the confidence in my abilities to elect me as your deputy chair. I will continue to support our Chair, Cllr Ponter at whatever level is required and I'm sure we will all form a strong team once we get underway.

Tena koutou, tena koutou, tena tatou katoa