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## Bay of Plenty Times



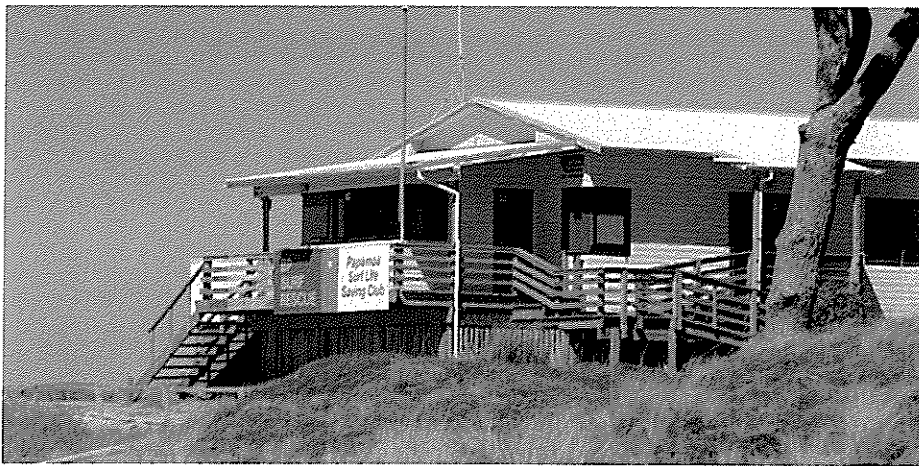
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### New rescue base gets \$250k kick-start



DANGER: Mayor Stuart Crosby (below) says the existing building is collapsing with significant storage problems and the club closing half of the downstairs because it is insecure and dangerous. PHOTO/FILE

Tauranga City Council has agreed to pay start-up costs of \$250,000 to build a new community surf rescue base at Papamoa.

The local authority yesterday committed itself to the rebuild in which Papamoa Surf Life Saving Club would become tenant to a trust set up to build, own and operate the base.

Opposing was Councillor Gail McIntosh who was shocked at the \$175,000 design cost to get building consent, saying that amount of money would build half a house and was "way over the top".

When she was told that the price had been reviewed and was very reasonable, Ms McIntosh said: "Obviously I am in the wrong profession."

Mount councillor Leanne Brown pressed for the \$250,000 grant, saying it would avoid delays in the timeline to get the surf base built.

The council also agreed to support making a cornerstone grant of \$950,000 in the 2017-18 financial year as a contribution to construction costs - subject to approval of the project's business case.



Tauranga  
Mayor Stuart  
Crosby

Mayor Stuart Crosby said the existing building was collapsing in front of their eyes, with significant storage problems and the club closing half of the downstairs because it was insecure and dangerous.

Councillors were told the key issue for the trust was to obtain resource consent. This would identify the exact size and scale of the



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activity and its effects on Papamoa Domain.

It was hoped to have consent by Christmas, but that depended on whether the application was publicly notified. If it was notified, the consent process could take many months. A potential problem was that the City Plan's scheduled site for a surf club building did not quite line up with where the trust wanted to put the new building.

Councillor Kelvin Clout said the club did a fantastic job saving lives and it needed council support to fundraise in the community. Councillor John Robson said that of all the applications for funding, this was the most appropriate for the council to become involved in.

"The public can't lose in a public/public partnership," he said after taking aim at private/public partnerships of the type being suggested for the downtown Civic Centre redevelopment.

Ms Brown said the \$175,000 design cost was a high-end figure and the trust was getting more quotes for a design and build project.

Councillor Bev Edlin said it was about people saving people on one of the best beaches in New Zealand and the amount of time given by club volunteers.

Papamoa Surf Lifesaving Club chairman Andrew Hitchfield said the decision was great news for the club, for the Papamoa community and for beach users.

"It moves us into the next phase now of working to put some firm time lines in place around the new build. The reality is, the trust has been together for about six years, there's been a lot of investment of time at a pro bono level to get us to this stage."

Mr Hitchfield was confident the business case for the new build would be in place for next year's funding round to make them eligible for the cornerstone funding commitment. "Our aspiration is to have a club in place by the end of next year."

Papamoa club captain Shaun Smith said the club was there for community.

"There's supposed to be 40,000 people out here in the next 20 years and we can't even look after the whole beach at the moment without a better facility," he said.

When the club was built in the '90s it was big enough, but no one knew quite how big the Papamoa area was going to get, so Mr Smith was pleased at the opportunity to get a new club.

#### **Papamoa Surf Life Saving Club**

- Formed 1988 and established on the Domain 1990
  - Patrols cover 14.5km from Sandhurst Drive to Marjorie Lane
  - Club membership of 756 predicted to reach 1000 by 2020
- Bay of Plenty Times

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