

Wairoa District Council



The Challenge

Wairoa District Council was seeking to replace its manual spreadsheet based annual and long term financial planning processes. Over time the processes had become increasingly complex and inefficient creating a level of business risk for Council.

The Solution

Wairoa District Council has implemented the MAGIQ Performance software application to achieve a highly efficient and future-proof framework for the delivery of its Annual and 10-year Long Term Financial Plans.

The Benefits

MAGIQ Performance is delivering significant time-savings and improving the overall efficiency of the production of Council's Annual and Long Term Plans.

All stakeholders – senior management, cost centre managers, Councillors and the community now have far greater transparency and confidence in the accuracy of the data they are relying on for business decision-making.

About Wairoa District Council

Local Government industry

50 staff members

8,000 residents

\$28m annual expenditure

"Using MAGIQ Performance we can present the 'big picture' and we can also easily access and interrogate the underlying data. This provides all of our stakeholders – senior management, cost centre managers, Councillors and our community with far greater transparency and confidence in the accuracy of the data." **Chris Hankey**, Financial Planning Manager

"MAGIQ Performance provides automation that will significantly improve the efficiency of the production of future Annual and Long Term Plans."

Chris Hankey, Financial Planning Manager

Wairoa District Council has implemented the MAGIQ Performance software application to achieve a highly efficient and future-proof framework for the delivery of its Annual and 10-year Long Term Financial Plans.

The Wairoa District is located on the North Island of New Zealand in the northern half of the Hawke's Bay region. In recent years Council has embarked on an ambitious programme of economic development. One result of these efforts is that Rocket Lab has chosen to establish its Satellite Orbital Rocket Launch Site on the Mahia Peninsula. The first test launch was held in May 2017 and has well and truly placed Wairoa District on the international aerospace map.

MAGIQ Performance is a suite of highly sophisticated and easy to use Budgeting, Reporting & Analytics, Financial and Strategic Planning software. The MAGIQ Financial Planning solution is designed to provide organisations with a sophisticated and highly automated application to model and produce their Long Term and Annual Financial Plans.

Previously Council had used a highly complex set of spreadsheets to model and produce its Annual and Long Term Plans. According to Chris Hankey, Financial Planning Manager, Wairoa District Council, whilst this approach was effective and produced high quality reports, the model was extremely sophisticated and its inherent complexity also created a degree of risk.

"The model itself is very sophisticated and effective for us, however as is often the case, the deep knowledge and understanding of the model and the underlying calculations tends to reside with the person that has created the model," said Chris.

"We recognised that this was a risk for Council and we wanted to implement a strategy that would remove reliance on any single person and future-proof our Annual and Long-Term Financial Planning processes," he said.

Council initially used MAGIQ Performance to produce its 2015 and 2017 Annual Plans, and has been using the system to support monthly, quarterly and annual reporting for a number of years.

Following the successful completion of the 2017 Annual Plan process, WDC's CFO, Gary Borg and Chris then undertook to use the software to build Council's 2018/28 10 Year Long Term Financial Plan in readiness for the June 30, 2018 deadline.

Chris believes one of the key strengths of the product is the ability to filter and interrogate the Plan data to move effectively from a high-level strategic view to a more detailed line item view.

"Using MAGIQ Performance we can present the 'big picture' and we can also easily access and interrogate the underlying data. This provides all of our stakeholders – senior management, cost centre managers, Councillors and our community with far greater transparency and confidence in the accuracy of the data," said Chris.

While implementing the new system has required an up-front investment in time, in the longer term Chris sees great potential for additional time-savings.

"MAGIQ Performance provides automation that will significantly improve the efficiency of the production of future Annual and Long Term Plans. At the moment we're focused on delivery of the 10-Year Plan, however expanding this to a 30-Year perspective and matching the legislated period for Infrastructure Planning requirements, is also a very real and achievable possibility.

With a moving population, understanding the potential future impacts of rating of the community in any district, let alone a smaller one, is demanded more and more by senior leaders, elected members and the ratepayer. Having a flexible and responsive capability helps us to meet this changing need," said Chris.

The MAGIQ team worked closely with Chris throughout the implementation process and he reflects very highly on the level of service provided by MAGIQ Consultants Reece Jones and Chris Benson.

"The knowledge and support provided by Reece and Chris has been amazing," said Chris. "They both have a really deep understanding of the software and they did an outstanding job of transferring that knowledge and supporting our implementation of the planning module. Their on-going support of our implementation and setup of the plan has been above and beyond the call of duty."

As a smaller community with limited access to resources, Chris is very mindful of Council's responsibility to its ratepayers and community.

"We have a responsibility to make sure we deliver improved services and provide excellent value for money to our community. I'm confident that MAGIQ Performance is helping us to achieve these outcomes," said Chris.



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About Wairoa District Council

The Wairoa District is located on the North Island of New Zealand in the northern half of the Hawke's Bay region. The District is a picturesque and productive agricultural region. With close proximity to natural attractions such as the stunning Mahia Peninsula, Lake Waikaremoana and the Ruakituri River the District offers an excellent lifestyle for its local residents and many holiday visitors.

About MAGIQ Software

MAGIQ Software is an international software business focused on the delivery of the MAGIQ Cloud Finance and Administration Platform. MAGIQ Software has more than 500 customers throughout Australia, New Zealand, the USA, the UK, Singapore and South Africa. Key markets include Local Government, Health and Community Services, Utilities, Education and Not for Profit. A highly experienced and skilled team of more than 100 staff deliver local support and development from offices in Napier, Melbourne, Sydney, Auckland, Christchurch and Los Angeles.

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