

Outgoing deputy takes parting shot at Halse

By DENISE PIPER

A "mongrel" councillor has been elected deputy mayor after a changing of the guard at the Whangarei District Council.

Bream Bay representative Phil Halse has been re-appointed deputy to new mayor Morris Cutforth.

Mr Halse has been a councillor for 18 years and was deputy to Pamela Peters.

But his election was marred by accusations from recent deputy Kahu Sutherland.

At the full council meeting last Wednesday, Mr Sutherland said Mr Halse committed prime land to developers Neil Group.

"A commitment was made to Neil Group by councillor Halse as deputy mayor - that commitment was made without the sanction of the council and committed a prize piece of this district's heritage and position to the developer.

"I trust that that won't be happening again."

In response Mr Halse said any commitment to the sale of land had to go before full council.

Mr Sutherland's rebuttal was swift: "I heard that but it's not true."

However, Mr Halse got support from all of the other councillors, apart from Crichton Christie.

John Williamson said he had seen Mr Halse grow as a person when he was deputy mayor and he was just what the mayor needed.

"With all due respect, you're



New leaders: Bream Bay councillor Phil Halse, left, has been elected deputy to Morris Cutforth.

going to need someone perhaps with a bit of mongrel," he told Mr Cutforth.

Mr Cutforth said Mr Halse complemented his own broad pic-

ture style by being a details person and had wide experience.

In other major appointments, Hikurangi third-term councillor Greg Martin was made chairman

of the infrastructure and services committee, taking the role off Mr Christie.

Shelley Deeming and Warwick Syers retained their chairs of the

environment, and finance and support committees.

All councillors will be members on all three committees until a review at the end of six months.