

THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 13 MAY 2008 AT THE OFFICES OF THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL, 388 MAIN SOUTH ROAD, GREYMOOUTH, COMMENCING AT 10.32 A.M.

PRESENT:

P. Ewen (Chairman), R. Scarlett, D. Davidson, B. Chinn, A. Robb, T. Archer, A. Birchfield, R. Barber

IN ATTENDANCE:

C. Ingle (Chief Executive Officer), S. Moran (Planning & Environmental Manager), C. Dall (Consents & Compliance Manager), R. Mallinson (Corporate Services Manager), T. Jellyman (Minutes Clerk),
The Media

1. APOLOGIES

Moved (Davidson / Scarlett) *that the apology from T. Scott be accepted.*

Carried

PRESENTATION

Sam MacDonald (Head Boy, Greymouth High School) and Ben Tapper (Chaperone) provided a presentation on the recent Annual Youth Environment Forum held in Wellington. He outlined the content of the Forum and spoke of two key areas, waste management and energy use in homes. Sam thanked Council for the opportunity to attend the forum. The Chairman commented that it was pleasing to see the West Coast represented and asked Councillors if they had any questions. R. Barber asked Sam if he had considered doing a survey on the energy efficiency in West Coast homes. Sam responded that it is more practical to cover recycling and waste management as this is a lot more practical as paper recycling and aluminium can recycling has already commenced at local schools. The Chairman thanked Sam for representing the West Coast and wished him well for his education and future.

2. MINUTES

Moved (Archer / Robb) *that the minutes of the previous Resource Management Committee meeting dated 8 April 2008, be confirmed as correct.*

Carried

Matters Arising

Cr Birchfield asked for an update on the Marine Reserves Forum. S. Moran advised that he has received an update from Denis Shannahan. There are more meetings planned to be followed by a round of workshops around the West Coast. S. Moran advised that no particular areas on the West Coast have been identified. Cr Archer spoke of the extensive community involvement coast wide. He asked R. Barber for his observation as to whether this has been meaningful input. R. Barber spoke of the fishing industry's involvement. He stated that there will be a public consultation round as well and recommendations will then go to the Minister. Cr Archer asked if there were any identified timelines for proposals for the West Coast. R. Barber is hopeful of final recommendations being made by the end of the year. Cr Davidson expressed his concern that there has been no indication to date of the size of marine reserves or areas. R. Barber stated that the final outcome is to try to meet all the needs of the community as well as the needs of habitat protection with minimal angst. Cr Scarlett asked if it is likely that recreational fishing will be banned in a marine area. R. Barber responded that there is an application for two Maataitai north of Kahurangi Point and that there is no change for recreational fishing, there is no commercial take allowed. Recreational fishing is allowed and bylaws for certain areas can be put in place. The Chairman stated that process for marine reserves is underway and he hopes that those who are championing these changes do engage with the public to ensure public support.

3. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman reported that he attended tender openings for various works during the month. He stated that it is pleasing to see the competitive pricing that is now resulting from contractors.

The Chairman attended the recent Mayors and Chairs Forum with C. Ingle and Cr Scarlett. They met with the new Chair of Development West Coast and their Chief Executive.

Cobden residents contacted the Chairman.

The Chairman and Cr Scarlett will attend a hearing tomorrow. They are both Commissioners at this hearing relating to the sewage ponds at Hokitika.

The Chairman attended a nighttime demonstration for the Solid Energy Rescue Helicopter. He also discussed local issues with MP Chris Auchinvole and Wayne Map at this event.

Moved (Ewen / Birchfield) *that the Council receive this report.*

Carried

5. REPORTS

5.1. PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP

5.1.1 PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGER'S MONTHLY REPORT

S. Moran spoke to his report. He advised that Coastal Plan Change 2 was notified for submissions on the 10th of April and closed on the 9th of May. Thirteen submissions have been received.

S. Moran invited Council to view a copy of our final submission on the Proposed New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement 2008 which was previously circulated to Councillors for comment.

S. Moran advised that the Waste Working Group has applied for funding for three years but were only granted one year's funding. He is currently working through ways of putting this funding in place.

S. Moran is currently talking with stakeholders regarding the West Coast Walking and Cycling Strategy. They are looking to develop an overarching framework in order to put together a longterm integrated funding system that will work over the region rather than piecemeal.

S. Moran reported that Chris Pullen attended the Civil Defence Controllers Training Meeting in Wellington and is now well up to speed in this area.

S. Moran reported that the Civil Defence West Coast Controllers Forum was held in our council chambers on the 24th of April. This forum allowed all controllers to meet each other and work together on skills, tasks and scenarios which would be required of them as part of the response during an event. C. Ingle also attended this meeting. He spoke of the very good attendance and a very good debrief on Exercise Pandora. It was clear that the longer you participate in an exercise the more you learn.

S. Moran advised that the National Warning System Test was recently carried out. WCRC did respond during the required timeframes.

S. Moran advised that the Coordinating Executive Group meeting was held last week. The Engineering Lifelines Group met yesterday. C. Ingle advised that there was a meeting of the civil defence group at the recent Mayors and Chairs Forum where Tony Kokshoorn was elected as Chair of the Civil Defence Group.

S. Moran advised that there have been no flood events during the reporting period.

S. Moran reported that NIWA are promoting the new LakeSPI tool (Lake Submerged Plant Indicator). This is used for monitoring the lake ecological condition and allows for interpretation of water quality. S. Moran stated that although the overall score has been stable there have been some changes.

S. Moran spoke to the table of results for Contact Recreation Sampling for the 2007 / 08 summer. He stated that there is a good trend towards better water quality this year compared to other years. Cr Birchfield asked about the higher risk reading in March at Cashmere Bay. S. Moran responded that faecal matter from waterfowl is responsible for this higher reading.

The Chairman asked if there was any explanation as to why only a one year contract for waste minimisation was given as opposed to the normal three year contract. S. Moran advised that there has been no feedback at all from the Ministry but advised that funding was limited this year therefore we were fortunate to get a project.

R. Barber stated that he has been advised that the septic tank at Cashmere Bay is not being cleaned out regularly. S. Moran reiterated that the problem is caused by the birdlife in the area. It was agreed that this matter would be followed up by staff with Grey District Council.

Cr Birchfield stated that he feels Transit should be fixing roads rather than worrying about the West Coast Walking and Cycling Strategy. He expressed his concern with the state of the road east of Arthurs Pass. S. Moran advised that this is being addressed by Canterbury. C. Ingle has been talking to their Regional Land Transport Committee regarding this matter. C. Ingle advised that aside from this stretch of road, cycling on some west coast roads is not safe and that this strategy will address these areas.

Moved (Scarlett / Davidson) *that Council receive this report.*

Carried

5.2 CONSENTS AND COMPLIANCE GROUP

5.2.1 CONSENTS MONTHLY REPORT

C. Dall spoke to this report. He drew Council's attention to the first resource consent that has been granted for a stock crossing.

Cr Chinn asked C. Dall what sort of conditions would be placed on resource consent RC8041 for discharge of domestic sewage effluent at Hans Bay. C. Dall responded that advanced systems for wastewater treatment technology are used in these sensitive areas and that this is a discharge to land and not water.

C. Dall spoke of the hearing at Haast that he and S. Moran attended yesterday. This is for a proposed new subdivision at Okuru. WCRC's submission about the adequacy of on site sewerage treatment was discussed at the hearing. C. Dall reported that there has been a lot of progress with onsite sewerage treatment systems and the importance of them being built properly and looked after properly. Cr Davidson asked who is responsible for the monitoring of these systems.

C. Dall confirmed that whoever issues the consent is responsible for monitoring it.

C. Dall reported that the Minister for the Environment has declined to intervene into Council's request for the call in of the consent applications for Meridians' proposal for a high dam on the Mokihinui River. Therefore we will proceed to a hearing and it is likely that WCRC will need to defend the decision in the Environment Court. C. Dall advised that WCRC would be facing legal costs that will be difficult to budget for. The Chairman asked how significant could these costs to ratepayers be. C. Dall confirmed the costs could be between \$100,000 - \$300,000. Cr Archer stated that he feels the legislation is wanting and he feels that we should write to the Minister and suggest that the legislation is changed to allow for recovery of legal costs or request that the government sets up a fund similar to the Ministry for the Environment for mounting appeals for the general layperson that could be available to Councils for Councils to make application to for cost recovery. Cr Chinn does not want our ratepayers to be subject to this charge. Cr Davidson stated that there should be compensation available for councils in cases such as this as he feels this is outside the RMA. The Chairman stated he shares the same concerns as other councillors. Cr Scarlett suggested going straight to the Environment Court. Cr Robb stated he supports Cr Archer and that there are holes in the legislation and suggested a letter be written to the Minister.

Moved (Archer / Birchfield) *that a strongly worded letter be written to the Minister for the Environment offering two options. Either a change in legislation or Government providing a pool of funds to enable Councils to actually call on to recover legal costs, in the same way as the Ministry for the Environment have provided to the layperson to recover costs.*

Carried

Cr Davidson asked when it is expected that the hearing will commence. C. Dall stated that approximately 260 submissions have been received to date and it is likely that this will take place in August. A Hearing Committee is yet to be appointed.

Moved (Archer / Robb) *that the May 2008 report of the Consents Group be received.*

Carried

5.2.2 COMPLIANCE & ENFORCEMENT MONTHLY REPORT

C. Dall spoke to this report. In general there has been a good level of compliance.

There has been no gravel extraction from the Blaketown Beach or Karoro Beach gravel extraction areas during the reporting period.

No other non-compliances have been reported during the reporting period and nothing significant from any mine visits.

C. Dall reported that work has commenced to open the old portal at the Strongman Mine site in preparation for the new fire management strategy.

C. Dall reported that five Abatement Notices were served during the reporting period. Most of these were in relation to dairy effluent discharges where the offenders had been given ample opportunity to comply with required regional rules.
Cr Davidson asked if Globe Progress Mine now has their discharges under better control. C. Dall confirmed this is the case and the good weather has also helped.
The Chairman mentioned that it is now timely for Pike River Mine to be monitored. C. Dall agreed to commence the gathering of baseline figures for this purpose.

Moved (Scarlett / Chinn)

RECOMMENDATION

1. *That the May 2008 report of the Compliance Group be received.*
2. *That the Council approves the release of the bond for Resource Consents RC97014, RC97038 and RC00084.*

Carried

6. GENERAL BUSINESS

There was no general business.

The meeting closed at 11.26 am

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Chairman

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Date