

THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 9 JUNE 2009 AT THE OFFICES OF THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL, 388 MAIN SOUTH ROAD, GREYMOUTH, COMMENCING AT 10.30 A.M.

PRESENT:

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

IN ATTENDANCE:

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

1. APOLOGIES

Moved (Davidson / Robb) *that the apologies from P. Ewen and R. Barber be accepted.*

Carried

2. MINUTES

Moved (Robb / Davidson) *that the minutes of the previous Resource Management Committee meeting dated 12 May 2009, be confirmed as correct.*

Carried

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

3. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

There was no Chairman's report due to Cr Ewen's absence.

5. REPORTS

5.1. PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP

5.1.1 PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGER'S MONTHLY REPORT

S. Moran spoke to his report advising that the Plan Merge and Wetlands Variation are proceeding. S. Moran reported that hearings for the National Policy Statement on Freshwater Management are due to start early in July. S. Moran advised that reports back to Parliament regarding the Resource Management Act reforms Phase 1 are due by the 20th of June.

S. Moran reported that he and N. Costley attending the Canterbury Regional Land Transport Programme hearing on the 2nd June. He stated that they were given a fair hearing, they spoke for approximately 25 minutes on the upgrade of Mingha Bluff to Rough Creek. Cr Scarlett asked when is a decision is likely. S. Moran stated he is expecting a decision this week.

S. Moran reported that Mr Chris Manuel of Hokitika is arranging the West Coast Shakeout project for Exercise Ru Whenua which is planned for the 18th of September. Mr Manuel is working on a Californian model which will involve the wider local community, which will include schools as part of the drop, cover and hold earthquake drill response.

S. Moran advised that there have been six exceedences of the National Environmental Standard for the Reefton Air Shed.

S. Moran advised that there is \$5000 worth of funds available from the Honda Tree fund, applications close on the 30th of June. S. Moran reported that he has received an email from Sharon Haarsma and Alex Ray from Buller High School thanking Council for the opportunity to attend the Youth Environment Forum. He stated that pupils found the forum very useful.

Moved (Archer / Chinn) *that this report is received.*

Carried

5.1.2 STATE OF ENVIRONMENT REPORT ON GROUNDWATER QUALITY

S. Moran spoke to this report. He stated that this work was undertaken by Geological and Nuclear Science (GNS). S. Moran advised that groundwater quality is comparatively good at present and in particular in relation to other regions in New Zealand. S. Moran reported that the level of iron likely to be due to natural factors and the levels of manganese is likely to be related to well casing itself rather than wider environmental factors. Cr Scarlett asked if it could be said that human development is having no effect on our water at all. S. Moran responded that there is an affect but it is at the lower end of the scale. Cr Scarlett asked how long does monitoring go back. S. Moran responded that monitoring dates back to 1998. T. Scott asked what affect does manganese have on health. S. Moran responded that manganese is an aesthetic guideline and it impacts on colour and taste. Cr Birchfield stated that manganese is put into steel to make it stronger. It is also mixed into drill casings to make them stronger. S. Moran stated that manganese levels are not necessarily a health issue. Cr Birchfield stated that it is good to hear that water quality is good and that it is not going backwards. He added that when you look at the results, Council is doing its job. Cr Scarlett asked if wells in the Buller area are monitored. C. Ingle responded that the Regional Council monitors wells in the Buller area but they are not monitored as intensively as the GNS sampling.

Moved (Robb / Birchfield) *That the Groundwater Quality State of the Environment Report is received.*

Carried

5.1.3 WEST COAST REGIONAL LAND TRANSPORT PROGRAMME 2009 – 12

S. Moran spoke to this report. He advised that Council need to adopt this programme prior to it being submitted to the New Zealand Transport Agency. Cr Archer commended staff and management and all those involved in putting this document together as it is a huge project. Cr Birchfield stated that they need to get on the with projects as they have been pathetically slow especially with areas such as McKendries Corner.

Moved (Archer / Robb) *That the Regional Council adopt the Regional Land Transport Programme.*

Carried

5.2 CONSENTS AND COMPLIANCE GROUP

5.2.1 CONSENTS MONTHLY REPORT

C. Dall spoke to this report. He advised that he has been involved in various mediations meetings relating to the Trustpower Ltd for the proposed Arnold Valley Hydroelectricity Power Scheme consent. Cr Scarlett asked what is the timeframe for completing the appeal process. C. Dall responded that a number of the appeals should be able to resolved within the next couple of months but one or possibly two of the appeals may proceed to the Environment Court. Cr Archer confirmed that this can be a very tenuous process.

Moved (Birchfield / Archer) *that the June 2009 report of the Consents Group be received.*

Carried

5.2.2 COMPLIANCE & ENFORCEMENT MONTHLY REPORT

C. Dall reported that there has been a recent water turbidity exceedance at the Globe Progress Mine. C. Dall advised this is the first non-compliance in some 21 weeks and was attributed to a heavy rainfall event. He stated that this non-compliance emphasizes how important water management is during heavy rainfall events.

C. Dall reported that Council was notified of a sulphuric acid spill at the Pike River Coal site. He stated that the majority of the acid was contained on site but a small amount entered an adjacent settling pond. The acid eventually discharged to the river and to date there have been no substantial adverse affects.

C. Dall reported that there have been a number of incidents at the Stockton Mine site during the reporting period. He stated that a lot of these were the result of accumulative effects following heavy rainfall events. C. Dall reported that infringement notices would be issued for some of these incidents as some were avoidable.

C. Dall reported that the sentencing hearing for the former sharemilkers of a dairy farm in Whataroa has been held. The Judge sentenced the sharemilkers to 200 hours community service, which was in place of a monetary fine as both sharemilkers are insolvent.

Discussion took place regarding water management at the Stockton Mine. Cr Birchfield stated that it was a major rain event that caused these problems. He stated that during heavy rain events it is very hard to contain water and that Council needs to show common sense when administering this. C. Dall stated that he is aware of this and that is why no formal action has been taken. C. Ingle queried what would be classed as a heavy rainfall event and that guidelines need to be in place for this purpose. C. Dall stated that Solid Energy has continuous gauges at the Stockton Mine Site. Cr Scarlett spoke of guidelines from the Met Service. C. Dall responded that generally rain events are based on storm frequencies such as a one in two year event or a one in five year event. Cr Birchfield stated it was a big dump of rain and that a pit at Giles Creek proved troublesome to de-water. Cr Birchfield stated that the sewage ponds at Blackball were scoured out and washed down the river. He noted there was no mention of prosecution over this and that at the same time the Mangatini sump at the Stockton Mine was flooded. Cr Scarlett noted that the Blackball sewage issue was not included in the Council report. C. Ingle responded that Council was advised of this and that it may have been an oversight that this incident was not included in the report. C. Ingle confirmed that this would be followed up.

Cr Davidson spoke of the request from Buller District Council for a \$2000 bond for the revegetation of a mine. He asked if this Council sets bonds. C. Dall responded that WCRC only sets bonds for our consents but we do not govern what Buller District Council bonds for its land use consent. Cr Archer advised that whenever there is a joint hearing for a joint consent the tendency is that there is a joint bond issued. Cr Archer stated that in recent times issues with bonds have been well canvassed and that consenting authorities and the Department of Conservation and others agencies who have the ability to release bonds have strategies in place where the double and triple bonding can be done away with. Cr Birchfield disagreed. Cr Scarlett noted that it is up to the miner to discuss with the local authority if he feels that bonds have been set unjustly.

Moved (Chinn / Birchfield) *That the June 2009 report of the Compliance Group be received.*

Carried

5.2. GENERAL BUSINESS

There was no general business.

The meeting closed at 11.08 a.m.

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Chairman

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Date