

THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 8 JUNE 2010 AT THE OFFICES OF THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL, 388 MAIN SOUTH ROAD, GREYMOUTH, COMMENCING AT 10.30 A.M.

PRESENT:

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

IN ATTENDANCE:

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

1. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

2. MINUTES

Moved (Davidson / Robb) *that the minutes of the previous Resource Management Committee meeting dated 11 May 2010, be confirmed as correct.*

Carried

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

3. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Cr Ewen reported that he attended the re-opening of the Brunner Mine site as part of the celebrations for the 150th Anniversary of Westland. Cr Ewen advised that he has been liaising with the Chief Executive on the Proposed New Pest Management Strategy. Crs Ewen, Robb and Archer have now been through the final draft of this strategy. Cr Ewen also dealt with enquiries relating to 1080 and the Blaketown Beach gravel issues during the month. Cr Ewen reported that he has received a lot of favourable comments from the public on the upgrade of the Greymouth Floodwall. Cr Ewen stated that contractors and staff have done a terrific job of the floodwall and it is a credit to those involved.

Moved (Ewen / Scarlett) *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 the decisions on the Coastal Plan Change 2 were released on the 26th of May and it is now out for the appeal period. S. Moran reported that if there are no appeals received then the rule becomes effective after the 8th of July but if there are any appeals then it won't have effect until the appeals are resolved.

S. Moran updated Council on the Proposed National Policy Statement for Fresh Water Management, he advised that the Minister has sent the Board of Inquiry's Report to the Land and Water Forum. The Forum was supposed to report back to the Minister by June but he has extended the date for the report to August. This means that for the National Policy Statement, the Minister will not be

making any decisions until late August or September at the earliest. Cr Davidson asked if Council gets the opportunity to view a draft of the report. S. Moran responded that the Board of Inquiry's report is out and he will provide Councillors with a copy of this.

S. Moran advised that there is a Possible National Environmental Standard on future sea level rise. He stated that the Ministry is still looking into it and they have outlined what they are looking at for this should it go ahead. S. Moran advised that the possible NES might come up at a later date and Council may make a submission.

S. Moran reported that work is on track for the installation of the weather radar with consents and authorisations now in place. He advised this would give more information on weather forecasting for heavy rain events.

S. Moran reported that monitoring of air quality at the Reefton Airshed has been continuous but not reported on as there have been no exceedences since September last year. He advised that the winter weather is now upon us there have been two exceedences of the 50 mcg standard of PM10 during May.

Cr Scarlett asked where would the weather radar be located. S. Moran advised that the weather radar would be located on the Blue Spur at Hokitika and covers approximately 200 kilometres in each direction. Cr Birchfield stated that he hopes nothing is done regarding the possible NES on future sea level rise and that commonsense will prevail as he feels that whole science is wrong and that as time goes on this will be proven. Cr Davidson stated he feels there is no immediate need for a NES but planning needs to be considered in low lying areas. Cr Archer stated that he is intrigued that they are now talking about an 800 mm rise as he thought that Government position was that there was only going to be a 500 mm rise. He feels that the difference of 300 mm is potentially likely to have a huge impact on low lying coastal properties and he understands why a definitive measurement needs to be put in place in view of the litigation possibilities if Councils don't do something and someone is affected. Cr Ewen commented that this is crystal ball gazing at the moment.

Moved (Archer / Robb) *that this report be received.*

Carried

5.2 CONSENTS AND COMPLIANCE GROUP

5.2.1 CONSENTS MONTHLY REPORT

C. Dall took his report as read. He noted that the major consent matter during the month was the hearing for Solid Energy NZ's proposed Stockton Hydro Scheme which was commenced on the 17th of May and adjourned on the 26th of May. C. Dall advised that the committee is currently working through a number of issues before releasing its decision.

C. Dall reported that he still has not received any decision from the Environment Court in relation to the TrustPower appeal which was heard about 2 ½ months ago.

C. Dall reported that DoC and Meridian Energy Ltd have sought from the Environment Court to put the appeals on the Meridian consents on hold while they go back to discuss access and land swaps.

C. Dall stated that this is sensible from a consenting authority perspective and the Regional Council and Buller District Council have supported this application. C. Dall advised that a land swap may be an option to settle this matter and a concession is also being considered. Various outcomes were discussed with C. Dall expanding on possible scenarios that might lead to agreement for the parties.

Cr Scarlett asked if it is normal for a company like Meridian to spend so much money on a consent that runs the risk of DoC not granting them access. C. Dall responded that this is normal practice especially with consents for mining, as miners will often obtain consents prior to gaining access. C. Dall stated that consents do not guarantee right of access. Discussion took place of the processes followed around gaining access to conservation land. Cr Archer stated that the stumbling block is the Conservation Act because there is no mechanism that requires the landowner to deliver a decision in any given timeframe. C. Dall agreed with Cr Archer's comments.

T. Scott asked C. Dall why are we still allowing dairy effluents into rivers and freshwater ways. C. Dall responded that these consents to discharge dairy effluent are predominantly to land but there are periods especially during heavy rain when there may be a discharge but in most cases it is not a direct discharge to water.

Moved (Scarlett / Robb) *that the June 2010 report of the Consents Group be received.*

Carried

5.2.2 COMPLIANCE & ENFORCEMENT MONTHLY REPORT

C. Dall spoke to this report advising that since writing this report, the beach profile report for Blaketown Beach has been received. C. Dall stated that the profiles do show a build up of 3000 m³ in the Blaketown licence area with areas of change to the shape of the beach identified. C. Dall advised that this would account for some of the complaints that have been received. Cr Ewen stated that he has fielded a number of calls on this issue, he drew attention to the meeting with residents held here at Council in 2005. Cr Ewen spoke of the conditions put on gravel take and stated that the gentleman's agreement regarding gravel take, the infra- red beam and dust gauges has now fallen by the wayside. He is concerned that it is now back to where we were originally and that it is now more of an honesty system and that if there aren't checks and balances in place then we have progressed no further. Cr Ewen feels that Council monitoring needs to be more robust than what we are doing at the moment. C. Dall explained the beach profile report and confirmed that despite gravel being taken, the beach is still building up but there are certain areas that are hotspots where there has been a reduction in the beach profile but overall there has been a build up. Cr Ewen stated that the hotspots should be easily identifiable and if there is a build up and there is no erosion then this is where the focus for gravel extraction should be. Cr Ewen stated that the beach is getting steeper in a lot of places and this is a precursor where the beach could pull away. He feels a precautionary approach is required and maybe gravel should not be taken from the weaker, softer spots. C. Dall agreed with this and stated that this is why there has not been gravel extracted at the Merrick Street site and there hasn't been for some time. Cr Ewen stated that Westroads would now be getting close to their 6000 m³ limit for gravel extraction from Blaketown Beach for the year.

C. Dall advised that a report is awaited from Pike River Coal Ltd regarding the minor discharge that occurred at this site. He stated it had very minor effects to the environment.

C. Dall reported that the aerial 1080 operations have commenced for the season and staff will be monitoring these operations over the coming weeks. He stated that he has dealt with a number of inquiries over the past few weeks regarding 1080.

C. Dall reported that a further complaint has been received regarding water quality in Devils Creek but further investigation has revealed that this is the result of some re-suspension of material that was discharged some time ago during a higher flow event.

C. Dall reported that an average number of complaints and incidents were received during the month.

C. Dall reported that a number of work programmes for mining have been submitted; this is due to the number of alluvial gold mining operations that are taking advantage of the high gold price.

Moved (Archer / Scarlett) *that the June 2010 report of the Compliance Group be received.*

Carried

6.0 GENERAL BUSINESS

There was no general business.

The meeting closed at 10.56 a.m.

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Chairman

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Date