

THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 9 OCTOBER 2018, AT THE OFFICES OF THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL, 388 MAIN SOUTH ROAD, GREYMOUTH, COMMENCING AT 11.04 A.M.

PRESENT:

A. Robb (Chairman), T. Archer, P. Ewen, P. McDonnell, A. Birchfield, S. Challenger

IN ATTENDANCE:

M. Meehan (Chief Executive Officer), R. Mallinson (Corporate Services Manager), R. Beal (Operations Manager), H. McKay (Consents & Compliance Manager), H. Mills (Planning Science and Innovation Manager), N. Costley (Strategy & Communications Manager), T. Jellyman (Minutes Clerk).

1. APOLOGY:

Moved (Archer / Ewen) *that the apology from Cr Clementson be accepted.*

Carried

2. PUBLIC FORUM

The Chairman welcomed Dianne Sharpe to the meeting. Ms Sharpe addressed the meeting and stated that she would like to speak about the Hokitika Seawall rating district. Ms Sharpe owns property along Revell Street, Hokitika and is in the C Classification for the rating district. Ms Sharpe raised concerns about the fairness of the scheme and answered questions from Councillors. The Chairman thanked Ms Sharpe for her attendance.

Mr Graham Ford addressed the meeting. He stated that he lives in Maori Creek Road and is concerned at the increase in his rates and the Uniform Annual General Charge (UAGC). Mr Ford stated that he can afford to pay his rates but he knows of others who are now struggling to pay their rates. The Chairman spoke of the consultation process Council undertook with regard to the Long Term Plan process with the setting of rates. He stated that there is a lot of expectation around Council services and these are often out of Council's control. The Chairman stated that Council is happy to work with people who are struggling to pay their rates and is happy to work out a payment plan to help ratepayers. He asked Mr Ford to encourage anyone he knows that needs help to contact Council so that a payment plan can be put in place. Mr Ford spoke of the cost of living at the moment. Cr Archer stated that for the last 20 years the regional council has held its rates to a zero general rate increase. Cr Archer agreed that costs are increasing along with many additional directives that Council has to fund such as Local Government Commission (One District Plan), civil defence, economic development, monitoring requirements and changes to legislation. Cr Archer stated these matters are thrust onto Council and it has no other option. Cr Archer stated that across the country, this Council's regional rates are very low by comparison but this Council can no longer hold to a zero rate increase. The Chairman thanked Mr Ford for his presentation.

3.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Moved (McDonnell / Challenger) *that the minutes of the Council Meeting dated 11 September 2018, be confirmed as correct.*

Carried

Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

3.1.2 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING – 18 SEPTEMBER 2018

Moved (Archer / Birchfield) *that the minutes of the Special Council Meeting dated 18 September 2018, be confirmed as correct.*

Carried

Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

REPORTS:

4.1 ENGINEERING OPERATIONS REPORT

R. Beal spoke to this report and took it as read. He stated that the tender documents for the sale of Kiwi and Blackball quarries are now ready for review.

R. Beal advised that Agreed Levels of Service will be discussed with each rating district at the annual meetings as this is a requirement from Audit NZ. R. Beal advised that native planting alternatives will also be discussed at the annual meetings. R. Beal stated that if there is enough interest there is the opportunity to apply to the Shane Jones' \$1 billion provincial fund for trees. R. Beal spoke of his team's recent visit to Kaikoura which was hosted by Ecan. He stated that flood protection schemes were viewed and our staff took the opportunity to meet with their engineering staff.

The Chairman advised that he is unable to attend the rating district meetings scheduled for 15 October. It was agreed that Crs Birchfield and Ewen would chair these meetings between them. R. Beal advised that there will be 22 meetings held this year with the exception of Neil's Beach and Okuru rating districts.

R. Beal answered questions from Councillors.

Moved (Archer / Birchfield) *that the report is received.*

Carried

4.1.2 IMPLICATONS OF THE RANGITAIKI RIVER SCHEME REVIEW – APRIL 2017 FLOOD EVENT

R. Beal spoke to this report. He stated that this report will be discussed further at today's annual meeting of the Greymouth Joint Floodwall committee. R. Beal advised that preparation for sea level rise needs to be planned for with a high level GIS person to be employed so that information can be visually displayed accurately to communities. R. Beal spoke of the importance of utilising and investing in current staff to ensure there is good capability. Cr Birchfield spoke of the importance of keeping floodwalls clear of structures and to ensure staff and public safety is maintained during a flood event. R. Beal stated that checklists have been prepared for this purpose as at times staff do need to be on site to inspect damage during event. M. Meehan stated that it was very fortunate that the Edgcombe event occurred during daylight hours as there could have been significant loss of life during this flood. He advised that Council staff are currently working through protocols for engineering staff during a flood event. Discussion took place on the ways and costs involved in implementing these recommendations along with what to do first with a clear understanding on what is expected. M. Meehan stated that a very good starting point will be the discussions on agreed levels of services at the annual rating district meetings. Discussion took place on the amount of projects currently underway and the complexity of some of these issues facing coastal communities.

Moved (Archer / Challenger)

- 1. That the report is received.*
- 2. That Council reviews the funding and resourcing required to progress the recommendations made in the report through the next Annual Plan process.*

Carried

4.2 CORPORATE SERVICES MANAGER'S MONTHLY REPORT

R. Mallinson spoke to this report and advised that he has circulated an updated version and tabled hard copies. R. Mallinson reported that the surplus is \$346,000.

R. Mallinson advised that Audit NZ finished their onsite work last Friday. He updated Councillors on matters relating to the annual audit which include, reassessment of future quarry restoration liabilities (and associated mining right values), peer review of those costings and accounting for the buy out of the 51% major shareholder (PCR LP) on 29 June 2018.

R. Mallinson reported that the Investment Portfolio has performed reasonably well for the first two month period with a return of \$225,000. R. Mallinson advised that the first programmed withdrawal of \$350,000 has been completed.

R. Mallinson advised that the results for the year to June 2018 were substantially below expectations and the short term bank borrowing amounted to \$2.1M as at 30 June. He stated this is easily correlated to the negative budget variances experienced during 2017 / 18.

R. Mallinson stated that carrying short term debt is not satisfactory and he is therefore recommending that \$700,000 is withdrawn from the JB Were main portfolio in order to stabilise Council's short term borrowing. R. Mallinson answered questions relating to short term borrowing, interest rates and the possibility of riding this out instead of borrowing. Extensive discussion ensued, it was agreed that this matter would be parked for the time being and R. Mallinson would continue to report on this matter. The second recommendation in his report was withdrawn.

R. Mallinson advised that rates invoices were mailed out last week. He stated that feedback from some ratepayers has been as he would have expected in view of the new Uniform Annual General Charge. R. Mallinson advised that the payment date has been extended by one week until 26 October as the rates were mailed out a week later than usual. M. Meehan advised that ratepayers have been offered the opportunity to put a payment plan in place if required.

Moved (Robb / Birchfield) *that the report be received.*

Carried

5.0 CHAIRMANS REPORT

The Chairman spoke to his report and advised that several of the people who have expressed interest in being part of the Grey Freshwater Management Unit were in attendance at the recent meeting.

The Chairman spoke of the recent workshop for Buller Flood Protection. Cr Archer advised that there has been no general consensus on what the public want but more effort does need to go into the evacuation plan for this area as people's lives are more important than property.

Moved (Robb / Birchfield) *that this report is received.*

Carried

6.0 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

M. Meehan spoke to his report. He advised that following on from the meeting regarding coastal erosion in Granity, Ngakawau and Hector, a one page report will be produced for the community's comment. He advised that NZTA, Buller Electricity and Buller District Council staff along with WCRC staff were in attendance.

M. Meehan stated that he is still waiting for the consultation from the government to occur regarding the proposed mining ban on conservation land. He advised that a consultation document is expected within the next few weeks. M. Meehan advised that Council's focus has been to ensure that a thorough robust submission is put in and connects well with industry via Minerals West Coast, Straterra, iwi and the larger companies along with the three district councils who are involved with this group.

M. Meehan advised he is taking annual leave from 6 – 22 November. R. Beal will be Acting Chief Executive during this time.

Cr McDonnell asked M. Meehan what NZTA's approach is with regard to coastal erosion issues around Granity, Ngakawau and Hector. M. Meehan responded that NZTA is looking at work south of

the Ngakawau river to protect their asset in this area and Buller District Council are looking after the area north of the river. He stated that they are linking in together to ensure there is no duplication and costs are shared and they will also consult with property owners in this area.

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

Carried

GENERAL BUSINESS

Further discussion took place on coastal erosion matters. Cr Archer spoke of the importance of realistic timeframes. Cr Archer spoke of matters discussed at the recent flood protection workshop in Westport, he stated that civil defence is very important to communities. Cr Archer stated that currently there are no warning systems in place throughout the region to warn people that they need to evacuate. M. Meehan advised that the Civil Defence Director provides a quarterly updates which link into the CEG and Joint Committee meeting. M. Meehan advised that mobile phone alerting system, social media, police, fire and ambulance are used for this purpose. He stated that all of the emergency services attend the quarterly CEG meetings. It was noted that key civil defence staff were not at the workshop. M. Meehan stated that he would provide more information on this matter as there are already good systems in place.

Cr Archer raised the matter of whether or not a tourism rate will be implemented on the West Coast as this discussion needs to be had before the next annual plan process. M. Meehan stated that he has invited DWC to discuss this matter by October or November this year.

Cr Ewen spoke of issues previously raised relating to the Blackball Quarry, including noise and vibrations. Cr Ewen stated that all quarries have noise conditions which Council monitor and vibrations are classified as noise therefore Council does have a role to play in this area.

Cr Ewen expressed concern with possible changes to whitebait regulations. He is mindful that this Council may get caught up in this.

The meeting closed at 12.37 p.m.

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Chairman

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Date