

THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 14 SEPTEMBER 2010, AT THE OFFICES OF THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL, 388 MAIN SOUTH ROAD, GREYMOUTH, COMMENCING AT 11.28 A.M.

PRESENT:

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

IN ATTENDANCE:

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

1. APOLOGIES:

There were no apologies.

2. PUBLIC FORUM

There was no public forum.

3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Moved (Davidson / Robb) *that the minutes of the Council Meeting dated 10 August 2010, be confirmed as correct.*

Carried

Matters arising

Cr Archer asked what is the status of the letter that was to be written to the Minister for Conservation requesting that the Coastal Plan Change 2 is signed off as soon as possible. S. Moran responded that L. Sadler has contacted the Minister's Private Secretary last week and was informed that the letter will be signed off within two weeks. S. Moran advised that he would ensure that his staff keeps in touch with the Minister's office regarding this matter.

REPORTS:

4.1 PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGER'S REPORT ON ENGINEERING OPERATIONS

S. Moran spoke to his report. He advised that there are a substantial amount of repair works underway in various rating districts as a result of recent heavy rainfall events. S. Moran advised that in view of these works there has been a substantial amount of rock taken from the Inchbonnie Quarry which is helpful for the works in this area.

Moved (Ewen / Archer) *that the report be received.*

Carried

5.1 CORPORATE SERVICES MANAGER'S REPORT

R. Mallinson spoke to his report advising that his report is brief as there is no financial report prepared for the month to 31 July. R. Mallinson reported that the Investment Portfolio has performed well during July. He advised that the first rates installment for 2010 / 11 has now been mailed out. The newsletter was included in this mail out with advice on the possibility of saving GST when rates are paid in full before 30 September.

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

Carried

5.1.1 ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR TO 30 JUNE 2010 (UNAUDITED)

R. Mallinson spoke to this report. He advised that the auditors are currently on site. R. Mallinson advised that there are two adjustments to the previously reported an operating surplus of \$962,325 which is before the Greymouth Floodwall costs and a capital expenditure of \$244,552 for the Inchbonnie Rating District that had originally been classified as operating expenditure. Cr Ewen commented that this is an excellent result.

Moved (Robb / Davidson) *that the unaudited Annual Report for the year to 30 June 2010 be received.*
Carried

LATE ITEM

C. Ingle advised the meeting that there has been a request for a late item. This is a request from the Animal Health Board for further funding which also happened last year. The Chairman asked Council if they are prepared to receive a late agenda item.

Moved (Robb / Davidson) *that this late item be put on the agenda.*
Carried

The Animal Health Board have advised that there is now an opportunity for the council to fund a bit more of the local share and therefore more ground control work than they would otherwise be able to do. C. Ingle advised that the Animal Health Board now have an extra \$1M which could be spent on the West Coast but Council would need to front up with \$100,000 which is the local share. Cr Scarlett clarified that for \$100,000 we would get close to \$1M worth of work for ground control tender work. C. Ingle stated this also happened last year and the Animal Health Board assured him that this would not happen again. C. Ingle stated that he feels there is an opportunity to support the Tb control programme. Cr Scarlett asked if it was likely that VCS would get some of this work. C. Ingle agreed that it is likely that VCS would get some of the contracts. Cr Birchfield asked C. Ingle for his opinion. C. Ingle stated that this is unbudgeted but he feels that the business case is there as we would only be paying for 8.3% of the total cost. He feels that it is more of a matter of have we got the money available, should we give the full amount or half of what they are asking for. C. Ingle stated that the other question is where should we pay it from, either from reserves or do we tag half of it against the special ratepayer for next year. Cr Scarlett stated that he feels annoyed with the Animal Health Board as they were told last year to get their budgets right and not to come again. He stated that he is mindful that this is \$1M worth of work and VCS will probably get some of the work. Cr Scarlett feels that we should do it and suggested a 50 / 50 split between VCS and the investment fund. Cr Ewen stated he would be happy with 50 / 50 in view of the operating surplus. Cr Scarlett stated this is 9 / 1 and all ground control. Cr Ewen stated that with the operating surplus the way it is, he would be happy with 50 / 50 share, as it is 9 / 1 return. Cr Archer stated he is disappointed that this has happened again as last year we had exactly the same scenario but at least last year they came with a report. He feels this is a backyard request that the Animal Health Board haven't understood what they were told last year and this is the same argument as last year. Cr Archer is opposed to this. C. Ingle advised that if the Animal Health Board doesn't spend this money in this region then they will spend it elsewhere. Cr Archer stated that he would like to reserve making the decision on funding until council has heard about the discussions between the Chief Executive and the Animal Health Board. Cr Archer stated that this would be in the public excluded part of the meeting. Cr Robb stated that he is disappointed in the fact that the Animal Health Board have come back again this year but he does see this as an opportunity for the West Coast to get extra funding which is important to the Tb programme. Cr Robb supports the funding request and stated that all ratepayers are affected by the Tb programme. He stated that Tb control on the West Coast benefits all ratepayers with the dairy industry and farming being a huge part of our economy. Cr Robb commented that if it is a 50 / 50 funding share from the surplus and a lot of the surpluses are generated from Tb control which is a direct result of the Tb funding money. Cr Chinn stated that he does not support the funding request as he does not like the way the Animal Health Board operate and last time they came for more money he voted against it. Cr Chinn stated that this falls back on the targeted ratepayers and that is why he is against it. Cr Davidson stated that he is not worried about what happened last year and is interested in whether or not it is a good deal for the West Coast. Cr Davidson stated that if it is ground control then that keeps everyone happy as that is what people want. Cr Davidson is in favour. Cr Birchfield stated that it's a good deal and he would like to know where the funding is coming from. Discussion took place on where the funding could come from. R.

Mallinson advised that if the funding comes from the targeted rate then an extra increase in rating would be required next year as this year's targeted rate has already been set. Cr Scarlett noted that all the funding is in the surplus and it is just a question of where the funds come from.

Moved (Archer / Robb) *that Council holds back on making a decision until after Councillors have heard the report on recent discussions with the Animal Health Board in the confidential section of today's meeting.*

Cr Robb stated that this money will stay in the region as wages and Council needs to be mindful of this. Cr Scarlett stated that he is happy to take Councillors through the discussions held with the Animal Health Board in the confidential section of today's meeting. It was agreed that this part of the meeting would be adjourned and the matter further discussed after the confidential part of the meeting.

6.0 CHIEF EXECUTIVES REPORT

C. Ingle spoke to his report. He spoke of the recent meeting he attended for the switching of the river mouth at Saltwater Creek and advised that the resource consent for this has now been lodged by the Guardians of Paroa. C. Ingle advised that there is a small complication with it now being whitebait season and people whitebaiting at the mouth. Consents staff will need to ascertain whether the whitebaiters are affected parties. C. Ingle advised he attended the Regional CEO's meeting and the Chief Executives Environmental Forum in Wellington. He advised that there are quite a few issues on the table including Treaty matters. C. Ingle advised that he and Cr Scarlett would be attending the Regional Affairs Committee meeting on Thursday and Friday in Wellington which will follow up on these matters. C. Ingle advised that Treaty settlements in the North Island are changing the landscape quite a bit and this is affecting regional councils as they are seen as the appropriate level for Iwi to engage with on environmental matters. C. Ingle spoke of the meeting he attended in Christchurch with regional council biosecurity managers where the regional share contributions were discussed. He advised that we currently pay 8.3% at the moment but there is now a push from North Island regional councils to make this a flat 10% for each region. C. Ingle stated that he is trying to strongly resist this increase, as it will cost us more money to do the Tb work. He advised that the rationale behind the 8.3% is because we have so much Crown land here and this has not changed. C. Ingle advised that he and Cr Scarlett would be vigorously defending that the status quo remains. C. Ingle reported that he and Cr Scarlett met with the Chairman and CEO of the Animal Health Board on the 25th of August in Wellington. C. Ingle advised that he hosted a meeting here with EECA on home insulation options, they are still trying to get a funding deal with the PHO and an external funder who are both offering to put money in for this. C. Ingle advised that Development West Coast is yet to answer as to whether they will assist with funding. C. Ingle advised that he attended the quarterly Mayors and Chair Forum yesterday. C. Ingle reported that he would be attending some of the annual rating district meetings. He reminded council of the hearing for the Pest Plant Strategy on the 22nd of September and stated that there are only a couple of submitters attending.

Cr Davidson stated that he felt there were no great advantages for EECA's home insulation options for West Coasters. C. Ingle responded that the proposed scheme would give particular advantages for low income earners or beneficiaries who would get a 90% subsidy and possibly a longterm loan for the other 10%. Cr Scarlett advised that this is looking more positive than it was and he will keep council posted on this matter.

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

Carried

7.0 CHAIRMANS REPORT (VERBAL)

The Chairman reported that he met with John Dalzell, Chairman of the Animal Health Board and their CEO, William McCook on the 25th of August. He advised that he would inform council of this in the confidential section of today's meeting as previously agreed. Cr Scarlett reported that he attended the Mayors and Chair meeting yesterday and spoke of the \$100,000 contribution from Development West Coast to the Canterbury earthquake fund. Cr Scarlett advised that he would have a discussion in general business as to what this council's contribution will be to this fund. Cr Scarlett stated that it has been agreed that the regional council is the most appropriate body to send this contribution off, as it is a regional donation to the people of Canterbury from the people of the West Coast. Cr Scarlett advised that the donation is for social services such as the Red Cross and not for buildings or infrastructure. Cr Scarlett stated that the Civil Defence Plan was adopted at yesterday's Mayors and Chair Forum.

Moved (Scarlett / Davidson) *that this report be received.*

Carried

GENERAL BUSINESS

Cr Birchfield stated that in view of the public comments being made about council credit card use he would like to see all the expenses for councilors for this term be released. C. Ingle confirmed that the Greymouth Evening Star requested that the last five years of credit card expenditure be released and this has been done. C. Ingle advised that the Westport News had requested that information on what had been eaten and where also be released but this matter is currently under dispute. R. Mallinson advised that all travel and accommodation details have also been released. Cr Chinn drew attention to an article he read in the Greymouth Evening Star that stated that WCRC would not release any further documents unless they pay for this. R. Mallinson clarified that should a further request be made then time would be charged for as per normal under the LGOIMA. Cr Archer advised that the Chief Executive is responsible under the legislation for the release of public information and he decides whether or not there will be a charge at the time. Cr Archer stated that R. Mallinson was the acting Chief Executive when this information release request was made.

Cr Scarlett requested that discussion take place as to how much this council would be donating to the Canterbury earthquake fund. Cr Scarlett advised that it has been suggested that \$10,000 be given by each council and he does not disagree with this and would like to have consistency between the local councils. Cr Ewen stated that any giving would come back a hundred fold when we have our one. Cr Archer asked if the media article he read is correct in stating that Grey District and Buller District Councils have indicated that they are each prepared to offer \$10,000, Westland District Council have indicated that they do not have any spare cash to make a donation and any donation that would be made including the donation from Development West Coast would be seen as a regional donation. Cr Scarlett confirmed that this is correct. He advised that he was speaking to the Mayors yesterday and was informed that Westland may review this decision. Cr Ewen feels that the \$10,000 suggested by the District Councils roughly equates to the population of each district and \$25,000 equates to a regional donation. Cr Birchfield feels \$10,000 is a suitable amount. Cr Davidson is in favour of a \$10,000 donation. Cr Chinn stated that he welcomes Development West Coast's decision to give \$100,000 as this is the people's money whereas the money from the district councils is ratepayer's money and he is in favour of a \$10,000 donation. Cr Robb agrees with \$10,000 as it is still spread out between the two regions. Cr Scarlett advised that some councils have in kind, sent people to help, he noted that Cr Archer is going to help in Christchurch later this week. Cr Archer stated he would be happy with the larger donation as Canterbury people are really hurting at the moment and he is in agreement with Cr Ewen on a larger donation.

Moved (Ewen / Archer) *that the West Coast Regional Council give a donation of \$25,000 be given to the earthquake fund for the people of Canterbury.*

Cr Davidson moved an amendment to the motion, that the donation be \$10,000.

Moved (Davidson / Birchfield) *that the West Coast Regional Council give a donation of \$10,000 to the earthquake fund for the people of Canterbury.*

Cr Scarlett asked for a show of hands. The amended motion was carried.

Cr Scarlett reiterated that it is important to remember that this donation is given by the people of the West Coast to the people of Canterbury and will be given to the Red Cross who will distribute it to social services for people in need.

Cr Scarlett advised that the meeting would be adjourned and reconvened once a decision has been made regarding the Animal Health Board matter.

The meeting was adjourned at 12.12 pm and reconvened at 12.40 pm.

Cr Scarlett advised that it is now time to make a decision on the funding request from the Animal Health Board. Cr Chinn suggested leaving the decision to the next council to make following the Local Body Elections. Cr Archer is not in favour of this as this council has been around for three years and has a

much better understanding of this matter and is in a better position to make a decision. Cr Archer is now in a better frame of mind regarding the funding request.

Moved (Robb / Ewen) *that the West Coast Regional Council pays the Animal Health Board \$100,000 from the operating surplus for the local share for ground control tender work.*

*Carried
Cr Archer abstained from voting.*

Further discussion took place on the Animal Health Board's method of requesting further funding with all councilors expressing their opinions.

Cr Scarlett wished all councilors the best for the coming elections. He thanked councilors for the term they have had and stated that this has been a good council and good progress has been made.

The meeting closed at 12.44 p.m.

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Chairman

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Date