

THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 8 OCTOBER 2019, AT THE OFFICES OF THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL, 388 MAIN SOUTH ROAD, GREYMOUTH, COMMENCING AT 10.56 A.M.

PRESENT:

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

IN ATTENDANCE:

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

1. APOLOGY:

There were no apologies.

2. PUBLIC FORUM

There was no public forum.

3.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The Chairman asked the meeting if there were any changes to the minutes of the previous meeting. There were no changes requested.

Moved (Archer / Ewen) that *the minutes of the Council meeting dated 10 September 2019, be confirmed as correct.*

Carried

Matters arising

Cr Ewen asked about the Notice of Direction for Kiwi Quarry. M. Meehan advised that there is no Stop Work Notice in place. He advised that a Notice of Direction is in place but there is no intention to reopen Kiwi Quarry, he advised that if Council did want to reopen the quarry all that it required is to comply with the normal obligations of health and safety including make safe work. M. Meehan stated that R. Beal has advised that there is nothing stopping Council from working in the quarry as long as best management practices are followed.

Cr Archer asked for an update on funding related to the Westport 2100 project. M. Meehan advised that Westport 2100 has held off with recommendations, as Council is currently working with R. Beal on a package to take to the new Council.

REPORTS:

4.1 OPERATIONS REPORT

M. Meehan spoke to this report in R. Beal's absence. M. Meehan advised that a meeting of the Hokitika Joint Seawall Committee will be held on Thursday and will discuss what to do about the Tudor Street groyne as there is a three metre drop in this area. Cr McDonnell implored that the new Council looks at the rating classifications for the Hokitika seawall rating district.

M. Meehan advised that section of the heliport stopbank at Franz Josef that is owned by the rating district is being upgraded and will be paid for by the rating district. He advised that there is an agreement in place with Destination Westland for the rest of the stopbank which is owned by them.

M. Meehan reported that the Lower Waiho stopbank, Milton & Others, is now complete. He stated that 66,000 tonnes of rock was recovered from the riverbed, and used for the reinstatement of the stopbank. M. Meehan stated that this was a monumental effort by staff and contractors, opening of the stopbank will take place on Thursday. M. Meehan stated that Council made the decision in early April to rebuild the stopbank and the effort with this is a credit to the contractors involved and to B. Russ, R. Mallinson and R. Beal. It is hoped that there will be a very minimal loan for the Lower Waiho rating district. M. Meehan advised that work with Council's insurer and MCDEM will continue. Cr Archer endorsed M. Meehan's comments and stated that this project has been a great effort from staff. Cr Archer asked if there has been any community feedback and he asked what are the final costs. Cr McDonnell stated that he has not yet received any feedback, Cr Challenger stated that he has heard positive things from the rating district and they seem very pleased. Cr Challenger stated that minimal cost to ratepayers is what everyone is happy about. Cr Ewen stated that this has been a good way to utilise the Catastrophe Fund to get work up and running, prior to insurance payments being received.

Cr Birchfield commented that a very good job has been done in Franz Josef. He agreed with Cr Ewen's comments regarding the Catastrophe Fund. R. Mallinson answered questions relating to costs and advised that final payments are yet to be received but the net cost to Council to date is \$2.45M. R. Mallinson advised that B. Russ is monitoring costs on a weekly basis.

Discussion took place on the groynes and the affect they are having. M. Meehan advised that an Engineer form OCEL has been engaged to advice on the groynes. Cr Archer stated that it is appropriate that Council passes on its appreciation to management and staff on work down for the Lower Waiho rating district. Cr Archer stated that this has been a good job which was well done by all involved. M. Meehan advised that B. Russ has been engaging with community the whole way through. M. Meehan advised that the community is keen to extend the stopbank and are looking at protection work upstream. M. Meehan stated that it has been good to recover rock from the river rather than quarrying rock and transporting rock from Whataroa to Franz Josef. M. Meehan advised that the contractors have gone 10 kms down river to recover rock. He stated this has been a massive effort to get this rock. M. Meehan advised that B. Russ originally thought that they might retrieve 20,000 tonne of rock from the river but to get 66,000 tonnes is a huge effort from those involved. Cr Ewen stated that should the stopbank be extended this would be new capital work. Cr Birchfield agreed that it is a good idea to extend the stopbank up to Rata Knoll. M. Meehan confirmed that the rating district is looking at increasing height of compacted bank. Cr Robb stated that Council deserves some praise for the way it reacted to the situation as Council took a bit of heat in a very difficult situation. Cr Robb stated Council took on board what community was looking at and was able to change direction at fairly short notice. Cr Robb stated that on behalf of Council, formal recognition should go to B. Russ, R. Beal and R. Mallinson for the extra work done in ensuring that this was a successful and well run project. Cr Robb stated that Council's finances are well looked after by R. Mallinson.

Moved (Clementson / Archer)

1. *That the report is received.*
2. *That B. Russ, R. Beal and R. Mallinson are formally thanked for their work with the Milton & Others Stopbank reinstatement.*

Carried

4.2 CORPORATE SERVICES MANAGER'S MONTHLY REPORT

R. Mallinson spoke to his report and advised that the surplus amounted to \$856,000 compared to the budgeted surplus for the two months of \$74,000. He advised that revenue includes \$865,000 in Crown payments regarding the March flood event. R. Mallinson advised Council is getting income from the Crown on revenue account which is not matched by any expenditure on operating account because the rebuild is going straight through to the balance sheet as capital work. R. Mallinson reported that total revenue for the two month period amounted to \$3.315M and includes \$865,000 from the Crown. Total expenditure amounted to \$2.458M. R. Mallinson reported that VCS income is running below budget as well as investment income for the two month period.

R. Mallinson spoke to the rest of his report and answered questions from Councillors. He stated that the remedial fix for the Greymouth Floodwall did not happen in the 2018/19 year. R. Mallinson advised that this work is yet to be done and will go into this current year's financial budget.

R. Mallinson answered questions relating to the Catastrophe Fund. He confirmed that just the excess of \$250,000 from the Crown and the insurer. The \$750,000 will be reinstated and built up as quickly as possible to the \$1M. Cr Archer asked if there has been any indication as to how much we will receive from insurers for Lower Waiho claim. R. Mallinson stated that he is still awaiting a response from the insurer. M. Mallinson stated he is optimistic that the claim will be accepted in full and is in regular contact with the Broker, Anon. R. Mallinson advised that the Lower Waiho and other rating districts affected by the March weather event will get the benefit from the excess as there is only one claim for the whole region. M. Meehan advised that a review of all asset management plans will be done to ensure that the right amount of coverage is in place for any future events. Cr Birchfield good to get a breakdown of all costs associated with the claim for Lower Waiho. R. Mallinson advised that Council has good clarity on what will be received from the Crown but less clarity with regard to what will be received from the insurer at this stage. He stated that the insurer is expected here in a few days' time. M. Meehan explained the insurance process to the meeting. R. Mallinson explained the valuation process to the meeting. M. Meehan advised that Council holds just under \$60M in assets across the rating districts and it is important that Council gets this right across the 26 rating districts that are insured by Council.

Moved (Ewen / McDonnell) *That the report is received.*

Carried

5.0 CHAIRMANS REPORT

The Chairman asked if any councilor would like to say a few words. Cr Clementson stated that he was approached to run for Council six years ago. He thanked staff and management for their support over the years. Cr Clementson stated that he is not seeking re-election due to his father's recent accident, but stated that he may consider standing for Council again in the future.

Cr Archer endorsed what has been said. He stated that today is his last formal meeting, he has been attending various Council meetings for over 35 years, albeit the last 12 years on this Council. Cr Archer stated that he has been heartened that Council can debate quite vociferously and everyone is accorded their right to speak. He stated that nobody has ever been held in disregard because of their opinion. Cr Archer stated that unfortunately New Zealand has now become the conservation conscious of New Zealand and the recent policies and NPS's and the cost to community and cost to those of fixed incomes is growing exponentially. Cr Archer wished everyone all the best and thanked all present for their camaraderie and support. He thanked Council management and staff and wished Councillors well for the elections.

Cr McDonnell agreed with Crs Clementson and Archer's comments. Cr McDonnell stated that the regional council is blessed with its quality of staff and management. He wished staff well with the changes coming from central government. Cr McDonnell wished the three Councillors seeking re-election well and stated that it is important Council has some continuity.

Cr Challenger wished those Councillors leaving well, he wished the three Councillors re-standing good luck. Cr Challenger stated that he hopes that the new Council is a balanced Council as they are here representing different pockets of the community.

Cr Birchfield agreed with previous comments and stated that it is a very well run Council with good staff. He stated that he will miss the Councillors who are going.

Cr Ewen echoed the comments said and stated that there are some difficult times ahead. He stated this Council has strived for excellence and is not one of mediocracy. Cr Ewen stated that the wetlands issue was the beginning of challenges and he feels that pakahe could be the next challenge. Cr Ewen stated that he has enjoyed the company of Crs Archer, McDonnell and Robb and they have contributed well to the debate.

The Chairman stated that this is his last council meeting, he thanked senior management team and their staff. He stated that a lot of their work is not always noticed or appreciated by the wider public, he thanked them for their dedication and effort for community. The Chairman thanked N. Costley for her high quality of work, he thanked M. Meehan and stated that he can be proud of the team and where the organisation is at.

The Chairman stated that the minutes are always accurate with not many additions or changes. The Chairman thanked R. Mallinson for his work with audits and stated that his advice is always sound. The Chairman thanked his fellow Councillors and stated there they have had some good lively debates, they haven't always agreed, but they always come to a decision and move forward. Hold heads high here for right reasons. The Chairman wished Crs Ewen, Birchfield and Challenger well for the election. He thanked Crs Clementson, McDonnell and Archer as they are not seeking re-election. He stated they can leave knowing they have served their communities well, with the decisions they have made have had the community's best interests at heart. The Chairman thanked Cr Clementson for his support as Deputy Chairman, and Cr Ewen for his term as Deputy Chairman. The Chairman thanked Cr Archer and stated that they came onto Council at the same time, along with Cr Birchfield. He stated that Cr Archer's wise words and wisdom have been well received. The Chairman stated that Cr Archer's contribution to his community has been outstanding.

The Chairman reflected on achievements during his tenure on Council and noted that Council's investment fund has been looked after and grown. The Chairman stated that WCRC is often the glue within the three districts in terms of joint services. He stated that Civil Defence is a great joint service for the community. The Chairman spoke of the huge amount of work Council does on behalf of the region in providing information, bringing people together, making submissions on central government policies. The Chairman stated that he has been part of a Council that has always acted in the best interests of its community. He stated that in his six years as Chairman Council has made so bold and tough decisions that might not have always been politically easy to make but they have been made on good governance principles and were the right thing for the community. The Chairman wished staff and Councillors well in future endeavours.

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

Carried

6.1 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

M. Meehan spoke to his report and advised that the MfE staff will be on the West Coast for a field visit on 23 October. M. Meehan stated that there is a lot of work in this area at the moment, with weekly meetings to work through the impacts of the freshwater package.

M. Meehan advised that he is preparing work for the biodiversity NPS along with a response to the huge amount of work coming out of Wellington during the next six months.

M. Meehan answered questions from Cr Archer regarding the scope of work with regard to the commercial viability of ports, and the resilience of them.

M. Meehan thanked Councillors for this service. He stated that he has found that they have been prepared to have a debate, and prepared to disagree, but disagree on good terms. M. Meehan stated this has allowed for clear direction for staff which is appreciated. M. Meehan wished the four departing Councillor well and stated that they will be missed around the Council.

Moved (Clementson / Challenger) *that this report is received.*

Carried

GENERAL BUSINESS

M. Meehan provided Cr Ewen with an update on Kiwi Quarry. M. Meehan advised that a Notice of Inspection is in place and there is an understanding between WorkSafe and Council's Quarry Manager, where make safe work can be done.

The meeting closed at 11.48 a.m.

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Chairman

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Date