

THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 14 JULY 2020, AT THE OFFICES OF THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL, 388 MAIN SOUTH ROAD, GREYMOUTH, COMMENCING AT 10.30 A.M.

PRESENT:

S. Challenger (Chairman), A. Birchfield, P. Ewen, D. Magner, B. Cummings, J. Hill, L. Coll McLaughlin, J. Douglas, F. Tumahai

IN ATTENDANCE:

M. Meehan (Chief Executive Officer), R. Mallinson (Corporate Services Manager, via Zoom), H. Mills (Planning, Science & Innovation Manager), H. McKay (Consents & Compliance Manager), R. Beal (Operations Director), T. Jellyman (Minutes Clerk), The Media

Cr Birchfield read the prayer.

1. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

PRESENTATION

M. Meehan introduced Heath Milne, Chief Executive of Development West Coast (DWC) to the meeting. H. Milne stated that recently there has been a lot of discussion relating to alternative energy and the future of coal mining on the West Coast. H. Milne acknowledged that Cr Hill had previously asked where things are at with this. H. Milne stated that the Green Party is the only Party with an official policy on mining. H. Milne stated that there was a piece of work done a few years ago which looked at the feasibility of converting coal burners to wood or wood chip. This has since resulted in an expression of interest to the Provincial Growth Fund (PGF), but has now been turned down. H. Milne advised that the research has determined that it is completely uneconomic to convert coal boilers to wood chip, or brickettes as there is not enough wood waste to replace the boilers on the West Coast. He stated that the cost of conversion is cost prohibitive. H. Milne stated that carbon capture and storage options are unknown but he could look into this. H. Milne spoke of the negative publicity around the use of coal, and advised that this is not being countered by a balanced view. H. Milne has engaged with several industry players, and industry representation and said that there is not a balanced argument being put forward about valid reasons to continue using coal, and not just from an economic point of view but from an environment point of view, or counter argument. H. Milne stated that this needs to be looked at going forward. Cr Hill asked if there is a future for converting coal fired boilers to wood fired boilers, he feels that only way of the future would be if carbon capture was added to this. Cr Hill stated that the calorific value of wood is lower than coal and more carbon could be emitted with wood than coal. Cr Hill asked if it is worth investigating this? H. Milne advised that the initial work done was not based on the ETS scheme. He stated that coal produced on the West Coast is good coking coal, and steel cannot be manufactured without this type of coal. H. Milne stated it more about changing the rhetoric, so that there is an understanding that this industry is not having as big of an impact on the environment as the lobby groups would have people believe. Cr Hill spoke of the costs for carbon emissions and the prospect of large companies like Fonterra changing from coal to wood when the cost of carbon emissions is likely to be so much higher.

Cr Ewen stated that the policy from the Green Party is not doable. He said that brickettes were investigated in the 50's and 60's with a brickette plant investigated for Westport around this time. Cr Ewen stated wood is not viable for the same energy content. H. Milne stated that the industry voice needs to be considered before moving towards technology that is actually not there yet.

Covid-19 Recovery: H. Milne stated that since March DWC has been focussing on Covid-19 related economic issues. He advised that one of the first steps was to form the Covid-19 Recovery Group which was initially set up to look at potential areas likely to be impacted and how this could be done. H. Milne stated that the big focus was on government support and to ensure that the West Coast captured as much of this support as possible. He stated that the tourism industry has been affected the most, with a separate group formed to support this industry. H. Milne advised that since going down to Level 1, the West Coast tourism industry is performing better than a lot of other parts of New Zealand. He stated that this group meets every two weeks and is chaired by Rob Caldwell with representation from iwi, WCRC, DoC, MSD, and several DWC trustees. This group has morphed into the West Coast Alliance, with the objective being to capture as much

of the bulk government funding as possible so that projects such as Jobs for Nature, and similar initiatives can get underway. H. Milne stated that it is still uncertain how much funding is coming through. H. Milne stated that this is not about handouts, but is about creating a productive and sustainable future.

F. Tumahai stated that there are so many groups doing so many things, and the Alliance will be a good way of putting framework in place. Cr Hill stated that it is great to see this actually happening. H. Milne stated that businesses have suffered, and once the second wage subsidy finishes in September another raft of redundancies is expected and further business closures. H. Milne spoke of a number of West Coast businesses closing or mothballing.

Cr Hill stated that he is keen to speak to the Alliance about waste management for the West Coast. The Chairman thanked H. Milne.

2. MINUTES

The Chairman asked the meeting if there were any changes to the minutes of the previous meeting.

Moved (Birchfield / Cummings) *that the minutes of the previous Resource Management Committee meeting dated 9 June 2020, be confirmed as correct.*

Carried

Matters Arising

Cr Ewen asked about the recent issues that occurred at the Roa Mine. H. McKay agreed to follow up on these matters and report back to Councillors.

Cr Coll McLaughlin noted that there are some minor typographical errors in the minutes but she will follow up on these via email.

3. PUBLIC FORUM

There was no public forum.

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Cr Challenger stated that he has had a quiet month with nothing to report.

5. REPORTS

5.1 PLANNING AND OPERATIONS GROUP

5.1.1 PLANNING REPORT & HYDROLOGY REPORT

H. Mills spoke to his report and advised that the Environment Court has now made a determination on the RPS mediation and have accepted all changes that were worked through at mediation. H. Mills provided background information on the RPS and advised that Appendix 1 is the Determination of the Environment Court, and Appendix 2 is a clean copy of the RPS. H. Mills advised that all regional councils have to have an RPS under the RMA. He stated that Council's process started in 2015, with the Proposed RPS being notified in 2015, and hearings held in 2018. He advised that Council notified decisions in 2018, and Council agreed on all the changes that the Panel had worked through. H. Mills advised that three appeals were received, from Heritage NZ, DoC and Forrest and Bird. H. Mills explained the process to the meeting and gave a history of proceedings. H. Mills explained the changes and how these were dealt with. He stated that Policy 1, identifying SNA's, was already a part of original decision that the original hearing panel had decided on. H. Mills stated that SNA's were to be mapped. H. Mills explained bottom lines contained in Policy 2 to the Committee. H. Mills stated this was quite a difficult process but feels that the process landed in a good spot with a good compromise found for SNA's. H. Mills advised that approving the RPS is a mandatory step, and if this is not done there is the potential for a \$600,000 fine. The Chairman thanked H. Mills and his team for their work, and stated that this has set things up well for the One District Plan. The Chairman spoke of the importance in getting issues resolved early on. Cr Ewen agreed with The Chairman's comments. Cr Ewen stated that this is supposedly the end game, but is concerned there will be another chapter and things will change again. H. Mills answered questions from Councillors and clarified matters relating to SNA's and the One District Plan process. It was agreed that H. Mills and L. Sadler would attend the next meeting of the Te Tai o Poutini Committee. F. Tumahai stated that the staff team has done very well in the Environment Court process and this has shown that everyone could work together, to get a result. F. Tumahai stated that this has saved a lot of money and he appreciates everything that has been done, as what happened in mediation was very impressive, and had never been done before.

H. Mills advised that the appeals period for Plan Change 2 closed yesterday with one appeal received from Makaawhio which relates to the Lake Kini wetland near Bruce Bay. Discussion took place on how these matters could impact the Te Tai o Poutini One District Plan. H. Mills answered questions from Councillors.

Moved (Coll McLaughlin / Magner)

1. *That the report is received.*
2. *That the Resource Management Committee adopts the Environment Court's Determination on the mediation changes to the Regional Policy Statement and approves that it be made operative on 24 July 2020.*

Carried

M. M. Meehan acknowledged the contributions from Makaawhio and Ngati Waewae throughout the RPS process. M. Meehan stated that the RPS started a long time ago with a number of full days of collaboration sessions held at Council. He stated that these contributions have been significant and Council would not be in the position now without the commitment for Makaawhio and Ngati Waewae.

5.1.2 REEFTON AIR QUALITY SUMMARY

H. Mills spoke to this report and advised that there has been one exceedance of the NES for air quality during the reporting period. He stated that changes to the NES are still awaited and are expected towards the end of the year. H. Mills advised that once the changes are to hand, it will provide clarification on where to from here, and allow for consultation with the Reefton community. Cr Ewen noted that this is only a small exceedance.

Moved (Cummings / Birchfield) *That the report is received.*

Carried

5.2.1 CONSENTS MONTHLY REPORT

H. McKay spoke to this report and advised that nine consent site visits were carried out during the reporting period. She reported that 10 non-notified resources consents were granted, and one change to consent conditions were granted during the reporting period.

H. McKay clarified matters relating to Elect Mining Ltd's resource consent.

Moved (Ewen / Magner) *That the July 2020 report of the Consents Group be received.*

Carried

5.2.2 COMPLIANCE & ENFORCEMENT MONTHLY REPORT

H. McKay spoke to this report and advised that 100 site visits were carried out during the reporting period. She advised 17 complaints or incidents were recorded and three non-compliances. H. McKay reported that 14 additional complaints or incidents were received and these were either complaint or are still under investigation.

H. McKay advised that no further action is required following the recent diesel spill at Stockton, as this was contained. She stated that an abatement notice has been issued following the recent discharge of sediment at a gold mining site.

H. McKay reported that two formal warnings and three abatement notices were issued during the reporting period.

H. McKay reported that seven mining work programmes were received during the reporting period with all seven work programmes being approved. H. McKay advised that five bonds were received, and three bonds were recommended for release.

Cr Birchfield drew attention to the five complaints in the Stafford, Waimea Creek, Goldsborough area. H. McKay advised that there has been a flurry of ongoing complaints relating to noise in this area. She advised that staff are working through what can be done to deal with this on an ongoing basis. H. McKay answered questions from Councillors and agreed to follow up on the discharge of water to land in the Greymouth area. The Chairman asked H. McKay if staff have been able to follow up on the complaints received in South Westland. H. McKay advised that compliance staff will be visiting this area later this week and will follow up on these matters, as well as septic tank issue at Hannah's Clearing.

Cr Hill asked H. McKay if her team are coping with their workload post Covid-19. H. McKay responded that although it has been busy, the compliance team has been keen to get back out into the field and they are enjoying being back to full capacity.

Moved (Birchfield / Cummings)

1. *That the July 2020 report of the Compliance Group be received.*
2. *That the bond of \$10,000 for RC-2018-0107 Robert Graham, \$6,000 for RC-2017-0085 Dead Horse Mining and that \$5,000 for RC03274 Koronet Mining Ltd be released.*

Carried

GENERAL BUSINESS

The Chairman acknowledged that this is M. Meehan's last meeting after 16 years at the Regional Council, starting as a Compliance Officer, Planning & Operations Manager, and the last four years as CEO. The Chairman stated that M. Meehan has represented us very well, particularly in Wellington, and has worked hard getting West Coast issues understood. The Chairman thanked M. Meehan for his efforts and wished him well for the future.

The meeting closed at 11.17 a.m.

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Chairman

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Date