

THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 10 DECEMBER 2019, AT THE OFFICES OF THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL, 388 MAIN SOUTH ROAD, GREYMOUTH, COMMENCING AT 11.16 A.M.

PRESENT:

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

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), R. Beal (Operations Director), T. Jellyman (Minutes Clerk).

1. APOLOGY:

There were no apologies.

2. PUBLIC FORUM

Prior to Ms Inta addressing the meeting, Cr Cummings asked if there is a resource consent in place for the cleaning of out the drain. H. McKay responded that there is a resource consent application for the culvert structure at the mouth of the drain, which is on hold for further information, but there is no resource consent for the cleaning out of the drain because it is operated under the permitted activity rule. Cr Coll McLaughlin advised that Buller District Council is obligated to do this.

The Chairman welcomed Frida Inta to the meeting via telephone. M. Meehan advised Ms Inta that all councillors are present, as well as both iwi representatives. Ms Inta stated that the main thrust of her submission is the dredging out of a creek colloquially known as Swannies Creek. She stated that she is not aware of any permitted rule which allows the dredging out of this creek. Ms Inta stated that the dredging material has been taken out of the CMA, and put above the CMA, it has destroyed the vegetation in this area, and has introduced weeds. Ms Inta stated she would like a reply to her submission. She stated that Swannies was a natural inlet and there was an outlet there at one time which has been diverted several times. Ms Inta would like to know what are the permitted rules for this area and what is Council going to do to address this issue. The Chairman thanks Ms Inta and advised that Council staff will be in contact with her.

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. It was noted that there were only three of the current councillors present at this meeting.

Moved (Challenger / Ewen) that *the minutes of the Council meeting dated 8 October 2019, be confirmed as correct.*

Carried

Matters arising

Cr Ewen advised that in response to his question regarding Kiwi Quarry, he stated that there is no such thing as a Notice of Direction, there is a verbal directive. Cr Ewen stated that there is a Prohibition Notice given to the site on 11 May 2018, and this is still in force. He stated that there is no rock on the floor. Cr Ewen stated that should Council wish to work on this site in the future, a Geotech assessment would be

required and an extraction plan would need to be provided. R. Beal confirmed that Council has no plans to reopen Kiwi Quarry.

3.1.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF TRIENNIAL MEETING HELD 25 OCTOBER 2019

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

Moved (Ewen / Challenger) that *the minutes of the Triennial Council meeting dated 25 October 2019, be confirmed as correct.*

Carried

Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

REPORTS:

4.1 OPERATIONS REPORT

R. Beal spoke to his report and took it as read. He stated that due to heavy rain over the past week there has been work done in the Wanganui rating district with 5,000 tonne of rock placed on the stopbanks of the Wanganui River.

R. Beal advised that the final costs of the rebuild for the Milton & Others stopbank are not yet to hand. He stated that the Lower Waiho rating district is very motivated to upgrade the stopbank from Canavans Knob to Rata Knoll. They also wish to extend the Milton & Others Stopbank downstream but this is substantially more expensive. R. Beal advised that should this work go ahead the existing loan can be refinanced by taking out a further \$400,000 without having to increase the repayments but the term would be 25 years. R. Beal advised that for the rebuild, 40% of the declared value will be paid out, and 60% of the costs of the rebuild will be covered by MCDEM.

The Chairman asked R. Beal if more rock will be placed in the Hokitika rating district as there has been more erosion in this area. R. Beal advised that erosion has been quite aggressive in this area over the past four months. He stated that work has been started and further rock work will be done once the erosion slows. R. Beal answered questions from Councillors and confirmed that currently there is no Council owned rock pile in the Inchbonnie quarry. He stated that at the end of the existing royalty agreement, Council will have a 5000 tonne stockpile.

Discussion took place on rating districts and the importance getting classifications right when a rating district is set up. M. Meehan advised that the classifications for the Hokitika rating district may be looked at during the annual plan process. He provided in depth advice on rating districts in general.

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

Carried

4.1.2 WESTPORT 2100 – RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WORKING GROUP

M. Meehan introduced Mr. Chris Coll to the meeting. M. Meehan acknowledged the work done by the Westport 2100 Working Group and stated that a lot of the members are volunteers who have put a lot of time into producing this report for Council. He stated that the Working Group had wanted to get this report before the previous Council but as there are matters in the report that will need to be brought to the Annual Plan, it is better that the report comes before the current Council. Mr. Coll addressed the meeting and advised that the group has been together for 8 / 9 months and working towards some monumental decisions. He stated that the group is getting focused on identifying the risk and hazards involved which include flooding by the Buller River, earthquake in the Buller region and West Coast in general, cyclone such as Fehi or similar, Tsunami from the Tasman Sea, localised earthquake fault such as the Cape Foulwind fault, or from the Pacific east coast side South America area. Mr. Coll stated that the overarching effect of climate change which can magnify and complicate all of these events. Mr. Coll stated the working group is left with three options, number one – do nothing in the mistaken belief that it will cost nothing until the event or disaster strikes, this is considered not an option as insurance companies may increase premiums or make insurance unaffordable. Option number 2 is to put an evacuation plan in place for Westport, Carters

Beach. Mr. Coll spoke of the risk that the Buller Bridge may not be safe to cross and this is the only escape route. Option three is to upgrade existing hard structures that still remain, and build stopbanks and rock protection around Westport by initiating a rating district proposal as a matter of urgency. Mr. Coll stated this has become urgent, the working group is concerned about justified criticism if an action plan is continued to be postponed. Mr. Coll spoke of the planned new hospital which is located in the Westport township and this could be of concern. Mr. Coll spoke of potential effects of gravel build up in the Buller River. He displayed aerial photographs of this area, and the areas of concern. Mr. Coll advised that Matt Gardner from Land River Sea Consulting Ltd has been asked to prepare a response and a study. Mr. Coll spoke extensively of the history of this area. He advised that the next meeting of the working group will be held next January 2020.

N. Costley advised that she has been working with and assisting the working group. She spoke of the 32 recommendations in the report which are all parts of planning for both civil defence, the Regional Council, Buller District Council and other stakeholders including NZTA. N. Costley stated that the recommendations focus on short, medium and long term actions and have been phased into phase 1 and phase 2 process with phase 1 being things that can get underway now or in the new financial year. Phase 2 covers projects that would be undertaken following initial investigative work.

M. Meehan advised that a letter has been received from Buller District Council confirming that Crs Sharon Roche and Grant Weston have been appointed to the Westport 2100 Working Group, and that former Crs Phil Rutherford and Shayne Barry continue to be included in the Westport 2100 Working Group.

Mr. Coll answered questions from Councillors. Extensive discussion took place on the formation of rating districts, rating classifications, insurance issues and the importance of progressing this project. Cr Coll McLaughlin spoke of the risk Westport people may encounter by not being able to get insurance cover if there is not suitable protection in place. She stated that the feedback from Buller is just get on with it, and that the community must be consulted with. Cr Hill stated that there may be a reluctance to establish a rating district but it is important that this work is started. M. Meehan advised that this requires a lot of work, he advised that properties who are at the most risk pay more. He stated that there are no hard and fast rules around the establishment of rating districts and it is not a perfect science. Extensive discussion took place and it was agreed that one rating classification is the fairest. Cr Coll McLaughlin suggested that a workshop is held for Councillors so that they can be well informed. She stated that it is important that the most palatable option for the community is found.

Moved (Challenger / Hill)

1. *That Council receives this report.*
2. *That Council adopts the phase 1 recommendations as identified in Table 1: Recommendations of the Westport 2100 Group, for inclusion in the next Annual Plan and the Long Term Plan 2020-2023 and subsequent Annual Plans, unless they can be prioritised earlier in current business as usual budgets;*
3. *That Council investigates the formation of a rating district for the wider Westport area to accelerate recommendations to improve the resilience of the Westport community and to undertake the further investigative work required to inform the phase 2 work, with some urgency.*

Carried

4.2 CORPORATE SERVICES MANAGERS MONTHLY REPORT

R. Mallinson spoke to his report and advised that this is the four month report up to 31 October 2019. He advised that total revenue was \$5.798M, and includes \$960,000 from MCDEM in payouts for the Milton & Others stopbank rebuild and other damage to infrastructure as a result of the 26 March weather event. R. Mallinson advised that investment income is less than budgeted. He stated that VCS revenue and expenditure reflects the number of quantum of contracts that have been carried out during the reporting period.

R. Mallinson reported that total expenditure for the period is \$4.79M and total operating surplus is just over \$1M. R. Mallinson explained the rest of his report in detail for the benefit of the new Councillors, and answered questions from Councillors. He advised that VCS and investment income is running below budget.

Moved (Challenger / Ewen) *That the report be received.*

Carried

4.2.1 ELECTED MEMBER REMUNERATION

R. Mallinson spoke to this report. He advised that Councillor remuneration is set by the Remuneration Authority, and they inform Councillors how much they will be paying their Chair as well as informing each Council of the pool they need to pay to all other Councillors except the Chair. R. Mallinson advised that the Chair's salary has been set at \$85,300, with the sum of \$317,737 needing to be paid to the other six Councillors. R. Mallinson explained the four different scenarios for the deputy chair's relativities for salary. R. Mallinson advised that the Remuneration Authority advise how many cents per km Council is allowed to pay but Council does its own budgets separate to this pool for mileage reimbursements. R. Mallinson stated that Council has no option but to pay the full pool otherwise Council would be in breach of the law, and the regulations. R. Mallinson reiterated that Councillors are not voting themselves a pay rise, as this is a directive from the Remuneration Authority. R. Mallinson answered questions from Councillors and acknowledged the extra work the deputy chairman is required to carry out. The Chairman stated that as his salary is set, he suggested that 75% relativity. Discussion took place and all present agreed with the 75% scenario.

Moved (Cummings / Magner)

That Councillors adopt the 75% relativity for the Deputy Chair / Resource Management Committee Chair position.

Carried

4.2.2 SCHEDULE OF MEETING DATES FOR 2020

R. Mallinson spoke to his report. The Chairman noted that traditionally the Council meeting has been held on the second Tuesday of each month. M. Meehan advised that over the next six months there will be quite a lot of work with the Annual Plan requiring additional workshops. Cr Ewen suggested that a workshop could be held during the third week of January. M. Meehan advised that Council will need to meet to approve the submission on the Crown Minerals Amendment Act which is due on 27 January.

Moved (Coll McLaughlin / Ewen) *That Councillors adopts the 2020 Schedule of Meeting Dates.*

Carried

4.2.3 TRIENNIAL AGREEMENT

N. Costley spoke to this report and took it as read. She stated that this agreement is a requirement of the Local Government Act requiring the four West Coast Councils to prepare a triennial agreement. R. Mallinson provided background information on the history of triennial agreements.

Moved (Challenger / Cummings)

That Council endorses the Triennial Agreement for Councillor Birchfield to sign on behalf of the West Coast Regional Council.

Carried

5.0 CHAIRMANS REPORT

The Chairman spoke to his report and asked Councillors if there were any questions relating to meetings he has attended during the reporting period. Cr Ewen asked The Chairman if there has been any signal from other parties about the disbanding of the Conservation Board. Cr Birchfield responded that he has not heard this matter mentioned at any meeting he has attended as yet. Cr Ewen stated that Council could lend its voice to this matter as he is not in favour of this move. Cr Ewen stated that Conservation Board does not represent the region as elected members, as Council does. Cr Ewen stated that in the last term it has been more ministerial appointment as opposed to those people who were removed. The Chairman stated that the Board has been stacked. Cr Cummings agreed. F. Tumahai also agreed. Cr Ewen stated he would like the Board to be disbanded. M. Meehan advised that Council has no power over the Board. Cr Coll McLaughlin stated that she is not in favour of disbandment but would like to see the community better represented. Cr Hill agreed with Cr Coll McLaughlin. F. Tumahai advised that the whole weight of the Board has now shifted to what it used to be with it shifting to a lobby group. F. Tumahai stated that he

feels that Board does not need to be disbanded but does need to be refocused and changed. Cr Magner stated that she would be stepping aside from the conversation. M. Meehan suggested that a joint letter is penned, and sent to the Minister highlighting Council's concerns. Cr Cummings asked how the appointments to the Board are made. The Chairman advised that they are ministerial appointments. F. Tumahai advised that both iwi appointments are appointed by Ngai Tahu. M. Meehan stated that the letter can be worked on via the Mayors, Chairs and Iwi Forum and circulated to Councillors and iwi representatives.

Moved (Ewen / Coll McLaughlin)

1. *That M. Meehan drafts a letter to the Minister of Conservation expressing concern regarding the recent changes to members of the Conservation Board.*
2. *That this report is received.*

Carried

6.1 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

M. Meehan spoke to his report and spoke of the meetings he attended prior to the new council being formed. He advised that the meetings with the sphagnum moss industry and the field trip hosted by Council with regard to the changes for the freshwater NPS and to support Council's submission. M. Meehan advised that positive feedback has been received.

M. Meehan advised that civil defence has been very active over the last month or so.

M. Meehan reported that he and the Chairman attended the Regional Sector meeting in Wellington on 7 November.

M. Meehan stated that the meeting with Minister Parker was focused on the Freshwater package and he seems willing to look at different alternatives and is aware of the concerns that have been raised to date. M. Meehan stated that the Minister for Civil Defence has now been hosted twice in the last month. Both M. Meehan and the Minister flew to Franz Josef yesterday to attend a public meeting with approximately 400 tourists that were stuck in Franz Josef following the recent heavy rainfall event. M. Meehan advised that the Director of NEMA (National Emergency Management Agency) also attended this meeting. M. Meehan advised that there are a lot of council staff involved in the civil defence response as this is a very important part of staff roles.

M. Meehan advised that the meeting with Minister Sage was an opportunity to highlight Council's concerns with the biodiversity NPS which is being led by Minister Mahuta, Minister of Local Government and is not being led by Conservation. M. Meehan stated that this was also an opportunity to put the costs in front of the Minister of what costs to implement and the concerns from landowners regarding this NPS.

M. Meehan advised that focus on what is coming through from central government and working out how to deal and support staff with this is continuing. M. Meehan stated that there are a lot of unknowns in this area which makes it harder when trying to set up the Annual Plan process.

M. Meehan answered questions from Councillors and provided additional information on the new civil defence agency, and matters relating to Westport 2100, Franz Josef weather event and cost recoveries for this event.

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

Carried

GENERAL BUSINESS

There was no general business.

The meeting closed at 12.41 p.m.

.....
Chairman

.....
Date