

**THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF TE TAI O POUTINI PLAN COMMITTEE  
HELD ON 28 MAY 2020, VIA ZOOM, (DUE TO COVID – 19)  
COMMENCING AT 09.00 A.M.**

**PRESENT:**

R. Williams (Chairman), A. Birchfield, J. Cleine, S. Roche, T. Gibson, B. Smith, A. Becker, L. Coll McLaughlin, P. Madgwick, F Tumahai

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

J. Armstrong (Project Manager), L. Easton, E. Bretherton, R. Mallinson (WCRC), S. Bastion (WDC), S. Mason (BDC), P. Morris, (GDC), T. Jellyman (Minutes Clerk)

**WELCOME**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. He advised that WCRC is hosting the meeting via Zoom. He reminded those present that this is a public meeting and members of the public as well as media are welcome to attend. The Chairman welcomed any members of the public who may be viewing the meeting via Council's Facebook page.

R. Mallinson advised that he would be presenting the budget paper on behalf of M. Meehan.

**APOLOGIES:**

**Moved** (Smith / Gibson) *That the apology from L. Martin be accepted.*  
*Carried*

**CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

**Moved** (Becker / Gibson)

*That the minutes of the meeting dated 11 May 2020, be confirmed as correct.* Carried

**MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

**Financial Report**

R. Mallinson spoke to this report and advised this is for the 10 months to 30 April. He reported that income for the year is \$400,000 which includes the \$250,000 targeted rate, and the \$150,000 general rate contribution from WCRC. It also includes the WCRC contribution of \$25,000, and the LGC grant which is for 9 out of the 12 months. R. Mallinson reported that total income was \$575,000, expenditure was \$447,000. The surplus for the period is \$128,000.

J. Armstrong advised that more income has been received over the last nine months than budgeted for. She advised that costs for the website are included as Consultant Fees but should be under stakeholder engagement. J. Armstrong stated there will be an overspend on stakeholder engagement this year as the Iovist platform cost was unexpected this early in the project. She advised that it is likely the underspend will be around \$70,000 to \$80,000. It was noted that this can be carried over to next year. R. Mallinson confirmed there is no problem carrying over the unspent surplus to the following financial year. S. Bastion queried the \$25,000 contributions from councils, R. Mallinson confirmed that WDC is to be invoiced for this amount but both GDC and BDC have declined to pay, and therefore will not be sent invoices.

**Moved** (Roche / Smith) *That the financial report is received.* Carried

## **Te Tai o Poutini Plan 2020 /21 Budget**

R. Mallinson spoke to this report on behalf of M. Meehan. R. Mallinson advised that for WCRC's annual plan a formal joint resolution is required by this committee. R. Mallinson advised that due to Covid – 19, WCRC agreed at its April meeting to adopt a zero rate increase in general rate, the uniform annual charge and the emergency management rate and the One District Plan rate for 2021. R. Mallinson advised that WCRC is not going to publicly consult on its annual plan. He confirmed that WCRC is operating within the parameters of the Long Term Plan. He advised that actual budgeted expenditures and revenues will be finalised once details of the One District Plan budget request are received from this committee. R. Mallinson advised that WCRC has agreed to borrow up to \$0.75M to cover any budget shortfalls in 2021. R. Mallinson advised that this committee has revised its budgetary requests considering the impacts of Covid -19. R. Mallinson explained the budget table in this report.

R. Mallinson advised that One District Plan Funding is to have a carry forward from this current financial year of possibly up to \$100,000 but in view of J. Armstrong's earlier comments, this is likely to be slightly less. He advised that the targeted rate will remain at \$250,000. R. Mallinson advised that if it had not been for the one off LGC contribution of \$250,000 Council would have been rating at \$450,000 and would have needed to borrow to cover shortfall. He stated that WCRC will make decisions on the 2020/21 budget at its June meeting.

Cr Birchfield stated WCRC needs to decide if they are going to borrow to fund this. His impression is that more savings should be looked for within the current budget. Cr Birchfield stated that he will not accept this report until WCRC has had a discussion. Cr Birchfield stated that savings could be made in the research area, he queried why research has to be done. J. Armstrong advised that TTPPC is legally obliged to do research, and cannot make a guess where issues are going to arise. She stated that planning staff need to be well informed as to whether policy is going to achieve outcomes for the good of the West Coast, suitably educated people are needed to do this research.

Mayor Cleine stated that the committee needs to be very clear regarding starting the process of the necessary funds to do a good job. He gave the example of delaying the SNA process could add a year and cost at least \$0.5M. Mayor Cleine spoke of the DoC led nature based jobs and if there is an opportunity to make a funding application to undertake some of the key research. Mayor Cleine stated he would like to see an action point that J. Armstrong works with the WCRC CE to progress this. Mayor Cleine spoke of a meeting he had this morning with Mr. Lou Sanson from DoC and this is the type of project that will benefit the entire West Coast. J. Armstrong stated that she loves this idea as it can help landowners with pest control and fencing. She explained how these type of projects can work for Councils. She stated this would be a huge natural fit for this. Extensive discussion took place and it was agreed that J. Armstrong would follow up with M. Meehan to progress this matter.

Cr Coll McLaughlin stated it is important to emphasis that a lot of this funding is coming via DoC, and a funding application via DoC might be more successful as far as the draft policy statement sits. Mayor Cleine advised that DoC have stated that they will not be the distributor of this funding, and it is likely that WCRC or DWC will oversee this. Cr Roche stated she supports Mayor Cleine's suggestion and said that regardless where money comes for research, it is false economy to push the research out. She feels that for every year that the project goes on for this is another \$0.5M. Cr Roche stated that in the Project Plan a draft plan was to come back to this committee. She stated that by pushing out the research around SNA's could take time and could mean that the next election with new committee would be in place. Cr Becker agreed with Mayor Cleine and Cr Roche. J. Armstrong advised that DoC would not be administering the research and it is likely that part of the fund would go to regional councils or regional body. Mayor Smith stated he was briefed on the possibilities of external funding, and was informed this would cover both public and private land and is administered outside of DoC He stated this will reduce costs and timeframe, and is straightforward.

The Chairman advised that there is general support for the budget, it was therefore agreed that the budget would be presented to the West Coast Regional. It was also noted that there was strong support for external funding.

**Moved** (Smith / Cleine) *That the budget report is received.*

*Against Cr Birchfield  
Carried*

## **Project update**

J. Armstrong noted that everyone seems happy with the video presentations and from now on the planning team will present from agenda papers via Teams.

J. Armstrong advised that under Covid -19 lockdown the planning team were able to continue working. She advised that a number of questionnaires were developed during this time. J. Armstrong reported that good responses on mining, Heritage and biodiversity have been received.

J. Armstrong advised that L. Easton is nearing the end of her one year contract, J. Armstrong has written up a new 12 month contract commencing 1 July 2020, which will be at the same rate. It was agreed that this committee will recommend to M. Meehan, as Chief Executive, that he signs the contract. The Chairman commented that the work coming from L. Easton is first class.

**Moved** (Coll McLaughlin / Roche)

*That the West Coast Regional Council's Chief Executive signs L. Easton's contract for a further year.*  
*Carried*

Cr Coll McLaughlin suggested that in future questionnaires are printed and circulated in the Messenger, as this would go West Coast wide. She stated that they are very good and she would like questionnaires to be as effective as possible. J. Armstrong stated that this could be expensive, she suggested adverts with links to the questionnaires could be put in the Messenger. She agreed to follow up on this. Cr Smith agreed with Cr Coll McLaughlin's suggestion on the placement of the questionnaires in the Messenger as this is a free newspaper. Cr Birchfield stated that links to questionnaires could also be placed in each Council's newsletters which go out with rates.

Discussion took place on the name – Te Tai o Poutini Plan. J. Armstrong advised that while on the roadshow, a few people claimed that they are confusing the name with the Polytech. J. Armstrong suggested adding the words "a Combined District Plan for the West Coast" to the email signatures and website. Cr Birchfield agreed, he stated that he refers to it as the One District Plan, and he would like to see this done in large letters. Cr Coll McLaughlin stated she likes the work "combined", as the West Coast is one region but three districts.

**Moved** (Becker / Gibson) *That the Project Manager's update is received.*

*Carried*

### **Technical Update – Approach to Minerals and Mining**

J. Armstrong stated this has been an interesting discussion with the Technical Advisory Team as each district council has different rules. L. Easton advised that she has recorded a video on this matter. She stated that minerals and mining is a significant issue for the West Coast. L. Easton stated that under the RMA minerals do not have to be sustainably managed, as there is an expectation that minerals will be exploited and run out. L. Easton stated the West Coast is blessed with lots of different types of minerals and mineral development has been the backbone of the West Coast. She stated that Pounamu and Aotea stone are important for Ngāi Tahu. She advised that BDC and WDC's current provisions are very similar. She advised that GDC's plan has been written differently and is silent on minerals and mining in its plan. L. Easton stated that following discussions with GDC staff it has been revealed that many mining activities in the GDC district are permitted activities except in SNA's and in outstanding landscapes. She stated that there are advantages in identifying areas that need better protection as this allows for a more permissive regime in other locations. L. Easton stated she has looked at other areas around the country that have significant mineral resources. She stated it is reasonably common for councils to avoid reverse sensitivity and to create specific provisions. She stated that it is important to think about reverse sensitivity, as this relates particularly to rural residential development. L. Easton advised that in depth workshops have been delayed due to Covid – 19 but should be done in July. L. Easton advised that WCRC has a significant function around extraction industries. She stated that the focus of Te Tai o Poutini Plan needs to be on district matters. she stated it is important to be able to reduce risk of duplication. It was noted that WDC has transferred their function around consenting, monitoring and enforcement for mining activities to WCRC. This could be considered as a method within this plan also.

L. Easton advised that some mines are due to be re-consented under this plan and care will need to be taken on how this process is managed. She stated that the size of Stockton and the work involved with this needs to be carefully managed. She stated this is a unique site and a special zone would be appropriate for Stockton. She spoke extensively on how this could be managed and worked through and advised that feedback on this from the committee will be sought. L. Easton answered questions relating to SNA's, she clarified about limited notification and how this could be provided for. Cr Coll McLaughlin stated a big focus

with SNA's has been where will they be and what can and can't you do. L. Easton provided information on the tiered approach to regulation and what are the issues the district plan manages. Extensive discussion took place on vegetation clearance. L. Easton advised that a call is yet to be made in this area.

Mayor Cleine asked if there is an argument to incorporate the wider area, such as Buller Plateau into a special zone in order to enable special rules or treatment of this area. L. Easton responded there have been no boundaries drawn but this has been discussed with DoC and they were not very positive about this idea. Mayor Cleine stated that he is looking forward to progressing this matter.

L. Easton answered various questions and offered to provide further information on special zones for coal mining. L. Easton advised that she has proposed to include a range of currently and potentially mined areas in the mining precinct.

Mayor Smith stated that he feels gravel extraction should be made easy on nominated rivers, getting rid of gravel is a priority on aggrading rivers. He would like to see special areas set aside in the Plan for rock extraction. Mayor Smith would like to see the Plan have a focus on economic benefit to the district and to New Zealand when considering access to minerals, he supports mining zones for the Buller Plateau and Ross, Ianthe, Strongman, Reefton, and the Paparoa's. He stated that all of these areas need to be considered when SNA's and wetlands are zoned. Mayor Smith stated that minerals are a huge part of the West Coast. Cr Birchfield agreed with Mayor Smith's comments, and stated he is very concerned with SNA's and where they are going to end up. Cr Birchfield feels that the West Coast has already made its contribution to SNA's through the national parks. He stated there are huge areas of our district taken up with national parks. Cr Birchfield feels that there should be no more time or money spent on this. Cr Coll McLaughlin asked if more data could be available. L. Easton stated she would like some kind of overlay that highlights significant areas of minerals on the West Coast. She is keen to get better data. It was noted that MBIE might have further data. Cr Roche stated the conversation on SNA's highlights the need to progress research as without this research it is putting the plan on hold. The Chairman stated it is important to deal with the issues. Cr Coll McLaughlin stated that it is difficult to working on a district plan when there is no National Policy Statement in place. J. Armstrong stated there is no intention of duplicating work that has already been done. She stated there is strong case law directing identifying of SNA's in the current RMA, and this has to happen anyway. J. Armstrong stated that desktop work for assessing areas is exactly the same for the RPS as for any NPS, it would collect exactly the same information. J. Armstrong stated that as a planning team they see no reason to hold off getting the desktop analysis done. Mayor Smith asked J. Armstrong if a SNA or a wetland can't be determined without first determining what the mineral resources are over the same area of land. J. Armstrong advised she cannot confirm this without looking but doubts that would be the case. L. Easton stated that the important question for this committee is what are the rules that apply to a SNA. She stated that she would be bringing further information back to the next meeting on this matter. Mayor Smith stated he wants to be sure that minerals have been fully examined to ensure mineral wealth is not being locked up. Mayor Cleine stated that duplication of consents has been identified by the mining sector, he would like to know how much this process will help to streamline with other agencies. L. Easton advised that the biggest complaints are around the Crown Minerals process and DoC concessions process, and TTPP has no control over these. She stated this is a signal to the planning team to bear this in mind as they do not want to add in unnecessary regulation. She stated any opportunities to streamline will be taken up.

**Moved** (Gibson / Cleine)

1. *That the report is received.*
2. *That the Committee provide feedback on the proposed approach to Minerals and Mining.*  
*Carried*

The meeting adjourned for a ten minute break and reconvened at 10.25 a.m.

### **Non Residential activities**

L. Easton spoke to this report and advised this is a follow up from the discussion at the April meeting. She displayed a video to the meeting and stated that the approach taken by other councils varies as this is a local community issue. L. Easton spoke of home businesses, various industrial activities and the impact this can have on peoples lives. Visitor accommodation was covered and tourism was discussed. The summary of rules for Home business was discussed with each committee member stating their preferred option. Mayor Cleine stated he is in favour of option 1. Cr Coll McLaughlin is in favour of option 2 as she feels that there should be as small as obstacles as possible for those in business. Extensive discussion took place with L. Easton advising that these are the performance standards that have been discussed with the TAT. She

spoke extensively and answered questions from the committee relating to traffic generation and regulations. Mayor Gibson stated she is in favour of option 2. Cr Birchfield is also in favour of option 2. Mayor Smith is also in favour of option 2, and stated that Covid – 19 has forced us to think about the way forward. He stated that connectivity is now very important in order for people to work from home. He is in favour of a very liberal approach. Cr Roche is in favour of Option 1, as she concerned that existing business might move out of CBD, and towns could lose their vibrancy of township. F. Tumahai agrees with Option 1 as he would hate to see businesses move out of the CBD. P. Madgwick is in favour of Option 1 as he feels there is a real danger of gutting the CBD. He feels that Option 1 has enough flexibility, he said that after the Covid – 19 lockdown people have realised it is a lot easier to work from home. L. Easton confirmed that home business can be under a discretionary activity. Cr Becker agrees with Mayor Smith and is in favour of Option 2. He stated that businesses that are looking at moving to home base rather than the CBD must be on shaky ground and could be lost altogether if they don't work from home. Cr Birchfield agreed with Cr Becker and stated that it is not sustainable to be in the CBD at times. The Chairman stated that this is very good feedback. It was agreed that L. Easton will take this feedback to TAT and will have joint discussion with the staff to ascertain the way forward. She advised that different provisions may be looked at for Buller. Cr Coll McLaughlin stated that it is likely that everyone agrees on the core ideas, but if the difference of a business surviving means being at home, rather than in the CBD then this needs to be enabled. She stated that nobody is disagreeing on what they want; it is just the way to get it. It was agreed that this is a great opportunity to set out good guidelines. It was agreed that L. Easton would report back to a future meeting on this matter.

Visitor accommodation was discussed. L. Easton advised that she has looked carefully at Queenstown's rules as they have similar issues with regard to visitor numbers. She stated that it is hoped that the economy returns post Covid -19. She expanded on her report and invited feedback on this. Cr Coll McLaughlin is in favour of option 2, extensive discussion then took place with each member providing feedback. It was noted that it is important that events are not lost if there is not enough accommodation. Mayor Smith stated that Westland has very few accommodation facilities in commercial areas as most new lodges are in areas that are rurally zoned. It was noted that it is important to ensure that there are not too many roadblocks in place if for example accommodation is needed in places such as the West Coast Wilderness Trail. He stated that none of this is zoned as commercial. Mayor Smith is in favour of Option 2, he stated it is important that the rules allow for development. He stated that there is a danger of rolling out red tape. Mayor Smith wants to make sure that when someone wants to build accommodation to a tourist activity that they can do without going through a fully contested resource consent process. Cr Roche is in favour of Option 1, she feels there is a lot of red tape with Option 2 with identifying zones. Cr Roche stated that there are times when there are pinch points with accommodation. She feels a workable option needs to be achieved. Mayor Gibson stated that control can be had through regulatory functions. Cr Birchfield stated there needs to be as little red tape as possible. He feels that Air B n B's are going to be needed. P. Madgwick favours Option 1, and would like to see hosted accommodation being permitted. He feels this levels the playing field with motels and allows for unhosted Air B n B's to go through a discretionary process. L. Easton stated that these comments have been very helpful. She agreed to come back to this committee with further proposals after discussion with the TAT.

### **Community Facilities**

L. Easton stated she is keen to hear from the committee regarding this. Mayor Cleine stated he is keen for feedback on Option 2, with regard to education facilities. L. Easton advised that these could be run out of a church or community hall, or could be homebased childcare such as Barnadoes. Mayor Cleine is in favour of Option 1, Cr Becker agreed. S. Bastion asked if sports grounds and venues are considered in this. L. Easton advised this will be covered in the next agenda. L. Easton advised that this is about sites that are zoned residential. L. Easton advised that the Westland Sports Hub would be looked at as an open space zone. Discussion took place on discretionary activities. L. Easton confirmed that discretionary activities applications generally need to allow for affected parties to have some input. P. Madgwick agreed and stated that this needs to be flexible enough to allow for urban Marae and sports club activities, as well as other uses such as functions. L. Easton stated this is great feedback. She advised she will come back to the committee with a draft of specific provisions, some maybe specific to Buller in a couple of months' time.

**Moved** (Cleine / Coll McLaughlin) *That the Committee receives the report.*

*Carried*

### **Technical Update – Plan Layout**

L. Easton spoke to this report and advised that this report is an overview. She stated that this Plan is being made under the new National Planning Standards. L. Easton advised that the introduction will include a mihi and the strategic direction has been done in discussion with Ngāi Tahu planners. She stated that Part 2 will cover district wide matters and introduces the strategic direction chapter. L. Easton advised that a tourism paper will be brought to the next meeting. She stated that the strategic direction chapter sets the overall framework for the Plan. She stated that this Plan will look very different as the current plans were written in the 90's. The new Plan will be an E Plan and it is hoped it will deliver better standard customer service. L. Easton is mindful of internet issues on the West Coast, therefore the Plan needs to make it as easy as possible to print and provide copies to the public.

L. Easton clarified Optional Content. She stated that a lot of content in this area is now not required. She stated it is important that objectives and policies can stand alone without explanations, as this is how they are used. L. Easton answered questions and provided further information. S. Bastion suggested a name change. F. Tumahai agreed with this suggestion. L. Easton agreed to look at alternative names for the Mineral Extraction strategic direction section. Discussion took place and it was agreed that L. Easton would work on this. Cr Coll McLaughlin stated that a wider section might be required to cover infrastructure in general. Mayor Smith stated that the West Coast needs to be able to cover economic drivers without a solid economy. He stated that without jobs there is no community. He stated he does not feel any sensitivity about extracting coal, gold, rock and believes this is part of what the West Coast does. He stated it is important that this committee stands up for what the West Coast is. Cr Becker agreed with Mayor Smith's comments and stated that it is important that any potential is not stymied. Cr Birchfield also agreed and stated that the West Coast is based on mining, and we should be proud of mining. The Chairman stated that members are expressing the certain uniqueness to the region and this needs to be emphasized and highlighted a bit more. Cr Becker asked if the harvesting of sphagnum moss can be added into the Plan as this is a crop that is harvested on the West Coast for nearly 30 years, and is a permitted activity. L. Easton stated that this has been very helpful with the strategic direction chapter. She asked if there is anything in previous plans that the committee would like included. Cr Coll McLaughlin stated she would prefer that the plan is kept as streamlined as possible but she would like to see a supporting document with more explanatory and contextual information that is prepared as part of this process and is accessible. She stated that there shouldn't be anything included that already sits in RPS. Cr Birchfield stated that the harvesting of sphagnum moss is a permitted activity in the Land and Water Plan. L. Easton advised that she can include an advice note highlighting that this is a permitted activity under the Regional Plan.

**Moved** (Becker / Smith) *That the information is received.*

*Carried*

### **General business**

The Chairman stated that he and J. Armstrong will send out a brief document seeking comments for the next meeting. He asked the meeting if they would like to have more frequent meetings, or if they are comfortable with the current set up. He asked the meeting to consider whether or not they would like sub-committees set up.

Cr Birchfield stated that he would like everyone to receive a map of the West Coast that shows the amount of private land left, which is around 10%. Cr Birchfield stated that the West Coast has already lost 5,000 hectares to the wetlands and he is very concerned that the matter of SNA's could take more of the West Coast's private land. Cr Birchfield stated he is prepared to make a stand; he feels that the West Coast has made their contribution to New Zealand's SNA's through national parks. He does not want to see SNA's taken out over private land, which further restricts that ability to fund the huge cost of running four councils. The Chairman suggested that L. Easton includes this information in her next presentation

The meeting closed at 11.29 a.m.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance.

### **Action Points**

- J. Armstrong to follow up with M. Meehan to progress investigation of a funding application for SNA research work from the Nature's Heritage Fund.

**NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is scheduled for 09.00 on Wednesday 24 June 2020, via Zoom.

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Chairman

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Date

**Action Points**

- Feedback on agenda item one to be provided to E. Bretherton and L. Easton

**Meeting Dates for 2020**

- Thursday 30 July (Westland District Council)
- Thursday 25 August (Te Tauraka Waka a Māui Marae, Bruce Bay)
- Thursday 24 September (Buller District Council)
- Thursday 29 October (Grey District Council)
- Tuesday 24 November (West Coast Regional Council)
- Wednesday 14 December (Westland District Council)