

THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 13 AUGUST 2019, AT THE OFFICES OF THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL, 388 MAIN SOUTH ROAD, GREYMOUTH, COMMENCING AT 10.48 A.M.

PRESENT:

A. Robb (Chairman), N. Clementson, P. Ewen, A. Birchfield, P. McDonnell

IN ATTENDANCE:

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

1. APOLOGY:

Moved (Robb / Clementson) *That the apologies from Crs Challenger and Archer be accepted.*

Carried

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 (Clementson / Birchfield) *that the minutes of the Council meeting dated 9 July 2019, be confirmed as correct, with the amendment made as noted below.*

Carried

Matters arising

H. McKay drew attention to an error on page 4, in the general business section where the second lines states "H. Mills advised", this should read "H. McKay advised".

Cr Ewen asked R. Mallinson if the Catastrophe Fund has been liquidated for the Franz issue. R. Mallinson confirmed that this has happened.

3.1.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING 19 JULY 2019

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

Moved (Birchfield / Ewen) *that the minutes of the Special Council meeting dated 19 July 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 advised a meeting of the Karamea Rating District committee was held on 30 July. He stated that the stopbank upgrade was discussed at this meeting and it was agreed that an information sheet would be mailed out to the rating district. R. Beal advised that Council engineers have investigated a different alignment for the stopbank which would prevent the need to remove the rata trees but to change the alignment would require 1.1km of new wall as opposed to upgrading the existing wall. He advised this would make for a big change in costs with the budgeted cost being \$400,000 to a new estimate of \$1.1M. The engineers have advised that a new alignment would reduce the waterway in a flood and this would place more pressure on the south bank. R. Beal stated that Engineers do not support the new alignment option.

R. Beal reported that a meeting with the Lower Waiho rating district was held last week, and it was agreed that the Milton & Others Stopbank will be completed as per the design (2 metre thick rock work). He advised that there was extensive discussion on extending the wall downstream and raising the wall between Rata Knoll and Canavans Knob as two pieces of separate work once the rebuild has finished.

R. Beal stated that the cost of the rebuild is between \$2.4 and \$2.5M. He advised that a new source of rock is being investigated, contractors have retrieved around 40,000 tonnes of rock from the river but they are now struggling to retrieve rock from the river.

Cr McDonnell asked for an update on insurance. R. Mallinson advised that he met with the assessor on site, and he is optimistic that the insurance recovery will be on the full declared value of the assets that make up the Lower Waiho infrastructure. He stated that best case scenario would be little or no borrowing required by the community. M. Meehan confirmed that the community has always been aware that the costs will fall onto the community. Cr Birchfield stated that it would be good to have the wall connected to Canavans Knob. R. Beal advised that design and costings will be presented to the rating district at their next meeting.

R. Beal reported that there has been a change to the width of the crest of stopbank for the Heliport upgrade for the Franz Josef rating district at the request of the rating district committee.

R. Beal introduced Matt Gardner from LandRiverSea Consulting to the meeting to present his report on the Waiho River. R. Beal spoke to the summary in M. Gardner's report and stated that there has been 3.3 million cubic metres of sediment has entered the river system since 2016. Aggradation down in the vicinity of the Waiho Loop has been seen since the 1980's and it is becoming more likely that a permanent avulsion will take place into the Tartare River in the future.

M. Gardner spoke to his PowerPoint presentation. He stated LiDAR was flown in 2016 and again in 2019. M. Gardner spoke of the work he has carried out in analysing the changes in bed levels which have occurred between 2016 and 2019. M. Gardner spoke of changes in weather patterns, historic behaviour of the river, river training, erosion, risk, and what can be expected to happen in the future. M. Gardner answered questions from Councillors. Extensive discussion took place.

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

Carried

4.1.1 COBDEN SEA EROSION REPORT

M. Meehan spoke to his report and drew attention to the letter from Grey District Council (GDC) which is attached to his report. M. Meehan advised that Council commissioned a NIWA report in May 2017 and provided engineering feedback on the wall that GDC constructed to protect an old landfill in this area.

M. Meehan advised that the NIWA report recommends relocating the carpark and consulting with the community about what they want. M. Meehan stated that main risk is from coastal erosion in this area is to GDC assets, such as the landfill, Jellyman Park and the carpark area. M. Meehan advised that he is not aware of any properties having water through them but there may have been some overtopping into backyards. M. Meehan stated that GDC is asking Council to look at consulting on a potential rating district that would then protect their assets and would provide protection for some properties in lower Cobden. Cr Birchfield stated that the fundamental issue, as stated in the NIWA report, is that the carpark and associated infrastructure have been located too close to the active shoreline. Cr Birchfield stated that the carpark needs to be pushed back from the sea, and he feels that Council should not be involved in

spending money on this. Cr Ewen agreed with Cr Birchfield, but expressed concern with the costs ratepayers could be facing to do further work in this area. M. Meehan advised that the properties that already derive some benefit from work in this area are already paying into the Grey Floodwall Rating District, and the clear benefit from any works in this area is on GDC assets. M. Meehan advised that there is nothing stopping GDC from proceeding with work, and going with the recommendations contained in the NIWA report, and this would not require a rating district.

Moved (Robb / Birchfield)

1. *That the report is received.*
2. *That staff organise a meeting with a delegation from Grey District Council and the Councillors from the Regional Council who represent the Grey constituency to discuss the issues.*

Carried

4.1.2 HOKITIKA COASTAL EROSION

R. Beal spoke to his report and advised that Ian Goss from BECA was engaged to provide advice. He stated that the recommendations from this report are to use large armour grade protection rock, and incorporate geo fabric. Cr Ewen stated that a resolution has already been acted on, seconded and passed, he asked if this is to be rescinded or acted upon, and now there is a new recommendation on the same topic. Cr Ewen spoke of the recommendation to spend \$250,000 for temporary protection. The Chairman stated that this is new advice and is a better course of action, and it would be wise for Council to look at this new advice and make another decision. R. Mallinson advised that with regard to Standing Orders, the Special Meeting on 19 July agreed to take a particular course of action, and a resolution would be required to amend the previous decision. R. Beal advised that the cost would be \$260,000 and is still within the original recommendation's budget. B. Russ advised that the \$260,000 will cover from Hampden to Tudor Street, but if further work is wanted from the seawall to Tudor Street this would be at a cost of \$360,000. Cr McDonnell asked if this would still be classed as a temporary solution. B. Russ confirmed this would be temporary. Cr McDonnell stated that six weeks ago the drop down off the end of Hampden Street was around 2 metres, but a few days ago the drop down was only about 2 feet. He asked B. Russ if this would suggest that the area is now building up again. B. Russ stated that a large slug of gravel near the mouth of the Hokitika River is now starting to migrate towards the north. He advised that following recent storms gravel has built up north of the seawall. M. Meehan advised that the BECA Report is based on good engineering advice and there is risk to properties in the area. Extensive discussion took place. Cr Ewen expressed concern about costs escalating and he would like to see the work go ahead sooner rather than later. Cr McDonnell stated that he would like the whole rating district to be looked at again as he feels that Council is going beyond what the original scope of the seawall was, which is to protect the CBD, which the whole town benefits from. Cr McDonnell acknowledged that Revell Street properties pay a higher amount for the groynes but he feels that those who live near the racecourse of Alpine Views also benefit from the CBD being protected but they don't necessarily benefit Revell Street individual properties being protected.

Moved (Birchfield / Ewen)

1. *That the report is received.*
2. *That the resolution from the Special Meeting held on 19 July 2019 be amended, to \$260,000 following the BECA recommendations in the attached report.*

Carried

4.1.3 INVESTIGATION INTO THE BENEFIT OF PUTTING A CUT THROUGH THE WAIHO LOOP

R. Beal spoke to his report and advised that LandRiverSea was commissioned to ascertain what benefit a cut through the Waiho Loop might provide to the community. Matt Gardner from LandRiverSea spoke to the report. M. Gardner advised that he used a fixed bed model and does not allow for movement of the riverbed during a flood event. He explained the location of where the cut could be made and advised that this would be a 50 metre wide cut through the narrowest part. M. Gardner explained the process,

he gave a history of previous attempts to control the river, and he spoke of the likely conclusions. M. Gardner stated that the Waiho River is very powerful and even during a small fresh there are boulders the size of a small truck coming down the river. He stated this is a wild river, and would not be controlled through a channel, and the river does what it wants to do. M. Gardner explained modelling calculations and stated that if 370,000 cubic metres of materials were removed the cost would be around \$3.7M. M. Gardner explained the modelling and advised that based on current bed levels, this could speed up an avulsion into the Tartare River, it will not work its way back up to the bridge. It is likely to lead to rapid bed degradation and this could undermine existing stopbanks and put the stopbanks at risk. He stated that for the costs involved this is not value for money.

Moved (Clementson / Ewen)

1. *That the report is received.*
2. *That no further work be undertaken.*

Carried

4.2 VARIATION 6 TO THE WEST COAST REGIONAL LAND TRANSPORT PLAN 2015 – 21

The Chairman welcomed Steve Higgs from NZTA to the meeting. N. Costley spoke to this report and advised that the report was brought to the July Council meeting but was deferred to this meeting in order for further information to be gathered. N. Costley advised that S. Higgs will update the meeting on what is happening with the Speed Management Review and potential impacts for the West Coast. S. Higgs advised that this variation that has been put to the Regional Transport Committee (RTC) and is one of a number of variations that are being put to all RTC's around the country. He stated this is part of the Speed Management Programme that the NZTA Board is keen to get underway. S. Higgs tabled additional documents and spoke extensively of the Safe Network Programme which includes safe roads and roadsides, safe and appropriate speeds and safe level crossings. S. Higgs advised that work is yet to start on the variation, this is being rolled out nationally and they are targeting the top 10% parts of the network nationally. He stated that the priority regions are Auckland, Waikato and Canterbury. S. Higgs stated that this is a three year programme with Year 3 including the West Coast, Top of the South, Gisborne, Hawkes Bay, Taranaki, Wellington and Southland. He outlined the process this will follow and advised that the cost of the West Coast SH Speed Management Guide Implementation is likely to be \$1.45M. S. Higgs acknowledged the media coverage this matter has received and advised that the reason why the variation is being asked for is that NZTA is not able to do this out of its normal operation budget due to the size of this work. He stated that additional funding would need to come out of the National Land Transport Plan and would also impact on the Regional Land Transport Plan and this is the reason for the variation. Extensive discussion took place with S. Higgs answering questions from Councillors. Cr Birchfield stated that he is suspicious of the speed restrictions and the impacts this could have on the West Coast. Cr Ewen stated that there is no public transport on the West Coast and he feels that the best management plan is for people to stick to the signage. Cr Ewen stated NZTA's goal of a safe road system free from death and serious injury is mission impossible and is unattainable, but a safer road system that may reduce injuries and death. Cr Ewen spoke of accidents that had happened on the West Coast that were not speed related. Cr Ewen stated that he does not support the 80 km per hour speed reduction. S. Higgs answered questions related to MegaMaps, and spoke of the importance of obtaining local information.

The Chairman advised that the RTC passed the recommendations unanimously at their recent meeting, and part of the process is to gather information and to make recommendations. He stated if this is not done, how can Council make an informed decision. S. Higgs spoke of driver behaviour and speed, he advised that funding is going into this area. Extensive discussion took place on what could happen if Council rejects the variation. N. Costley explained the likely scenario if this did happen. Extensive discussion took place and the three motions were put.

Moved (Robb / Clementson)

1. *That Council approves the variation to the Regional Land Transport Plan 2015 -21 for the inclusion of a West Coast State Highway Speed Management Guide Implementation;*
2. *That Council agrees to vary the Regional Land Transport Plan by adding the above proposed activity to Table 9 – "Activities included in the West Coast Regional Land Transport Plan by adding the above*

proposed activity to Table 9 "Activities included in the West Coast Regional Land Transport Plan" in the RLTP.

3. *That Council submits the variation to the West Coast Regional Land Transport Plan 2015 – 21 to the New Zealand Transport Agency.*

*Against – Crs Birchfield & Ewen
Carried*

4.3 CORPORATE SERVICES MANAGER'S MONTHLY REPORT

R. Mallinson tabled a replacement first page of his report, as there was an error with the Milton & Others Stopbank capitalization. R. Mallinson reported that the interim deficit for the full 12 months is \$1.245M. R. Mallinson advised that further work is required in the quarry rock inventory and infrastructure revaluations areas before the final financial result for the year is confirmed. R. Mallinson advised that the contributors to the deficit are the investment income which is \$225,000 below budget for the year. R. Mallinson reported that the investment portfolio continued its strong rebound in June with gains of \$222,000, the VCS surplus was substantially less than budgeted and there is net general funded activities negative budget variances of just under \$1M. R. Mallinson stated that major contributors in that area were much lower than budgeted cost recovery in the Consents & Compliance area, also a demand on expenditure in the River, Drainage & Coastal protection activity area, which continues to be great. R. Mallinson stated that Council has spent \$1,060,000 on the Milton & Others Stopbank rebuild at Lower Waiho to 30 June and this is being treated as a capital cost.

R. Mallinson advised that discussions on the Milton & Others Stopbank rebuild are continuing with Council's insurers. He stated that he is optimistic about the recovery Council is likely to obtain from insurers following this event, and it is likely that Council will see this money soon, which should be just under \$0.5M.

R. Mallinson advised that he borrowed \$1.5M last week from the Local Government Funding Agency to cover cash flow on the Milton & Others Stopbank rebuild. He advised that the interest rate is 1.45% on this borrowing. M. Meehan stated that staff are working hard to turn around the financial result in the resource management area. He stated that there are a number of contributing factors including new staff, a significant downturn in consent applications. M. Meehan stated that Councils are in the middle of the biggest resource management reforms in the last 20 years, and staff are going to get loaded with more. M. Meehan stated that there is no ability to recover from government, or anyone else, other than ratepayers. He stated that the amount of National Policy Statements, National Environmental Standards, changes to the Resource Management Act and others matters coming through all have an impact. Cr McDonnell asked R. Beal if there were any more funds coming from VCS. R. Beal confirmed that this is the final total for VCS for the year. Cr McDonnell spoke of the \$177,000 over budget for civil defence and natural hazards. R. Mallinson advised that a lot of the over spend in this area relates to the March weather event. M. Meehan advised that the West Coast is at a disadvantage to other places in resourcing a team that covers our region. He stated that the TAG report will cover this area. M. Meehan explained civil defence staffing to the meeting, and advised that the March event revealed gaps that Council is working on such as welfare, where there is considerable work required after the event. It was noted that there have been some significant civil defence events over the past year or so.

Cr Ewen asked R. Mallinson for further information on the 226% increase in Other, R. Mallinson stated that he would provide further information to Councillors on this.

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

Carried

4.3.1 SETTING OF RATES FOR 2019 / 20

R. Mallinson spoke to this report and advised that this is an important step in the legal for setting the rates. He stated that the Annual Plan for 2019 / 20 declared Council's rating intention and it is a requirement for Council pursuant to the Local Government Rating Act to pass these resolutions.

Moved (Clementson / McDonnell)

That Council adopt the attached proposed rates strike and penalty setting resolutions numbered:

- 1. Setting of various rates as per 1 (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), (h), (i), (j), (k), (l), (m), (n), (o), (p), (q), (r), (s), (t), (u), (v), (w), (x), (y), (z), (aa), (bb), (cc), (dd), (ee), (ff), (gg), (hh), (ii) pursuant to section 23 (1) and (2) of the Local Government (Rating) Act 2002.*
- 2. Adopting due dates for payment of 20 October 2019 and 20 April 2020 as per 2 and pursuant to section 24 of the Local Government (Rating) Act 2002.*
- 3. Setting Penalties as per 3 pursuant to section 57 of the Local Government (Rating) Act 2002.*

Carried

4.4 LEAVE OF ABSENCE – 10 SEPTEMBER COUNCIL MEETING

Cr Clementson spoke to this report and took it as read.

Moved (Ewen / Birchfield)

That Council grants Cr Clementson a Leave of Absence from attending the 10 September 2019 scheduled Council meeting.

Carried

5.0 CHAIRMANS REPORT

The Chairman spoke to his report and took it as read. He offered to answer questions from Councillors.

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

Carried

6.0 TWELVE MONTH REVIEW – 1 JULY 2018 – 30 JUNE 2019

M. Meehan spoke to this report. He advised that the partial achieved target, which is in progress, and relates to dairy farm visits and new staff coming on board. M. Meehan stated that the flood warning target was not achieved due to matters out of Council control such as power outages and the sensor device on the Waiho River bridge being washed away in the flood. M. Meehan stated that staff have performed well in view of all of the other work that is going on.

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

Carried

6.1 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

M. Meehan spoke to his report. He advised that the most of the focus from the Regional Chief Executives Forum and the Chief Executives Environmental Forum was about biodiversity as DoC are consulting on a Biodiversity strategy, changes to the RMA which are due to be announced, the NES for farming. M. Meehan advised that these changes are the most that have been seen in the past 20 years.

M. Meehan stated that MfE staff were here on Friday to progress matters relating to landfills and Hector. M. Meehan advised asked Councillors wished to proceed with the Council meeting scheduled for 8 October, in view of the close proximity to the elections. Cr Ewen commented that this election is no different to others and the October council meeting has always been held in the past. It was agreed that the October Council would proceed.

Cr Clementson asked M. Meehan for an update on the Buller Plateau meeting. M. Meehan responded that what was done between 2013 and 2016 is being looked at and he is hopeful that multiple hearings and appeals to the Environment Court can be avoided. M. Meehan stated that this is a work in progress.

Moved (Birchfield / Ewen) *that this report is received.*

Carried

GENERAL BUSINESS

Cr Ewen stated that he is seeking clarification and reassurance that this Council, as recently mentioned in the media, would not circumvent Official Information Act requests. M. Meehan advised that he is aware of the comments that have been made, he stated that the legislation is clear, there is guidance on the Ombudsman's website, and this is what Council complies with. The Chairman stated that this is not a process that Councillors are involved with.

The meeting closed at 12.54 p.m.

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Chairman

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Date