

THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 19 JULY 2019, AT THE OFFICES OF THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL, 388 MAIN SOUTH ROAD, GREYMOUTH, COMMENCING AT 11.00 A.M.

PRESENT:

A. Robb (Chairman), P. Ewen, P. McDonnell (via telephone), A. Birchfield, S. Challenger

IN ATTENDANCE:

M. Meehan (Chief Executive Officer), R. Beal (Operations Director), R. Russ (Council Engineer), T. Jellyman (Minutes Clerk). The media.

APOLOGIES:

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

Carried

Moved (Birchfield / Challenger)

That Standing Orders are suspended to allow Cr McDonnell to participate via telephone.

Carried

MINUTES

The minutes from the Special Meeting of the Hokitika Joint Seawall Committee meeting were tabled. It was noted that these minutes will be adopted by the Hokitika Joint Seawall Committee at their next meeting.

PUBLIC FORUM

Moved (Birchfield / Challenger) *That Mr Don Neale (Hokitika resident) be granted speaking rights.*

Carried

Mr Neale addressed the meeting and stated that he attended the meeting of the Hokitika Joint Seawall Committee meeting last week. Mr Neale stated that his involvement is in a personal capacity, and not do with his occupation as a coastal specialist with the DoC. Mr Neale stated he holds a Master's Degree in coastal processes and has lived within 200 metres of the Hokitika Beach for 30 years. Mr Neale stated that he is part of the rating district and would like to see some consultation with the rating district prior to a decision being made. Mr Neale spoke extensively of the options available and spoke to various diagrams that he had brought to the meeting. Mr Neale spoke of the options that are available including hard options of a seawall and beach re-nourishment. Mr Neale stated that he does not see the benefit of a rubble wall being put in place and feels that this could be harmful and he would like to see Council hold off on this option. Mr Neale stated this is not an urgent situation as there is still 20 – 30 metres of public land, then another 10 – 20 metres of private land before any built assets are affected. Mr Neale stated that he would like WCRC to seek urgent advice from NIWA prior to commencing any work. Mr Neale stated that other structural and cladding options should be looked at. Mr Neale stated that road access for trucks and machinery to get to the site would be detrimental and would make the hazard worse as it would destroy the vegetation which helps to build the sand dunes. Mr Neale stated that if a seawall is an option it should be the last line of defence and potentially even on private land. He stated that NIWA has not recommended at any stage that a rubble wall be put in place as is currently on the table. Cr Challenger asked Mr Neale questions relating to high tides forecast for August and if he feels these could pose a threat to the area. Mr Neale stated that these higher tides are not necessarily a greater threat. Cr Birchfield asked questions of Mr Neale relating to beach nourishment. Mr Neale stated that artificial beach nourishment using trucks could be done but there are other ways of managing this. Mr Neale

stated that the river does have an impact on what is happening on the beach. Mr Neale stated keeping things as stable as possible without making massive changes might be the best approach. Further discussion relating to the mouth of the Hokitika River, potential groynes and the impact historic groynes have had on this area in the past. Cr Ewen stated do nothing is not an option as there could be issues coming up over the next month. He stated if these issues are not addressed now, there could be bigger issues to face. Mr Neale stated that the do nothing option is hard but feels that it is important to be sure that the situation is not made worse, he feels that the rubble solution could make things worse. Mr Neale stated that rubble does not give full protection against erosion, and it does not do anything to feed the beach. Mr Neale stated that the Hokitika Beach now has enough elevation to stop the waves coming over the top. Mr Neale spoke of the option of putting a road formation on the beach and how this might work. Further discussion took place on this option. Cr McDonnell asked Mr Neale how he felt the community might react to this. Mr Neale stated that as long as it was stated that this is a short term solution and it was explained to the community that this is the best short term solution and will bide some time until there is a longer term solution is recommended by the experts. The Chairman thanked Mr Neale.

Moved (Birchfield / Challenger) *That Mr Kerry Jeffs (Hokitika resident) be granted speaking rights.*

Carried

Kerry Jeffs addressed the meeting and stated that he is an affected property owner and has lived in the area for the last four years. Mr Jeffs stated that there is a huge amount of erosion in front of his property and is concentrated between Hampden and Tudor Streets. Mr Jeffs stated that he has seen around 15 – 20 metres of land vanish over a 4 – 6 week period. Mr Jeffs stated that he has never seen so much erosion as what has occurred recently. Mr Jeffs stated the affected area is on marine road reserve. Mr Jeffs stated residents have had several meetings and those living between Hampden and Tudor Streets are very nervous. He stated that these residents want something done. Mr Jeffs spoke of large trees and pensioners flats in this area. Mr Jeffs expressed his concern about the possibility of high tides in August. Cr McDonnell asked Mr Jeffs questions relating to his boundary and road reserve land. Mr Jeffs stated that vegetation is vanishing every time there are high tides or big waves. Mr Jeffs stated that he does not support the option of river gravel being used as he feels that quarry rubble would lock in better.

REPORTS:

COASTAL EROSION REPORT

R. Beal spoke to his report. He stated that he is seeking long term advice from NIWA on what impact the river mouth is having on beach nourishment, information on the current cycle and coastal processes, current erosion solutions and the effectiveness of establishing more groynes. R. Beal explained the short to medium term options to the meeting. He stated that the community needs some effective solutions, urgently. He stated that consideration has been given to using river gravel and this has been costed on the same design, but it is felt that this will not provide the short term protection needed. R. Beal explained the recommendations in his report. He answered questions from Cr Birchfield relating to putting a cut into the Hokitika River to move the mouth closer to the town, along with the use of river gravel. R. Beal stated that this has been considered and could add some benefit but is unlikely to stop the current erosion. Cr Birchfield stated that this work needs to be done immediately. Cr Ewen asked if any of the existing groynes would be touched. R. Beal confirmed that they would not be, and he is expecting further advice on the groynes from NIWA.

Cr Challenger spoke of an erosion cut which was moving north, with the last one coming as far north as the Hau Hau River. He stated that this one could already be moving north and therefore he feels that more money than necessary should not be spent. He suggested waiting to see what happens. R. Beal advised spoke of risks of waiting with one being there might not be access to the area.

B. Russ addressed the meeting. He stated he is concerned about risk of further erosion over the next couple of months. B. Russ stated that if there was more time then beach nourishment would be an option. He stated the sea was cutting in further to the north a couple of weeks ago and this is where beach nourishment should be considered before too much land is lost. B. Russ stated that there is a natural sand dune system which is high at the moment and the erosion is now getting to this dune. He stated that the area cannot afford to lose this dune system as waves could end up going through properties in this area.

The Chairman stated that in view of the urgency of this work there is not the option of public consultation as this work is emergency work.

Cr McDonnell stated that he understands the urgency of this work but is concerned that the whole rating district has to pay for the work and therefore he is in favour of the softer engineering option of beach nourishment. Cr McDonnell stated that he would like to wait for the advice from NIWA.

B. Russ confirmed that NIWA are not available to visit the site until September. He stated that he is currently trying to get an engineer from BECCA to visit. B. Russ confirmed that it is hard to know just how urgent this work is as it could turn around and there might be no further erosion, or it could continue. B. Russ advised that over 20,000 tonne of rubble needs to be brought in and it is likely that the job would take around four weeks to complete which would be towards the end of August.

Cr Ewen stated that it is a gamble to wait and he feels Council cannot take the risk. Discussion took place on whether it would be quicker to get the rubble from the Hokitika River, rather than Camelback Quarry. B. Russ advised that he would not feel comfortable using this as any sandy gravel would get sucked out when the erosion hits the bank and the material from Camelback Quarry is a far better option. Crs Birchfield, Ewen and Robb were in favour of the recommendations.

Moved (Birchfield / Ewen)

1. *Build a 3:1 batter with rubble from the Camelback quarry to form a 450m (from Hampden Street groyne to Tudor Street groyne) sacrificial "wall" on the foreshore bank (estimated cost \$250,000) with the ability to increase the length of works if required.*
2. *Council fund this work through a 5 year loan against the Hokitika Seawall Rating District at the ratios set out in the Annual Plan.*
3. *Council approve up to a \$500,000 loan, which will also be used to implement recommendations from NIWA in relation to the river mouth and coastal groyne engineering works.*
4. *Suspend the maintenance of the access ramps on the Seawall until such time that the environmental conditions allow for the cost effective maintenance of the access ramps.*

*Against
Crs Challenger and McDonnell
Carried*

The meeting closed at 11.44 p.m.

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Chairman

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Date