

## THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 14 MAY 2020, AT THE OFFICES OF THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL, 388 MAIN SOUTH ROAD, GREYMOUTH, COMMENCING AT 10.30 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), R. Mallinson (Corporate Services Manager), R. Beal (Operations Director), T. Jellyman (Minutes Clerk), J. Hawes (IT Support).

#### **1. APOLOGY:**

There were no apologies.

#### **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** (Ewen / Coll McLaughlin) *that the minutes of the Council meeting dated 28 April 2020, be confirmed as correct, with the minor amendment below made.*

*Carried*

Cr Coll McLaughlin stated that Westport had two projects submitted as part of the Covid 19 Economic Recovery Infrastructure, and not just one as documented in the minutes. The second project is Westport flood protection, with construction of extensive stopbanks designed to prevent floodwaters from inundating large numbers of properties at a total cost \$10M (funding sought \$7.5M).

#### **Matters arising**

There were no matters arising.

#### **REPORTS:**

#### **4.1 OPERATIONS REPORT**

R. Beal spoke to his report and advised that work has been completed in the Punakaiki, Karamea, Wanganui, Taramakau and Inchbonnie rating districts. He advised that repair work on the Greymouth Floodwall was suspended during lockdown due to the amount of people accessing the floodwall as the correct social distancing was unable to be maintained. R. Beal advised that work will recommence next week.

R. Beal advised that quarry waste from the Inchbonnie Quarry has been used to top up protection work along the Taramakau River. R. Beal answered questions from Councillors.

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

*Carried*

#### **4.1.1 COASTAL EROSION – COBDEN**

R. Beal spoke to this report and advised there has been severe erosion around Jellyman Park. He stated that Council engineers are happy with the recommendations in the NIWA report.

**Moved** (Challenger / Cummings)

1. *That Council receives this report.*
2. *That the NIWA Report is received and provided to Grey District Council*

*Carried*

#### **4.1.2 COASTAL EROSION – HOKITIKA RATING DISTRICT**

R. Beal spoke to this report and stated that the erosion between the seawall and the Hampden Street groyne is being monitored two to three times a month, as well as the area between Tudor Street and Richards Drive. R. Beal advised that the report reveals that the northern most groyne at Richards Drive is working, but the southern groynes are not working as good. He advised that the recommendation is to leave the groynes in place, and to not do any work near the river mouth. Cr Cummings stated that the groynes need to be stood back up to stop water getting behind. Discussion took place, R. Beal advised that the southern groynes do need to be beefed up. Cr Challenger agreed and stated that the groynes need to be re-shaped. Cr Challenger stated that he will be visiting the areas tomorrow at the request of a ratepayer. Cr Challenger spoke of change in sea patterns and advised that seawalls are only a temporary measure. Cr Challenger stated that options to retreat in Hokitika need to be considered along with a coastal hazard management plan. Cr Challenger stated that the Beca Report is a sound report.

**Moved** (Challenger / Magner)

1. *That the report is received.*
2. *That the BECA report is received and provided to the Hokitika Seawall Joint Committee.*
3. *That following further advice Council support an application to extend the Hokitika seawall to the Crown Infrastructure Projects Fund.*

*Carried*

#### **4.2 CORPORATE SERVICES MANAGERS MONTHLY REPORT**

R. Mallinson spoke to his report and advised that this is the eight month report up to the end of March 2020. He reported that there is an accounting surplus \$1.38M. R. Mallinson advised that the investment portfolio has suffered a large reduction in value of \$865,000 during March, and had this not have occurred, he would have been reporting a surplus of \$2.2M. R. Mallinson stated that during April the portfolio bounced back considerably with an increase of \$550,000. He advised that the surplus includes \$1.2M of NEMA receipts and \$0.5M worth of insurance receipts. Cr Ewen asked if there was more income expected from NEMA with regard to the emergency event in Franz Josef. R. Mallinson responded that Council has received an interim insurance claim payment of \$0.5M but final settlement still to be agreed upon as there is still \$700,000 yet to come in. R. Mallinson answered questions relating to the investment portfolio and the Catastrophe Fund. He advised that the Catastrophe Fund will be refunded when the final settlement comes in from insurer, and this should be back up at around \$1M in a couple of years.

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

*Carried*

#### **4.2.1 RATES DEBTORS –ASSISTANCE TO RATEPAYERS UNABLE TO PAY INSTALMENT DUE 20 APRIL 2020**

R. Mallinson spoke to this report and advised that this report recognises the impact of Covid -19 on some ratepayers, especially those who have suffered a substantial loss of income. Extensive discussion took place, M. Meehan stated that it will be useful to see how government plays this out and if council needs to do anything further to assist ratepayers. M. Meehan advised that Council is looking at a zero rate increase for next year. R. Mallinson answered questions from Councillors and provided historic information on this matter.

**Moved** (Coll McLaughlin / Hill)

1. *Council agrees that ratepayers who did not pay the second rates instalment due on 20 April be identified and written to and given the opportunity to seek a payment deferral for six months from 20 April 2020 until 20 October 2020 if their wages income has decreased by at least 20% or business income by at least 30% due to COVID19 related impacts.*
2. *Appropriate declaration form to be developed to simplify the process.*
3. *Council to agree to waive all penalties relating to any amounts unpaid on 20 April, whether COVID19 related or not.*

*Carried*

#### **4.2.2 MEMBERSHIP OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT NZ**

R. Mallinson spoke to his report and advised that the cost of membership is \$33,314. Cr Challenger asked if the membership is forgone, would this impact on opportunities to borrow from the Local Government Funding Agency (LGFA). R. Mallinson confirmed that there would be no such impact. M. Meehan advised that every Council in New Zealand is a member of LGNZ and there are a lot more positives than negatives with being a member. He stated that at the moment LGNZ is going through a change with their Chief Executive about to stand down, and the President, Mr Dave Cull will leave his post in a month or so. M. Meehan advised that LGNZ have been very useful in petitioning with the Three Waters and they coordinate all of the Regional Sector meetings. M. Meehan stated that LGNZ has some very talented people who do a very good job in ensuring that the Local Government voice is heard. M. Meehan advised that Council should maintain membership. Cr Challenger agreed and stated that he has concerns with Mr Cull. The Chairman stated he objects to Mr Cull's anti-mining and anti-development stance. Cr Challenger stated that Mr Cull is still President of LGNZ but he is not an elected member, he queried whether a non-councillor should be able to keep this position. M. Meehan stated that if an elected member stands down as Mayor, while in the term as President of LGNZ, that individual has the choice of whether or not to continue with the term. M. Meehan stated that Mr Cull chose to continue in the role as LGNZ President until his term finishes in June or July this year. Cr Ewen stated that there may be changes with Mr Cull's departure, and he feels that Council could hold off and see what happens with the change of President. M. Meehan explained the process for putting forward a remit at the LGNZ annual meeting. Cr Coll McLaughlin stated that LGNZ has a lot of training resources available for new councillors. She is in favour of council retaining its membership but does have concerns with leadership. Cr Hill supports Cr Challenger's comments and would like a strongly worded letter sent to LGNZ. Cr Magner agreed with Cr Coll McLaughlin's comments regarding the training resources. The Chairman suggested that membership is reviewed each year. M. Meehan explained the National Council to the meeting, including the makeup of the sector and the zones for each sector. He advised that Cr Coll McLaughlin is part of the Policy Advisory Group which provides policy advice to the sector, and she attends the quarterly meetings in Wellington. Cr Ewen stated that Council's nomination should be considered if the rural voice is to be heard. M. Meehan advised that this needs to be done though Zone or the regional section. He stated that Mayor Smith made an attempt to secure this role but the Selwyn mayor got it. Discussion took place and it was agreed that the recommendation would be amended to include the change to the constitution, as discussed, and that Council review's its membership annually.

**Moved** (Challenger / Cummings)

1. *That Councillors continue its membership in Local Government New Zealand*
2. *That Council writes a letter to LGNZ confirming its membership but expressing its disappointment in Mr Cull's comments at the Minerals Conference.*
3. *Council would like to see the constitution changed to ensure that when an elected member stands down they do not have the President's role.*
4. *That Council annually reviews its membership.*

*Carried*

#### **GENERAL BUSINESS**

Cr Hill stated that he has received some customer complaints about flooding in culverts. He stated these seem to be more prevalent during lockdown. Cr Hill gave an example of a person who had contacted him expressing concern about the different agencies she had been advised to contact. Cr Hill stated that a lot of time is being spent duplicating things. M. Meehan agreed that this can type of complaint can be quite complicated as sometimes it could be an NZTA culvert that Buller District Council administer on their behalf. M. Meehan advised that Council looks at the rules to ascertain whether or not there has been a breach of

any rules and then checks to see if follow up is required before passing the complaint onto the appropriate agency. M. Meehan offered to put some comms in place for this type of complaint.

The meeting closed at 11. 25 a.m.

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Chairman

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Date