
MINUTES OF POLICY & SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE STRATFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON THURSDAY 6 MAY 2010 AT 10.00 AM.

PRESENT

The Deputy Mayor Mr R M Hignett (Chairman), Councillors A L Frost, S M Pugh, J C Rowe, W J Sandford, K R Squire, R K Vickers and the District Mayor Mr N C Volzke.

IN ATTENDANCE

The Chief Executive Mr M R Freeman, the Corporate Services Manager Mr H M Swart, the Operations Manager Mr J R Jones, the Community Services Manager Mrs P R James, the Executive Administration Officer Mrs D J Christie and there was one representatives from the media (Daily News) and 8 members of the public in attendance.

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Milner and the Planning & Regulatory Manager.

PS/10/71

VOLZKE/SANDFORD

THAT the apologies be received.

Carried

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Speakers to Submissions

File 01082

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Policy & Services Committee Meeting. He reinforced to Councillors that the purpose of this meeting is to hear submissions on the 2010/2011 Draft Annual Plan. Councillors were asked to hear all submissions with an open mind, to restrict their question time to the submitters to points of clarification or issues pertaining to subject matter. Councillors are requested not to get into direct dialogue with submitters as there is a tight timeframe scheduled for the day. Councillors may take notes whilst submitters are speaking.

1. **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF SUBMISSIONS**

File 01082

PS/10/72

SQUIRE/PUGH

THAT each of the 21 submissions to the Annual Plan be received.

THAT each submitter be individually thanked for their submission, and a copy of the minutes of this Policy and Services Committee Meeting and subsequent meetings be provided to each submitter.

Recommended Reason

So that each submission is formally received and the submitter provided with information on decisions made.

Carried

2. ANNUAL PLAN SUBMITTERS TO BE HEARD

File 01082

Four submitters have requested an opportunity to be heard in support of their submission.

1. Mrs Brenda Glennie - Submission No. 6, page 6

Mrs Glennie presented her submission on "Green Cemeteries" with points of interest being:

- green cemeteries takes into account the present day thinking about our environment.
- there is growing movement in the way we are being disposed of after we die as we are constantly being urged to live a greener life.
- the process for green cemeteries from the casket materials through to the burial, with trees being planted and the breakdown/decomposing cycle, there are no headstones, grave surrounds, paths or lawn mowing required.
- Council could consider green cemeteries when they are looking at opening another cemetery.

Mrs Glennie noted that it is her desire to be buried this way so that tree roots can enfold her in their arms underneath a green forest full of bird life.

Councillor Squire asked Mrs Glennie if she had considered whether the green cemeteries would be able to contribute towards carbon credits.

2. Ron Hayward - Submission No. 12, page 60

Mr Hayward stated that emissions are a fallacy and he didn't see how all the money in the world is going to stop emissions, yet the government still insists on doing so. He noted that the emissions costs are a burden on everyone as well as the cost of living, increase in GST etc. These costs are forcing Councils to have a very close look at their expenditure and in doing so, he agreed that this Council keep its seal extension to a minimum.

3. Robin Lilley - Submission No. 19, page 67

Mr Lilley spoke to his submission and asked that Council extend the seal to the end of Manganui Road. He noted that there are four houses on that stretch of road that are affected by the dust being created from traffic, especially during the summer months. He noted that over the years the road has become more of an access to the river from previously experienced, as it is an attraction to families. He advised that over the last eight years there has not been an ounce of metal put on the road and it has deteriorated drastically. He advised that those affected were happy to prepare the road to the required state ready for sealing, whether it be that they supply the labour and machinery and Council supply the materials to get it to the stage of being sealed.

Councillor Vickers asked how much of the road is left to be sealed.

Mr Lilley replied that there is approximately 500m. He suggested that metalling the last 500m would be an improvement to the road surface as an interim measure.

Mr Lilley emphasised that the dust during the summer time is huge and the houses are situated approximately 100m from the road, which the wife doesn't appreciate when it comes to laundry and dust through the house.

4. Kelly Martyn (Federated Farmers) - Submission No. 21, page 80

Mr Adamski thanked Council for the opportunity to present their submission and introduced Mr Hight and Kelly Martyn who were also representing Federated Farmers.

Miss Martyn gave a power point presentation to Council and noted the following points of interest:

- UAGC and the way Council calculates this, suggested adding more dollars to the UAGC from the general rate.
- the Auditor General has approved another method of calculating UAGC which distributes rates with greater fairness.
- rates are a means of gathering revenue for Council and not a tax on property.
- many rating options for Council to distribute the rates burden fairly are included in the Local Government (Rating) Act.
- its within Councils power to make the system fairer.

Meeting adjourned at 10.32am.

Meeting reconvened at 10.50am to consider submissions.

3. **CONSIDERATION OF SUBMISSIONS – ANNUAL PLAN**

File 01082

The purpose is to consider submissions to the Draft 2010/2011 Annual Plan as part of the consultation process.

ISSUES RAISED

1. **Aerodrome, Holiday Park and Pensioner Flats - Submission**

The Holiday Park lease is for sale. The aerodrome and pensioner flats are subject to legal trust mechanisms and extensive consultation requirements. The ratepayer is not subsidizing the aerodrome. The pensioner flats are at market rental for that type of housing.

2. **Gordon Road**

Work on this road was subject to a contract performance issue, which has been resolved.

3. **Individual Requests for Seal**

Junction Road, Purangi – is a through road and is 36km on the list out of a total of 230km.

Manganui Road – is a no exit road and is 76km on the list out of a total of 230km.

The timing of these roads will be dependent upon the rate of progress in working down the priority list, and whether Council redirects the seal extension finances to forestry roading work as part of the 2012 LTCCP.

Discussion

Councillor Sandford asked how much maintenance has been undertaken on Manganui Road.

The Operations Manager undertook to investigate this and put together a survey so that an analysis can be done. He noted that certain standards have to be met for upgrading the road, and while the residents want to assist getting the road sealed, it then becomes a matter of who is responsible if the seal breaks up.

The District Mayor noted that Mr Lilley has advised that there is an increase in the use of Manganui Road to access the river. He asked if there was any analysis available, and whether Council have any measures of traffic movements on that road.

The Operations Manager advised that he would include this in the survey to be undertaken.

4. **Seal Extension Programme**

The draft Annual Plan presented options from 2km to 5km, with consequential rating impact. Elected members considered the full range of factors, including economic factors, level of service, equity, and impact in future years when deciding to adopt 2km as the preferred option.

The level of submissions seeking other than the 2km proposed is low.

Discussion

The District Mayor noted that there are a number of submissions that make reference to seal extension and he had some degree of sympathy for the arguments put forward. He noted that overall there was nothing in the submissions that would change his mind when considering the proposal. He did acknowledge the risk and difficulty of getting the seal back to 5km in future years.

5. **Amalgamation**

Elected members are familiar with the pros and cons of such a suggestion.

6. **Transfer Station Hours**

During 2010/11 management will investigate whether a swap of opening hours can be achieved within the contract at no extra cost. The outcome will be reported to Council.

Discussion

Councillor Sandford noted that the Whangamomona residents would like the transfer station open in the mornings, and that on occasions the transfer station has opened for businesses if they ring. He suggested that some consultation be undertaken on the days the transfer station is open ie. boxing day, new years day etc.

Councillor Frost asked if there had been a survey done on suitable times for the public.

It was noted that the transfer station was part of the Customer Satisfaction Survey out in circulation.

The Operations Manager noted that the contract for the transfer station is for a seven year period.

It was noted that the suggestion from Submission No.5 be taken on board and investigated in the forthcoming year.

PS/10/73

FROST/SANDFORD

THAT management will investigate whether a swap can be achieved as there is no extra cost and therefore it does not affect the Annual Plan.

Carried

7. **Green Burial**

During 2010/11 management will investigate. The outcome will be reported to Council.

Discussion

The District Mayor thanked Mrs Glennie as it was a well written submission. He has a document that Mrs Glennie provided him with some months ago and it is available for Councillors and management when undertaking investigations.

8. **Drinking Water Fountain**

A drinking water fountain could be located near the Exceloo facilities in Victoria Park where water is available. This location is covered by the security camera system to help minimise vandalism. The cost is approximately \$3,000, which would be additional rates funding in the capital grouping.

Discussion

It was noted that the \$3,000 was for a basic type stainless steel basin. It was noted that the fountain was a great idea, but there were concerns at the ongoing maintenance and vandalism.

9. **Rating Structure**

Several submissions make reference to changes in the rating structure by adding more targeted rates and/or altering the mechanism for calculation of the targeting, and increasing the level of UAGC. Such matters are a consequence of the Revenue and Financing Policy, and not Annual Plan budgets. This policy is adopted as part of the LTCCP, and alterations to this policy require an amendment to the LTCCP.

In previous years elected members have referred such suggestions to the next review of that policy, in this case, part of the 2012-2022 LTCCP.

Discussion

It was noted that Council would look at it in greater depth during the next review as part of the 2012-2022 LTCCP.

The District Mayor said that Federated Farmers made the point of being fair, therefore he suggested that it be referred to a workshop for further consideration. He noted that there are groups in the community that should be a part of that review and looked at for further reference.

Councillor Rowe congratulated Federated Farmers for their very clear and easy presentation, he found it compelling and the presentation should be referred to in the next review.

10. **Fluoride**

A discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of the artificial fluoridation of water supplies is presented in the attached paper World Health Organisation, 2004. Fluoride in Drinking-water: Background document for development of WHO Guidelines for Drinking-water Quality, WHO Press, Geneva.

The recommended limit for the artificial fluoridation of water supplies is 0.5–1.0 mg/litre. (Ref: World Health Organization, 2006. Guidelines for drinking-water quality, third edition, incorporating first and second addenda, Chapter 12; Chemical Fact Sheets, 12.63 Fluoride, pp. 375 – 377 b. WHO Press, Geneva).

Stratford artificially fluoridates its water supply at a rate of 0.6 mg/litre ie. at the lower end of the recommend limit.

11. **Ability to Pay**

Council does have a financial hardship policy for any member of the community who is impaired in the ability to pay rates.

12. **Resource Levels**

Management continue to monitor resource levels of all activities to ensure they are reflective of the levels of service, demand for services, and the ongoing additional work being imposed by legislation, especially in the Planning and Regulatory activities. Council employment numbers are still one of the lowest in NZ.

13. **Governance Costs**

The explanation of this activity is detailed within the Governance and Corporate Support section of the draft Annual Plan.

Discussion

The District Mayor noted that the difficulty is actually understanding the detailed governance and support section. He said while he accepted what was reported, he felt that consideration be given to put it in a more readable format ie. some corresponding explanations to understand it clearly in plain language.

General Discussion

The District Mayor referred to Submission No. 3, page 9 - the submission makes reference and compares this Council's rates to South Taranaki District Council, he asked whether this submission should have a specific response. He noted that there is an assumption that rates are based on per acre and not the property value. He advised that both councils rate on value. He pointed out that the submission makes comment that this Council's rates are three times higher than South Taranaki (this is incorrect), he noted that it is ok to make a submission, but you need to get the facts right.

The Chief Executive advised that the process from now is that the Draft Annual Plan will come back as a final Annual Plan at the May Policy & Services Committee Meeting to be confirmed at the Ordinary Meeting in June. He noted that there is an indication that GST will increase, which will have an impact on the rates as they are struck for a one year period. This increase will impact the second, third and fourth instalments, Council have to wait and see what is going to happen with the GST, therefore the challenge is to get the wording right in the Funding Impact Statement. He noted that the Fees & Charges Manual contains GST inclusive figures, these will now be exclusive of GST figures to cater for the government changes.

The meeting concluded at 11.26 am.

R M Hignett
CHAIRMAN

Confirmed this 8th day of June 2010.

N C Volzke
DISTRICT MAYOR