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## **MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE STRATFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, STRATFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL ON TUESDAY 25 AUGUST 2020 AT 2.00PM**

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### **PRESENT**

The District Mayor N C Volzke (the Chairman), the Deputy Mayor A L Jamieson, Councillors G W Boyde, R W Coplestone, P S Dalziel, J M S Erwood, A K Harris, V Jones, M McKay, W J Sandford and G M Webby.

### **IN ATTENDANCE**

The Chief Executive – Mr S Hanne, the Director Community Services – Ms K Whareaitu, the Director Assets – Mrs V Araba, the Director Environmental Services – Mr B Sutherland (*part meeting*), the Executive Administration Officer – Mrs E Bishop, the Communications Manager – Ms G Gibson, the Community Development Manager – Mr Chade Julie, the Administration & Communications Support Officer – Ms R Vanstone, the Aquatic Services Team Leader – Mrs Holly Baker, the Community Development Officer – Mr P Boyd, the Community Development Officer – Mrs A Kingston, the Special Projects Manager – Mr N Cooper, the Roading Asset Manager – Mr S Bowden, the Health & Safety & Emergency Management Advisor – Mr M Bestall, the Environmental Compliance Officer – Mr K Best (*part meeting*), 13 members of the public and one member of the media (Stratford Press).

#### **1. WELCOME**

The District Mayor welcomed the Chief Executive, Councillors, staff, media, and members of the public

He read the health and safety message in full to reiterate its instructions in an emergency to those in attendance.

#### **2. APOLOGIES**

An apology was noted from the Director – Environmental Services – Mr B Sutherland

#### **3. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chief Executive noted that during the discussion on item 7 – Proposed Location of new Aquatic Centre, the Customer & Leisure Services Manager – Mrs A Mathews had been approved to call in to listen to the discussion and outcome as she is currently on maternity leave but available if any operational questions arose.

The District Mayor noted that he would exercise his right of discretion as Chairman (Standing Order 21.1) which gives him ability to allow Councillors to speak more than once to any motion. He reminded Councillors to pull their microphones close when speaking so those in the public gallery could hear clearly.

He noted that the security fence erected at the netball courts were put there by Netball Taranaki to break the courts in to zones to be able to manage crowds under Level 2. There had been speculation that Council had put these in place to start construction and he clarified this was not the case.

Congratulations were noted for Kelly Jury, from Strathmore, who had had just been named in the Silver Ferns netball team.

4. **DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS INTEREST**

The District Mayor requested Councillors to declare any real or perceived conflicts of interest relating to items on this agenda.

There were no real or perceived conflicts of interest relating to the items on the agenda.

5. **DECISION REPORT - AMENDMENT TO MEETING SCHEDULE**

D20/22209 (Pages 6-13)

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. THAT the report be received.

JONES/HARRIS  
Carried  
CL/20/82

2. THAT Council amend the 2020 Meeting Schedule to change the remaining two Audit and Risk Committee Meetings for the year to Tuesday 6 October 2020 and Tuesday 1 December 2020.

JAMIESON/McKAY  
Carried  
CL/20/83

**Recommended Reason**

The meeting schedule was adopted by Council in November 2019 which sets the dates for the coming year. Due to the appointment of the new External Chair for the Audit and Risk Committee amendments are required to be actioned.

The Executive Administration Officer noted the following points:

- This report is a formality to adopt an amendment to the meeting scheduled adopted by Council in November last year.
- The remaining two Audit and Risk Committee meetings for 2020 are being altered to accommodate the new Audit and Risk Chair.
- The Standing Orders allow for amendments to be made by Council but that any amendment constitutes notification to members of every meeting on the schedule. In order for transparency and consistency this report had been brought to Council for adoption and notification to its members simultaneously.

6. **DECISION REPORT - THREE WATERS REFORM PROGRAMME**

D20/21944

(Pages 14-63)

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. THAT the report be received.

BOYDE/WEBBY

Carried

CL/20/84

2. THAT Council note that:

- in July 2020, the Government announced an initial funding package of \$761 million to provide a post COVID-19 stimulus to maintain and improve water networks infrastructure, and to support a three-year programme of reform of local government water services delivery arrangements; and
- initial funding will be made available to those councils that agree to participate in the initial stage of the reform programme, through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), Funding Agreement, and approved Delivery Plan.
- this initial funding will be provided in two parts: a direct allocation to individual territorial authorities, and a regional allocation. The participating individual authorities in each region will need to agree an approach to distributing the regional allocation
- the Steering Committee has recommended a preferred approach to the allocation of regional funding, being the same formula as was used to determine the direct allocations to territorial authorities

3. THAT Council:

- **Agree** to sign the MoU at **Appendix A** and Funding Agreement at **Appendix B**.
- **Agree** to nominate Sven Hanne, the Chief Executive of the Council as the primary point of communication for the purposes of the MoU and reform programme – as referred to on page 6 of the MoU.
- **Agree** to delegate decisions about the allocation of regional funding to Sven Hanne, the Chief Executive of the Council, with the understanding that the minimum level of funding to the Council be based upon the formula used to calculate the direct council allocations, and noting that participation by two-thirds of territorial authorities within the Taranaki region is required to access the regional allocation
- **Note** that the MoU and Funding Agreement cannot be amended or modified by either party, and doing so would void these documents.
- **Note** that participation in this initial stage is to be undertaken in good faith, but this is a non-binding approach, and the Council can opt out of the reform process at the end of the term of the agreement (as provided for on page 5 of the MoU).
- **Note** that the Council has been allocated \$1,194,945 of funding, which will be received as a grant as soon as practicable once the signed MoU and Funding Agreement are returned to the Department of Internal Affairs, and a Delivery Plan has been supplied and approved (as described on page 5 of the MoU).

- **Note** that the Delivery Plan must show that the funding is to be applied to operating and/or capital expenditure relating to three waters infrastructure and service delivery, and which:
  - supports economic recovery through job creation; and
  - maintains, increases, and/or accelerates investment in core water infrastructure renewal and maintenance.

COPLESTONE/DALZIEL

Carried

CL/20/85

### **Recommended Reason**

Opting into the initial stage of the reform programme is a voluntary, non-binding commitment. It **does not** require councils to commit to future phases of the reform programme, to transfer their assets and/or liabilities, or establish new water entities. It does however enable access to a significant amount of government funding. The benefits outweigh the costs and risks associated with this proposal.

The Chief Executive noted the following points:

- There is a lot of detail to this report. The Government is embarking on a three stage water reform programme and have expressed a desire to remove the water functions from individual councils at the end of the three stages. There has been no talk about privatisation and so it is assumed they would still be controlled by a public entity but the exact form is yet to be decided.
- Stage 1 asks Councils to opt in by entering into a memorandum of understanding and is non-binding to continue to the next stages. If that wasn't the case the recommendation from Officers would look fundamentally different.
- The MOU requires Council to cooperate in good faith to form a database of what infrastructure looks like across New Zealand. This includes what is there and what the condition of the infrastructure is. This will require some significant staff time to produce but there is an offer of \$1.2 million to enter into the MOU and approximately the same again from a regional fund. Mr Hanne noted he was reasonably confident this would result in a total of \$2.38 million for the Stratford District.
- The report seeks authorisation for the Chief Executive to continue with the MOU and to negotiate on Council's behalf for the regional distribution.

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- The District Mayor noted this topic had been workshopped with Council and that a number of Councillors attended a half day seminar on the topic.
- The Deputy Mayor noted he felt Council would be pushed into the water reform if they didn't voluntarily enter into the agreement. He noted he did not want to hand Stratford's water over to another organisation given it has been kept fairly up to date and was fault free to a degree. But he felt Council should enter into this agreement given that it was in good faith and non-binding.
- Councillor McKay agreed that through the workshop, seminar and report the non-binding factor has been very clear. She supported entering into the agreement and provide the data required.
- Councillor Boyde agreed but noted that the details released later on could be concerning. Councillor Jones reiterated these concerns and Councillor Webby endorsed the comments made.
- It was confirmed that the amounts would be plus GST.
- The District Mayor noted that this is only tranche one. It was important to note it was non-committal past this point. There is funding to be accessed by agreeing to enter into the MOU and Council would need to enter into this in good faith while exploring other options for water delivery. He noted the funding was regarded as stimulus funding to get money out to the

community as part of the economic recovery rather than an infrastructure reform. He supported the Chief Executive having the authorisation to negotiation the apportionment of the regional fund.

Points noted in discussion:

- The Chief Executive noted that this decision had to be made by the end of this month and that the funding allocation (what this will be spent on) will need to be submitted by the end of September. A report will be brought to Council separately on what this funding will be spent on, although it is anticipated it will largely be spent on the planned work programme that has already been consulted on via the Long Term Plan process.

7. **DECISION REPORT – PROPOSED LOCATION OF NEW AQUATIC CENTRE**

D20/22233

(Pages 64-76)

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. THAT the report be received.

SANDFORD/WEBBY

Carried

CL/20/86

**Recommended Reason**

A decision in this matter is required as a matter of urgency to enable this project to move to the next stages.

It was agreed that the word “opt” was to be removed from the resolution as an error.

The Special Projects Manager noted the following points:

- This subject has been aired quite extensively in various media forms.
- The topic was brought before Council in April which led to the earlier decision to co-locate the new aquatic centre with the TET Multi Sports Centre. At that point the alternative location now being considered was not specifically included with the alternative being ‘other land owned by Council’.
- The disadvantages and advantages from the original report have been regurgitated into the current report with further commentary and extra points following feedback received from the community.
- Council is now required to weigh up the merits of both sites so a decision can be made and the project can get underway.

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- It was clarified if the pool was moved clear of the existing carpark there would not be enough room to retain four courts.
- It was noted that \$96,000 had been spent over three financial years to resurface the netball courts and that some structural work had been needed on the last court to be resurfaced. The resurfacing has an expected life expectancy of 10-15 years.
- It was noted the current courts were 68 years old, constructed in 1952. The contractors doing the resurfacing had noted the courts were not in the greatest condition and did not guarantee a lifespan of the resurfacing being 10-15 years due to the cracking in the courts.
- It was noted there were no known seismic issues that would effect the construction of the pool but that the cracks were due to the asphalt surfacing.
- The savings of \$90,000 - \$100,000 a year for management of both facilities was questioned and it was noted that the current tenants did manage the full facility – therefore only one

would be required to manage the complete facility and could possibly be run more efficiently if there was a dedicated resource rather than the restaurant management attempting to manage a sports facility. This would not be required to be attached to be undertaken.

- It was noted that it was unknown what the courts had been built on top of whether it be fill or natural soil.

Points noted in discussion:

- Councillor Coplestone noted he had spoken to a lot of people on this subject. He supported co-locating the facilities to utilise staff, facilities, creating future scope, replacing the ageing structures that are the netball/tennis courts and create a sports hub that will entice a range of sports to be undertaken in one building. He did not support extending on an open reserve in town, he did not want to duplicate utilities such as a gym or a café. He supported the addition of changing rooms and toilets for three different sporting codes (hockey, cricket and netball) and did not want to see the \$8 million grant jeopardised because Council was divided on where to located the pool. This was decided last year and he stated that Council should stay with the status quo; however he noted he was in favour of building a new pool for the District regardless of the decision today.

*As two Councillors wished to move opposing motions the District Mayor requested the Chief Executive toss a coin to determine which motion would be put. He had sought legal advice on ensuring fairness should this issue occur.*

### **RECOMMENDATION**

- 2(a). THAT Council reiterate its earlier decision to co-locate the new aquatic centre with the TET Multi Sport Centre,

BOYDE/JAMIESON

Division

For 5

Against 6

Lost

CL/20/87

Points noted in discussion:

- Councillor Boyde noted his support of the new pool. He noted he had contacted some of the public that had signed the petition to allow him to make a well informed decision when voting. He found everybody had different concerns and there had been a lot of misinformation given for example new netball courts could cost \$2 million, the pool being on the field would only cost \$8 million, there were going to be no replacement netball courts and that the Malone Gates would be blocked. Some had then apologised for signing after learning the facts, he felt this was important to consider for how Council conducts itself in the future for big projects. A well informed community is a powerful community. He noted his decision had been based on whether the location had long term benefits, synergies for the community and did it meet the Government's Four Well-beings and he felt the TET Co-Location ticked all those areas particularly with potential synergies. He noted the costs were higher with this option but that the intergenerational and operational benefits for the community, district and region would make it a far better long-term location. He noted he had visited seven new pools around the country over the past year, six of which were mixed with a sports facility. He noted they all had seen advanced benefits from being a combined facility. He noted netballers had had health and safety issues with the current courts for a long time. Netball Taranaki supported the proposal for six flat courts all together and that this option would provide 25 years maintenance free. The TET Multi Sports Stadium is now owned by Council and therefore the community would want it to succeed and noted the potential savings of \$90,000 - \$100,000 per year. He noted the current pool is 81 years old and would see \$8 million in savings with

the new facility, that the existing café could be used as could the existing dry land space, there was more car parking availability with the existing parks and the War Memorial Carpark and there was the ability to have a shared facility reception for customer service. The existing site could remain operational while the build is being undertaken and this would not take any reserve land away from any other codes. It would make this area the destination choice for recreational options and become a centre of excellence for the future. He noted that regardless of the decision he supported the construction of a new pool 100%. He felt today should be celebrated as Stratford decides on the new pool location after 81 years.

- Councillor McKay supported the motion. She had carefully considered both options. She believed if there was nothing currently there then the facilities would be built together. Long term co-location would bring a strong facility for our District and Regional – locally, nationally and internationally and would bring long term operational savings which would be valuable to our ratepayers for many years to come.
- Councillor Harris acknowledged her respect for both options as well as the arguments for both. She noted she supported whatever the outcome would be and looked forward to moving to the next exciting stage. She supported the motion and when looking at both options felt the co-location would offer best outcome.
- Councillor Erwood noted his opposition to the motion. He noted there had been plenty of discussions on synergies but no definition and felt no one should leave their children swimming to go and get a coffee. He questioned the opening hours of the café having to match those of the pool. There is an assumption that Council will take over the management of the TET Multi Sports Centre and he noted this discussion with Councillors had not occurred. He felt it had been handed back to Council in a rundown state struggling to survive but it needed to be managed correctly as it was, by putting a pool in the front it would block off the Centre even further. He noted that the centre had not been designed to be added onto and felt costs would only grow. He questioned how much disruption would impact netball, tennis and the road beside it. He felt construction of the pool here would ruin the vista of the park and would clearly shade the Malone Gates. There would be limited options for solar heating in this position and felt Council should be looking at more energy efficient ways. He felt the sloping ground of the netball courts would cost more money to build on and that there was no budget for shifting the netball courts that Council had just spent \$96,000 on resurfacing. With option 2b there would be no limit on design, shape or size. It would provide options to expand the pool in the future for hydrosides or an outdoor diving board. Construction on the field would have little impact on other codes. Stratford Primary School are looking at getting an artificial wicket and Stratford High School is happy to share theirs as is the Stratford Cricket Club – a new artificial wicket would cost \$15,000. He noted Councillors had not heard anything from Netball. Building on the field would allow access way for the delivery of services, staff access, access for disabled users and provide facilities for Hockey to use at the back of the building. He noted hockey hardly used the Centre and even held their prize giving at another location. If the pool was north facing then solar heating could be used. It would be good to walk out onto flat grassy ground. He noted Council had changed elements of the Control of Dogs Bylaw based on public feedback and with the feedback from the community he asked Councillors to support option 2b. He did not want to waste \$1.3 million plus to build on sloping ground based on assumptions and estimates and decisions not yet made or to shift the netball courts. These costs will only increase the rates on our ageing rate payer.
- Councillor Sandford spoke against the motion. He noted he had not supported this option from the start and now the community had come forward to stand with them as well. He noted that the leasees' of the TET Multi Sports Centre had always said there was not enough room, as had various sporting codes. He could not work out where the proposed extra space would be coming from. He did not support the suggestion that Council would manage the stadium and noted the public perception of competing against local providers when Council ran the Holiday Park. He supported the blank canvas on the field so facilities could be added to help codes rather than exposing the netballers to the elements on a flat field. He noted his disappointment that Netball Taranaki had not put forward what they want to Council. This is the biggest project he has ever seen and he did not want to miss the opportunity to do this

right. He did not feel the public had been given a decent opportunity to have their say on this matter. He did not think taking green space away was an issue due to the amount of parks within the District that were totally underutilised and suggested a wicket could be put at Page Street. The grassed area has been underutilised since Hockey moved to the artificial turf.

*The Director - Environmental Services – Mr B Sutherland and the Environmental Compliance Officer – Mr K Best joined the meeting at 3.00pm.*

- Councillor Dalziel did not support the motion. He felt the synergies outlined could be achieved with the pool located on the north side against the hockey turf and not on Regan Street. He noted his concern that by co-locating with the TET Multi Sports Centre any additions in the future would be constrained. With the pool on the field he saw the entire area as a recreational campus with the pool, tennis, netball, hockey and the stadium providing an entire campus for sport and recreation to take place. It will make a fantastic facility for the town.
- Councillor Webby noted she did not support the motion. There are aesthetic qualities that would be lost with the pool being built there. One of the major attraction to visitors, and our community, were the parks. The entrance to the park is natural and one of the best parts of the walk. There is also a wonderful view through from Prospero Place. She felt that the funding that has been allocated, and that which is still to be raised, should all go on a new complex. She noted the estimates presented were vague and was really concerned about the real costs of this complex moving forward.

*The Health and Safety and Emergency Management Advisor departed the meeting at 3.01pm.*

- Councillor Jones noted he had been undecided with so many good points raised for both options. He had concerns around the true synergies with co-locating as it will be a total sports area with either option. He questioned the lack of input from netball as Council had approached them and cricket had been forthcoming. He felt the cost of shifting the courts could be put into the new pool while starting on a clean slate as this option seemed a lot cheaper than renovating. He didn't feel that moving one client to another space to put another client in that space would achieve anything.
- The Deputy Mayor noted he was very happy that Council would be building a new pool which would make a huge difference to the community. Wherever this is built it will be a new purpose built facility for our community. He thought solar heating could be achieved at both sites but that this part hadn't been discussed yet. He was in favour of supporting the synergies of a joint complex, there would still be multiple access routes and disability access if co-locating and felt the view from Prospero Place of the mouna would be hindered with the complex on the field. Cricket will be moved regardless of the decision and noted that management of the whole facility had not been discussed by Council.
- The District Mayor noted he had considered both arguments over the whole process and felt there was no right or wrong with both locations having strong advantages and disadvantages which have collectively been expressed very well. He noted the Stratford Cricket Club are an affected party who will lose the use of the field but have agreed to this with a commitment that Council will reinstate a wicket somewhere else for them. Parking has been raised as an issue before but felt this had arisen due to misinformation with some concerns that the pool co-locating with the TET Multi Sports Centre would take out the parking in front of the current centre. He noted this was not the case but regardless of which option the central point for parking at the War Memorial Centre would solve these concerns. He noted he had asked himself what the initial plan had been and that was to construct a new pool. \$12 million of borrowed funds were allocated in the budget with the next \$3 million to be raised by way of grants making a total budget of \$15 million. This had increased since then to \$20 million and Stratford had been fortunate to receive \$8 million of Government funding towards this project. He felt that any savings Council could make was of benefit to its rate payers and the report indicates savings in excess of \$1 million could be made with indications that building the pool on the field would save approximately \$2 million. The financial consideration was the key factor for him and therefore he would not support the motion.



- Councillor Boyde noted that the decision made today was a long term one. He noted the TET Multi Sports Centre was a \$6.6 million asset that Council needed to look after. He reiterated that wherever the pool was located he supported the project 100% but felt that the short lifespan left at the current netball courts that the right option was co-location with the TET Multi Sports Centre. He acknowledged the \$2 million difference in costs but noted that was a possibility and made from assumptions with architects and felt at the end of the day there could be this variance with the field option as well.

*A division was called for resolution 2(a):*

*Those voting for the motion: Councillors Boyde, Coplestone, McKay, Harris and the Deputy Mayor.*

*Those voting against the motion: Councillors Erwood, Dalziel, Jones, Sandford, Webby and the District Mayor.*

**RECOMMENDATION**

- 2(b). THAT Council rescind its earlier decision and ~~opt~~ agree to locate the new aquatic centre on the sportsfield to the north of the hockey turf.

ERWOOD/SANDFORD

Division

*For 6*

*Against 5*

Carried

CL/20/88

Points noted in discussion:

- Councillor Erwood noted the synergies with the complex on the field for hockey to utilise and to provide an access/service lane for use by staff and disabled people to mean a north-facing complex with provision for the lane between the complex and the turf.
- Councillor Boyde noted that this decision should be celebrated as the community would be getting a new pool and that is fantastic news.

*A division was called for Resolution 2(b)*

*Those voting for the motion: Councillors Erwood, Dalziel, Jones, Sandford, Webby and the District Mayor.*

*Those voting against the motion: Councillors Boyde, Coplestone, McKay, Harris and the Deputy Mayor.*

*The meeting closed at 3.24pm.*

N C Volzke  
**CHAIRMAN**

Confirmed this 8<sup>th</sup> day of September 2020.

N C Volzke  
**DISTRICT MAYOR**