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## **MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE STRATFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL HELD BY AUDIO VISUAL LINK ON TUESDAY 28 APRIL 2020 AT 3 PM**

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### **PRESENT**

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

### **IN ATTENDANCE**

The Chief Executive – Mr S Hanne, the Director Community Services – Ms K Whareaitu, the Director Corporate Services – Mrs T Radich, the Director Assets – Mrs V Araba, the Director Environmental Services – Mr B Sutherland, the Executive Administration Officer – Ms R Vanstone, the Roding Asset Manager – Mr S Bowden, the Communications Manager – Ms G Gibson, the Community Development Manager – Mr C Julie (*part meeting*), the Community Development Officer – Mr P Boyd (*part meeting*), the Senior Library Officer – Mrs B Roper and two members of the media (Stratford Press and Taranaki Daily News).

#### 1. **WELCOME**

The Deputy Mayor welcomed the District Mayor, the Chief Executive, Councillors, staff and the media.

#### 2. **APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies.

#### 3. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements.

#### 4. **DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS INTEREST**

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

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 5. **ATTENDANCE SCHEDULE**

The Attendance Schedule for Policy and Services Committee meetings was attached.

## 6. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

### 6.1 Policy and Services Committee Meeting – 25 February 2020

D20/3404 Pages 7-15

#### RECOMMENDATION

THAT the minutes of the Policy and Services Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 25 February 2020, be confirmed as a true and accurate record.

COPLESTONE/McKAY  
Carried  
P&S/20/43

The Executive Administration Officer undertook to make the following amendments:

- Amend the spelling error, *Wolzke* to *Volzke* in the item 12 recommendation.
- Correct the wording error under item 13.1 where Councillor Harris asked how the district compared with other councils in terms of the waste levy, not solid waste.

### 6.2 Policy and Services Committee Meeting (Bylaws Hearing) – 14 April 2020

D20/6328 Pages 16-20

#### RECOMMENDATION

THAT the minutes of the Policy and Services Committee Meeting to hear and consider submissions to the Wastewater and Solid Waste Bylaws held on Tuesday 14 April 2020, be confirmed as a true and accurate record.

WEBBY/HARRIS  
Carried  
P&S/20/44

## 7. MATTERS OUTSTANDING

D16/47 Page 21

#### RECOMMENDATION

THAT the matters outstanding be received.

ERWOOD/BOYDE  
Carried  
P&S/20/45

The Chief Executive reported the following:

- The renumbering of Pembroke Road is underway by council officers. Elected members have been involved in initial conversations in workshop.
- The Percy Thomson investment profile and funding for Whakaahurangi Marae will be addressed in this meeting under the Corporate Services report and the Policy Review item, respectively.
- Temporary fences will be dealt with in a future policy review.

8. **DECISION REPORT – I-SITE AND LIBRARY OPENING HOURS**

D20/6329

Pages 22-28

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. THAT the report be received.

COPLESTONE/WEBBY

Carried

P&S/20/46

2. THAT Option 7 is adopted as the future opening hours for the co-location of the Visitor Information and Library services.

VOLZKE/BOYDE

*Against* DALZIEL & JONES

Carried

P&S/20/47

**Recommended Reason**

Opening hours of the co-location of the Visitor Information and Library services should be adopted in order to progress and plan for the co-location to be implemented.

The Director – Community Services noted the following points:

- Plans are underway for the co-location to commence as soon as possible and council is now looking at the operations' hours, staffing plans and communication to users. It is worth noting that the delivery of the service is expected to be together.
- Council officers are recommending option 7 (as noted in paragraph 7.4 and appendix B of the decision report). The proposed operating hours are below what the I-Site is currently open for but above the libraries opening hours.
- A weekday opening time of 8.30am would allow bus users to utilise the facility and interact with staff to purchase additional tickets, for instance. A closing time of 5pm is recommended as analysis shows that a minimum number of users are utilising library services between 5-5.30pm. Weekend hours are proposed as Saturday 9am-1pm to capture summer's visitors and tourists and winter's sports players, particularly those from the eastern communities. Option 7 opts out of opening on public holidays.
- Currently, the I-Site does not open until 10am and sees a drop off in users between 12 noon and 1pm. AA does not provide telephone support after 12 noon on a Saturday to its counters. and the service does not operate on public holidays.
- Councillor Jones asked if any analysis had been completed on the staff required for the proposed opening hours. Overall, the more hours that the service is open, the more it costs in terms of overheads and cost savings is one of the main reasons for combining the services, as confirmed by the Deputy Mayor. Ms Whareaitu clarified that initial workings showed a saving of one full-time equivalent position and other considerations included aiming to do away with the lone-worker situation.
- Councillor Boyde agreed that option 7 looked to be a good option. He sought clarification on whether the new roles, which are quite different for each service, are well defined. Ms Whareaitu clarified that this was being worked through currently with the ultimate aim to have customer service officers working across both services. She added that one or two staff had started training already.
- The Deputy Mayor considered operational hours to be a management decision. The Chief Executive confirmed future 'tweaking' of hours to be an operational issue however this proposal represents a significant change affecting level of service.
- Mayor Volzke observed from the graphs that the library and I-Site were frequented at similar times suggesting that the services were quite complimentary and that users went from one to

another. He therefore suggested that the proposed times were right and did not require major change. Mayor Volzke supported and Councillor Boyde seconded, option 7.

- While Councillor Dalziel agreed that option 7 was workable, his preference was for option 6. He questioned what additional business bus users bought before 9am and he considered that a service should be provided during the summer public holidays including Easter. Councillor Coplestone agreed and asked why the library service could not be 'chained off'. Ms Whareaitu clarified that this was considered however it was felt that the entire service should be available. There were also staffing and security issues to consider. The Senior Library Officer advised that the library was a flexible space which could be used in a number of different ways. Library staff were wary of making structural changes to the building.
- Councillor Erwood was also in favour of option 7.
- Councillor's Dalziel and Jones were against the recommendation.

## 9. **DECISION REPORT – DRAFT COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY**

D20/6145

Pages 34-39

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. THAT the report be received.

McKAY/BOYDE  
Carried  
P&S/20/48

2. THAT the *draft* Communication and Engagement Strategy be adopted and released for public feedback and brought back in June for deliberations and adoption.

JAMIESON/McKAY  
Carried  
P&S/20/49

### **Recommended Reason**

The recommendation from the Committee is required to initiate the public feedback process and adopt the draft strategy as a framework for supporting communication and engagement between Council and the community.

The Director – Community Services acknowledged the work done by the Communications Manager in getting the strategy to this stage.

Questions/Points of clarification:

- When questioned by the Deputy Mayor, the Communications Manager clarified that a brand audit was a refresh of the external facing communication tools of council - publications, documents, logo and website.
- Councillor Dalziel asked what value potentially expensive public consultation added as from his perspective, the document read well. Ms Gibson clarified that it was appropriate to share the draft with the community adding that she values any feedback the public can provide in terms of how they wish to be engaged with. The Deputy Mayor shared this view noting that communication and engagement had been bought up many times in the 2019 customer satisfaction survey.
- Councillor Dalziel sought clarification on the costs associated with the brand reset, including website. Ms Gibson confirmed that all initiatives in the strategy were planned for the current budget and no extra would be required. Consultation costs would be met from within the normal operating budget. Councillor Dalziel looks forward to the confirmation of these costs.

- Councillor Webby added that consultation was another opportunity for transparency within council.
- Mayor Volzke sought consistency when referring to either Māori contribution, as referred to in the Local Government Act, or participation.

10. **DECISION REPORT – POLICY REVIEWS 2018/19 & 2019/20 – TENTH TRANCHE**

D20/5077

Pages 49-54

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. THAT the report be received.

ERWOOD/HARRIS  
Carried  
P&S/20/50

2. THAT the attached, updated and new policies, being the:

*Asset Management Policy (updated), and the  
Community Relationships Policy (new)*

be adopted.

HARRIS/McKAY  
Carried  
P&S/20/51

**Recommended Reason**

This is part of the policy review round currently under way. Policies require review from time to time to ensure they still reflect current legislation and best practice, as well as the views and business needs of the organisation. The policies recommended for withdrawal have either been found to be not required, amalgamated into an existing policy or replaced by a new policy as outlined in the body of this report.

The Chief Executive noted that the Asset Management Policy update includes a minor textual change while the Community Relationships Policy attempts to provide a more consistent approach to collaboration with community groups. Historically these relationships have evolved. It makes sense to apply the same lens across all groups in order to be fair, equitable and to get the best outcomes.

Questions/Points of clarification:

- Mayor Volzke would like to add ‘sustainable’ under the heading of *Roles and Responsibilities* in the Asset Management Policy (page 57 refers).
- Mayor Volzke sought clarification on lifecycle management asking at what point council officers depreciated the value of an asset and determined that it needed replacing. Mrs Araba confirmed that the Asset Management Policy is a high level statement of how staff will undertake asset reviews. When it comes to determining whether or not an asset needs to be replaced a database such as RAM for roading or Asset Finder for three waters, is the first indicator. A visual check is also completed. Mr Bowden talked elected members through the process involved in reviewing a bridge replacement. He said that a detailed check of the bridge is conducted every 6 years. As the bridge approaches end of life, there are more frequent visits. Maintenance checks also consider options to prolong life.

## 11. MONTHLY REPORTS

### 11.1 ASSETS REPORTS D20/3462 (March) & D20/3462 (Feb)

Pages 76-107

#### RECOMMENDATION

THAT the reports be received.

BOYDE/McKAY  
Carried  
P&S/20/52

#### Questions/Points of clarification:

- Councillor Boyde requested an update on the progress of the subdivision in relation to budget. Mrs Araba advised that she is keeping a watching brief.
- In response to a question from Councillor Coplestone, the Roading Asset Manager clarified that the Kohuratahi Bridge work had fallen behind due to the COVID-19 lock-down however bulk of the timber replacement had been completed. Ironwork was yet to be done. The cost is expected to be just over \$100,000 as budgeted.
- Mayor Volzke sought an update on roadworks at Tututawa. Mr Bowden responded that work had been expected to be completed by the end of March but was delayed due to COVID-19. Work crews were being remobilised this week with the priority being finishing the structural metalling of the road. There is a risk that sealing the road will be delayed due to encroaching winter weather.
- Mayor Volzke asked for an update on the status of the Bike Park project – the cost of which seemed to be increasing significantly and was now ridiculously expensive. Mr Hanne noted that this update would be added to matters outstanding.
- Councillor Boyde advised that the council farms yearly target had been surpassed and the farm was performing outstandingly well in relation to the once a day or 16 hour milking schedule.
- The Deputy Mayor asked, in relation to dumped tyres (page 132 refers) just outside the road reserve on private land, whether the landowner had been informed. Mr Bowden clarified that the landowner had reported the dumping. He estimated a cost of \$10,000 to remove by council warning that this would set a precedent. Following questioning by Councillor Harris, Mr Hanne confirmed that there was no correlation between this dumping and a LGOIMA request seeking information about dumped tyres in February. Mayor Volzke asked whether this matter should be reported to the Taranaki Regional Council as dumped tyres on private land were surely an objectionable, environmental issue.
- Councillor Dalziel sought clarification on the \$45,000 in NZTA funding received (page 100 refers) for a State Highway 3 roading project. Mr Bowden clarified that this initial sum of money covered consultant's fees to look at crossing points on Broadway under the Walking and Cycling Strategy.

*The Community Development Manager, Community Development Officer and the Stratford Press reporter all left the meeting at 3.59pm.*

## 14.2 COMMUNITY SERVICES REPORTS

D20/3459 (March) & D20/3459 (Feb)

Pages 120-137

### RECOMMENDATION

THAT the reports be received.

WEBBY/McKAY  
Carried  
P&S/20/53

The Director – Community Services noted the following points:

- Prior to lock-down the successful event highlights included Colour in the Park, the Positive Aging Forum and Children’s Day.
- Sport New Zealand Rural Travel funding is on hold until the impacts of COVID-19 are better understood. The closing date for Creative Communities funding has been extended however it is likely to be a similar short-term outcome.
- Some data could not be reported due to the closure of facilities.

### 14.2.1 Council Organisation and Council Representatives on Other Organisations

- The Deputy Mayor acknowledged the efforts of the Safer Communities Trust, those contributors to the regional emergency management effort and community organisations such as Team Hope and many others for the efforts made to care and protect the communities vulnerable during the COVID-19 crisis.
- Councillor Coplestone sought an update on digital enablement on Broadway. Ms Whareaitu reported that options were being explored and would be bought back to elected members for consideration.

## 14.3 ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES REPORTS

D20/3382 (March) & D20/3382 (Feb)

Pages 138-151

### RECOMMENDATION

THAT the reports be received.

HARRIS/McKAY  
Carried  
P&S/20/54

The Director – Environmental Services noted that the next month’s reporting would give a clearer picture of the effects of COVID-19. There were no questions from elected members.

## 14.4 CORPORATE SERVICES REPORTS

D20/4445 (March) & D20/4445 (Feb)

Pages 152-179

### RECOMMENDATION

THAT the reports be received.

BOYDE/ERWOOD  
Carried  
P&S/20/55

The Director – Corporate Services noted the following points:

- It was her preference to provide the report in its entirety every month.
- The Percy Thomson Trust investment schedule was presented as requested.
- Mrs Radich confirmed that she would keep a watching brief of the cash flow situation as revenue had dropped significantly due to facility closures and rates payment cancellations (by automatic payment).

Questions/Points of clarification:

- Councillor Dalziel asked for further clarification as to the treatment of the Campbell property ‘in the books’. Mrs Radich advised that she would separate sale and loss in the future.
- Mrs Radich shared Councillor Dalziel’s concerns about the Percy Thomson Trust’s reliance on commercial property investment, especially in the current environment. Councillor Dalziel asked whether the trust could repatriate some of those investments. Mr Hanne advised that this question ought to be posed to the trust itself. As a ‘CCO’ (Council Controlled Organisation) the council’s influence extends to the appointment of trustees whereas shareholding is a concern of the trust.
- Mayor Volzke supported Councillor Dalziel’s view and asked for more detail around the trust’s investments in order to know the position of these. This request was supported by Councillors Boyde and Coplestone and was added matters outstanding.
- Councillor Boyde, in referring to the district’s rates valuations to be conducted by QV at the end of this year, noted his interest in seeing if and how the COVID-19 crisis affects valuations.

## 15. **QUESTIONS**

- At the request of Councillor Dalziel, Mr Hanne advised that council officers had attempted to colour code the parts of the monthly reports which could be reported monthly (red shading) or three monthly (yellow shading). Director’s feedback was that this would not reduce their workload however, as two report templates would be required to be maintained and the data would still need to be collated on a monthly basis. Also, some measures are required to be reported monthly for the annual report mechanism although it was possible to negotiate this with the next auditor.
- Councillor Boyde suggested that he had no issue with detail while Councillor Dalziel clarified that he had suggested streamlining to save on reading time. Councillors were satisfied with the current monthly reporting format.
- Councillor Dalziel asked Mr Hanne what he was doing to reduce council’s running costs at a time when small businesses were facing tough economic decisions. Mayor Volzke responded that all councils were accelerating their capital spend and considering ways to reduce their costs without cutting core functions or economic development. Mr Hanne added that council was constantly reviewing its costs with a view to reduction especially as central government passes more and more responsibility to deliver essential services to local government. He suggested that it would be adverse at this point to reduce staffing given that COVID-19 is a reasonably short-term event. In addition, most contracts go through a tender process and exit penalties apply. The council utilises all of government procurement procedures to find the cheapest ways to procure services and the annual plan process has identified further areas to reduce costs.
- Councillor Dalziel was not convinced that the proposed rating increase of 4.3% was final especially given South Taranaki District Council’s proposed a zero rates increase. Mr Hanne confirmed that a rates position was a political decision however he reiterated that this council consistently applies the procurement policy.
- Mayor Volzke clarified that the time to review rates is after feedback comes in. If that feedback is significant and meaningful it would be considered and/or changes made.



*The meeting closed at 4.46pm.*

A L Jamieson  
**CHAIRMAN**

Confirmed this 26th day of May 2020.

N C Volzke  
**DISTRICT MAYOR**