

Date: Tuesday 24 August 2021 at 3.00pm
Venue: Held via Audio Visual Link

Present

The Deputy Mayor A L Jamieson (the Chairman), the District Mayor N C Volzke, Councillors G W Boyde, P S Dalziel, J M S Erwood, R W Coplestone, A K Harris, V R 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 – Environmental Services – Mr B Sutherland, the Director – Corporate Services – Mrs T Radich, the Director – Assets – Mrs V Araba, the Committee Advisor and Executive Assistant – Mrs E Bishop, the Roading Asset Manager – Mr S Bowden, the Projects Manager/Engineer – Mr Steve Taylor, the Environmental Health Manager- Ms R Otter and one member of the media (Stratford Press)

1. Welcome

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

2. Apologies

There were no apologies received.

3. Announcements

The Deputy Mayor thanked the Chief Executive for including Elected Members in all the staff updates relating to COVID 19 during Alert Level 4.

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 & Services Committee – 27 July 2021 D21/27700 Page 8

Recommendation

THAT the minutes of the Policy and Services Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 27 July 2021 be confirmed as a true and accurate record.

DALZIEL/McKAY
Carried
P&S/21/114

Recommendation

THAT the Matters Outstanding be received.

DALZIEL/BOYDE
Carried
P&S/21/115

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- Councillor Boyde requested the workshop scheduled for October on damage to roads by Forestry be brought forward. He noted the damage to Puniwhakau Road highlighted in the monthly report and the previous damage to Soldiers Road have increased the urgency for this discussion. It was clarified that any decision on differential rates would not take effect until 1 July 2022 and there was quite a bit of work still to be done collating data on the forestry areas and looking at how other Councils are managing this situation. Councillor Boyde clarified that his request was regarding restricting the damage with the Taranaki Regional Council allowing 6 trucks a day and questioned if there was a way to close the roads during adverse weather events he noted that almost a quarter of a million dollars had been spent above budget for these repairs on just two roads. The District Mayor supported the request for a workshop to discuss this issue. He noted he had visited Puniwhakau Road and it was as much an environmental issue as it was a safety issue. He questioned if the regional council was aware of how much ran off the roads into the rivers when this damage was done. A discussion on this will be held earlier than the October workshop.
- Councillor Dalziel clarified he was anticipating an ongoing project update on the Aquatic Centre Project to be included in the Assets Monthly Report which would have a summary, project end date, where it is currently tracking and budget lines. The Director – Assets noted this would be incorporated in the next report.
- Councillor Sandford questioned if the damaged stonework at the southern round-a-bout had been repaired at the same time as the pedestrian crossing? The Roading Asset Manager noted that this was currently awaiting quotes for the repairs as it would be an insurance claim from the person who caused the damage and had been delayed as there was a shortage of suitable stone masons able to complete the job. He would follow this up and this item will be added to matters outstanding.

Recommendation

THAT the Annual Report on Dog Control Policy and Practices for the year ending 30 June 2021 be received and contents noted.

McKAY/VOLZKE
Carried
P&S/21/116

Recommended Reason

The report is required under section 10A of the Dog Control Act 1996.

The Director – Environmental Services noted that this report was required to be provided every year under the Dog Control Act and noted the standard statistics for the activity for the past year. There were no measures that were particularly different compared to the previous years in the report.

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- It was noted that the increase in infringement notices correlated with the increase in dog attacks on stock and other animals and wandering animals highlighting more enforcement action from incidents and more complaints received.
- It was clarified that information on unregistered dogs was fairly limited although there is a small number officers are aware of. The reduction in registered dogs is as a result of less dogs in the urban area.

9. Decision Report – Proposed School Zone Variable Speed Limits

D21/29614 Page 22

Recommendations

1. THAT the report be received.

ERWOOD/COPLESTONE
Carried
P&S/21/117

- ~~2. THAT the Committee give approval for council officers to consult with the community for a proposal to install 30 km/h speed limits on Avon Street (Avon Kindergarten) and Erin Street (Midhirst School).~~
- ~~3. THAT the Committee give approval for council officers to consult with the community for a proposal to install permanent 30 km/h speed limits at Best Start Stratford, Gr8Kidz Childcare and Learning Centre and Stratford Community Childcare Centre.~~
- ~~4. THAT the Committee give approval for council officers to consult with the community for a proposal to install 30 km/h variable speed limits at Avon School, Central Kindergarten, St Joseph's Catholic School and Stratford High School / Koru Kindergarten.~~
- ~~5. THAT the Committee give approval for council officers to consult with the community for a proposal to install 60 km/h variable speed limits at Makahu School and Pembroke School.~~
- ~~6. THAT once the consultation period has been undertaken, a further decision report will be presented to this committee summarising the comments received and making a recommendation on the speed limits around the schools mentioned.~~

Recommended Reason

Waka Kotahi is in the process of proposing a new rule enabling an improved approach to speed management planning on New Zealand roads, called the Land Transport Rule: Setting of Speed Limits 2021. If the proposal is successful, the rule will require all road controlling authorities to reduce speed limits around urban schools to 30 km/h (permanent or variable) and rural schools to 60 km/h (permanent or variable).

The Projects Engineer/Manager noted the following points:

- This report was a result of Waka Kotahi New Zealand Transport Agency's review of the Setting of Speed Limits 2017 rule for which they plan to have the changes rolled out by the start of 2022. One of the conditions of the new rules will be reduced speed limits around urban schools to 30km and rural schools to 60km with a timeframe of having 40% of these changes done before 30 June 2024 and any remaining to be completed by 31 December 2029.
- It was suggested that this could be completed earlier. There are 11 schools which includes 3 day-cares that can be included in this report – some are on state highway and therefore cannot be covered.
- Consultation will be held with the schools first to determine an appropriate area followed by consultation with the immediate residents and then the general public. The appendices show the indicative areas where those speed zones could be.

- It is proposed that as Avon Kindergarten and Midhirst Primary Schools are in cul-de-sacs that a permanent 30km speed zone be put in place with the other schools being variable speed zones to cover school pick up and drop off times. It is suggested that a permanent reduced speed limit be put in place for Gr8Kidz and Best Start daycares as kids are dropped off at varying times. The limits for the rural schools would also be variable to be reduced speeds during pick up and drop off times.

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- Councillor Sandford noted that the new day-care on Cloten Road had been missed as well as the play centre behind Mitre 10 and requested these be included.
- The Deputy Mayor noted his concern that Council had initially set a speed limit at Stratford Primary School of 40km and felt there was still the ability for the 30km limit to be changed before it becomes legislation. The Roading Asset Manager noted that Council had to develop a plan to be signed off by the Regional Transport Committee by 2024 that looks across the whole district and part of this is the reduction of speeds outside of schools with a goal to reduce the road toll and encourage a safer area for students to walk or cycle to school. He did not think it mattered if council did this now or waited for the legislation to be approved. He noted there was a bigger discussion currently occurring with Stratford Primary School with the pool development and parking discussions which would be discussed in a workshop with Elected Members in the near future and would include reducing that 40km speed limit to 30km. He noted there had been no clarification yet on how long an area the speed limit needed cover and the proposal had picked up whole blocks surrounding school areas.
- The Deputy Mayor noted his concern regarding the size of the area of reduced speed, particularly for St Joseph's Primary School as he felt this was too far and also the reduction from 100km to 30km at Gr8Kidz.
- The District Mayor noted that the Whakaahurangi Te Kōhanga Reo had not been included. He felt that putting schools and daycares together was not appropriate as schools had set times to arrive and leave and there were also not many children walking or cycling to kindergartens or daycare without supervision. Mr Bowden would discuss the definitions further with Waka Kotahi to clarify if the intent was to include kindergartens and daycares.
- Councillor Erwood requested that further clarification be sought on the length of the speed limit as well.
- The report would be brought back to the committee when more detail had been received.

10. Monthly Reports

10.1 Assets Report D21/28968 Page 39

Recommendation

THAT the report be received.

COPLESTONE/BOYDE
Carried
P&S/21/118

The Director – Assets noted the following points:

- This report is the beginning of the new financial year and includes the updated financial compliance measures adopted as part of the Long Term Plan.
- This report only covers July in terms of performance measures but these have all started on a good note.
- Officers are undertaking a lot of planning and programming for capital works at the moment.

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- Councillor Boyde reiterated his earlier concerns on the roads damaged by forestry trucks and noted the pictures on page 44 ad 45 of the report emphasised this.
- It was clarified that the regional council were still considering enforcement action on the oxidation pond flooding in July. It is likely that council will be prosecuted. Officers are doing everything possible to ensure that this will not happen again.
- Officers believe that the missing water from the Midhirst Dairy Company pipe was a burst pipe. The valve that supplies the old factory has now been capped.
- Councillor Erwood commended the waste minimisation programmes undertaken at the library and felt this could be extended to schools and market days.
- Councillor Erwood noted the significant flooding on Opunake Road during the heavy rains where water ran off properties and onto the roads. He questioned if council could require property owners to address this on their properties to not impact the roads. Mr Bowden noted that it would be ideal for property owners to deal with their own water run off but suspected council was going to have to look at roadside water tabling along Opunake Road. Councillor Erwood reiterated that if there was a fatality due to this flooding and council had not required these land owners to comply then the responsibility would come back on Council, he noted this also occurred during minimal rain as well. He questioned if letters could be sent to these land owners to get them rectify the water runoff and asked that this be added to matters outstanding. Mrs Araba noted there was not much that council could do to rectify an overland flow path but education could be a possibility.
- Councillor Boyde noted that the significant amount of rain had occurred in the urban areas and caused surface flooding as well and felt it was a tall order to ask rural land owners to divert the water when the same happened in town.

10.2 Community Services Report
D21/29171 Page 66

Recommendation

THAT the report be received.

McKAY/HARRIS
Carried
P&S/21/119

The Director – Community Services noted the following points:

- The new report template was highlighted in particular the new key performance measures with the digital channel section. She welcomed any feedback on the new format to ensure the report represents what Elected Members wanted to be engaged on.
- It was noted a wrong graph had been included in the pool section and would be rectified in the next report.
- All facilities were currently closed under Alert Level 4. The teams are undertaking planning, looking at training possibilities and undertaking community engagement via the social media platforms. The Community Development Team have a lot of meetings and events planned so are currently looking at other options for these.
- The Service Centre is taking a lot of calls with the majority of these related to rubbish or rates as a result of the current Level 4 lockdown.
- She noted the work of the Community Development Manager who had been extremely busy in his role of Alternative Welfare Manager with Civil Defence.

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- Councillor Boyde noted the excellent feedback he had received from the assistance with online booking for COVID vaccinations and the addition of the Lions Volunteers to help as well. He questioned if there was the opportunity for help over the phone with bookings as those using this assistance appreciated the local support. The Chief Executive noted that residents could book over the phone through the Ministry and felt it would be a duplication of a service if council officers assisted bookings in this manner. He noted council was supporting COVID initiatives and had been working with the Taranaki District Health Board and Ngāruahine Health Services.
- Councillor Dalziel noted that the door count had been removed from the performance measures and replaced with items issued including digital items which he felt was inaccurate as one person could check out multiple items but would have been recorded as only one visit by the door count. It was noted that this had been discussed with Elected Members during the Long Term Plan discussions as a more accurate way of capturing actual transactions and as a result of both the Library and iSITE having a downwards trend in numbers through the doors. It was requested that as the door count was still active that these numbers still be included in the report monthly to capture physical use of the building, it was clarified that while this could be done it would not be an active performance measure. Councillor McKay supported the new measures as a good way to accurately track how the library is being used which could lead to better use of the library, getting the public engaged and better utilisation of the service when staff have a better insight of what they should deliver. There were still inaccuracies when counting numbers through the door.

10.3 Environmental Services Report

D21/27931 Page 73

Recommendation

THAT the report be received.

ERWOOD/McKAY
Carried
P&S/21/120

The Director – Environmental Services noted the following points:

- The general level of activity in building control was noted. He noted the suggestions that council had shut down the building industry and as a result officers had looked closely to ensure this was not the case. He noted the 12 working days prior to the introduction of the geotech guidelines had seen 5.75 building inspections per day and 12 working days before the nationwide lockdown had seen 5.54 inspections a day. There were two new applications per day before the guidelines and 1.75 a day prior to lockdown. These numbers illustrate the industry had not been shut down at all.
- There were a couple of performance measures not met in July. A couple of building consents went over the processing time due to the contractor's workload but the average wait time had now reduced. A number of building inspections have taken more than one day to take place and were a result of capacity issues with only one inspector as well as some types of inspections he was unable to complete and required a wait for someone external who was able to complete those. There was also a code of compliance that went over time due to a resourcing issue. The team is very stretched at the moment with a current vacancy and one staff member working reduced hours.
- There were also two resource consents under the Planning activity that went over as a result of a series of applications coming off hold at the same time which affects the ability to control the workload.

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- Councillor McKay noted the issues regarding the building guidelines seem to have quietened down, however she felt that the media put out more false information and only highlighted one side of the story and questioned if officers had pushed back on this? Mr Sutherland noted that a lot of information had been provided to the media but this had not been used.
- Councillor McKay also noted the media coverage of the mental health of builders due to council was unfair and was an awful accusation to make.
- The Chief Executive noted that he, along with the Communications Manager and Director – Community Services, had supported Mr Sutherland with the media dealings during this process. Numerous days of effort had been dedicated to providing accurate and balanced information and a

significant amount of that was just not picked up. He noted the report of the residents living in their caravan due to the new guidelines was actually due to a number of other issues that had not been answered over the 5 weeks prior to the introduction of the guidelines. A letter of concern will be sent to the editor of the paper concerned and work had begun on this prior to lockdown. A retraction is not being sought but concern to be noted on how the reporting was carried out.

- Mr Sutherland noted that in terms of changes that need to be made the geotech guidelines was the biggest. His team will work to improve the rollout of the future changes and to release these in a palatable fashion.

10.2 Corporate Services Report

D21/29586 Page 80

Recommendations

1. THAT the report be received.

COPLESTONE/DALZIEL
Carried
P&S/21/121

2. THAT the Committee acknowledges that the Treasury Management Policy breach has been authorised appropriately by the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee and the Mayor.

DALZIEL/WEBBY
Carried
P&S/21/122

The Director – Corporate Services noted the following points:

- Staff are currently working on the year end results and are almost done. Audit NZ have advised they will not be able to start the audit until 25 October which is usually when the Annual Report is being presented to council for adoption.
- There is an updated report on page 90 which provides explanations on capital expenditure projects that had not been completed or were no longer needed. The new budget for this financial year is \$29million.
- The summary of the subdivision project was included in the report on page 81. This table had been in previous reports but now has updated figures including an estimation of interest costs and project management costs. It also includes the sale of the spite strip but does not include any potential future spite strip sales. There is \$618,000 still outstanding with \$400,000 due in within the next eight months.
- There have been a number of phone calls due to the rate increases and officers have been discussing the breakdown of each individual's rates with them.

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- Councillor Dalziel commended the work done on the subdivision project and felt council had got it spot on. It was a very well run project.
- It was clarified that the personnel costs were below budget for the month and was likely to do with staff vacancies for which a lot of recruiting had been undertaken recently. Mrs Radich would monitor this.
- It was clarified that the animal control revenue was down due to dog registrations being due now.

11. Questions

- It was noted that at the COVID Vaccination Click last week under Alert Level 4 800 people were vaccinated on Friday with a further 900 completed on Saturday. At the previous clinic there were 2,386 vaccinations given. This is a fantastic local result. There is still follow up work to be done as everyone will require their second vaccination. The Taranaki District Health Board has raised the possibility of another clinic on a smaller scale targeting specific groups.

The meeting closed at 4.13pm

A L Jamieson
Chairman

Confirmed this 28th day of September 2021.

N C Volzke
District Mayor