

Date: Tuesday 23 May 2023 at 3.00PM

Venue: Council Chambers, 63 Miranda Street, Stratford

Present

The Deputy Mayor – M McKay (the Chairperson), the District Mayor N C Volzke, Councillors: G W Boyde, A M C Dudley, J M S Erwood, A K Harris, E E Hall, V R Jones, W J Sandford and M J Watt

Via audio/visual link: Councillors S J Beck and C M Tongaawhikau (part meeting)

In attendance

The Chief Executive – Mr S Hanne, the Director – Corporate Services – Mrs T Radich, the Director – Assets – Mrs V Araba, the Director – Environmental Services – Mr B Sutherland, the Acting Director – Community Services – Mr C Julie, the Committee Advisor and Executive Assistant – Mrs E Bishop, the Communications Manager – Ms G Gibson (*part meeting*), the Roading Asset Manager – Mr S Bowden (*part meeting*), the Project Manager – Mr S Taylor (*part meeting*), the Services Asset Manager – Mr J Cooper (*part meeting*), two members of the public (*part meeting*) and one member of the media (Stratford Press)

Via audio/visual link: The Special Projects Manager – Mr N Cooper.

1. Welcome

The opening karakia was read.

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

The Deputy Mayor reiterated the health and safety message and emergency procedures.

2. Apologies

An apology was received from Councillor C M Tongaawhikau

Recommendation

THAT the apology be received.

HALL/BOYDE
Carried
P&S/23/59

Note: Councillor Tongaawhikau joined the meeting by audio/visual link later in the meeting.

3. Announcements

There were no announcements.

4. Declarations of members interest

Elected members were asked 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, including Hearings, was attached.

6. Confirmation of Minutes

6.1 Policy & Services Committee – 18 April 2023 D23/17197 Page 12

Recommendation

THAT the minutes of the Policy and Services Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 18 April 2023 be confirmed as a true and accurate record.

SANDFORD/ERWOOD
Carried
P&S/23/60

7. Matters Outstanding

D16/47 Page 20

Recommendation

THAT the Matters Outstanding be received.

HARRIS/DUDLEY
Carried
P&S/23/61

The Chief Executive noted the following points:

- The Street Numbering project update is in the Environmental Services monthly report.
- The Page Street Swimming Pool Complex is now actively part of the Long Term Plan process due to the Earthquake Prone Building discussion. Therefore this will now be removed from matters outstanding.
- Options for croquet locations are presented in item 10. This item is now complete.
- The additional Kingheim Track is presented as item 9.
- The Pool queries, waste water and water KPIs and recycling revenue matters have all been answered within the department monthly reports.

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- It was noted there was an additional outstanding matter on page 18 regarding writing off debts, this had been missed from the matters outstanding index. The Director – Corporate Services clarified that there had been \$23,738 of debt written off that was older than three years, this is noted in the Corporate Services monthly report.

Recommendations

1. THAT the report be received.

JONES/DUDLEY
Carried
P&S/23/62

2. THAT pursuant to Section 342(1) (b) in accordance with Schedule 10 clause 11(e) of the Local Government Act 1974, notice is hereby given that the Stratford District Council approves the closure of the following roads on Sunday 25 June 2023 between the hours of 09:30am to ~~3:00pm~~ 4.00pm for the Taranaki and South Taranaki Car Clubs to host a Tarmac Rally motorsport event.

Special Stage 1 and 3.

- Mohakau Road – From SH43 to Makuri Road.
- Makuri Road – From Mohakau Road to Douglas Road.
- Douglas Road – From Makuri Road to SH43.

Special Stage 2 and 4.

- Wawiri Road – From Ahuroa Road to Makuri Road.
- Makuri Road – From Wawiri Road to Stanley Road.
- Stanley Road – Makuri Road to Croydon Road.
- Croydon Road to Salisbury Road.

ERWOOD/BODYE
Carried
P&S/23/63

Recommended Reason

In order for the Taranaki and South Taranaki Car Clubs to host a Tarmac Rally motorsport event, it is necessary to close the roads listed above for safety reasons, for the participants and for any spectators. The proposed road closures require a formal endorsement by a council resolution.

The Roding Assets Manager noted that a request to extend the road closure to 4.00pm had been received. He noted the clubs were now expecting 60 entrants.

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- It was clarified the appendices had been supplied by the organisers, the reference to the roads outside of our district were likely there in error. Mr Bowden would advise them to ensure their documentation was accurate for future applications.
- It was noted that the organisers would be required to let residents know of the amendment to the road closure times, although it was noted the letters to residents had allowed for a later time than requested.

Recommendations

1. THAT the report be received.

BOYDE/DUDLEY
Carried
P&S/23/64

2. THAT a further trail comprising part of the Te Ara o Maru Walkway, being the one closest to the Whangamomona township, be opened to the public and this be done as soon as possible following the erection of suitable signage and gazettal of the walkway and formal appointment of Council as the controlling authority by the Walking Access Commission.

3. THAT officers liaise further with the Taranaki Trails Trust and Kingheim Limited in regards to the remaining trail, being that on the northern side of Mangare Road and the Forgotten World Highway, to determine its best use and with a view to opening to the public as soon as practicable.

VOLZKE/SANDFORD
Carried
P&S/23/65

Recommended Reason

It is now approximately 8 years since these trails that comprise the Te Ara o Maru Walkway were developed by Kingheim Limited and, since the first was opened to the public in 2021, the Whangamomona community is seeking to have the others opened as soon as possible to meet demand for walking and mountain bike trails in the area.

The Special Projects Manager noted the following points:

- This report was prepared to provide an update to elected members where council was at in terms of the walking and mountain bike trails at the Kingheim Forestry.
- In 2018, at the request of the Walking Access Commission, Council agreed to be the controlling authority of the walkways with the first track opened to gauge the popularity and use of the trail. There has since been further pressure to open more of them with the next logical one being the walking trail closer to the township on the southern side of the highway. This trail is primarily a climb up the ridge and is steep and advanced but would be easy to open with just signage required. The other trail is quite large and extensive being around 9-10kms in length, it was also initially earmarked as a mountain bike trail but feels this needs further discussion with the Taranaki Trails Trust and mountain bike clubs before it is opened.

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- Councillor Boyde noted that the function of the controlling authority did not include providing seating, toilets or rubbish facilities. He noted that the installation of rubbish bins was a huge concern to him as it would encourage visitors to take rubbish and this would also be a huge expense to council to collect. He also noted there were public toilets in Whangamomona less than 1km away. Mr Cooper clarified that auxiliary items such as these would be at council's costs, Kingheim had done above what had been required of them, but he could approach them if that was council's request.
- The District Mayor noted there were a number of references within the report to the potential use of the trails with assumptions noted around the demand in the area. While he supported the trails for walking and cycling he noted his concern that no demand had been established and that it would be good to have assurance that there was a demand for these.
- Councillor Sandford noted he was against providing rubbish bins or toilets due to these becoming an ongoing cost to council. He felt as council was heading towards zero waste it should set standards and required visitors to take their rubbish home.
- Councillor Harris agreed that toilets and rubbish bins may be premature, she felt once demand was established then council could react accordingly. She noted there was a common good for these sort of activities in the area but noted her hesitancy.
- It was clarified that the responsibility for the basic maintenance of the tracks is with Kingheim, however if there was a time that council decided to upgrade the tracks further then that would be at council's

expense. Mr Cooper clarified that the Walking Access Commission made it a condition of the easements that all maintenance was carried out by the applicant (being Kingheim). Council's obligation is to ensure Kingheim Forestries carry out these obligations.

Points noted in discussion:

- The District Mayor noted the common concern about the potential for ongoing costs and the potential lead to rubbish collection or signs being replaced. He noted these decisions would need to be made based on the demand once they are operational because it appeared there was minimal demand at present.

10. Information Report – Croquet Club Location Options

D23/19984

Page 131

Recommendations

THAT the report be received.

BOYDE/HALL
Carried
P&S/23/66

Recommended Reason

This will enable the Council to consider the request by the Stratford Croquet Club to relocate their activity to a bigger council reserve, capable of accommodating up to 4 croquet courts.

The Project Manager noted that since the agenda had been published a letter had been received from the Stratford Croquet Club confirming that the club had discussed purchasing their own mower to reduce maintenance expenses should the location move.

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- Mr Taylor clarified that the estimated \$30,000 maintenance costs for the additional courts would come from the open spaces contract and would include mowing, incidental weeding and gardening.

The Services Asset Manager joined the meeting at 3.28pm.

- The Chief Executive clarified that this report satisfies the request made by elected members to identify land where croquet could be established. The Croquet Club was also asked to do a similar exercise on non-council owned land. It is now for elected members to decide what to do with the information presented.
- It was clarified that if the preferred location was the former TSB Pool site then there would be a sequence of events that would follow that decision as it was part of a separate discussion regarding its earthquake prone assessment.
- The District Mayor noted that the Adrian Street, Celia Street, Pembroke Road and Cassandra Street options were not suitable to meet the request of the Stratford Croquet Club, therefore the only options that should be pursued further would be Victoria Park, King Edward Park or the former TSB Pool site. He noted that the club had been asked for analysis or documentation that other sites had been explored for council to be able to form a complete picture. He noted that Sport Taranaki provided a regional facilities tool for clubs to use and look at co-habitation options. This would be a good tool for this club to use.
- The Deputy Mayor asked if the club had been spoken to about covering additional maintenance costs? Mr Taylor noted there was a set fee for the croquet club to use the current location which is \$420 per year, council would need to consider an increase to the fees and charges to acknowledge three or four courts but would need to remain in line with the other sports fields where the fees do not come close to covering the maintenance fees either. Mr Hanne noted that other fields did provide the opportunity for multiple use so that would need to be considered if comparing this to the other sports fields as croquet courts would be for exclusive use.
- It was clarified that pétanque would require a different type of grass. Mr Taylor noted he had spoken to the New Zealand Croquet Association who advised him that there were a number of clubs that do cross share with other codes such as bowling or pétanque but use different courts because of the required grass and surfacing types.

- Councillor Boyde supported a decision report to be brought back to council, including the additional information requested and the outcomes from the regional sports facilities tool.
- The District Mayor requested that officers liaise with the club to explain the expectations of council for their research.
- Mr Hanne clarified that the TSB Pool site would require a building to be sited away from the disturbed part of the site (current water bodies) but that those areas would be sufficient with engineered fill to create suitable foundations for the courts.

11. Monthly Reports

11.1 Assets Report

D23/17999 Page 143

Recommendation

THAT the report be received.

DUDLEY/BOYDE
Carried
P&S/23/67

The two members of the public left the meeting at 3.40pm.

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- It was noted there had been an increase of fly tipping, Mr Bowden noted one week after two truckloads of rubbish had been removed from Opunake Road there was already another truckload dumped.
- Councillor Jones noted that the April monthly report had stated there was \$30,000 of applications for the Waste Levy Contestable Fund with this monthly report noting there was \$57,000 of total applications. Mrs Araba clarified that there had been a total amount of \$57,000 requested from this fund.
- Councillor Erwood questioned the on-going issues with the sports fields at Victoria Park and asked if the contractors would be ensuring a proper job was done given the funds council had already put into this project, and if not what were the expected additional costs? Mr Taylor noted that a plan had been finalised of how to finish the works and the final stages of this were whether to do it now or wait until after the rugby season therefore contractors were investigating the least disruptive way of doing this.
- Councillor Boyde noted that he, Councillor Sandford and Councillor Jones had visited the rugby fields and asked at what point did council make a decision to close the fields. He noted that there was 85mls of rain in six hours on the weekend and most sports had been cancelled and felt the damage that has been done was due to the direct negligence of the people playing on the fields. Mr Taylor noted that the contractor had advised officers of the condition of the Page Street fields the week before and then advised it would be best to close the fields this week. The Page Street fields are now closed until Thursday when a further decision will be made. Closing of the fields is done in discussion with the rugby club to discuss the best outcome for both parties. Mrs Araba noted that the cost of repairing this damage is high and officers will review how these decisions are made.

Councillor Tongaawhikau joined the meeting via audio/visual link at 3.47pm.

- Councillor Sandford noted that in the past there was an officer who would judge the fields and put out a flag if they were closed and this had been respected by the public. This past weekend it was very clear there was going to be torrential rain and he felt council should be doing something when this information is available to stop the fields being demolished. Mrs Araba noted that if this was supported by elected members then officers could make these decisions.
- The Deputy Mayor felt the expectations of council in significant rainfall should be communicated to the club to make a decision with the field condition in mind whether the game should be played. Mr Hanne noted that rugby have a strong desire to play the game and will do so until the ground doesn't let them. He noted there were currently daily interactions due to maintenance issues and did not think there would be a positive outcome if the decision for closing the field was left to the club. There was

also no instrument for charging for damage other than what is currently in the annual fees and charges for hire.

- Councillor Dudley noted that practice had occurred at Page Street on Monday, Mr Taylor noted that this was while the club and officers were exploring alternative options for relocating training.
- Councillor Jones questioned what communication would be provided for the successful Waste Levy Contestable Fund applicants. It was noted that this had been published in Central Link. Councillor Erwood requested that this be provided to council in report form. It was noted that there was a current breakdown of these on council's website and that a media release would be sent in the next couple of days. It was agreed that this breakdown would be included in the next monthly report.

The Services Asset Manager and Project Manager left the meeting at 3.57pm.

11.2 Community Services Report
D23/18465 Page 163

Recommendation

THAT the report be received.

HARRIS/DUDLEY
Carried
P&S/23/68

The Director – Community Services noted the following points:

- Nominations for Citizen Awards close this week. He encouraged councillors to remind the community to consider possible nominations.
- The Puanga Flag competition is now open and will close 13 July 2023.
- The Mayors Taskforce for Jobs programme which is jointly funded by MSD and LGNZ has received a two year extension. There is a meeting tomorrow to discuss what this will look like.
- It was noted the team at the Library and Visitor Information centre have met their targets for Better Digital Futures which provides guidance around the use of technology and helps elderly navigate the internet.

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- Councillor Boyde congratulated the Stratford District Youth Council on their achievements in the last couple months with their agm, new members and great numbers attending the youth week events.
- The District Mayor noted it was brilliant getting the extra MTFJ funding and to get two years confirmed which gives better certainty to the coordinator around employment. The 42 placements with a target of 50 is an outstanding achievement. He noted there had also been good liaison with the Stratford Park Project.
- The District Mayor noted he had recently attended the AGM of the Stratford Community House. This is an extremely well run organisation with a good, stable group of trustees. The facility is good, clean and tidy and has a full occupancy with demand for more. This is a real success story.
- The District Mayor noted he had attended the New Zealand Parks Conference awards evening last week where the Stratford Bike Park had been nominated for an award as an active playground area. He acknowledged the work of staff for this project to have it recognised at such a high level.

11.3 Environmental Services Report
D23/15596 Page 173

Recommendation

THAT the report be received.

ERWOOD/BOYDE
Carried
P&S/23/69

The Director – Environmental Services noted a correction on page 175, percentage of inspection requests completed within 24 hours of request should read “the *two* that weren’t”.

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- It was clarified that section 2 of this report highlighted the update regarding the street numbering project. Currently officers were working on consultation with the residents affected by the change.
- The District Mayor noted that that last year council had seen 66 new dwellings and consents which was currently at 41. He asked if comparison could be provided between other councils and the national numbers. Mr Sutherland noted that council was tracking consistently with others but would collate the figures for the next monthly report.

11.4 Corporate Services Report
D23/20520 Page 180

Recommendation

THAT the report be received.

WATT/HARRIS
Carried
P&S/23/70

The Director – Corporate Services noted that footage from 1953 and 1979 had been found in the archives room. One of the films is footage from the late Queen’s visit and could be the oldest colour footage of Stratford. Equipment was required to be borrowed from the Kings Theatre to be able to play these to discover what was on the reels, but the more they are played the more they will deteriorate. Therefore work is being done on the best way to preserve these records digitally.

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- Councillor Boyde questioned if council was creating a problem for next year by bringing expenditure forward in the roading budget. Mr Bowden noted that \$700,000 was being considered to bring forward from the next financial year to ensure work can carry on until the end of June and confirmed that this will mean a serious look at what will be done next year. Councillor Boyde questioned if Waka Kotahi realised the issues and that council can only do minimum repairs, he noted this was not a sustainable model. Mr Bowden noted that Waka Kotahi was in a similar position to council, roading maintenance in general costs a lot of money and there is just not a lot of money to go around. Their budget is collected from registrations, road user charges and fuel taxes and he was unsure how they were managing the gap between what needs to be spent versus the revenue being collected.
- The District Mayor noted that the figures for the 2022/23 year for the national land transport programme was \$707 million with next year being \$497 million which is a reduction of over \$200 million. He noted the Taranaki Mayoral Forum has raised this with the minister and would raise it again when meeting with the CEO of Waka Kotahi next week.
- The Deputy Mayor questioned the \$170,000 difference between the forecasted rate collection and the actual figures. Mrs Radich noted there could be a number of contributing factors including ratepayers spreading out their costs, however she noted there was no variance in the year to date collection percentage. She noted it would be quickly noticed if there were missed payments or dishonoured

direct debits as a result of residents starting to struggle. She also noted that people choosing to stop their automatic payments and pay lump sums during the year was usually an indicator of problems.

- It was clarified that the expected completion dates on page 193 were provided by the project managers that those projects would be completed by 30 June.
- Councillor Boyde noted the suggestion on page 184 to do a full review of council assets and asked if this was initiating a review? Mrs Radich noted that elected members had raised the query around reducing gross borrowings by using the cash reserves to repay debt. She noted that should this be done the balance sheet would remain the same in terms of gross debt, therefore there would be only a small gain made. She had noted alternative options could be liquidating assets that are not owned to deliver community outcomes. Councillor Boyde noted that if the council farm had no debt and profit was used for rate mitigation this would be significant for the community.
- Councillor Jones noted his confusion about internal borrowing. He noted that the balance sheet shows term deposits are assets, borrowings are liabilities and he questioned how the internal borrowing remains in the reserves? He noted he understood keeping funds to be able to do jobs but not to fund reserves. Mrs Radich noted that council was different to a normal business, there were specific rules around local government funding and she referred councillors to the Revenue and Financing Policy. New items are debt funded to spread costs over future generations. The Treasury balance shows the gross debt but each activity has its own debt, so even if the term investments were used to repay debt the debt will still be there for each activity and spread over the life of the asset. It was noted that the auditors see the underlying figures for this that link back to the balance sheet and are broken down by activity.
- The Deputy Mayor questioned if \$2 million was taken from reserves to pay off debt in the water activity, council would then need to use the funds that were paying for the reserves? Mrs Radich noted that unless the water activity had done something to receive the money in the reserve then the debt would still sit under that activity. Each activity would also still have interest allocation.
- Mr Hanne noted that the significant point to this discussion was whether council has cash backed reserves or not. If something happened requiring the reserves then if they were not cash backed council would have to borrow for it.
- The District mayor noted the report comments on the cost to borrow versus investment and at the moment the interest received was more than what was being paid. He noted that South Taranaki District Council had their investment fund of \$150 million but still have \$100 million of borrowing on their balance sheet. He did not see any point in repaying the debt unless this situation changes.
- Councillor Sandford requested that the policy for Asset Sale Proceed reserve and the Financial Contributions Reserve be circulated to councillors.
- Councillor Beck congratulated officers on keeping the total activities cost in line for the year.

12. Questions

There were no questions.

13. Resolution to Exclude the Public

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting, namely:

Agenda Item No: 14

The general subject of each matter to be considered while the public is excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter, and the specific grounds under section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this resolution are as follows:

General subject of each matter to be considered	Reason for passing this resolution to each matter	Grounds under section 48(1) for the passing of this resolution
Easement	The withholding of the information is necessary for commercial sensitivity	The withholding of the information is necessary to protect information where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information. Section 7(2)b(ii) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.

ERWOOD/HALL
Carried
P&S/23/71

The Roding Asset Manager, the Communications Manager and the media left the meeting at 4.33pm.

14. Public Excluded Item

Recommendation

THAT the open meeting resume.

VOLZKE/JONES
Carried
P&S/23/74

15. Closing Karakia

D21/40748

Page 205

The closing karakia was read.

The meeting closed at 4.43pm.

M McKay
Chairperson

Confirmed this 27th of June 2023.

N C Volzke
District Mayor