

# MINUTES

## Policy and Services Committee

eF22/55/05 – D24/7501

**Date:** Tuesday 27 February 2024 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: S J Beck, A M C Dudley, J M S Erwood, A K Harris, E E Hall, V R Jones, W J Sandford, C M Tongaawhikau and M J Watt.

### In attendance

The Chief Executive – Mr S Hanne, the Director – Assets Mrs V Araba (*part meeting*), the Director – Environmental Services – Mr B Sutherland, the Committee Advisor and Executive Assistant – Mrs E Bishop, the Communications Manager – Ms G Gibson, the Corporate Accountant – Mrs C Craig, the Chairman Percy Thomson Trust – Mr B Ellis (*part meeting*), the Communications Advisor – Mrs S Clarkson (*part meeting*), the Acting Community Development Manager – Mrs A Kingston (*part meeting*), the Roding Asset Manager – Mr S Bowden (*part meeting*), the Property Officer – Mrs S Flight (*part meeting*), the Parks and Reserves Officer – Mrs M McBain (*part meeting*), the Projects Manager – Mr S Taylor (*part meeting*), the HR & Governance Administrator – Mrs C Reynolds (*part meeting*), the Sustainability Advisor – Ms V Dombroski (*part meeting*), the Services Asset Manager – Mr J Cooper (*part meeting*), the Graduate Roding Engineer – Mr F Hick (*part meeting*), four members of the public (*part meeting*), one member of the media (Stratford Press).

*Via audio/visual link: the Director – Corporate Services – Mrs T Radich, the Director – Community Services – Ms K Whareaitu, two representatives Venture Taranaki (part meeting) and one member of the public (part meeting)*

### 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

A leave of absence was approved for Councillor G W Boyde

#### Recommendation

THAT the apology be received.

HARRIS/DUDLEY  
Carried  
P&S/24/55

### 3. Announcements

The Chief Executive noted an amendment had been made to the Housing for the Older Person Policy. The full policy was tabled along with two additional pieces of feedback received after the agenda had been published. These were circulated to the committee electronically and available in hard copy at the meeting.

#### 4. Declarations of members interest

Elected members were asked to declare any real or perceived conflicts of interest relating to items on this agenda.

Councillor Harris – Item 8, 4.3.5 (Remitting of Fees to Non-Profit Organisations Policy)

#### 5. Attendance Schedule

The Attendance schedule for Policy and Services Committee meetings, including Hearings, was attached.

#### 6. Confirmation of Minutes

##### 6.1 Policy and Services Committee –23 and 30 January 2024 D24/2499 Page 13

##### Recommendation

THAT the minutes of the Policy and Services Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 23 and 30 January 2024 be confirmed as a true and accurate record.

BECK/JONES  
Carried  
P&S/24/56

The Committee Advisor and Executive Assistant undertook to make the following amendments:

- Page 20, second bullet point *she* to *he*
- Page 20, fifth bullet point *amendment to the motion* change to *change to the motion*.
- Page 21, last bullet point, request to bequest
- Page 27, third bullet point, *year 2025* amend to *year 2035*.
- Page 35, first bullet point, amend *halfway* to *halfway*.

#### 7. Matters Outstanding

D16/47 Page 41

##### Recommendation

THAT the Matters Outstanding be received.

JONES/ERWOOD  
Carried  
P&S/24/57

#### 8. Decision Report – Policy Reviews – February 2024

D24/6183 Page 42

##### Deputation – Michael Coes – Housing for Older Person Policy

Points noted in presentation:

- In 2014 when his father was a tenant he was paying \$110 per week in rent compared to the current \$140 per week. Residents acknowledge the rents have not gone up significantly so are not against a rental increase but are against how it has been calculated.
- New Plymouth and South Taranaki rents vary from \$140 to \$220 per week and have an intended increase of 10%. With a 10% increase their rent would increase to \$154 however with the proposed calculations they would increase to \$161 which is significant for those on a NZ Super.
- He noted they were not eligible for any support from Work and Income, however he noted the District Mayor has advised there may be some support available.
- He noted there were other ways to calculate the rent other than the proposed market value. He noted New Plymouth rents were rated on a square meter basis and were between \$160 - \$220 per week with Eltham paying \$140 per week, Hawera \$140 - \$160 per week, Waverley \$140 per week and Inglewood \$140 per week.

- He noted the pensions do not increase by 10% each year and the proposed increase would see residents in a dire situation.
- He questioned the operating cost for the facility being \$160,000 a year when residents only see mowing and the odd inspection. He requested clarification of these costs.
- The rent increase will cause financial hardship so they are requesting a review be undertaken on the running costs of the facility.
- He noted they had sought legal counsel who have advised further details are required before decisions are made.

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- The District Mayor noted there was the potential for tenants to access other funding support for help with rental costs through the Ministry of Social Development. He asked if there were any tenants currently receiving any sort of supplements or support? Mr Coes confirmed there were two tenants receiving supplements from Work and Income but did not know of any others who were eligible. He noted if the person had more than \$8,500 in their bank account, or in a funeral investment fund, then they are discounted from being eligible.
- Mr Coes asked if there would be another opportunity for tenants to speak to council about these issues? Mr Hanne noted that the policy was in front of elected members today for adoption. There are a couple of options to be considered, it could be take off the agenda to be discussed at a future date but this would still leave uncertainty with what it is going to be. He noted elected members have incorporated this increase into the Long Term Plan and any changes will need to be incorporated back into the financials for this.

### Recommendations

1. THAT the report be received.

TONGAAWHIKAU/HALL  
Carried  
P&S/24/58

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

1. CCTV Cameras Policy

VOLZKE/ERWOOD  
Carried  
P&S/24/59

2. Housing for Older Persons Policy (replacing Housing for the Elderly Policy)

JONES/WATT  
Division  
4 for  
7 against  
Lost  
P&S/24/60

3. Presentations to elected members Policy (replacing the Presentation to Elected Members and Staff Policy)

ERWOOD/TONGAAWHIKAU  
Carried  
P&S/24/61

4. Council Vehicles

JONES/BECK  
1 against  
Carried  
P&S/24/62

be adopted.

## Adoption of Policies

### CCTV Cameras Policy

- It was clarified that the cameras were used to charge commercial trade waste operators who discharge trade waste at Esk Road.
- It was clarified 4.2 of the policy meant that council's obligation was to make every best effort to ensure the cameras are working. To be able to use the camera footage for enforcement then the other party needs to have been advised of the camera before recording.
- It was clarified that the fees and charges reference would be at the staff charge out rates. This is due to the staff time required to retrieve the footage and ensure it is in a usable format for the external party.
- It was noted there was strict criteria for an external party to access the footage. Requests have been turned down in the past.
- It was clarified the cameras at Victoria Park (Bike park and grandstand) were owned by the Central Taranaki Safe Community Trust.
- It was requested that a further clause be added to note: *and any other locations where cameras are installed subsequent to the adoption of this policy.*
- It was requested that 5.2 be amended to read: and to provide evidence of *unlawful* use of the facility.

*The Services Asset Manager and the Roding Asset Manager joined the meeting at 3.27pm.*

### Housing for Older Persons Policy

The Chief Executive noted the following points:

- Two further pieces of feedback for the Housing for the Older Person Policy were tabled. These were circulated to councillors and hard copies were available at the meeting.
- A change to 4.2 of the Housing for Older Person Policy was noted:
  - 4.2 To achieve the funding objectives, rents for Housing for Older Persons will be set at no less than 80% of market rates. *Where data is not available for a one bedroom unit in Stratford, the market rate will be set at 80% for a median two-bedroom house in Stratford or the closest applicable town (if no market data exists for Stratford), as indicated on the Government tenancy website.*

### Questions/Points of Clarification:

- Councillor Hall noted that the feedback had highlighted a concern that the market rent was based on New Plymouth rents. Mr Hanne clarified that the tenancy website had been used for the properties, Stratford does not have a 1 bedroom unit but what is consistently available is a 2 bedroom property. Therefore the ratio between a 1 and 2 bedroom unit in New Plymouth had been used to calculate the rent for a 1 bedroom unit from the data available for a 2 bedroom unit.
- The District Mayor felt Hawera would have been more similar to Stratford than New Plymouth, or a combination of the two. His concern was the rent the residents would be charged would be 80% of whatever number council decides is the market value therefore it is important to have accuracy on how that number is reached. He felt uneasy about how it was being done at the moment. He would also like some certainty from MSD that subsidies are available for those people who will meet the criteria. He felt more work was required, and the legal advice sought by the residents should be considered. Mr Hanne confirmed there was no 1 bedroom data available for Hawera.
- The Deputy Mayor noted there had been a suggestion to calculate rent on a percentage of income. She asked how much time and administration would be required to do this, and how regularly would it need to be reviewed? Mr Hanne noted the key issue was council was trying to achieve a percentage of cost recovery. Officers then tried to find a fair process to come to that 80% cost recovery as instructed. A percentage of income would not achieve the desired outcomes or original intent. He noted that the calculation would be a straight comparison of the benefits received and multiplying it by the percentage council decides. The District Mayor noted setting rents based on incomes is the principle used for community housing providers, these units do not fall into that category.
- Councillor Harris requested further insight into the running costs of these facilities. Mr Hanne noted that this activity has its share of the facilities maintenance and parks and reserves contract and staff overhead.
- Councillor Watt agreed with leaving this policy and doing more research on the rent. He asked if any rental managers had been approached to do a rental appraisal? Mr Hanne confirmed a local real estate company had completed an appraisal as part of the development of the policy. The Projects Manager noted this was appraised at \$360 per week.
- The District Mayor did not feel council was in a position to make a decision today. He noted the policy was to ensure any customer could figure out the rent themselves and see that they are being

fairly applied. He wanted some time to think whether or not this was the robust way to calculate the rent.

- Mr Taylor clarified that the median rent for a 2 bedroom unit in New Plymouth was \$520 and the median rent for 1 bedroom was \$420 which was 80% of the two bedroom unit. The Stratford two bedroom unit was \$416 so the calculation had been 80% of that figure. Councillor Hall asked if that theory could be applied to different areas to make sure the difference is consistent around the country.
- Councillor Beck felt this information should have been provided earlier for councillors to have made a decision. He felt the real estate appraisal made more sense as it was locally based. Mr Hanne reiterated that this information had been discussed with councillors previously.
- It was clarified that the rates and services are covered by council not the tenants.
- Councillor Hall noted there had been a number of scenarios presented by elected members and staff around the way the rental amount is analysed. She felt it would be right to take the policy off the table to discuss the way forward.
- Councillor Jones noted the process outlined by the Chief Executive was robust and was less than the amount appraised by the real estate agent. He was happy with the way it had been calculated and was happy to move on with the policy as it is. He noted it would not be generating the full rate in Year 1 so there was time to review it next year if necessary.
- Councillor Watt agreed and felt staff had done their research as well as approaching a local real estate agent to do the appraisal which worked out higher than the rent proposed. He did not think more research and information gathering was required.
- It was clarified a policy can be reviewed at any time.
- Councillor Sandford noted he was against the motion. Council had always tried to keep those rents at a place that is affordable for the residents in there. He now realised they have been too low for too long and believed it has to move but did not feel happy with the amount. He was happy to wait for further legal opinion and to have more discussion now there was more light thrown on the situation from the submitters.

*A division was called:*

*Those voting for the motion: Councillors: Jones, Tongaawhikau, Watt and the Deputy Mayor.*

*Those voting against the motion: Councillors: Beck, Dudley, Erwood, Hall, Harris, Sandford and the District Mayor.*

*The five members of the public left the meeting at 3.56pm (including the member of public on audio/visual link)*

*The Graduate Roading Engineer joined the meeting at 3.56pm.*

#### Presentations to Elected Members

- The Chief Executive noted that presentations to staff had been separated from this policy and would be moved into a more appropriate document.
- Councillor Sandford noted elected members presentations had been separated from staff to align with three year terms of council.
- It was clarified that the leaving presentation was separate (and potentially in addition to) long service recognition.

#### Council Vehicles

- The Chief Executive noted that this policy had remained largely unchanged but now included EV and Hybrid vehicles.
- Councillor Jones felt that the best vehicle for the job should be considered and suggested removing EV and Hybrid out. He also noted that new engines last a lot longer than 100,000kms. Mr Hanne noted this had previously been five years or 100,000kms. Some of the vehicles have specific adjustments and requirements, such as the animal control vehicle, and it was felt five years was too short. Additionally a lot of the vehicles do not do a lot of kilometres so 100,000kms would be about six to seven years. It was also about keeping the overall look of the fleet.
- Councillor Jones requested that clause 2.6 should have EV and Hybrid removed and changed to the most practicable and cost effective vehicle for the required job. Mr Hanne noted that this was also about taking into account some of the corporate responsibilities council has. If there was a sustainability policy it would be included in there. EV and Hybrid vehicles can still be considered if this sentence was removed.
- Councillor Hall supported retaining the wording as it says the practicalities will be considered.

## Recommendation

THAT clause 2.6 of the Council Vehicle Policy, regarding Battery Electric Vehicles (BEVs) or Hybrid Electric Vehicles (HEVs), be removed.

JONES/BECK  
Division  
For: 7  
Against: 4  
Carried  
P&S/24/63

*A division was called.*

*Those voting for the motion: Councillors: Beck, Dudley, Erwood, Jones, Sandford, Tongaawhikau and Watt.*

*Those voting against the motion: Councillors: Hall, Harris, the Deputy Mayor and the District Mayor.*

*Councillor Harris left the table at 4.16pm.*

*The Graduate Asset Engineer left the meeting at 4.16pm.*

## Withdrawal of policies

### Remitting of Fees to Non-Profit Organisations

- Mr Hanne noted the remitting of fees was more significant now due to size of the projects, building act changes and general requirements. It was a lot of staff time for no income and the suggestion was to remove the policy to ensure the community was not covering the shortfall.
- Councillor Hall asked how many not for profit organisations apply for this in a year? The Director – Environmental Services noted it was not widely used, however a significant project that met the criteria could result in a large number being remitted.
- The District Mayor noted the alternative to removing it could be putting a cap on the remittance amount to retain a bit of support for those organisations. He suggested it would be capped at a dollar amount per application.
- Councillor Hall was reluctant to see this policy removed but saw a balance with having a capped amount. Not for profit organisations fill the gap between what the community needs and what the government supplies. There are limited ways for council to support not for profit groups and yet they help council meet the community well-beings. She felt showing support for them was tangible but recognised the financial strains on councils at the moment. She felt a cap would provide a median and noted that applications for smaller projects would find this kind of support significant.
- Councillor Jones felt that potentially a lot of organisations did not know this policy existed. He noted that organisations also have rate remissions and some would have land and receiving other benefits from council.
- Councillor Beck did not want to see the policy removed but supported a cap.
- Councillor Sandford noted that a cap would still impact the ratepayers and supported deleting the policy.
- It was clarified that the building consent fee was a small percentage of the total project costs.
- Councillor Hall and Councillor Beck noted their vote against the motion.

*The Sustainability Advisor left the meeting at 4.24pm.*

*Councillor Harris re-joined the table at 4.24pm.*

### Infringement Notices

- This policy does not have any additional value as it is national policy which council cannot change anyway.

## Recommendations

2. THAT the following policies, being the:

1. Remitting of fees to Non-Profit Organisations

SANDFORD/ERWOOD  
2 against  
Carried  
P&S/24/64

2. Infringement Notices Policy

be withdrawn.

BECK/WATT  
Carried  
P&S/24/65

### Recommended Reason

This is part of council's rolling review of policies. Policies require review from time to time to ensure they still reflect current legislation and best practice, as well as elected members' views and meet the business needs of the organisation. Any 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.

## 9. Information Report – Economic Development Quarterly Report – Quarter One and Two 2023/24

D23/50634

Page 78

### Recommendation

THAT the report be received.

HARRIS/ERWOOD  
Carried  
P&S/24/66

The Acting Community Development Manager noted the following points:

- Venture Taranaki had left the meeting, she noted their apologies.
- There were a couple of new sections which have been added to the report including the regional economic profile of the district.

*The Acting Community Development Manager left the meeting at 4.30pm.*

### Recommendations

1. THAT the report be received.

HALL/ERWOOD  
Carried  
P&S/24/67

2. THAT Council receive the half yearly report for Percy Thomson Trust as at 31 December 2023.

TONGAAWHIKAU/HARRIS  
Carried  
P&S/24/68

### Recommended Reason

In terms of Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2002 the Percy Thomson Trust, being a council controlled organisation, must deliver to Council a half yearly report (as at 31 December 2023) before 1 March 2024.

The Percy Thomson Trust Chairman, noted the following points:

- The six monthly report shows the trust continues to struggle along financially.
- In terms of operations the gallery and arboretum are going quite well. The programme in the gallery has been excellent and they continue to attract new visitors. It is well on the way to meeting the KPI of 20,000 visitors which has not been met the last couple of years.

### Recommendations

1. THAT the report be received.

WATT/McKAY  
Carried  
P&S/24/69

2. ~~THAT Council notes that the provision of the draft Statement of Intent for Percy Thomson Trust relating to the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2027 within this report meets the legislative requirements of a CCO to deliver a draft statement of intent to its shareholders by 1 March in the year preceding the financial year to which the draft statement relates, and~~

3. ~~THAT Council provide any comments on the draft statement of intent it wishes the board of the Percy Thomson Trust to consider in the preparation of its final Statement of Intent. The final Statement of intent must delivered to shareholders before the commencement of the financial year it relates to unless the deadline is formally extended by the shareholders.~~

### Recommended Reason

In terms of Schedule 8 of the Local Government Act 2002 Percy Thomson Trust, being a Council Controlled Organisation, must deliver a draft Statement of Intent on or before 1 March 2024 to its shareholders, being the Stratford District Council.

The Percy Thomson Trust Chairman, noted the following points:

- The Statement of Intent has been prepared on a status quo position, however he noted there have been a number of discussions around where the trust is heading and the future of the trust. Some of these options have been presented to the Mayor and set out a preferred method of where the trust goes, how it could be organised and what council's involvement would be. He noted this would be presented to councillors by the Mayor.



- He noted some of the issues were getting too big for the trust to handle, such as the building requirements. The trust has taken the approach of thinking if it was to start from scratch what would it look like.
- The Statement of Intent presented does show that the trust will continue to eat into the reserves over the next three years.
- The trust asks that the \$50,000 annual grant from council be maintained, along with the in-kind donations.

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- The Deputy Mayor felt that continuing as normal should not be an option with the financials as they are. She felt the Statement of Intent was counter productive if the trust was looking at how it would operate if it started today. Mr Ellis noted the trust was legally required to prepare a Statement of Intent but it was acknowledged this may well change before 1 July.
- The District Mayor noted the amount of external fundraising was less than previous budgets, but was significantly higher than what was achieved this year. He acknowledged the discussions regarding the future of the trust and felt the Statement of Intent should be received as a draft document and look to discuss the options presented to him at another date. He nominated himself and Councillor Hall to review the key points raised and suggest options to council. He would like to see the conclusion of the reorganisation by 30 June. It was acknowledged that one of the main issues have been the audit fees which would still be in place for this financial year, however may be significantly less for the upcoming financial year if this reorganisation is completed.
- Mr Hanne noted that any structural changes to the trust would be a parallel and independent process from the Statement of Intent. However if council wanted anything in this Statement of Intent it needed to inform the trust at this point.
- The Deputy Mayor noted she was not comfortable receiving the Statement of Intent knowing it is not the intention of the trust moving forward. She requested that it be received with a request for more information and details around the future governance and operation of the trust.

### Recommendations

2. THAT Council notes that the provision of the draft Statement of Intent for Percy Thomson Trust relating to the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2027 within this report meets the legislative requirements of a CCO to deliver a draft statement of intent to its shareholders by 1 March in the year preceding the financial year to which the draft statement relates, and requests the Percy Thomson Trust comes back to council with information and details on the future governance and operation of the Percy Thomson Trust.

McKAY/HALL  
Carried  
P&S/24/70

*The Chairman – Percy Thomson Trust, the HR & Governance Administrator and the Communications Advisor left the meeting at 4.51pm.*

**Recommendations**

1. THAT the report be received.

HARRIS/BECK

Carried

P&S/24/71

2. THAT the Committee approves Option 2 – to approve the donation of a bench seat

BECK/SANDFORD

Carried

P&S/24/72

**Recommended Reason**

To approve the donation of a bench seat (with a memorial plaque) from the Bray family to commemorate Ronald (Ron) Bray who worked at the Stratford District Council for 31 years as Park Superintendent.

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- The Deputy Mayor asked what the upkeep on a donated item would look like? The Parks and Reserves Officer noted the usual lifespan for a bench seat like this was 10-15 years with only waterblasting or polishing of the plaque likely to be required.

Points noted in discussion:

- The District Mayor noted he had requested the report be brought to council to allow elected members the opportunity to support the acknowledgement of the individual. He also noted that he felt council should consider the maintenance and eventual replacement as part of considering a donation of this sort.
- Councillor Harris felt this was an appropriate tribute, Councillor Beck agreed.
- Councillor Sandford noted that Mr Bray used to inspect all sports grounds during winter with a stick with a blue ribbon and if you turned up to your ground and the stick was there you knew, and respected, that the ground was closed.

### Recommendations

1. THAT the report be received.

ERWOOD/DUDLEY  
Carried  
P&S/24/73

2. THAT pursuant to Section 342(1) (b) in accordance with Schedule 10 clause 11(e) of the Local Government Act 1974, Stratford District Council approves the closure of the following roads between the hours 5.30am to 10.00am on Thursday 25 April 2024:

- Miranda Street between Fenton Street and Regan Street – 5:30am to 10:00am
- War Memorial Car park to be closed
- Fenton St from Broadway to Malone Gates and Portia St to the TET carpark

for the purpose of the ANZAC Day Dawn Service

BECK/DUDLEY  
Carried  
P&S/24/74

### Recommended Reason

In order for the Stratford District Council to hold ANZAC Day commemorations, it is necessary to close the roads listed above for the safety of the public gathering for the dawn service at the Cross of Sacrifice on Miranda Street. The proposed road closures require formal approval by a Council resolution.

### Questions/Points of Clarification:

- It was clarified the parade would go from Portia Street (by the TET Multisports Stadium), along Fenton Street and up Miranda Street to the cenotaph.

*The Parks and Reserve Officer and Councillor Tongaawhikau left the meeting at 4.58pm.  
The meeting was adjourned at 4.58pm and reconvened at 5.08pm.*

### Recommendations

1. THAT the report be received.

JONES/VOLZKE  
Carried  
P&S/24/75

2. THAT the draft Financial Strategy be approved and released for audit review, before the final draft Financial Strategy is approved to be released for consultation, **with amendment.**

HARRIS/HALL  
Carried  
P&S/24/76

### Recommended Reason

This is an opportunity for elected members to formalise their initial stance on the Financial Strategy for the district, prior to releasing for audit review.

Points noted in discussion:

- Councillor Hall noted her concern that having a rates increase limit of 7% gave a less realistic view to the ratepayers as having a rates increase higher than the limit resulted in less credibility. She noted the same rigorous process would be undertaken to ensure rates stay as low as possible but thought a higher limit would be more realistic.
- The Deputy Mayor shared similar concerns. She did not think council could realistically come up with an accurate figure and wondered if some commentary around aspiring towards the limit would be more accurate. She liked 7% as a number but felt some rewording with aspirational tones was required.
- Councillor Jones noted that council had been chasing 6% as a level for so long and ended up above it. The 15.5% increase would bring council to the level it should be at for the rates take and then it should be able to stay at the lower levels. To achieve the lower numbers this jump was required. He was happy with it staying at 7%.
- It was clarified that the inflation numbers were the BERL Index figures used by all councils. It was requested that this be made clearer in the strategy. CPI takes into accounts household consumer expenses and the BERL Index was inflation reflecting inflation for council related expenditure.
- Councillor Beck supported retaining 7%. He noted it was important to not see it rising higher.
- Councillor Watt agreed with leaving it at 7%. He noted inflation relates more to construction costs and the usual inflation of construction was 3%, however in 2022 it was 10.4%.
- Councillor Hall supported changing the wording to *aspire to*, to reflect the true intent of what council is trying to achieve.
- It was clarified it was legislatively required to have a limit, the Corporate Accountant noted these benchmarks were part of the financial regulations that council has to report on. A breach can occur as long as it can be explained. The big increase in Year 1 will result in smaller increases later on. Mr Hanne noted an additional sentence could be added to make it clear that council will make every attempt to be within this limit.
- It was noted that council will see the final version of this when it has been audited.

15. Decision Report – Infrastructure Strategy

D24/6282

Page 170

**Recommendations**

1. THAT the report be received.

HARRIS/McKAY  
Carried  
P&S/24/77

2. THAT the draft Infrastructure Strategy be approved and released for audit review, before the final Infrastructure Strategy is adopted for community feedback.

McKAY/JONES  
Carried  
P&S/24/78

**Recommended Reason**

This is an opportunity for elected members to ensure that the Infrastructure Strategy reflects their position on the management of Council's core assets in the next 30 years, prior to releasing the Consultation Document for audit review.

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- Councillor Jones noted that removing the uneconomical bridges would cover the cost to build the Brecon Road bridge straight away.
- The Deputy Mayor noted the strategy was really good to read. She felt it was very clear what council is trying to do.

### Recommendations

1. THAT the report be received.

DUDLEY/HALL  
Carried  
P&S/24/79

2. THAT the draft Consultation Document be approved and released for audit review, before the final Consultation Document is approved to form the basis for the consultation with the community.

MOVED/SECONDED  
Carried  
P&S/24/80

3. THAT, in accordance with Standing Order 8.4, an Extraordinary Meeting of Council be held on Tuesday 26 March 2024 at 1.00pm to release the final Consultation Document, and supporting information, for consultation with the community.

4. THAT the hearing date for submissions to the Long Term Plan be amended to Tuesday 14 May 2024, as noted in **Appendix 1**.

HALL/McKAY  
Carried  
P&S/24/81

### Recommended Reason

This is an opportunity for elected members to ensure that the consultation documents reflects their priorities and aspirations regarding the outcomes of the Long Term Plan, prior to releasing the Consultation Document for audit review.

The Communications Manager noted that the changes to the wording in the Financial Strategy would be carried over to the Consultation Document.

### Questions/Points of Clarification:

- It was requested the table on page 267 amended to *water services and solid waste*.
- The District Mayor noted the sample rates table now captured the fact that property values have gone up by different values and now reflects the different amounts in the rate increases. He requested a lifestyle property be added as another example.
- It was requested the \$29 a week for commercial properties be checked.
- Councillor Beck noted the sample rates examples will be the most looked at page and it needed to be clear. He noted the Annual Plan was good as it had all the percentages separated out, Mr Hanne noted it was easier to show in an Annual Plan as there isn't a property revaluation at the same time.
- Councillor Hall reiterated what a really straight forward document it was and congratulated the Communications Manager.

## 17. Monthly Reports

### 17.1 Assets Report D24/3178 Page 273

#### Recommendation

THAT the report be received.

McKAY/BECK  
Carried  
P&S/24/82

#### Questions/Points of Clarification:

- It was clarified that the schools have been approached by the Education Officer – Water and Waste for workshops with the intention being to tailor the workshops to what the individual schools require support with.
- The Director – Assets noted there had been good results with the Diatomix Project at the beginning but it was not really providing the desired results now. It has been trialled for two years and council is still meeting most of the consent conditions. Officers will need to get a consultant to do a report at the end of the term to see where to go from here.
- The District Mayor noted the change in plans for the septic tank at the Whangamomona Campgrounds and noted his concern that patronage is significantly different from days where there are events to normal day to day use. He asked if officers were confident they were building the right tank for the demand? My Taylor noted that the average patronage goes up significantly when there is the pig hunt, republic day or rugby games. When designing a septic solution it needs to work on the worst case scenario as that is the amount it takes. Officers are working through options such as additional port-a-loos for events or emptying the tank before the big days. Mrs Araba noted the new consultant was practical and on track.
- Councillor Jones noted the footpaths outside the primary school were being widened, and noted councillors had been told the renewals could not be used for widening. Mrs Araba noted that the low cost low risk budget was topping up the renewals for this project as a safety project. It was clarified that these replacements will fit inside the current design for future work outside the school.

### 17.2 Community Services Report D24/4295 Page 295

#### Recommendation

THAT the report be received.

ERWOOD/SANDFORD  
Carried  
P&S/24/83

#### The Communications Manager noted the following points:

- Sunday 3 March is the Stratford Youth Festival which is a combined event with Zeal Taranaki and the Stratford District Youth Council.
- The new youth councillors will be sworn in on Monday. All welcome to attend.
- A Positive Ageing Forum is scheduled for 21 March, please share with networks.
- The Sport New Zealand Rural Travel Fund is now open but has had minimal interest, please share with community contacts if able. The Creative Communities Fund opens next month.
- It was clarified the LGOIMA requests are now coordinated by Corporate Services and would be moved to be included in that monthly report.

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- Councillor Hall noted the outcomes for the Mayors Taskforce for Jobs and felt the parameters were very restrictive and did not reflect the work undertaken by staff. She noted it was looking unlikely to reach the goal of 38 and asked how that would impact funding? The District Mayor agreed that a lot more than nine people had been helped through this initiative. He did expect the funding to be reduced if the goal was not met.
- Councillor Hall noted the Stratford Business Association membership was 141, but was 150 in the Economic Development Quarterly Report. Ms Gibson noted that these reports did cover a different time period but she would clarify this. It was noted that council did not hold the knowledge of the total businesses in Stratford as this would be impacted by the different definitions of business.
- Councillor Beck noted there were 466 enrolments for Wai o Rua Swim School, Mr Hanne noted there had been less around 200 in the first term so to double that is really good. He noted it was important to retain the quality over quantity to keep the high reputation of the service. A financial report on this service will be included in the business report.
- Councillor Sandford noted he had received many complaints about the road closure from 7am for AmeriCARna.

**17.3 Environmental Services Report**  
D24/1633 Page 303

**Recommendation**

THAT the report be received.

WATT/HARRIS  
Carried  
P&S/24/84

The Director – Environmental Services noted that there was now a solution for the numbering issues on Ariel Street which would involve renumbering three properties. The proposal has been sent to LINZ. It was noted that officers have raised the issue with Google regarding Pembroke Road West and Pembroke Road East.

**17.4 Corporate Services Report**  
D24/5866 Page 310

**Recommendation**

THAT the report be received.

DUDLEY/ERWOOD  
Carried  
P&S/24/85

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- Councillor Hall requested more information on the reason for the variances in the operating expenditure for civic amenities and the library. Mrs Craig noted that some of the overspends are caused by timing with seasonal requirements and will even out when the work reduces.
- The Deputy Mayor asked at what point do officers stop spending and remain on track? It was noted elected members can ask these questions at any meeting and that staff do try to stick within budgets.
- Councillor Hall noted the recent conversations in the Long Term Plan about the significance in overspending and felt that more context should be provided in this report as to why they are over budget. She did not want to miss opportunities to address this and felt proactively provided information in the report would be helpful.
- Mrs Araba noted the budgets were mostly split across 12 months equally so at certain times they do go over. There will be some equalisation by the end of the financial year.
- It was noted that if a budget was going to be known to go over then it would be brought to the attention of councillors as soon as possible.
- It was requested that further context be provided in this report on the variances to the budgets.

- It was clarified the land purchase for the Stratford 2035 note meant it was unlikely to proceed this financial year. The landowner has started the last requirement to proceed with the sale.

## 18. Questions

There were no questions.

## 19. Closing Karakia

D21/40748 Page 328

The closing karakia was read.

*The meeting closed at 6.19pm*

M McKay  
**Chairman**

Confirmed this 26<sup>th</sup> day of March 2024.

N C Volzke  
**District Mayor**