
**MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING OF
THE STRATFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL HELD IN THE FUNCTION
FACILITY, WAR MEMORIAL CENTRE, MIRANDA STREET, STRATFORD
ON TUESDAY 26 MAY 2020 AT 3:03PM**

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 – Mrs E Bishop, the Communications Manager – Ms G Gibson, the Revenue Manager – Mrs J Erwood (*part meeting*), the Corporate Accountant – Mrs C Craig (*part meeting*), the Roding Asset Manager – Mr S Bowden (*part meeting*), the Special Projects Manager – Mr N Cooper (*part meeting*), Ms J Gilliland and Mrs J Patterson (Venture Taranaki) (*part meeting*) and one member of the media (Stratford Press).

1. **WELCOME**

The Deputy Mayor welcomed the District Mayor, the Chief Executive, Councillors, staff, the media and Venture Taranaki staff. He reiterated the health and safety message in the agenda and reminded members that the meeting place was still at the bell tower and that exits were clearly labelled in the War Memorial Centre.

2. **APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies.

3. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the public feedback received on the Annual Plan be tabled as information supporting the report - Item 9 – Adoption of Annual Plan 2020/21.

JAMIESON/VOLZKE
Carried
P&S/20/60

The three responses from the public to the Draft Annual Plan were circulated to be included for discussion with Item 9 – Adoption of Annual Plan 2020/21.

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.

The District Mayor, the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Sandford and Councillor Boyde declared and interest in item 9 – the public feedback received from the Stratford JP Association.

All four would leave the table when this feedback was discussed and considered.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT during the discussion on the Public Feedback received from the Stratford JP Association, Councillor Erwood would chair the meeting.

JAMIESON/VOLZKE
Carried
P&S/20/61

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 (Hearing - Rates Remission Policy) – 28 April 2020

D20/7484 Pages 8-11

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the minutes of the Policy and Services Committee Meeting to hear and consider submissions to the Rates Remission Policy held on Tuesday 28 April 2020, be confirmed as a true and accurate record.

ERWOOD/BOYDE
Carried
P&S/20/62

The Executive Administration Officer undertook to make the following amendments:

- Page 10, last bullet point amend to read “*removal of the rates remission on covenanted land could see the rateability of the land be subject to Council’s interpretation*”

It was requested that other options of support for land with heritage structures on it, as raised on page 11, last bullet, be added to matters outstanding for Officers to bring to Council at a later date.

6.2 Policy and Services Committee Meeting – 28 April 2020

D20/7485 Pages 12-20

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the minutes of the Policy and Services Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 28 April 2020, be confirmed as a true and accurate record.

WEBBY/SANDFORD
Carried
P&S/20/63

7. **MATTERS OUTSTANDING**
D16/47 Page 21

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the matters outstanding be received.

HARRIS/ERWOOD
Carried
P&S/20/64

The Chief Executive noted he was still to meet with Officers to discuss the Children's Bike Park project.

8. **INFORMATION REPORT – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT**
QUARTER 3
D20/8032 Pages 22-49

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the report be received.

BOYDE/COPELSTONE
Carried
P&S/20/65

The Chairman invited Ms Gilliland and Mrs Patterson to present the Venture Taranaki quarterly report.

Points noted:

- The launch of the Branching Out project was in quarter 3, this is now well underway.
- There has been quite a bit of interest, including from investors, in the offshore wind discussion paper.
- The National New Energy Development Centre is progressing well in terms of establishment. Viewing of potential locations has not been able to happen due to Covid-19. The launch is still on track for July.
- The team has been categorised into two categories for Covid – 19. Response and the Recovery (return to better). It has been very busy and some people have been redeployed from their usual roles.
 - Response was extremely critical to provide support to enterprises (mainly small and medium). With support from Councils, Venture Taranaki was able to provide two forms of grant support. The local fund was partnered with 60 professional advisory firms who matched the funding from Councils with their own free time. With this enterprises are able to access up to \$800 of professional advisory support for those with less complex issues such as core cash, forecasting, bank discussions, lease agreements and employee relationships. The Regional Business Partnership with government funding provided grants up to \$2,000 for more complex issues. As of Friday 22 May \$521,000 grants have been issued (\$15,000 to Stratford enterprises) to nearly 600 enterprises (21 in Stratford).
 - Recovery – Return to Better, has had a main focus on a tactical plan for all the actions from the various documents to integrate and map together and look at through a Covid-19 lens. New actions have been added and all actions were then put through an impact framework to get a draft tactical plan which focusses on key pillars – Smart connected

communities, skills and digital connectivity, food, the energy sector and a vibrant tourist and hospitality sector.

- A critical part of this was the Go Local campaign that has included Councils, business associations, the Chamber of Commerce and has seen fantastic support from local enterprises. It was launched 2 weeks ago and is being scaled up again this week. There has been a good response from social media and from retail statistics. Taranaki was up 2% from retail spend the same time in 2019 while nationally there has been an 11% decrease.
- Working on the domestic tourism campaign but there has been concern as a lot of the regions will be competing against one another for a relatively small market. The aim is to encourage those who usually visit Taranaki to continue to do so and then be very targeted about attracting new visitors to the region.
- The tactical plan “Return to Better” will become part of the economic pillar of the region’s overall recovery plan.

The Corporate Accountant joined the meeting at 3.21pm.

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- It was noted that the H2 Taranaki Roadmap was still a live document. There have been positive benefits to this as it has alerted the Government’s attention to hydrogen. The Balance Kapuni Hydrogen project is still progressing.
- It was noted that the increase in spend couldn’t be broken down to a district level on a weekly basis. These figures were provided as part of a special Covid-19 response request. It is hoped that the positive figures are a result of the Go Local campaign.
- It was noted the Enterprise Advisors worked individually with enterprises to help facilitate grants, to get investment ready and help with entrepreneurship. They will support these enterprises from start up to maturity. Shaan Davis is the new Stratford Enterprise advisor. The destination team looks at attraction of investment, people and talent and visitors. A key focus area is looking at creating a list of projects and tracking those projects while matching enterprises with investors. The best support from Council would be a ‘hub’ to provide a space for these enterprises.
- It was noted there is now the opportunity to consider what projects and investments are a priority for the Stratford District to be included as the team works through the tactical recovery plan.
- It was clarified that the 25 job vacancies in Stratford are collected by what Venture Taranaki is aware of. It would be possible to work out the percentage of the Stratford workforce by collating census data. The District Mayor noted that over 50% of Stratford residents who describe themselves as ‘employed’ travel out of the District to work. It was important to remember that Eltham was out of the District as well.
- It was clarified that the response funding for business continuity was looking at the individual client needs and was for both planning for the future and responding to Covid-19. Some businesses may not be eligible for one of the grants but it was noted many enterprises were now turning their minds to business strategy and planning.
- It was clarified that the National Energy Building was funded by core government funding but that the intention was to attract private and international funding and for it to become its own entity. There will not be any formal association with Venture Taranaki when it becomes its own entity.
- It was noted job advertisements can be a flawed way to compile data in a small town like Stratford as a lot of positions are filled with waiting lists, word of mouth and other methods.

Ms Gilliland and Mrs Patterson departed the meeting at 3.36pm.

The Director – Community Services noted the following points:

- Quarter 3 was primarily about delivering on Community Events.
- The area where the ANZ building once stood is now grassed and the fences have been removed today.
- A Broadway discussion paper will be brought to a Council workshop very soon.
- It was clarified that the floor plans for the i-SITE had not changed much since last brought to council. Any changes from now would be purely operational and would not be brought back for Council approval.

9. **DECISION REPORT – ADOPTION OF ANNUAL PLAN 2020/21**

D20/9174

Pages 50-180

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THAT the report be received.

ERWOOD/WEBBY
Carried
P&S/20/66

2. THAT feedback on the Annual Plan 2020/21 is acknowledged and any amendments, agreed to by elected members, are incorporated into the Annual Plan 2020/21.

3. THAT the Annual Plan 2020/21 (attached) be approved, and recommended for adoption by Council at the June 2020 Ordinary Council meeting. The adoption of the Annual Plan 2020/21 includes the:

- Funding Impact Statement (Clause 20 of Schedule 10 of the Local Government Act 2002), and the
- Fees and Charges Schedule for 2020/21.

4. THAT Council delegate authority to the Chief Executive to approve any final edits and design changes required to the Annual Plan to finalise the document for distribution.

COPLESTONE/McKAY
Carried
P&S/20/68

RECOMMENDED REASON

Council is required to adopt an Annual Plan, pursuant to Section 95 of the Local Government Act 2002 (“the Act”), before the commencement of the year to which it relates, by 30 June 2020, and prior to setting the rates for the financial year.

The Director – Corporate Services noted the following points:

- The draft Annual Plan was released for public feedback.
- Initially a 5.72% rates increase was proposed, however this was amended to 4.3% by removing some expenditure.
- There were three organisations who submitted feedback and no individual comments.
- With the increase of 4.3%, Council now meets all the benchmarks in the financial strategy.

Public Feedback

Federated Farmers of New Zealand

- Councillor Harris acknowledged the email from Federated Farmers regarding the charging of the UAGC per SUIP. She noted that this is based on the assumption that any dwelling has the potential to exhaust council services and in the most cases, for rural land owners, this is not the case. She requested that this be discussed further. Councillor Boyde and Councillor Dalziel supported this.
- The Chief Executive noted that as this is a part of the rating model it was not able to be changed at this time but was a natural component of the Long Term Plan process. It would be good practice to review the introduction of SUIPS and see if the intent has been achieved.
- The District Mayor noted that this would be discussed as part of the Long Term Plan process and would like to particularly look at the intent, the components and if any anomalies had arisen. He noted that the notion that Council treats farmers differently to other groups is incorrect and that the rates increase is reflective of the value of your property. He queried if the documents released to the public, especially the sample rates, contributed to this miscommunication. He noted the UAGC charge per SUIP also affected other rate payers such as rest homes and property owners of blocks of flats.
- Councillor Coplestone noted that the examples given by the District Mayor were tenanted properties and noted the affected dwellings that needed to be reviewed were dwellings such as shearers quarters. He requested that the response to Federated Farmers to note that Councillors have noted their concerns and will review the rating models during the Long Term Plan process.

Social Credit Western Region

- Thank for feedback.

The District Mayor, the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Sandford and Councillor Boyde left the table at 3.53pm. Councillor Erwood became the Chair.

Stratford JP Association

- The Chief Executive noted that it was not unusual for a specific group to ask for preferential treatment during an Annual Plan or Long Term Plan process. The Community Framework was put together to put a ruler across a lot of these requests. Council needs to decide if they wish to support this group, have separate fees and charges or name groups – which would become unfair and unmanageable.
- Councillor Dalziel noted the Chief Executive's concern for consistency. He noted the JPs were currently not charged for the room and given that they did not fundraise or charge for their services - their benefits for the community outweighed any management time or cost on our part. There were already inconsistencies with who does and does not pay.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Kowhai Room at the library be amended in the Fees and Charges to be free for non-profit community groups.

DALZIEL/WEBBY
Carried
6 for
4 abstained
P&S/20/67

- It was noted the charge for the room was \$5 per hour. There was a very small number of groups that used the room at the moment but this could increase with the removal of the fee.
- Councillor Coplestone noted it should be determined on a case by case basis.

- Councillor McKay supported the motion in principle as she acknowledged the value for the community. She noted there would be groups who did not ask and would be disadvantaged by not knowing to ask or be scared to ask. The Director – Community Services clarified that the fee for the JP Association would be \$480 per year should they be charged.

The District Mayor, the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Sandford and Councillor Boyde returned to the table at 4.04pm. The Deputy Mayor returned as the Chair.

Points noted in discussion:

- Councillor Dalziel noted that page 127 stated there would be a surplus of \$7.8 million and questioned what is done with that surplus. The Director – Corporate Services and Corporate Accountant noted that this was not a cash surplus but made up of all funding, grant and donations, the swimming pool complex funding and NZTA subsidies and it is reported on in the way that is required for accounting standards for a local authority. Councillor Dalziel requested that footnotes or better explanations be included in the future to ensure ratepayers are able to understand the surplus as it is misleading and can make the rate increase questionable.

The Corporate Accountant and the Revenue Manager departed the meeting at 4.17pm.

10. DECISION REPORT – FURTHER REVIEW OF RESERVE MANAGEMENT PLAN 2011

D20/9325

Pages 181-189

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THAT the report be received.

BOYDE/HARRIS
Carried
P&S/20/69

2. THAT, in terms of Section 41(4) of the Reserves Act 1977, as administering body of the reserves Council carry out a comprehensive review of the Reserve Management Plan 2011 as it affects the neighbourhood (urban) reserves of Windsor Park, Thomson Arboretum, Cassandra Reserve, Pembroke Reserve, Adrian Street Reserve, Swansea Road Sportsground, Pioneer Memorial Cemetery Reserve, Celia Street Reserve, Colonel Malone Statue Reserve, the Midhirst and Broadway Railway Beautification Reserves and nine unnamed urban esplanade reserves.

3. THAT following the review of the Reserve Management Plan 2011 as it affects the neighbourhood (urban) reserves, a similar comprehensive review be carried out in respect of the remaining reserves covered by the plan, namely the 11 rural domains and 18 other miscellaneous rural local purpose reserves in the district.

BOYDE/VOLZKE
Carried
P&S/20/70

Recommended Reasons

The Reserves Act 1977 requires Council to “keep its management plan under continuous review” and it is now nine years since the current plan has had a formal review to guide their present and future use, maintenance and development, other than in regard to King Edward and Victoria Parks.

The Special Projects Manager noted the following points:

- The Reserves Act requires that all administering bodies have to have in place, and under continual review, a management plan for all its reserves.
- In 2011 an overarching plan was adopted for all reserves. A review in 2016 resolved to create an individual plan for King Edward Park and Victoria Park.
- This report is a proposal to continue the review and encompass all the reserves. King Edward Park and Victoria Park will remain separate due to the size and complexity of use at these two reserves.
- It is proposed to do a management plan for urban and one for rural reserves to differentiate between the two.
- The process involves public notification, workshopping feedback from that notification, a draft plan to be released for consultation, a further workshop and a final plan to be drawn up and adopted by Council.
- This report seeks formal approval to begin the process.

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- It was clarified that these plans would bring together a lot of policies already in place to incorporate into a management plan.
- It was noted there was no significance in the numbering of the rural reserves on the map.
- It was noted that the review could give the opportunity to consider the reserves with bare land and whether they continue to be a reserve or be on-sold. It would also give the opportunity to review the halls given that some are unused and run down.
- All the reserves will be within one management plan but all the domain boards will be consulted with individually as part of this process.
- The targeted rate on some reserves would need to be looked at during a rating process and not during the management plan discussion.
- The timeframe would be 18 months to 2 years to complete.

The Special Projects Manager departed the meeting at 4.28pm.

11. DECISION REPORT – ADOPTION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

D20/9273

Pages 190-208

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THAT the report be received.
2. THAT feedback on the draft Communication and Engagement Strategy is acknowledged and any amendments, agreed to by elected members, are incorporated into the Communication and Engagement Strategy.
3. THAT the Communication and Engagement Strategy (attached) be approved, and recommended for adoption by Council at the June 2020 Ordinary Council meeting.

ERWOOD/HARRIS
Carried
P&S/20/71

HARRIS/McKAY
Carried
P&S/20/72

Recommended Reason

Adopting the strategy as a framework is recommended to support communication and engagement between Council and the community.

The Communications Manager noted the following points:

- The draft strategy was brought to the Policy & Services Committee in April and has since gone out for community feedback.
- It is now proposed that Council adopt the final strategy.
- Only one piece of feedback was received from Te Korowai O Ngāruahine Trust.
- The changes made in the document are highlighted.
- The total budget for council promotional materials/activities (which includes brand related expenditure) is roughly \$35,000 annually, and there is already allocated budget of \$60,000 for the website project. The intention is to complete the projects in the strategy within this budget.

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- Councillor Dalziel complimented the document and noted there had only been one response. Ms Gibson agreed this was disappointing and hoped to have gotten younger members of the public engaged, however a lot of the objectives in the document will hopefully see an increase in engagement moving forward.
- The District Mayor noted his concern that the feedback received from Te Korowai O Ngāruahine Trust had noted they had only received the document for consideration on the 11 May with consultation closing a few days later. They have made references to our responsibilities under the Act. Ms Gibson noted that this had been captured and there is a plan to properly develop engagement processes. It will be developed alongside Iwi and we will talk with them how they would like it to move forward. The Chief Executive noted there is every intent and desire to engage with Iwi and that he was looking forward to developing stronger ties. He and the District Mayor had met with Iwi leaders and had very positive conversations. He accepted the feedback as it is and promised to do better with engagement in the future.

12. MONTHLY REPORTS

12.1 ASSETS REPORTS D20/8086 Pages 209-218

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the reports be received.

BOYDE/COPLESTONE
Carried
P&S/20/73

The Director – Assets noted the following points:

- There were no issues at the Water Treatment Plant, Waste Water system or Storm Water systems.
- Normal business was scaled down during the Covid-19 Level 3 and 4. It was down to a two man crew doing essential maintenance.
- Solid Waste also saw a scaled down collection with waste and recycling disposed to landfill.
- Water engineers worked through both levels 3 and 4.

12.2 COMMUNITY SERVICES REPORTS D20/7958 Pages 231-237

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the reports be received.

ERWOOD/HARRIS
Carried
P&S/20/74

The Director – Community Services noted the following points:

- April was focused on responding to Covid-19.
- The team is now starting to get back to the new normal.
- All facilities are back open with sanitising, contact tracing and promoting cashless payments.
- The Swimming Pool is open but only for structured swimming and squad swimming – there is no leisure or recreation swimming yet. As the restrictions loosen it will slowly add more recreational swimming back in.

Council Organisations and Council Representatives on Other Organisations

Councillors may take the opportunity to report back from Strategic and Community organisations on which they are a representative for Council.

- Councillor Webby noted that the Percy Thomson Gallery had been closed during the lockdown but staff had created a virtual art exhibitions with Taranaki artists being invited to contribute work. The response was excellent. The Gallery Assistant also compiled a slideshow of photographs taken around Stratford during the lockdown which was excellent. Percy's Place opened last week and after a slow beginning sales picked up and reached over \$1,000. Gallery staff are busy preparing for the Taranaki Arts Trial opening this Thursday with over 80 exhibits and includes the Rodin's Eve – the sculpture that Te Papa has left with the gallery that remained following the finish of the previous exhibition and lockdown

occurring. 'Eve' will be at the gallery for 3 more weeks. Every care is being taken to conform with Covid-19 requirements.

- Councillor Erwood acknowledged the work of Di and Georgia from the Central Taranaki Community Safe Trust during the Levels 3 and 4 with daily emails to their community providing communication, safety tips and humour. This was reinforced by the Deputy Mayor.
- Councillor McKay noted there had been quite a bit of social media activity from the Stratford Business Association promoting the channels offered by Venture Taranaki and the Go Local campaign. There are some cool competitions coming up around showcasing what Stratford has to offer. It has also been a focus to promote to buy local and not online.
- Councillor Boyde noted that novaflow had been put down on the hockey turf to ensure correct spacing between the players. Competition starts 13/14 June and will move quickly from there. A lot of regional tournaments have been put off but there is still the likelihood there will be some secured by the end of the season. The gates have now been locked so no one can walk across the turf.
- It was noted that the Sport NZ Rural Travel Fund meeting will go ahead when able. This will be communicated to the committee members

The Roding Asset Manager departed the meeting at 4.48pm.

12.3 ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES REPORTS

D20/7465

Pages 238-244

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the reports be received.

BOYDE/COPLESTONE
Carried
P&S/20/75

The Director – Environmental Services noted the following points:

- The team was able to continue processing applications throughout the lockdown.
- There is contact tracing in place and social distancing for building inspections and health inspections are being undertaken via zoom.
- The building accreditation will begin in July but may be undertaken via zoom.

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- It was clarified that the impact of the changes to building consent requirements will not be known until details have been released to Council. These may still be in the developmental phase.

12.4 **CORPORATE SERVICES REPORTS**

D20/9048

Pages 245-261

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the reports be received.

DALZIEL/McKAY
Carried
P&S/20/76

The Director – Corporate Services noted the following points:

- This report covers a period of ten months.
- Auditors are doing the interim audit remotely. The final audit will be undertaken the week of 27 August.
- The team is starting to get prepared for the year end and getting on top of cashflow.
- It is positive to see the debtors and rate payments haven't been as affected by Covid-19 as initially thought. Rates are due at the end of this week.

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- It was noted that the Project Phoenix – digitalisation of the property files was 78% complete. It had originally been scoped as a 2 year project but at the end of the last financial year it was identified that it would take a further 12 months to complete the project. Therefore it has now been brought in-house and the Information Management Specialist is continuing the project. All residential files have been scanned and any rural and commercial that are not are being scanned if there is a request to view them. There is no funding going towards the project now.
- Councillor Boyde noted that the farm net revenue isn't shown in the revenue section of the report but separately on page 253 within user charges. Councillor Dalziel agreed that it should be separate to display the revenue and costs. The Chief Executive clarified it was a Council business item and therefore should be recorded as that. The District Mayor noted that in the report by activity the farm was separated out, as were the other activities/council business items.

13. **QUESTIONS**

- The District Mayor requested that the street numbering on Ariel Street be added to the matters outstanding to be investigated for consistency and clarity.

The meeting closed at 5.04pm.

A L Jamieson
CHAIRMAN

Confirmed this 23rd day of June 2020.

N C Volzke
DISTRICT MAYOR