

Report of a meeting of the Finance and Policy Committee, held in the Council Chambers, 29 Bowler Avenue, Gore, on Tuesday 28 August 2018 at 7.15pm.

Present His Worship the Mayor (Mr Tracy Hicks, JP), Cr Bolger (Chairman), Crs Beale, Davis, Dickson, Gardyne, P Grant, D Grant Highsted, Phillips and Reid.

In Attendance The Chief Executive (Mr Stephen Parry), Chief Financial Officer (Mr Luke Blackbeard), General Manager Regulatory and Planning (Dr Ian Davidson-Watts), General Manager Infrastructure (Mr Ramesh Sharma), 3 Waters Asset Manager (Mr Matt Bayliss), Project Manager Infrastructure (Mr Hashem Ramezan-zadeh), Communications/Promotions Manager (Sonia Gerken), Social Capacity and Health Coordinator (Bernadette Hunt) Corporate Support Officer (Suzanne Lucas) and one member of the public in the gallery.

Apology Cr Sharp apologised for absence.

1. RATE ARREARS (SC2177)

A report from the Chief Financial Officer had been received covering arrears as at the beginning of the 2018/2019 financial year. He said rate arrears had declined and he praised the good work of the rating officers in achieving this.

RECOMMENDED on the motion of Cr P Grant, seconded by Cr D Grant, THAT the report be received.

2. RATES REBATE SCHEME (SC2177)

The Council perused a report from the Chief Financial Officer.

The Chairman referred to the table which was a guide for household income and level of rebate payable. He said it was evident a lot of people qualified and a lot might not be aware they were eligible.

The Chief Financial Officer said a lot of advertising had been undertaken to inform ratepayers there was help available for low income earners and it was not limited retirees. Work and Income had been asked to pass on this information to its clients but the Council would like to see the number of customers applying grow.

Cr Reid said a lot of people probably did not realise Environment Southland rates could be included as well. She suggested getting in touch with Grey Power and carrying out extensive advertising and publishing the table widely.

The Officer concurred and said he would work with the Communications Manager to achieve this.

Cr Dickson asked for clarification regarding residents who had more than one property and had cumulative rates.

The Officer explained only the primary property was eligible ie the one the ratepayer lived in and this was based on the assumption most second homes generated an income.

RECOMMENDED on the motion of Cr Beale, seconded by Cr Reid, THAT the report be received.

3. MAYORAL OFFICE – UPDATE REPORT

The Council perused a report from the Mayoral Office.

His Worship commented a lot of progress had been made. He reminded the Council Ready for Growth had its genesis before the Provincial Growth Fund. He apologised on behalf of Economic Development Coordinator for her absence due to illness.

The Social Capacity Coordinator said since writing the report expressions of interest to the Provincial Growth Fund for both the Ready for Growth implementation centre and the Hokonui Highway project had gone to the TAG group for approval.

The Coordinator said the Ready for Living feasibility study had concluded there was strong support from stakeholders, the community steering group and Minister Tracy Martin. One of the strongest findings was the project needed to be community led and Council supported. To the drive the project forward \$28,000 of community funding was needed. Applications for funding had been submitted to the MLT and Community Trust of Southland.

His Worship informed the Council the Chief Executive had received an email from Mike Reid, Policy Manager for Local Government New Zealand.

The Chief Executive said Mr Reid had been in touch with the Prime Minister's office and he had heard some very positive reports about the Hokonui Highway project. He

said the Department of the Prime Minister had a lot of interest in the programme and would be in contact.

In response to a question posed by Cr D Grant, His Worship said he could not see any conflict between Ready for Growth and the Regional Development Agency and where possible, both would work in together in tandem.

RECOMMENDED on the motion of Cr Bolger, seconded by Cr D Grant, THAT the report be received.

The meeting concluded at 7.34pm.