

**Report of the Ordinary Meeting of the Community Services Committee Held in the Council Chambers, 29 Civic Avenue, Gore on Tuesday 29 April 2014, at 4.33pm.**

**PRESENT** Cr P Grant, (Chairperson), Crs Beale, Bolger, Byars, Dixon, D Grant, Highsted, Page and Sharp.

**IN ATTENDANCE** The Chief Executive (Mr Stephen Parry), General Manager District Assets (Mr Paul Withers), Parks and Recreation Manager (Mr Ian Soper), Roading Manager (Mr Murray Hasler), 3 Waters Asset Manager (Ms Sarah Crooks), Chief Financial Officer (Mr Luke Blackbeard), Planning Consultant (Mr Keith Hovell), Communications Coordinator (Sonia Gerken), Senior Planner (Howard Alchin), Arts and Heritage Curator (Mr Jim Geddes), Library Manager (Ms Lorraine Weston-Webb), Corporate Support Officers (Mrs Tracey Millan and Mrs Kylie Weir) and two members of the public in the gallery.

**APOLOGIES** His Worship the Mayor (Mr Tracy Hicks JP), Cr Davis, D Grant and Gover apologised for absence.

---

His Worship asked for any conflicts of interest. None were received.

**1. REPORT OF THE LIBRARIES MANAGER**

The Committee perused the report from the Library Manager, together with a letter received from the Southland District Council library manager about the Bookbus service.

The Manager provided a brief overview of the history of the Bookbus service that dated back to the time of the 1989 local authorities' amalgamation. Membership had been free.

She said the potentially affected schools were devastated about the loss of the Bookbus service that contributed to student literary skills and she thought there would be repercussions from the effected communities. A reasonably urgent

response was required to be sent back to the Southland District Library. She suggested a lesser amount than the \$6,000 per stop could be offered for the most used stops in the first instance.

The Chief Executive said His Worship had approached the Southland District Mayor about concerns over what had been contemplated. He appreciated from the Southland District Council's view that it was looking at withdrawing some Bookbus services in its own community, so could be reluctant to continuing funding the service in the Gore District. However it needed to bear in mind the Council had historically made the services and expertise of its Arts and Heritage Curator available free of charge to the Southland District Council.

He said the Library Manager was looking for direction. The Council could formulate a view for the Manager to communicate onto Southland District Council staff. Alternatively it could encourage both effected communities to submit to both Council annual plan processes.

In response to Cr Sharp, the Manager confirmed the Bookbus visited the area on a monthly basis.

Cr Byars said the Bookbus should be encouraged for all districts including Willowbank as population numbers came and went in small communities. It was a service that needed to be kept going if possible. It was good that the Council was going back to get some more discussion from the politicians.

Cr Highsted said the issue showed a lack of a spirit of cooperation amongst the councils. He could not see where the mindset had come from and would like to see the service continue as it was. Due to boundaries there was bound to be crossovers. The Council should reply a strong no.

Cr Page agreed and said the matter should be taken up at a political level.

Cr Byars asked how the situation affected the libraries shared services agreement between the Southland Councils.

The Chief Executive said there was a reciprocal arrangement to free shared access across the library services.

The Manager said there was a group of libraries from Waitaki south that met regularly and borrowed books from each other and members could utilise services at another district as long provided their home address.

Cr Sharp suggested the Chief Executive talk to the Southland District Council staff and negotiates a better rate for the service to continue.

Cr Highsted said the focus on any discussion should focus on the spirit of cooperation rather than a monetary rate. There was a bigger picture to consider and the Shared Services agreement needed to be borne in mind.

**RECOMMENDED on the motion of Cr Dixon, seconded by Cr Beale THAT the Council expresses its concern about the lack of cooperation exhibited in the proposal of the Southland District Council to impose an additional charge on the Bookbus service that serviced the rural community,**

**AND THAT the thoughts be conveyed to the Southland District Council formally to look at addressing this matter.**

**RECOMMENDED on the motion of Cr Highsted, seconded by Cr Byars, THAT the report be received.**

**2. REPORT OF THE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR (SC0072)**

The Committee perused the report from the Youth Development Coordinator, together with the report of Gore District Youth Council meeting held on Monday 31 March.

The Coordinator advised the Youth Council were holding an ice party that weekend and had held an interschool social. It was on track to meet Ministry of Youth funding requirements.

The Chief Executive said the Coordinator had slotted in very well to her role and the Council was very appreciative of her services. The Youth Council had gone from strength to strength in recent years and was already very involved in the current year's initiatives.

**RECOMMENDED on the motion of Cr Sharp, seconded by Cr Bolger, THAT the report be received.**

**3. REPORT OF THE DISTRICT ARTS AND HERITAGE CURATOR**

The Committee perused the report from the Arts and Heritage Curator.

In response to Cr Beale, the Curator said the exhibition from China had proved very popular with people travelling from as far as Auckland to view the exhibition. Final visitor figures were yet to be confirmed.

**RECOMMENDED on the motion of Cr Dixon, seconded by Cr Byars, THAT the report be received.**

**4. REPORT OF THE MIGRANT SERVICES COORDINATOR (SC0044)**

The Committee perused the report from the Communications Coordinator.

The Chief Executive said the Coordinator's reports gave an invaluable insight into the on the ground work she carried out to help smooth the process for new immigrants arriving in the community. Without that support they could well flounder in settling in.

**RECOMMENDED on the motion of Cr Sharp, seconded by Cr Page, THAT the report be received.**

**5. TIDIEST STREET COMPETITION**

A memo had been received from the Parks and Recreation Manager requesting three Councillors along with the Community Development Officer be nominated to take part in a working party to put a plan in place to revive the tidiest street competition for the district. The working party would also comprise of three Maitāura Community Board members.

**RECOMMENDED on the motion of Cr Dixon, seconded by Cr Beale, THAT the information be received,**

**AND THAT Crs Page, Gover and D Grant and the Community Development Officer be appointed to the Tidiest Street Competition working party.**

Cr Beale suggested the tidiest street signs be removed after a certain period of time.

**6. SPORT SOUTHLAND (BIANNUAL REPORT) (SC0331)**

A memo had been received from the Parks and Recreation Manager together with a copy of the Eastern Southland biannual report compiled by the Eastern Southland's Sport Southland Co-ordinator, Harley Ware.

**RECOMMENDED on the motion of Cr Highsted, seconded by Cr Dixon, THAT the report be received.**

**7. REPORT OF THE AQUATIC SERVICES MANAGER**

The Committee perused the report from the Aquatics Services Manager.

The Parks and Recreation Manager said the Otago Southland Dairy Awards evening had been a good event enjoyed by all. It was great to see the stadium being used for events.

Cr Sharp said it was disappointing to note that only four replies had been received from the Maitāura school survey about why the Maitāura pool was not being utilised a lot by local residents.

In response to Cr Beale asking if the Council actively marketed the stadium as a venue for hire nationally, the Manager said it advertised at a regional level. It worked closely with colleagues from the Invercargill pool also.

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

#### **8. REPORT OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION MANAGER**

The Committee perused the report from the Parks and Recreation Manager.

The report included statistics of revenue received from campers at Dolamore Park over the past three years, that had been requested by Crs at a previous Community Services meeting.

The Manager said the aquatic centre shutdown was scheduled to occur that Friday night and the process would take five weeks. The budget to date was on track. The work streams had been tendered. Investigation work would commence the following week.

Cr Sharp said he was still receiving complaints from people about the lack of parking available at the multisports complex in the weekends.

Cr Grant said it was a Gore thing. People did not like walking.

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

#### **9. REPORT OF THE GORE VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE MANAGER**

The Committee perused the report from the Information Centre Manager.

The Chief Executive said the impact from the Seven Sharp news programme had been fantastic with visitors seeking out the gallery.

Cr Grant said the Information Centre sign at the bottom of Medway Street did not point in the right direction. A nearby accountancy firm often received queries from visitors to the town looking for the information centre.

**RECOMMENDED on the motion of Cr Byars, seconded by Cr Sharp, THAT the report be received.**

#### **10. REPORT OF THE COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR**

The Committee perused the report from the Communications Coordinator.

The Coordinator said it was amazing that a post about the Livestock Supplies fire on the Council's Facebook page had peaked at 16,500 views. The number of followers of the Council's Facebook page had reached 861.

The Chief Executive said the Coordinator's position touched on all aspects of the Council's operations. With the Council now having its own Facebook page, the community were certainly much more informed than before the arrival of the Coordinator.

Cr Sharp said he would like to see costings around providing a SMS text messaging to the community.

The Coordinator said she would prepare a report for the Council.

Cr Sharp said he had asked for information about that a year ago.

He said a SMS text messaging service could have been effective at the time of the Livestock Supplies fire. He had a seven year old child affected by fumes from the fire stay at his home for three days after a doctor told his mother to remove him from the area.

He asked why Civil Defence had not been called out.

Cr Grant said it was not deemed necessary.

The General Manager, District Assets said the Fire Department had command of the incident and liaised with Civil Defence. He had kept in constant contact with Mr Neil Cruickshank from Emergency Management Southland. Provision had been made for people who were evacuated and had nowhere to go. Questions were asked about the toxicity of the smoke. The only concern was the particulate in the smoke that could cause harm to people. Advice given to roading people was to wear dust masks because of the particulate. The danger of the toxicity of smoke was not raised. Civil Defence personnel were alongside the fire getting ready to get into a state of further preparedness if required to act.

In reply to Cr Sharp, the General Manager advised that a local supermarket, hotel and church were closed.

Cr Sharp said locals he had spoken to had not been aware of the fire and a text messaging system would have prevented that.

Cr Byars said cell phone users had to give permission to the Council to be put onto a text data base. In an emergency knocking on residents doors was the only guarantee of communication. The key thing was to hit as many people as possible through different options.

In response to Cr Grant, the General Manager said a civil defence siren was not seen as a viable option for warning people of an emergency. Emergency Management Southland were currently investigating different technical options available including smart phone alerts to warn people about emergencies or hazards. If a state of emergency had been declared, Civil Defence would have handled the situation. People needed to take care of themselves too and previous disasters had shown people coped well for up to three days looking after themselves.

The Coordinator said if there was a civil defence emergency, there were Public Information Managers (PIMS) that would be called in. She was a PIMS person and there were various ways they would use to get information out electronically to the public. Civil Defence were currently looking at the pros and cons around introducing a SMS service.

Cr Beale said the emergency services had coped very well following the Livestock Supplies fire. Elderly residents in the community were the most vulnerable and they used the radio for information. It was still the best communication tool.

Cr Bolger suggested the Council approach Civil Defence and see where it was at with the introduction of a service.

The General Manager said texting had migrated into cell phone applications for Civil Defence and was evolving.

**RECOMMENDED on the motion of Cr Highsted, seconded by Cr Byars, THAT the report be received.**

The meeting concluded at 5.19pm.