

REPORT OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 29 CIVIC AVENUE, GORE ON TUESDAY 3 JUNE 2014, AT 4.47PM.

PRESENT His Worship the Mayor (Mr Tracy Hicks, JP), Cr Beale (Chairperson), Crs Bolger, Byars, Dixon, Gover, 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), Roding Manager (Mr Murray Hasler), 3 Waters Asset Manager (Mrs Sarah Crooks), Chief Financial Officer (Mr Luke Blackbeard), Communications Coordinator (Sonia Gerken), Senior Planner (Mr Howard Alchin) Building Control Manager (Mr Russell Paterson) (from 4.59pm), Senior Regulatory Officer (Mrs Frances Shepherd) (from 4.59pm) and Corporate Support Officers (Mrs Tracey Millan and Mrs Kylie Weir).

APOLOGIES Crs P Grant and Davis apologised for absence.

Cr Beale asked for any conflicts of interest. None were received.

1. MATAURA RAILWAY STATION – SEISMIC ASSESSMENT (P/F)

A report had been received from the Parks and Recreation Manager together with a copy of an email notification from Kiwirail of the % National Building Standard (NBS) rating for the Mataura Railway Station, a letter from the tenant of the building and a copy of the Kiwirail sign posted at the property.

In response to Cr Beale asking what the liability could be for the Council if the tenant continued with the current lease and a chimney on the building was to collapse, the Chief Executive said he would be reluctant to offer advice on the spot. He would prefer to present a report to the Council and said he was somewhat troubled that there were a number of buildings in the district that had less than 33% seismic assessments attached to them. The building in question was frequented by members of the public. There were several shades of grey surrounding the issue.

His Worship asked what the pressure around the timing of the issue was. The views of the people, the Mataura community and the Mataura Community Board, needed

to be considered. They were the people intimately involved with the railway station building and its future. Whilst the Council had an obligation to find out the liabilities, it needed to also understand what the building's future looked like.

In response to Cr Page asking how the Council had come to be leasing the building, the Manager said the lease had started in the MEDCO days in the 1990s and had progressed through to Council ownership of the lease. The Matura Community Board had met with the Kiwirail Lease Manager earlier in the year and Kiwirail had agreed to undertake an earthquake assessment and a conservation report on the entire premises. The building was over 100 years old.

His Worship said the building was one of the best of its kind in the country from an architectural perspective that still remained.

In response to His Worship, the Manager confirmed a shunter's room in the building was still deemed operational and power was still connected.

Cr Gover asked if removing and replacing or strengthening the brick chimneys was an option.

The Manager said Kiwirail was looking at possible options. The historical significance attached to the building needed to be considered.

RECOMMENDED on the motion of Cr Grant, seconded by Cr Page, THAT the information be received,

AND THAT the Council defer making a decision until the Chief Executive has provided a report detailing the issues that need to be considered.

In response to Cr Highsted, the Parks and Recreation Manager said the intention would be to maintain the lease with the current tenant on a month to month basis until the Council received the report and were able to make a decision.

2. REPORT OF 3 WATERS ASSET MANAGER

The Committee perused the report from the 3 Waters Asset Manager.

Cr Beale acknowledged Council staff for their quick action in constructing a bund to prevent the leaching of contaminants into the river during the recent fire at Livestock Supplies. He also congratulated Mr Mick Fitzgerald on celebrating 25 years employment at the Gore District Council.

The Manager concurred with Cr Beale. Mr Fitzgerald was an excellent and valued team member.

The Building Control Manager and Senior Regulatory Officer now attended the meeting at 4.59pm.

Cr Sharp said he had asked for a report several months ago about the open drain problem at Racecourse Road. Septic tanks ran into an open drain that caused an awful smell. The drainage officer had prepared a report five or six years ago but nothing had been done to rectify the problem that had been ongoing for 13 years. If a dairy farmer operated like that, he would be literally fried by Quality Assurance, Fonterra, Environment Southland and the Council.

The Chief Executive said the issue was somewhat wider than a localised drainage issue. Discussions had been ongoing about the effluent soakage problems at Racecourse Road for some 20 years now and workshops had been held about putting in a system to rectify the problems. However it had not resulted in a conclusive view of how much local people would contribute to get to a solution. Further clouding a solution was that the same group of people had made it clear in the Long Term Plan submission process that they were rural ratepayers wanting urban reticulation. There were a number of issues that needed to be resolved. The Council had been dealing with more pressing problems such as the West Gore drainage issue. He could provide a report to the Council, but that would require robust discussion about where the Council's responsibility started and stopped in that area.

The General Manager District Assets said if the Council had gone ahead with what had been discussed five years ago, modelling had since proven that it would not have worked. The effluent could have been pumped to the pump station, but it would not have been able to pump it away due a capacity issue with the Ajax pump station. The Council needed to be mindful of all the issues in the greater context of where that particular issue sat.

In response to Cr Sharp, His Worship said it would be more beneficial if issues such as the Racecourse Road drainage problem were provided in writing to enable staff to have an opportunity to answer all questions surrounding the issue. Putting a debate on issues that held a lot of financial significance to the Council could lead a solution that was not the best in the long run.

If the Council and community had gone ahead and adopted a resolution around the issue some years ago, in hindsight it would not have been able to deal with it so the problem would have come before the Council again. If someone needed information from the Council, a request should be documented so that everyone knew what was being asked.

Cr Sharp said the message he was passing on from a ratepayer was that he wanted the open stinking drain fixed.

Cr Bolger said there was a huge history and a lot of information around the issue. He suggested as an interim short term measure the drain could be cleaned to drop the water table.

Cr Sharp said that would not solve the issue.

Cr Bolger said it would drop the water table in the first instance. A permanent solution would be a lengthy and expensive issue.

The Chief Executive said he would supply a report on the wider issue to the Council that would set out what the challenges were. Ultimately it was an engineering and funding dilemma.

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

3. REPORT FROM ROADING MANAGER

The Committee perused the report from the Roading Manager.

In response to Cr Beale, the Manager said there were eight new underpasses under construction throughout the District that were due to be completed by October. He added several projects had been completed over the last few weeks despite the inclement weather.

In response to Cr Dixon asking why the Council was giving ratepayer money to farmers to help improve their farms, the Manager said more than half of the subsidy came from the New Zealand Transport Agency. In its view, underpasses were a public benefit in terms of both the safety and convenience aspects.

Cr Dixon said the Council was still paying \$5-6,000 toward each underpass. It was a farmer's responsibility to keep the roads clean from debris stock left behind.

In response to Cr Bolger, the Manager confirmed that the funding towards the underpasses came from the rural rating pool, not the district rating pool.

In response to Cr Dixon, the Manager said the Council generally provided \$3,000-\$5,000 on average towards the construction of an underpass. Stock on public roads caused a number of complaints received from the public around safety. An underpass eliminated the potential safety hazard.

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

The meeting closed at 5.17pm.