

MINUTES

TITLE: Corporate Services Committee
DATE: Thursday 19 March 2009
TIME: 9.30 am
VENUE: Tasman Council Chambers, 189 Queen Street, Richmond
PRESENT: Cr T B King (Chair), Mayor R G Kempthorne, Crs T E Norriss, M J Higgins, E J Wilkins, J L Inglis, S J Borlase, N Riley, R G Currie, S G Bryant, G A Glover, J L Edgar, B W Ensor, B F Dowler
IN ATTENDANCE: Corporate Services Manager (M W Staite), Accounting Manager (R Holden), Information Services Manager (P Darlington), Executive Assistant (V M Gribble)

1 TOURISM NELSON TASMAN LTD

Chief Executive Paul Davis and Charlotte Bidlake, Manager of Information Centres were in attendance to provide a briefing and powerpoint presentation for Councillors on the operations of the Company.

Ms Bidlake said three years ago Motueka invested in a point of sales system and hosts local operators onto the database. Motueka i-site has 140,000 foot traffic count and the manager provides a report to Tourism Nelson Tasman. Regional meetings are held with Top of the South i-sites which includes Motueka.

Mr Davis said in return for funding, Tasman Bay Promotions provides quarterly reports to Tourism Nelson Tasman Ltd.

Cr Riley spoke about the problem with freedom campers.

Ms Bidlake said i-sites have information to provide to freedom campers so they know where they can camp.

Cr Wilkins asked in the event of the tourism rate being thrown out, has Tourism Nelson Tasman any alternative plans.

Mr Davis said they would need to cut back services.

Cr Edgar asked what Tourism Nelson Tasman are doing to attract internet traffic.

Mr Davis said NZ.Com has operated for several years and they have a monthly contract with Hothouse. The use of social networking is starting and they have audiovisual promotions on YouTube. It is about getting Nelson Tasman on other websites. We are wanting to have an online marketing position.

Ms Bidlake said the funding for the new events position is coming from Nelson City Council and will focus on events like Nelson Arts Festival.

Cr Borlase commented on the 9% reduction in foot traffic and said in Golden Bay they consider there are more people around and camping grounds have been full.

Cr Glover asked about promoting events and if they are finding areas like Richmond are short of accommodation and that it is primarily Nelson-based.

Mr Davis said there is plenty of accommodation most of the year in the Nelson/Tasman Region area.

Mr Davis said they have just recently reviewed what they do in Australia, and will travel there more and add some travel shows.

Cr Ensor, key areas for growth is conference market and extending shoulder market. What sort of increase in numbers and what sort of dollars.

Mr Davis, we haven't done figures. We can do lots of medium-sized conferences.

Cr Currie said ratepayers have paid a lot of money putting in dump sites for visitors with campervans and they don't get any return from that. Would it be possible for Tourism New Zealand to require a charge on companies providing campervans?

Mr Davis said a green tax was floated by the previous government to levy international visitors and that money was to be used on infrastructure like dump sites. The tourism industry knows about the problems with freedom campers. It is a cost right throughout the country. The bigger problem is campervans that are not self-contained. DOC are funded by central government and collect a lot of money off the tourism industry to operate the national parks.

Cr Dowler said the proposed tourism levy has been received very negatively, especially in Motueka.

Mr Davis said feedback from significant tourism businesses after it has been explained to them has been good. A schedule of meetings has been set up to communicate what the proposed tourism levy is all about and how much it will be.

Cr King asked if Tourism Nelson Tasman is concerned about negative publicity because of freedom campers and asked how Council can fix the problem.

Mr Davis said there is an industry advocacy lobby group who have formed a freedom camping group working on the issue, putting up a website, targeting visitors with rules. All territorial local bodies throughout New Zealand have different freedom camping rules. We contacted Nelson Mail and referred them to the existing website and they didn't publish it. We need to be more proactive and go to see the editor at Nelson Mail.

Cr King, rugby world cup and games being scheduled here and team being based here. Some information would suggest that although it brings a large amount of tourists, there can be downside risk because other travellers say they won't go there because costs are higher etc.

In reply to a question from Cr King about the rugby world cup and games being scheduled here, Mr Davis said it has been estimated between 60,000 and 80,000 will be visiting New Zealand. At time of year the world cup is being played they can be easily absorbed. Tourism Nelson Tasman does as much as it can to maximise publicity. The main benefit is not economic spend but about media exposure world-wide.

2 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

2.1 Corporate Services Committee – 29 January 2009

**Moved Crs Riley/Borlase
FN09/03/08**

THAT the minutes of the Corporate Services Committee meeting held on 29 January 2009 containing resolutions numbered FN09/01/01 to FN09/01/14 be received.

CARRIED

2.2 Council Enterprises Subcommittee – 11 February 2009

**Moved Crs Inglis/Riley
FN09/03/09**

THAT the minutes of the Council Enterprises Subcommittee meeting held on 11 February 2009 containing resolutions numbered FN09/01/01 to FN09/01/13 be received.

CARRIED

3 REPORTS

3.1 Chairperson

Cr King spoke to his report which was contained in the agenda. He commented about the huge amount of work that has gone into compiling the Long Term Council Community Plan.

**Moved Crs Bryant/Riley
FN09/03/10**

THAT the Chairperson's report dated 13 March 2009 be received.

CARRIED

3.2 Strategic Development Manager

S Edwards was in attendance to speak about the LTCCP consultation process and requirements of Council and staff. She advised there will be a briefing for both community boards in Motueka on Tuesday 31 March 2009. It was proposed to hold

iwi consultation on 31 March 2009 but with Mayor Kempthorne and Cr Norriss not able to attend, staff will try to find a new date for this consultation.

3.3 Disaster Fund

Mr Staite spoke to the report contained in the agenda that considered revision of the criteria surrounding Council's general disaster fund.

Cr Bryant was concerned about the steady decline in the general disaster fund which has been used by Engineering Services, and also about transferring funds from the Rivers Disaster Fund which was set up from the special Port Nelson dividend. He was particularly concerned about the affect on Tapawera and Murchison if there was a bad flood.

Mr Staite said the river disaster fund is for works within the river bed and roads and bridges would be replaced from the general disaster fund. The LAPP fund has never been tested by Tasman District Council, but it has been used by other councils.

Cr Higgins understood the rivers disaster fund was to cover flood damage and the debate could extend into bridges and pipes that run alongside rivers. He said \$5 million could easily be spent after a big flood and that is why the fund was set up. He said he has challenged the Engineering department over the years when requests have been brought to Council for use of funds from the disaster funds.

Mr Staite said when the fund was first set up Council wasn't part of the LAPP fund which covers river damage and pipes, but not roading. Engineering requests come back to Corporate Services for confirmation.

Cr Borlase was concerned about taking money out of the rivers disaster fund.

Mr Staite said both engineering and parks and reserves should be putting money aside for restoration from storm events.

Cr Inglis suggested the money should be used to offset rates with a facility in place to borrow money if it was needed.

Cr King said since the time the funds were set up 12 years ago, the LAPP fund has been set up and rivers fund has been claimed on less. Having rivers disaster fund of around \$1m which would cover the excess claim on LAPP fund appears reasonable. Over time the general disaster fund is the one that is likely to be higher than rivers because the LAPP fund doesn't cover roading.

Cr Higgins left the meeting at 11.30 am.

Cr Currie said Engineering should be required to repay money it takes from the fund.

Mr Staite said the disaster fund can be used by any department of Council. He said no department is required to repay money used from the disaster fund, but they will be required to pay the first \$200,000 of any event, up from \$100,000.

Cr Norriss said Engineering previously put \$100,000 into the disasters fund each year but Council decided not to continue the practice. He supported the recommendation.

**Moved Crs King/Wilkins
FN09/03/11**

THAT:

- a) the general disaster fund contingency threshold be lifted to \$200,000;
and
- b) \$500,000 be transferred from the rivers disaster fund to the general disaster fund.

CARRIED

3.4 Finance Department Update

Accounting Manager, Mr R Holden, was in attendance to speak to his report which was contained in the agenda.

Mayor Kempthorne arrived at 11.43 am.

Mr Holden advised that Cam Fraei has been appointed to the position of Rates Officer and interviews for the Rates Clerk take place next week.

**Moved Crs Currie/Ensor
FN09/03/12**

**THAT the Finance Department report dated 12 March 2009 be received.
CARRIED**

Rates Officer Anthea Campbell attended the meeting.

Cr King thanked Anthea for the work she has undertaken in her role as Rates Officer and on behalf of Council wished her well for the future.

3.5 Information Services Update

Mr Darlington presented his report which was contained in the agenda. He commented on Yellowfin reporting, regional broadband, telephone software upgrade, regional civil defence and NZ Copyright Act Amendment Section 92A.

New GIS Analyst Terry O'Donnell commenced work with Council on 2 March 2009 and Systems Administrator Daryl Kearns will be taking a year's leave from April 2009.

**Moved Crs Borlase/Edgar
FN09/03/13**

THAT the Information Services Manager's report dated 10 March 2009 be received.

CARRIED

3.6 Corporate Services Manager

Mr Staite spoke to his report which was contained in the agenda. He commented on Financials for December 2008. He reported on Treasury functions at February 2009.

Cr Riley left the meeting at 12.05 pm.

Cr Norriss asked for an update on the self insurance funds.

3.6.1 Small Audits and Reviews

Council staff have provided a service to many small organisations over the years by providing a free audit or review. Mr Staite said Council does not carry insurance to cover the potential for staff errors in the audit process. If Council was to limit the audits/reviews to those organisations primarily administering a Council asset, 12 organisations would need to seek the services of another audit provider.

Mr Staite said if organisations have their own external auditor it would be appropriate for them to continue with that auditor.

Cr King asked that letters be written to the organisations advising why Council will no longer be available to audit/review their books.

**Moved Crs Edgar/Glover
FN09/03/14**

THAT Council staff provide audit or review services only to those organisations that are primarily administering a Council asset for Tasman District Council.

CARRIED

**Moved Cr Borlase/Mayor Kempthorne
FN09/03/15**

THAT the Corporate Services Manager's report dated 9 March 2009 be received.

CARRIED

3.7 District Revaluation Audit

Mr Staite presented the report contained in the agenda. The purpose of the report was to receive the audit report on the latest district revaluation.

**Moved Crs Bryant/Edgar
FN09/03/16**

THAT the District Revaluation Audit report dated 13 March 2009 be received.

CARRIED

4 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT – JANUARY AND FEBRUARY 2009

**Moved Crs Norriss/Borlase
FN09/03/17**

**THAT the accounts for January 2009 and February 2009 be approved for
payment.
CARRIED**

The meeting concluded at 12.22 pm.

Chair:

Date: