

STAFF REPORT

TO: Mayor and Councillors
FROM: Manager Community Services
DATE: 26 April 2007
SUBJECT: Trafalgar Park Development and Portable Seating

PURPOSE/REASON FOR REPORT

At the 22 March 2007 Council meeting the following resolution was passed after receiving a deputation from the Tasman Rugby Union (TRU).

“THAT Crs Riley and Norriss together with one Tasman District Council staff member and one other person from outside, investigate and report back as soon as possible on what could be obtained in the way of temporary seating within the current budget.”

A recommendation from this Working Group is detailed at the end of this report.

BACKGROUND

Both the Nelson City Council and the Tasman District Council have previously expressed support for the Tasman Rugby Union’s desire to stage first division rugby events at Trafalgar Park.

The LTCCP shows the project cost at \$3.1 million and the Regional Funding Forum had recommended that the two Councils contribution be \$2.2 million with Tasman District Council’s share of this being \$720,000. This was to be funded through the Regional Facilities Rate in the 2007/08 financial year.

As advised by the TRU on 22 March, they needed to invest substantially into their stadium in Blenheim so as to host games last season and this has meant that they could not put funds into Trafalgar Park at this stage.

PRESENT SITUATION

The following is an extract from a joint letter that went to Nelson City from this Council and the Tasman Bay Rugby Union.

“The present situation is that the Nelson City Council is committed to the expenditure of \$1,564.500 for the provision of 1,200 additional uncovered seats with the balance of funds being applied to media facilities etc. Trafalgar Park presently has 1,000 covered seats.

For its part the Tasman District Council had indicated that due to the difficulties in confirming the joint funding arrangements it is not prepared to proceed with its original proposal to provide a direct grant. However Tasman District Council is prepared to fund the purchase of removable uncovered seating in a configuration which would allow for Trafalgar Park to meet the standards required by the New Zealand Rugby Union for the operation of first division rugby games.

Tasman Rugby Union remains committed to meeting those costs directly associated with the provision of first class rugby games at Trafalgar Park. In negotiations with the New Zealand Rugby it has established concessions which will allow for the deferment of requirements such as night lighting. The Tasman Rugby Union is also able to provide temporary broadcasting facilities thereby removing the immediate need for the Nelson City Council to provide these facilities on a permanent basis.

In simple terms the present proposed seating configuration will not meet the requirements for 2,000 covered seats and 3,000 uncovered seats. However it does appear possible that subject to the agreement of all parties the seating arrangements responsibilities of the two councils could be rearranged to achieve a satisfactory configuration.”

The joint letter went onto recommend to Nelson City that they reconfigure their design to increase the number of covered seats to at least 2,000 and then the Tasman District Council tailor the purchase of portable uncovered seats to ensure that the total configuration required by the New Zealand Rugby Union of 2,000 covered seats and 3,000 uncovered seats can be provided for Tasman Makos games.

While the actions of the two councils would create the basic infrastructure necessary, this proposal will only proceed if the Tasman Rugby Union and the New Zealand Rugby Union can confirm that at least two Makos games per annum for the next two years can be played at Trafalgar Park. The Tasman Rugby Union will also accept responsibility for all temporary broadcast facilities and all other one-off costs associated with the operation first division rugby games at Trafalgar Park. While bookings for Trafalgar Park would continue to be handled by the Nelson City Council, the Tasman Rugby Union will accept full responsibility for all costs associated with its role as promoter of the Mako games in the Nelson region. Neither council will be required to provide further funding either by way of direct grants or underwriting of activities.

At the Nelson City Council meeting on Thursday 12 April 2007, the request was considered and the following resolution was passed:

“THAT the resolution of 1 March 2007 regarding the upgrade of Trafalgar Park viz:

THAT the sum of up to \$1,564,500 budgeted in the LTCCP for the upgrade of Trafalgar Park be used for the provision of grandstands providing approximately 1200 additional seating with the balance used to provide a new media facility;

AND THAT the development costing prepared by the Trafalgar Park Project Managers, Grant Hunt Building Associates Ltd, be adopted in principle;

AND THAT construction works begin as soon as possible;

AND THAT the Tasman Rugby Union and the Tasman District Council be encouraged to contribute toward future development and that if the Park is classified as a regional facility that this work be taken into account in any future funding calculations

be varied to provide as follows in respect of the first part of the resolution:

THAT the sum of up to \$1,564,500 budgeted in the LTCCP for the upgrade of Trafalgar Park be used for the provision of grandstands providing a minimum of 1,000 covered seats.”

COMMENT/DISCUSSION

This decision by Nelson City now requires Tasman District to consider the purchase of 3,000 uncovered portable seats and Crs Riley and Norriss have continued with their investigation of these and can now report:

- (a) That they are satisfied that the standard and quality of the portable seat systems which are based on a scaffold substructure which can be configured in numerous ways with plastic bucket seats, grip tread decks and stairwells (copy of photograph attached).
- (b) Such seating is very flexible and can be adapted to accommodate any changes at Trafalgar Park. They can also be used for different events and venues such as Opera in the Park and other sporting events throughout the district.
- (c) The systems have also been used as long term structures such as Mount Smart Stadium in Auckland which has had in place a 5,000 seat portable system for nearly 15 years.
- (d) Although no written quotation has yet been received from the suppliers, the price is estimated to be \$152 plus GST per seat, times 3,000 seats = \$456,000 plus GST. As indicated earlier in this report, \$720,000 has been allocated under the Regional Facilities Rate in the 2007/08 year for Trafalgar Park.

- (e) There is a 10 week delivery from time of order which means that the seats would need to be ordered in early May to be sure that they would be delivered in time to be erected for the 2007 Tasman Makos games.
- (f) Storage could be provided for the seats at a number of locations within Tasman District Council and if necessary this could be in containers or a large shed. Alternatively, they could be erected on various sports fields throughout the district when not required at Trafalgar Park eg 500 at Jubilee Park, 500 at Brightwater etc.
- (g) Consideration has also been given to the possible requirement for 20% of the cost to be provided by the users.

This proposal is quite different to other allocations such as the hockey water turf, the Saxtons Field Stadium and the Moutere Hills facility, as the seats are being purchased for various sports and events, they are not being left in any one facility and they will continue to belong to the Council.

Therefore the purchase of portable seats could be likened to Council using the Regional Facilities Rate to purchase land and develop Saxtons Field without any 20% funding. The Working Group therefore considers that the total cost should be met by Council. However any net revenue received from the hireage of the seats could be returned to the Regional Facilities Rate account.

- (h) Further investigation will be carried out on the best method of managing the portable seats.

SIGNIFICANCE

The proposal is not significant under the Council's policy on significance.

AFFECTED PARTIES

As the funds have been allocated in the 2007/08 LTCCP, there would be no affected persons/parties to this proposal.

OPTIONS

The options available to Council are:

- (a) To decline the proposal to purchase 3,000 portable seats for use at Trafalgar Park and other venues. This would mean that the Nelson City Council would need to reconsider their recent decision to build 1,000 covered seats and the Tasman Makos team would not be playing at Trafalgar Park.

- (b) To agree to the purchase of 3,000 portable seats for use at Trafalgar Park and other venues.

This would then make it possible for the Tasman Makos to play representative games on Trafalgar Park and provide seating for many other events throughout the region. It will also ensure the Nelson/Tasman public of first class games in Nelson and assist the Tasman Rugby Union in retaining sponsors from this region who quite rightly expect games in Nelson.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council agree to purchase 3,000 portable seats for use at Trafalgar Park and other venues at a total cost of between \$456,000 and \$500,000 plus GST and that Crs Riley and Norriss along with appropriate staff:

- (a) Have power to accept the final quotation.
- (b) Continue to investigate the best means of managing the hire, usage and storage of the seats.

L L Kennedy
Manager Community Services