

# Northland Regional Council meeting - 19th July 2011

[LINK to appropriate Agenda.](#)

[LINK to picture](#) of front meeting table by 5 year old Hayden (our grandson)

It was 1300hrs, when Chairman Craig Brown welcomes all and informs the meeting that an additional item on the Kaitaia Bus Service, is with their approval, to be heard at the end of the meeting.

There were no apologies received for Item No.1.0. with the absence of Cr Ian Walker duly noted. *He arrived shortly after as he had been held up momentarily outside of the meeting.*

Craig Brown begins the meeting reminding them that Item No. 2.0 that any '**Conflicts of Interest**' were to be advised item by item as they progressed through the agenda and they would be dealt with accordingly and then decide any action to be taken.

He continues by covering some general house-keeping, explaining the location of comfort stations to visitors and 'emergency evacuation procedures' and exits.

Mr Brown also made comment that he had noticed Cr John Bain had his microphone turned off. This was interesting as we had witnessed Dean Alderton, Building and Facilities Manager who had systematically placed all the microphones in place and switched them all on preceding the meeting. *Still suffering from microphone phobia John, or don't you want to be heard?*

Item No. 3.0. There was to be no presentations at today's meeting. Mr Dave Jones advised that Sarah Boon was present for item No. 4.8 Arts Promotion Trust and available for any questions.

## 4.0 COUNCIL AND CEO'S OFFICE

It was now Item No. 4.1 Confirmation of Minutes – 21 June 2011 (1301hrs)

Cr Tony Davies-Colley had a query regarding the Handover of the Events Centre to WDC in regards as to why the letter was not attached to the agenda.

Craig Brown explained that it was signed and now with the WDC.

General Manager CEO's Office and Projects, Linda Stansfield confirmed it was signed, to approve the handover with a couple of small alterations.

Cr Graeme Ramsey, asking if he had to look into the microphone or just talk into it, had a request for information but it wasn't in the minutes. He wanted to make sure points don't get lost. *You are right Graeme, sometimes it's the way things are said and the context they are said in, that can place a very different perspective on the feeling*

*towards items being discussed, but stating 'the report is received' can miss just so much of the real truth of the matter.*

Cr Bronwyn Hunt required that a small change be made on page 5 of the minutes.

Item No. 4.2 Chairman's Report to Council at 1306hrs. Required no discussion

Cr Graeme Ramsey asked again of the minutes of the last Mayoral Forum as to date he had only received one of a number. *They are either not worth having or they don't want you to know what the subjects discussed are.*

Craig Brown informed it is up to the last host of the meeting to supply minutes. Acting Chief Executive Tony Phipps confirmed it was up to Kaipara to send. *Last meeting was held at Kaipara; could they be on Dargaville time?*

Cr Tony Davies-Colley enquired that without minutes was there anything pertinent that came out.

Craig Brown informed that criticism from some certain sectors had smoothed over.

Nothing concrete at all, they were informal meetings to help the left hand know what the right hand was doing. There may be changes in the future and he will keep you posted.

Item No. 4.3 Chief Executive Officer's Report to the Council at 1311hrs.

Tony Phipps advised the report was to advise and give a long term plan.

Cr Joe Carr queried about water quality in Hokianga (page 31)

Riaan Elliot, Monitoring Senior Programme Manager answered that it was not normal but if it was a problem continued, monitoring could be looked at.

Tony Phipps informed that the District Health board would normally undertake this process.

Cr Tony Davies-Colley felt it was 'like a story being told; but with no outcomes'

Riaan Elliot informed that it was to give detail about processes in place for the present batches of resource consents. He also gave a brief update on the Whangarei Harbour process to date.

Tony Davies-Colley claimed that is a good result but it should be in the agenda.

Joe Carr asked if it was epidermal logical work. *Now Joe you are using big words that we have to look up in the encyclopaedia. Is that why there were some blank faces around the room.*

Riaan Elliot explained that if it was deemed that they need to do it; we would do it. We must be neutral in the process.

Craig Brown (in reference to page 29) on Aquaculture believed it was a way forward in Northland. He wanted the political arm of council, to be informed by the relevant people, working in this area.

Bronwyn Hunt said it was important to consult with iwi on the subject of aquaculture.

Cr Ian Walker understood that central government was keen to explore this any asked whether the offer had been made to Northland.

Tony Davies-Colley had a query on page 35, in regards to FNDC.

Riaan Elliot gave an insight into the situation.

Tony Davies-Colley, directing to Craig Brown, said 'you were looking for things to discuss in the Mayoral Forum'

Craig Brown, indicating that 'the point is taken; this is not the first time this has been raised at council by staff and council. In his opinion 'we should be using the stick not the carrot; whether it is human or dairy effluent'

Graeme Ramsey (page 43, Whangarei Heads Kiwi Predator Control) He confirmed he hadn't supported this as the information indicated it was a long term dependence on council funding; not a plan over time.

It was now Item No. 4.4 Councillor Workshops and Training at 1332hrs.

Cr Bill Rossiter claimed he had been to the Asset Management workshop, felt it was more for District councils, but was keen to go again. *Go Willy, all these cups of tea may not be too good for you.*

Cr Bronwyn Hunt believed the Asset Management workshop may be advantageous in the future, what with shared facilities, there may be some plant assets. *Do I feel some type of Unitary Authority Asset share coming on? It may well be very good for Northland if done for the right reasons and not allowing egos get in the way as previously displayed by some, in the circus ring.*

It was now Item No. 4.5 Quorum for Committees (1335hrs)

Craig Brown believed councillors should discuss the quorums for their respective committees. It should go to committees for decision and added it go to council for consideration.

Cr Joe Carr believed that two members should be able to open a meeting and adjourn it if necessary.

Cr John Bain queried if this was for voting.

It was decided that 50% was more of a better situation with some committees having other levels of quorum.

Item No. 4.6 Northland Regional Council Community Trust – Final Statement of Intent 2011/2012 at 1344hrs

Cr Bill Rossiter had a query on what were the meanings of RNZ & NZTE (page 59) *Wouldn't want to make it too easy for everyone. NZTE explained and RNZ explained*

Item No. 4.7 Update on Northland Emergency Services Trust (NEST) at 1345hrs.

Cr John Bain claims he has a conflict of interest. *What John everyone thought you were an 'unpaid volunteer' there? Are we all mistaken, maybe you should tell us all (show your cards) and it may save all this investigation, time and money?*

Cr Tony Davies-Colley believed there was a misunderstanding of the work to be undertaken by PWC (PricewaterhouseCoopers). The issue is "due diligence" as to funding not institution. There needs to be an investigation into the institution if it receives public money.

Cr Graeme Ramsey claims it is important where a rate is struck to give to an institution in an accountable and transparent way. It is ratepayer's money and it must be appropriated.

Cr Ian Walker queried whether it was about the quality of the service or the way they manage money? If PWC looked into the stadium it could be quite interesting. *You are so right Ian; I don't believe the 'service offered' is in question at all, but when the CEO/Chairman of NEST refuses to answer questions asked by the public about out-goings of the organisation it's no wonder the public start to ask the question 'what do they have to hide' This organization was funded with a targeted rate to support the basic service because it was believed to be in need of funds and it was on the 'bones of its arse', now it has 3 helicopters (the only 3 of its kind in NZ) and doesn't really have a good answer as to why it uses these aircraft, it shows increases in outgoings (salaries etc) and doesn't wish to openly discuss the issues. Many believe that due to it now operating 3 aircraft it is possibly over funded and out of the need for ratepayer funding. It's hard to paint a picture if you are only given a couple of colours. Show us your colours John, then the heat may die down.*

Chairman Craig Brown believed they had asked pwc to go well in depth into what they were asked to do.

Cr Bronwyn Hunt felt the organisation needed to be compliant if they required funds for NEST.

Lisa Aubrey, General Manager Finance and IT explained that the funds initially were 'to maintain the existing level of service, not to fund enhanced levels of service. *Right Lisa, the funds were for a rescue helicopter service, not a whole squadron of Sikorsky76a's. Good grief they will think it's a dumping ground for S76a's like Mojave Desert Airport in USA. Now there's a possible attraction for Whangarei. Sell the idea to WDC, they are always looking for main attractions for Northland, they might want one for their Noddy house.*

Cr Joe Carr believed to maintain an effective service there needed to be an investigation into the funding and due diligence should be done.

Cr Ian Walker was concerned this was about spending \$20,000-00 of ratepayers money. *No Ian, it's about funding up to \$675,000-00 as outlined in [Northland Community Plan 2009-2019](#) (page 12 to be precise)*

Cr Bill Rossiter confirmed its \$25,000-00 of ratepayer's money. *See comments above Willy. People ask; is it overfunded if it buys more helicopters?*

*Didn't know John was proficient in the art of [Origami](#). Cr John Bain has been real busy during this discussion of a project so dear to his heart, making a [new donation receptacle](#) for NEST. It's not very big John, oh suppose you can fold up the big cheques; you may be able to turn them into helicopters. [Try this John boy](#)*

As John Bain, believed on questioning from the chair there was nothing obnoxious in Joe Carr's new motion it was decided it be the motion for this item.

There was much discussion on the wording of the new motion to satisfy all.

Craig Brown felt that if after an investigation they may find they are better off than they were last year, so are we going to pull the funding? Is this investigation for the next 3 years of funding or what?

Cr Joe Carr informed that Cr Tony Davies-Colley had done his motion before the Annual Plan.

The original motion was withdrawn and the new motion was carried.

Cr Ian Walker commented that funding for the stadium should be audited. I also want an audit on the 1% of rates that goes to the Arts Promotion Trust as I don't know their financial situation and I could go on. *Is there not is a difference between an amount from general rates for a project and a targeted rate?* In the next year's \$20m slush fund there may be room for lots more funding of projects.

Item No. 4.8 Arts Promotion Trust - Key Performance Indicators and Funding at 1423hrs.

Sarah Boon, on the ball after the intricacies of the last agenda item, commences that she will be happy to come along with Cr Morgan with all the accounts for the last 10 years, for them to check. Sarah *now had their attention* and did a very precise presentation of what they were all about. It was more than just painting pictures and had Economical, Educational and Cultural benefits to our communities. Presently it was only Sarah boom and funding was required to ensure it developed for the needs.

Link to - Sarah's presentation. **Coming soon.**

Cr Ian Walker had concerns about 2 words used in the presentation; 'strategy' and 'capacity building'.

Sarah Boon gave good explanations, continued, that there were 1000 professional artists in Northland and we want them to stay here. They want a representative from Regional Council on board to keep them well informed.

Cr Bill Rossiter assured that it was designed to work with the whole of Northland.

Cr Graeme Ramsey, out of the blue, claims he's lost; they are talking about shared services. *This brings us back to the unitary authority thing again.*

There is a bit of bantering going back and fro for some time so Craig Brown gains control addressing to Tony Davies-Colley 'Apart from asking Ian Walker to have painting lessons, do you have anything to add?' He added, 'we won't have people talking with one tongue here and another behind our back'. Any further discussion?

Cr Bronwyn Hunt gained the floor and a few giggles, by saying amid the chaos. 'Thank you Sarah'

## 5.0 FINANCE AND IT

Item No. 5.1 5.1 Financial Report – 30 June 2011 (1441hrs) This item required no discussion.

Item No. 5.2 Investment Schedule and Performance – Financial Report to 30 June 2011 This item required no discussion.

Item No. 5.3 Paid Accounts for Approval – June 2011 (1443hrs) No discussion entered into.

Item No. 5.4 Lease Transactions – June 2011 This item also required no discussion at 1445hrs.

## 6.0 OPERATIONS

Item No. 6.1 Confirmation of Environmental Management Committee Minutes for Meeting of 21 June 2011 (1447hrs)

Cr Tony Davies-Colley had a query in regards to the Kaipara Harbour Management Group (Page 124) and what further work there was?

Chairman Craig Brown reiterates that sometimes it is best that the left hand knows what the right hand is doing; we need to be better informed at what is going on. *So right Craig, sometimes people expect us all to know it all, but many times we are all reliant on others to keep us informed, as you can't be everywhere at once.*

Cr Graeme Ramsey is pleased to know this but asks how do we advance it?

Cr Joe Carr informed that there is a proposed meeting with Te Uri o Hau Settlement Trust, but unfortunately both Cr Hunt and Cr Ramsey are unable to be present on the allotted date, but would check if there was an option for another day.

Cr Graeme Ramsey insists of the importance of Auckland, Kaipara and NRC keeping an open dialogue with Te Uri o Hau.

Craig Brown informs that the Kaipara harbour is shared with several councils and has its intricacies.

Cr John Bain believes we need to be cautious of schnapper replenishment in the Kaipara. *Oh my gosh John that comment certainly got your microphone aroused, as it now points skyward, or has someone slipped it some arousal medication?*

Item No. 6.2 Consents Decisions and Progress on Notified Applications in Process, Objections and Appeals (1458hrs) This item required no discussion.

The meeting was adjourned for afternoon tea break and we enjoyed refreshments and casual chat with councillors and staff before returning to the continuance of the meeting.

Cr Bill Rossiter took our grandson Hayden in for cake and orange juice before David Jones, Acting Democracy and Legal services Senior Programme Manager encouraged Hayden to have some fruit to finish off his break time.

Item No. 6.3 Report on Environmental Monitoring for the Period 1 June 2011-30 June 2011 at 1512hrs. This item required no discussion.

Item No. 6.4 New Zealand Transport Agency Proposed Changes to Financial Assistance Rates (1513hrs)

Cr John Bain spoke to the motion.

Cr Joe Carr was concerned about the word cannot in the 'submission' section on page 145 as it is harsh.

Cr Graeme Ramsey asks what the input from other TLA's is. (Territorial Local Authorities)

Chris Powell, Transport Operations Senior Programme Manager gives a brief into this item.

Cr Graeme Ramsey requests that it be a collective Northland submission.

## **7.0 PLANNING AND POLICY**

Item No. 7.1 Receipt of the Regional Policy and Development Committee Minutes - 13 June 2011 (1519hrs) This item required no discussion.

## **8.0 COMMUNITY RELATIONS**

Item No. 8.1 Northland Regional Council 2011 Environmental Curriculum Awards (1519hrs)

Susan Botting, Environmental Education Officer was present and spoke briefly to the item.

Cr Bronwyn Hunt thanked Susan for the amount of work she had put into this stating 'These kids are our tomorrow' *Bronwyn you are just so right and elected officials have to remember that many decisions made are for 'our tomorrow' and we must always remember that decisions must be able to be 'afforded tomorrow'*. Bronwyn Hunt continued with she had never seen a process so well managed and congratulated Susan adding "don't think we give out enough money to this; less for the helicopter and more for environmental awards". *I think even JB gave a little chuckle, but it looked forced.*

Cr Ian Walker informed that he would like to see this project promoted around other schools

Susan Botting comments that some groups are planting trees etc.

Cr Tony Davies-Colley was supportive of Ian Walkers comments and the economic side of environmental projects.

Cr Bill Rossiter comments that Cr Tony Davies-Colley is emotionally damaged.

Craig Brown continues that if Tony Davies-Colley wants to get on his soap box the others have to just sit there and take it.

Time now at 1525hrs and it was a supplementary Item Kaitaia Bus Service

Cr Bronwyn Hunt declares a conflict of interest as she is involved with an organization that funds the service and she is also known as the official NRC Bus Monitor for Kaitaia. Chairman Craig Brown gave an outline of the issue and asked if the NRC should fund the project for \$35,000-00 for the year?

Cr Joe Carr suggested that they should promulgate a submission to NZTA (New Zealand Transport Authority) for funding and then initiate a consultation process in FNDC to set a targeted rate for the Te Hiku ward.

Acting Chief Executive Tony Phipps explained that you can't get a new rate during the year; you would have to wait until next year.

Cr Joe Carr believed the public of the north should be aware of the situation.

Craig Brown asked Mr Powell if they complied.

Chris Powell, Transport Operations Senior Programme Manager responded that they don't comply, even after meeting them 3 times (as they think NRC holds the funds; and they don't). They don't even comply with the NZTA requirements.

Cr John Bain claims that 18months ago he was tasked to look into this and every suggestion put to them was never fulfilled. They may "have come to the end of the ride"  
*That's such a good pun John; you know we could have easily missed it if your microphone wasn't on!*

Cr Joe Carr explained that they have 28 different runs with an income of \$26k. Each run collects \$1000-00 per annum. The Bus service is developing and we should support the funding application to NZTA. *It is nice to add that this item surely had a good robust debate and it appears support with a submission to NZTA may be the only lifeline to this service at the present time.*

The meeting finished at 1606hrs, Chairman Craig Brown thanking those who attended and then the Councilors go into business with the public excluded.

## **9.0 BUSINESS WITH THE PUBLIC EXCLUDED**

Item No. 9.1 Confirmation of Confidential Minutes – 21 June 2011

Item No. 9.2 Identified Invoicing Error for Council Leasehold Property and Proposed Resolution

.....**Notes coming soon - Just joking**.....