

Regional Transport Committee meeting – 4th April 2012

[LINK to appropriate Agenda](#)

The meeting today got underway at 1000hrs.

Chairman John Bain welcomed all for attending.

Mr Bain also explained the emergency procedures and exits and restroom facilities that were available. Emergency meeting area was in the car park

Apologies (Item No 1) were received for Inspector Clifford Paxton, Mr Tony Norman and Mr Tom Baker.

John commented that Clifford had been a valued part of our community. Inspector Clifford Paxton has been appointed as the new Area Commander for the Western Bay of Plenty Police Area.

Far North District Councillor Sally Macauley was filling in for Tony Norman and Far North District Council Mayor Wayne Brown filling in for Tom Baker.

(Far North District Deputy Mayor Ann Court and Mr David Penny, Far North District ... Infrastructure and Asset Manager were also in the public gallery)

Item No 2. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest. The chair stated that any 'Conflicts of Interest' were to be advised item by item as they progressed through the agenda and any appropriate action to be taken.

Time now 1002hrs and **Item No. 3.1. Confirmation of Minutes** of Regional Transport Committee Meeting 1 February 2012.

Page by page the minutes were checked and there being no issues, except J B's phone going off, all were accepted. *Looking forward to the chocolate fish, at the next Transport meeting eh John?*

4.0 PRESENTATIONS

Item No. 4.1 RDF Forestry Roding at 1003hrs. Martin Taylor, Senior Programme Advisor (Engineering) NZTA. (New Zealand Transport Agency) gave a brief power point presentation. (*will place a link to this when it becomes available*)

Item No. 4.2 Road Maintenance Task Force and 'Headway' Update at 1009hrs
Mr Stephen Town NZ Transport Agency representative advised there was to be a series of workshops around New Zealand to enable input from local government. A project called "Headway" is operating and they will be work shopping with councils in Northland.

Wayne Brown queried who is on the task force and had concerns that they were not getting expected life from our highways.

Mr Stephen Town explained that the task force was from industry players, contractors, local government engineers, especially those experienced in asset management and NZTA personnel. He advised that 'asset life' was something that was going to get a sharper focus in the next decade.

Wayne Brown insisted that when they measure contractors they must check their attributes; like look at the life of their projects. Having contractors involved was like having 'rabbits looking after the lettuce patch'.

John Bain believed there has been too much rush and not enough quality. *That's possibly correct John an old saying I have from my retail days is, "Quality remains long after price is forgotten". Sometimes you only get less than you pay for.*

Mr Ken Rintoul Economic Development Representative, advised there were a couple of things that muffed him; highways were meant to be 25% better than when they got it, not 25% worse. Designers and contractors have let us down on some contracts. He believed "we were getting the Jap system, not the English system we used to" and we were getting "shit jobs out of it". He confirmed he was 'not having a snipe at Stephen Town, but making comments'. *That's what I like about Ken; he's knowledgeable and says it as it is.*

Cr Joe Carr thanked Stephen for this item.

Item No. 4.3 Storm Event Update at 1022hrs

This item was put aside until next meeting.

On to 5.0 INFORMATION REPORTS

Item No. 5.1 Regional Road Safety Update (time still at 1022hrs)

Mr Howeth Mountain Access and Mobility gave an update. He believed the new 'Giveaway Rule Changes' had gone well. He however had concerns that the Restricted Drivers Tests had been having higher failure rates and this could have an effect on less licensed drivers on the road.

Chris Powell, Transport Operations Senior Programme Manager, spoke in relation to the Northland Regional Road Safety Action Plan 2012-2015. (page15) *Some interesting reading in the reports.*

Item No. 5.2 Vehicles on Beaches Update (1027hrs)

Chris Powell gave a brief to this item. He advised that Far North District Council and Kaipara District Councils were looking at this project. *Whangarei District Council has already acted responsibly on this issue.* Chris wanted to thank all the agencies for the support of this project. Wayne Brown stated 'that as with FNDC, there had been no progress; don't kid yourself'.

Item No. 5.3 North Auckland Rail Line Review - Update (1028hrs)

John Bain advised that there had been a number of discussions between Kiwi Rail and councils. There were technical reports before them but theses needed to be looked at by technical specialists. NZTA was also very supportive of the way we were meeting.

Cr Joe Carr asked how often was the working group meeting.

Vaughan Cooper, Growth and Infrastructure Manager advised they had met 2 or 3 times. There was some discussion on the low floor wagons and another meeting was intended in the next few weeks.

Item No. 5.4 Bay of Island Airport - Timetable (1032hrs)

John Bain advised this was an item advising the timetable outlining the key steps.

Vaughan Cooper advised they were waiting for after these dates to know if it was a Yes or No.

John Bain confirmed that it was the 26th June for NRC to make its confirmation.

Cr Joe Carr commented that they needed a commitment from Far North District Council.

NRC Chairman Craig Brown reminded the meeting that it was decided at an earlier meeting that a study into all airports in the region was needed and then those findings were to be analysed.

Wayne Brown made his mark by adding 'the process is the process and we are consulting on this as we have elected this process'. He couldn't change it that the dates that their decision was due was after the NRC's.

Item No. 5.5 30 Year Transport Strategy – Draft Monitoring Report (1038hrs)

Vaughan Cooper spoke to the report. *The full report is attached and makes interesting reading. (pages 51 to 76)*

John Bain congratulated Vaughan for his report claiming it was an easy to read report.

Mr Ken Rintoul made some comments regarding highways (Section 3 page 52) He also had concerns that it all stopped at Whangarei heading north; there needs to be more emphasis on design and seasonal peak loads. He had a query on the cycle way (section 6, Page 53) in regards to its destination.

Wayne Brown queried how often is the review?

Vaughan Cooper advised they proposed to conduct it quarterly.

Wayne Brown claimed there were many things that didn't relate to his area; can they be crossed off.

Vaughan Cooper advised that these items are the results of the monitoring in the Transport Strategy.

Cr Joe Carr questioned the suitable deviations around Kaeo (page 62)

Craig Brown made some valid comments about flooding around Kaeo; it will always flood the only thing they hope to do is slow it down.

Mr Howeth Mountain Access and Mobility made some comments on deviation routes and how they must be to a standard to cope with the increase and size of traffic, when needed.

John Bain claimed Northland is particularly venerable with the Te Hana Bridge and Brenderwys.

Item No. 5.6 Northland Regional Land Transport Programme – 2009-2012 Funding Uptake (1056hrs)

With an amendment the recommendation was received.

Item No. 5.7 NZTA Functional Strategies (1059hrs)

Mr Ken Rintoul advised this will sneak past if we don't watch it; he understood from the strategies that they NZTA would be able to redirect money and could well be an open cheque book for Auckland. With Auckland's increasing population more is drawn out of the surrounding districts. The growth of Auckland depends on the outlying areas.

Craig Brown advised that Auckland was a consumer society; Northland is a producing society. They need to get into perspective the importance of our area. Our country doesn't rely on consumer society it relies on producers.

Mr Stephen Town advised that we are a sparsely populated country; the discussion won't go anywhere if you make it a rural versus city debate.

John Bain claimed the world doesn't stop at the Harbor Bridge and Bombays. We must rationalise a level of safety and good communication in our district; we need to have an artery we can rely on and rail is the answer. *Yes John you are right, Northland needs the Marsden Point Rail Link and Deep Water port at Marsden Point opened and good rail connections back to Auckland to sustain a supply chain to Auckland.*

Mr Ken Rintoul advised that fast rail works well to outlying areas to major cities. He commented that good rail to areas like Hamilton, Warkworth and Wellsford could well benefit the future of those areas and allows Auckland to grow. *This could well be a sustainable solution for the growth expected in Auckland in the next 20 plus years.*

Mr Steve Westgate, Environmental Sustainability Representative, felt the strategy had all the right words but what will it do?

Wayne Brown claimed 'it's the trucks that are bugging our roads'. He had information that one logging company pays \$300,000-00 per month in RUC (Road User Charges), but pays that in Auckland so it doesn't reflect truck usage in Northland. Like other operators who fuel up in Auckland travel north, back to Auckland and then refuel, so the statistics don't really show the trucks have mainly been working in Northland.

Cr Joe Carr informed that it was cheaper for him to buy fuel in Queenstown than up in Northland and the Refinery is on our doorstep.

Craig Brown advised that he lives so close to the Refinery and his local service station is the dearest. *Something is not right.*

It was now **6.0 DECISION REPORTS**

Item No. 6.1 Approval of the Regional Public Transport Plan 2012(1120hrs)

Mr Ken Rintoul declared that he had a conflict of interest in this item and asked if they wished him to depart.

John Bain claimed that was not necessary as it had all been done before.

Chris Powell advised that it was all self explanatory in the Plan but was happy to answer any questions.

John Bain opened it up for **General Business** at 1122hrs.

John Bain advised that Mr Steve Westgate will be absent for the next two meetings as he was going off-shore for a vacation requesting a leave of absence for Steve. This was duly agreed on.

John Bain advised the 'Save the Trees in Mander Park' group were present silently protesting proudly holding their placards with serious messages.

Wayne Brown asked "where is Mander Park?"

John was happy for literature they had supplied to be handed out to committee members.

Mary McDonald. A staunch supporter for saving the trees rose to her feet and addressed the members and advised them of one of Northland Regional Council's own publication about

'Trees' and how they may assist with flooding issues in the Northland district when planted wisely.

John Bain closed the meeting at 1124hrs thanking all for attending.

I must again say it John, a good way to round the meeting off. Pleased to see this as sometimes there are issues that members present wish to openly discuss and possibly don't get discussed as some may think they don't warrant the formalities of a motion.