

Whangarei District Council meeting – 24th April 2012.

[LINK to appropriate Agenda](#)

We are asked to all stand for 'His Worship, the Mayor'. The attendees that normally remain seated for his grand entry are sadly absent today; they must have something more important to do; however the majority in attendance in the public gallery remain seated for his entry to the chamber. *This number is growing as more and more are losing respect for the mayor.*

The gallery was to near full capacity as placard holding disgruntled Mander Park supporters had come to show their disapproval of how the council had failed to listen to the requests for the community.

At 1000hrs he remained standing and says "Thank you everyone, I just want to say if there is any disorderly behaviour you will be asked to leave" Did this also refer to the bad behaviour recently seen from the mayor and some of his councillors and staff?

Morris Cut 'the trees down' forth continued with his normal repertoire of reading someone else's works reciting a poem 'In Flanders Fields', by John McCrae from May 1915.

*In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.*

*We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.*

*Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.*

An appropriate verse with it being Anzac Day tomorrow.

Morris advises there are no apologies.

Morris continues and invites the first speaker in the Public Forum to come forward.

So it's on to item No.1, the 'Public Forum' (Page 1)

The first speaker (at 1003hrs) is Hannah Mitchell speaking on Child (and Youth) Friendly Cities. A very powerful speech from Hannah and well worth a read.

[Link to Hannah's Speech](#) (waiting for approval)

A round of applause from the gallery signaled approval of what the speech contained.

Dean Scanlen rose to his feet and sang a beautiful farewell waiata, after Hannah's speech. You could have heard a pin drop as he captivated the audience. Applause again filled the chamber in recognition of both Hannah's speech and Dean's grand performance.

The second speaker up at 1007hrs was Bernie Hetaraka, Whangarei Youth Space/ Higher Ground Youth Group speaking on Whangarei Youth Space initiative.

Bernie and Adam James from Manaia Health PHO and Adam James was from the 'higher ground steering group'. They gave a presentation on Youth and its benefits to the community.

Adam James finished by commenting to the mayor that he had recently been in Invercargill and Mayor Tim Shadbolt had sent his regards to him.

Morris in his reply says "They have a silly mayor down there and we have a silly mayor up here." *Maybe, but the Invercargill Mayor has some finesse and doesn't go around slinging abuse at people or criticising other races. I also bet Tim doesn't go back on his word; remember he claimed he would tow a concrete mixer behind the mayoral car.....and HE did.*

It was now 1010hrs. Item No. 2, Minutes of a Meeting of the Whangarei District Council held 28 March 2012 (Page 2)

There was no discussion on this item.

The time was now 1011hrs it was Item No.3. Police Report (Page 8) [Link to Police Report](#)

Again the Mayor had difficulty in introducing Paul correctly; this time as 'Commander Inspector'. *Maybe Sgt Syers can give you some lessons on 'ranks' from the experience gained from his extensive military career.*

Inspector Paul Dimery, Area Commander for Whangarei/Kaipara, gave an update on police activities claiming he had a few things he was going to make positives. There were praises for City Safe. Paul commented that youth advisors meetings were ongoing at the moment and things were very positive. He encouraged all to consider what they can do. He advised there had been a controlled alcohol purchase operation and the results were great. Read the report, link above, some very interesting facts and information.

Cr Sharon Morgan said it was good news to learn about the controlled alcohol purchase operation and was it district wide and was it on on-licence and off-licence premises?

Paul Dimery confirmed it was both on-licence and off-licence premises but he would get some more information.

Cr Merv Williams asked if the good results were a result of change in attitude of the licensee's or was it because of the CTO action and possible loss of licence?

Paul Dimery advised it was important to continue but emphasised 95% of licensee's operate good businesses.

Cr Sue Glen commented to Paul, you have the hardest job in the world. Congratulations to you and your team, a great big thank you to the force.

Paul Dimery thanked Sue, but added it's the community that gets behind us.

With time at 1024hrs it was Item No.4, Property Policy (Page 9)

Cr Warwick Syers advised that since comments from councilors at last month's meeting, these have been taken on board and the item re-submitted. He wanted to thank Cr Crichton Christie and Cr Brian McLachlan for their input. He added that the Mayor took a 'straw poll' amongst the members and there has been a change.

CEO Mark Simpson advised there was a 'typo error' on page 9 and it should read 'mayor' not 'major'.

Cr Brian McLachlan thanked Cr Syers for the change and emphasized it was important to bring all property sales back to all councilors.

Cr Crichton Christie also appreciated the changes and made thanks for them. But he had reservations; for the last 18 months we had a policy and taken no notice of it. The policy has been ignored; there are reporting things you must do and I hope you see that. He continued "I wait with baited breath; the responsibility comes back to me.

Cr Kahu Sutherland claimed that he didn't take part in the 'straw poll'. Voting shouldn't take place at workshops, it should be here. He also had concerns at the makeup of the committee. He was concerned there were no Okara ward councilors, as many of the properties that are for sale are in the Okara ward. These councilors should be here and this would add to the credibility of the committee. *So rightly so Kahu, one must wonder... why they don't want them there?*

Morris Cutforth informs that everything will come back to full council. *Yeah right! Possibly after the deals are all done?*

Cr Aaron Edwards requested for a definition about what constitutes 'minor park and road works'.

CEO Mark Simpson gave a definition to Aaron. *Well Mark thinks he did, it was round and round but no real definition.*

Cr Aaron Edwards asked why we include minor in there. What is the criteria?

CEO Mark Simpson in reply to Aaron advises, 'If you want to prepare something for the policy'.

Cr Merv Williams also thanks council for the changes. He adds 'I will be like Cr Christie and be taking a watch dog position'. *It could be full time Merv and very time consuming.* He added 'there must be accountability and transparency in the decisions to be made and he too would have liked to see Okara ward councilors in the committee'.

With time still at 1034hrs it was Item No. 5, Elected Member Remuneration (Page 30) (There was a supplementary item to go with this item but it was not circulated to the public gallery.)

Cr Phil Halse suggested that this item be taken in parts and he believed Item 1 should be the status quo.

He didn't think it's fair to pick only one person to reward. We have to work together to make it work.

Strange comment as they just formed a committee with only a select group of five; not quite 'the tight five'.

Cr Brian McLachlan claims it's about leadership and good on you. *Did he mean the mayor?*

Cr Sue Glen claims she finds it disturbing the remuneration authority only consider the mayor for an increase, and has concerns over 'all the chairs should get a rise', believing we should all be treated equally.

Cr Shelley Deeming prefers that the recommendation to be the same, the status quo.

Cr Greg Martin asks the CEO Mark Simpson to explain how the remuneration is worked out.

Mark Simpson explains how a pool is set in relation to population and the net value of assets. *Gosh Mark, with them selling off the assets they might soon be paying us, the owners of the assets. Or their pay may go down if we end up with too little assets?*

Cr Merv Williams asks 'Are we speaking to the whole item?'

Morris Cutforth replies 'No just item 1'.

Cr Merv Williams is right into it, "Speak to the whole five points. The Remuneration Authority was set up so we didn't have bun fights and councilors didn't line their own pockets. He also believed mileage should be changed to make it equal."

Cr Phil Halse advises he would like it to include any travel less than 30km.

Cr Crichton Christie interjects "I thought we were taking them individually".

Cr Kahu Sutherland asks if he can offer an olive branch for No 2. There needs to be only one option so the Remuneration Authority takes what they recommend and doesn't have an escape clause.

Cr Crichton Christie insists there must be a fair and reasonable way. People don't get paid for travelling to their work place. We could move an amendment to delete No 2.

Cr Merv Williams interjects, "You can't have a motion that is totally negative".

It's all on, some calling to read the standing orders, some saying you can do it, others you can't do it. The whole thing is becoming a shemuzzle. *It's a right circus and the 'ringmaster', well won't even go there.*

Just a special note we think Morris needs 'CUE CARDS'.

Cr Warwick Syers trying to regain some order claims "this is simply a 'back up' if the Remuneration Authority doesn't accept it.

CEO Mark Simpson then went into some details about the global economic crisis. *Have to ask how many properties are we going to have to sell for this increase in remuneration?*

Cr Sue Glen then advises that she thought it was to be done separately then it changed and what was it about now? Where is it?

Cr John Williamson comments "It's embarrassing spending this much time talking about this".

There was applause from the audience which duly brought a halt to the fiasco and it was voted on. *Don't ask me the answer; I really don't know and I presume neither do many of them.*

It could have been very easily resolved; Morris could have resigned and his money could have been split between all the others. Or could it been repaid to his campaign funders who were short changed?

This was obviously the most important item on today's agenda, 26 minutes to sort out 'their' remuneration. Doesn't it prove they really think of themselves, as we have seen during meetings sometimes decisions worth millions of dollars are done and dusted in meagre minutes? So what are they there for the community, or the MONEY?

The time now at 1100hrs. Item No 6, Youth Advisory Group (Page51)

Cr Phil Halse advises that everyone is quite keen on it as it had been discussed in the workshop.

Cr Kahu Sutherland queried if they had established a budget for it.

Cr Merv Williams in answer gave some brief details.

Cr Brian McLachlan claims he supports it as it will add value to what we do now.

Cr John Williamson advises that this is a combination of many of the presentations made to council. We don't get enough information from these and other groups. Even the mayor had campaigned on this issue. *Oh no, don't hold your breath it would be the only thing that Morris¹⁸⁰ Cutforth hadn't done an about face on since the election promises. HE can't be trusted.*

Cr Merv Williams has the final say "Yes Mr Mayor, this has been muted for a long time but no model was put forward. He wanted to compliment the staff now that a model had come forward and funding from MYD. (Ministry of Youth Development)

The time now at 1106hrs. Item No.7, Northpower Ltd – 2012 Review of Future Ownership (Page 54)

Morris Cutforth advises that Council may like to make a submission to the current structure of Northpower hence there was two extra items on the recommendation.

Cr Merv Williams suggests that this is a very interesting subject with many areas of debate; people could lose their rebates. He added look at our neighbours across the fence (NRC), they run trusts and want to run a business development trust.

Cr Warwick Syers advises that this is a 'mirror' of a submission he had personally made regarding the trust about 10 years ago and it fell on deaf ears. We have to have community assets. *Hate to tell you Warwick, but we have had assets and you lot are selling them off because of bad financial management. It's just like your 'unitary authority' take-over bid; don't you want to get your grubby little hands on the 'Port Shares' to make Whangarei District Councils financial deficit look better when you sell the shares off? Would they end up with nothing, with your involvement with a power trust? Was it not you that helped rugby make lots of money? Yeah right? And you have feeling for the community? And I hope you have your ears open for the next round of submissions.*

Cr Brian McLachlan reminds them that we are a customer; wouldn't it be worthwhile what our ratepayers have to say about it?

Cr Greg Martin advises that he won't be voting for this. *Good call Greg!*

Cr Sharon Morgan asks if it should read as a 'community' trust and not 'consumer' trust.

Cr Aaron Edwards insists there should be discussion outside this forum. *You are so right Aaron; the submission process is currently open, read the note below.*

Cr Shelley Deeming thinks that it should be done by Northpower. *Yoo hoo Shellsie it is, read notes below.*

Cr John Williamson makes his claim that Northpower must ask the community for a consultation. *They are John Boy, read the note below.*

Cr Aaron Edwards, Cr Brian McLachlan and Cr Greg Martin were the only ones who voted against the recommendation. *Now you know who are the ones that want to sell off 50% of the Northpower shares also. Scary eh?*

NOTE - I really don't know what they are going on about; we made our submission on this weeks ago. We have been promoting the process on our 'facebook groups' - Matters Political. The link is below for those not getting the information:-

[Link to -Northpower Ltd – 2012 Review of Future Ownership](#)

See submission details on page 5 **NB** Submissions close 4.00 pm on 30 April 2012

The meeting concluded at 1119hrs, the public excluded before going into the **confidential** section of the meeting.

Didn't Morris campaign that he wanted open and transparent council? And he always tends to vote for it to go into confidential.

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All information in regards to this meeting's agenda and others are available on the Whangarei

District Council website by clicking on this [link](#).