

Whangarei District Council Environment meeting
- 9th March 2011

Chair Cr Shelley Deeming welcomes all those present at 1030hrs and with no apologies we proceed to the first item.

Item No 1 - The minutes for the previous meeting were accepted with no discussion necessary.

The Environment Group Monthly Report February 2011, Item No 2 and again it was Environment Group Manager Paul Dell who had the floor. He commented briefly on the consent granted for the gymnasium at Kensington.

Cr Sharon Morgan in reference to a Liquor Licensing Authority in regards to a private objection and whether it was a resident.

Cr Sue Glen queried if Environment Court applicants were 'out of Time'

Cr Merv Williams, in relation to an item on page 5, Liquor Licensing Authority (LLA) wants to be notified when the hearings are on and councilors should attend as part of the learning process.

In relation to Plan Change 92 on page 13, Mr Dell commented, whilst creating laughter from some of the elected, that the appeal by Mr Hedges had been struck out of the Environment Court. *Don't worry Don some may still love you; shame you're 'elected' don't feel the same and treat you with the respect that is expected of them. Now you know why we aren't included in surveys.*

Cr Brian McLachlan was not happy about his motion that had been extended and he was also unaware of the extension. Paul Dell replied by stating that more work was needed on parking etc and he wanted to have sufficient information to make a decision. *Brian remember this was YOUR motion, possibly not a priority, as they didn't think of it.*

Cr Deeming commented that sound research was needed and they don't know 'what traffic movements'.

At 1043hrs it is into Item No.3. Environment Group Quarterly YTD Report and Mr Dell again explains it is self explaining that they set themselves 100% targets to get.

Cr Greg Martin asks if the Report Surveys are independent. *(Yeah, just like the McKinlay Douglas report on Unitary Authorities in Northland).* Paul gave an example of a noise Complaint on a Saturday night, there were not enough people to respond and relied on police attendance hence going outside the time frame , which results in report %'s down.

Cr Sutherland enquired 'How many stereos were confiscated?'

Paul replied, not sure of numbers but with cheap stereos and head banger stuff being only \$60 - \$70 and not thousands for stereos, it was in particular last summer a bigger problem. *Possibly not a big financial loss for some to lose them, being at the cheaper prices.*

Cr Sharon Morgan, in relation to 13.2.3, was concerned Whangarei was well below the national average of 64% and ours at 7.53%.

Cr John Williamson (*oh your phones new silencer is working*) felt the Whangarei District Plan was too permissive but Paul Dell replied he felt it was 'Well Structured'.

Chair Shelley Deeming suggested they 'move on before getting into light hearted chit chat'.

Item No. 4. Extension of Terms of Contract - Contract 04060 and 04062. It was now only 1050hrs and Paul Dell explained this was a new contract, with more detailed KPI's around delivery. There had been issues identified in the present contract that they wanted to work around connection issues. Providers had indicated that a 1st July commencement date was more in line with other councils.

Cr Christie queried about the new contract extended to include swimming pools etc. Paul Dell commented that they 'were testing the market place'.

Having investigated this tender process, it was surprising to see the Tender on Contract 10010 Regulatory Services was to close on Friday 25th March 2011 but the present contract expires on 1st April 2011. Only 5 working days is hardly ample time to view tenders, score them, inform a possible new contractor who then would have to get staff, vehicles, premises, uniforms, IT etc. etc. Was this a genuine mistake in timing or was it leaving the door wide open for the incumbent contractor or another prepared and sitting in waiting (Strange as these reasons were not highlighted in the meeting today). Having had concerns with councils regulatory department in the past over animal welfare issues and being prevented by the Environment committee and Mr Dell from re-inspecting the pound to check on the 'Promises' made in the September 2007 review, one hopes all is above board in this tender process. The review conducted in 2007 was critical of the way in which Whangarei District Council monitored its compliance contractor. Let us hope those involved watch carefully on councils process. It is therefore pleasing to see an extension to the present contract granted to enable council and any new interested parties the time to fully investigate all options put before them.

With the time at 1050hrs it was on to Item No 5 - Review of Council Policy regarding Uncompleted Works Bonds for Subdivision. Mr Dell explained it was 'bonding of

uncompleted work'. They had to be clear about bonding issues as bonds could be insufficient to complete the work.

Cr Shelley Deeming commented that it was to ensure adverse environmental effects are avoided.

Cr Williamson wanted an amendment relating to interest on bonds. He understands there is a problem but the existing policy does not allow interest and sometimes it takes a long time for council to refund bonds. There was a financial cost to developers and a financial advantage to council and it should be relative to the 6month bank deposit rates. Resource Consents Manager, Alistair Hartstone confirmed applicants had choice to bond the work and there were performance bonds under Section 108 of the RMA (Resource Management Act) to ensure work is established. He believed that interest could not be charged on bond but would check the legality.

Cr Shelley Deeming claims she was uncomfortable with it.

Cr Williamson suggested he either withdraw his amendment, they go away and sort it out, or receive it. *The cards were now on the table and rightly so.*

CEO Mark Simpson, *leaping into the breach,* let's be clear about the legitimacy and let it lie on the table. *And that my friends is where it is, so watch this space.*

Item No.6. Updated Growth Model. Now 1102hrs and Paul Dell informs they have adopted a previous growth mode, there has been a slow down in the economy and Dianne Zucchetto the Environmental Trends Analyst had recalculated a growth model for Asset Management to enable them to set development contributions. Government had deferred the census, because of the Christchurch earthquake *and it is figures from the census that analysts use for calculating this work.* He added that Statistics New Zealand had used some of Dianne's work. *We also have noticed over time Dianne has produced some very labour intensive documentation in planning forward for the district and in our opinion it has been to an exceptionally high standard. But then again we are only classed as Critics, so what would we know.*

Cr Crichton Christie stated Northland has had consistent growth. He was glad they had amended the growth rate as it will help in the planning area.

Twas interesting to note 180° alias Morris, appeared stunned by all this just flicking

through the pages and Warwick's body language , of crossed arms for much of the meeting, painted a picture all of its own *or was it because earlier he had accused a member of the public of misquoting him on an article in the paper. Memory issues or attitude?*

Item No.7. hits the scene at 1108hrs and it's the adoption of Whangarei District Urban Design Strategy.

Cr Kahu Sutherland congratulates the staff for putting in the work to this stage. *(It must have something about the Huntertwasser project in it and that will qualify the trip him and Mark had to Austria)*

Cr Sharon Morgan emphasized that she was pleased they had appointed a person for the Urban Design project.

The meeting concluded at 1111hrs with Cr Deeming thanking all for attending.

We vacated the chamber cautiously negotiating the foyer hoping not to trip over any more surprise packages from Austria.

[LINK to appropriate Agenda](#)