

Whangarei District Council Finance and Support Committee meeting - 22nd February 2012

[LINK to the appropriate Agenda](#)

This month's Finance meeting started at 0900hrs with Cr Warwick Syers in the chair wishing all a good morning and welcoming everyone.

There was an apology for Cr Jeroen Jongejans.

Cr Kahu Sutherland advised the chair that he needed to leave his cell phone on as he was expecting an urgent call.

Cr Syers thanked him for advising that.

Item No. 1. Minutes of a Meeting of the Finance and Support Committee held 21 December 2011 (page1) (0901hrs) these were received with no discussion required.

With the time still at 0901hrs, Item No.2. Financial Report for the Month Ending 31 December 2011 (page3)

Cr Warwick Syers asks Group Manager Support Services Alan Adcock, to take us through the two reports, Item No 2 and Item No 3.

Alan advised that the debt was at \$157million and things like arrears were tracking well (page 42)

They then backtracked to move the recommendation on Item No 2. (page3)

Item No. 3. Financial Report for the Seven Months Ending 31 January 2012 (page34) (0908hrs)

They moved to receive the accounts in this item.

Cr Merv Williams asked what the rate of interest in the Local Government Agency funding was.

Alan Adcock was unable to answer this, till it goes to market.

Cr Sharon Morgan had a query in the term of the amount to be borrowed.

Alan Adcock advised it was swapped over from short term to long term, which is over 5 years.

Time at 0913hrs Item No. 4. Council Organisations – Annual Reports for the Year Ended 30 June 2011 (page46)

Cr Kahu Sutherland 'urgent call' came through and he left the chamber.

The following Council Organisations were discussed and brief information was given to the status of them by Alan Adcock, with support from Cr Syers.

Springs Flat Contractors Ltd – this is not active but in place for preferred tax losses in conjunction with the land fill.

Whangarei Tourism Trust – Closing down.

Whangarei Quarry Gardens Trust – Its dependency on council funding is diminishing.

Whangarei District Airport – Wanting to find additional funding sources.

Whangarei Art Museum Management Group – they had experienced high power bills in the past but now with new air conditioning in the new building they expected costs to change considerably.

Cr Merv Williams commented that Whangarei Tourism Trust is showing no indicators. He added that he questioned the comment made regarding Whangarei Quarry Gardens Trust and its 'dependency on council funding is diminishing' claiming it would not be able to gain outside funding. *Merv has his pulse on these things; so his comment should not be taken lightly.*

Cr Sue Glen advised that the Quarry Gardens had only 1 paid employee and others involved, were very passionate about it.

Cr Brian McLachlan believed there should be more facts available like the amount of numbers through the door or bums on seats.

Alan Adcock advised that when applications for funding came through those more detailed bits of information would be available.

Cr John Williamson, was again, appalled at the cost of the audits.

Cr Warwick Syers informed that there was to be \$800,000-00 of loses applied against Springs Flat Contractors Ltd.

CEO Mark Simpson claimed "that in 2 years the internal debt will be paid". *Watch this space; wonder what piece of silver is going to vanish to achieve this?*

Item No. 5. Rating Remission and Postponement Policies (page108) (0926hrs)

Alan Adcock advised that all the policies were listed on page 112 which gives all the details of the policy. No further discussion was therefore required.

Item No. 6. 2011 Annual Economic Profile of Whangarei by Infometrics (page123) (0930hrs)

Darryl Jones (Economist) from NRC was present and gave a brief on this item at the request of Cr Warwick Syers. He advised that only employment was lagging behind the other areas of growth in Northland. *Some very interesting figures in this report; so take a look if you are interested.*

Cr John Williamson had a query on population growth in Whangarei and what effect it will have on the future predictions of growth and developments to cater for this. *If you notice population growth appears to be greater in the colder regions of New Zealand; there might be a message in this.*

Cr Sharon Morgan commented that it was great to see some of the rankings e.g. Communication, Tourism and logging.

Cr Phil Halse had concerns with the following on page 138 'Over the past 10 years the fastest growing industries in Whangarei were government administration and defence'.

Item No. 7. Positive Growth Group Report on Recent Activities October – December 2011 (page172) (0940hrs)

Cr Warwick Syers advised this was an 'information only' item on the agenda.

Cr Aaron Edwards had a query re banners as per page 173, also a comment on events.

Cr Sharon Morgan queried if the lease on Level 1 of Toll Stadium was long term.

Cr Warwick Syers advises at 0943hrs that this ends the meeting' thanking all for attending.

No time today to go to the library for a coffee & chat before the Council meeting at 1000hrs.

All information in regards to this meeting's agenda and others are available on the Whangarei District Council website by clicking on this [link](#).