

Whangarei District Council Finance and Support Committee meeting – 24th April 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 to the meeting.

It was great to see Cr Syers proudly displaying his new spectacles. *Had his previous vision for 'out of control debt', been clouded by his old glasses?*

There was an apology for Mayor Morris Cutforth; he was going to be a little late. *Was he out taking his dog for a walk and having problems finding a standing tree, for it to have a pee on?*

Item No. 1. Minutes of a Meeting of the Finance and Support Committee held 28 March 2012 (Page1) (0900hrs) these were received with no discussion required.

With the time now at 0901hrs, Item No.2. Financial Report for the Nine Months Ending 31 March 2012. (Page 3)

Cr Warwick Syers asks, CEO Mark Simpson, to take us through the report, as Morris Cutforth ambled in.

Mark explained, as discussed at the Finance Focus Group last week, things were largely on track. Capital Expenditure was under spent (page 5) and there was \$11million of property sales due by the end of June. This would still be short of the figure in the Annual Plan of \$14million. Debt was at \$157million instead of \$150mil. *Not a lot if you say it fast.*

Mark advised that the Local Government Funding Agency (LGFA) that they were now members of had a 3-5 year maturity profile.

Cr Sharon Morgan asked a question on forestry income.

Mike Hibbert, Property & Community Services Manager, explained that they had a portfolio of 13 forests. The costs of having them were on par with revenue; the plan for next year was for revenue of \$120,000-00. They were to look at them on a case by case basis and there were some cost benefits through the ETS. (Emission Trading Scheme). He advised that a report will be presented to Council in the future.

Cr Brian McLachlan asked that with the projected end of year; would they be pulling back the \$7million next year?

Mark Simpson advised they were still waiting to sell properties; and it should be as the LTTP predicts. *Isn't it poor when you have to sell of the 'people's assets' because of the lack of sound financial decisions and management?*

Item No. 3. Support Services Group – Report on Recent Activity (Page 25) (0907hrs)

Cr Merv Williams queried if council was being pro active regarding rate rebates; were they going out canvassing and asking for previous applicants to come in.

Mark Simpson advised he didn't know, but could get back to them. He added they could do that if he felt it was necessary.

Cr Warwick Syers queried "Do you think that's' a good idea?" *Well I suppose if you could save some of the constituents a few dollars it would be; but I suppose it doesn't affect you Warwick? Many out there are hurting while some of the councils big 'spend ups' don't really help them at all; as long as it spins your cogs?*

Cr Sharon Morgan wanted to thank the staff for the effort they had put in to the LTP process. *Yes the council 'propaganda machine' was in top gear, with all the meetings etc to promote what some in council wanted to promote.*

Cr Jeroen Jongejans claimed that the Summary Document was spot on. *Spot on for what? It didn't spell out in dollars what all these flash ideas were going to cost THEM.....THOSE that pay the bills.*

Time was now at 0910hrs Item No. 4. Delegated Authority - Financial (Page 32)

No discussion was required on this item.

Cr Warwick Syers advises at 0910hrs that the meeting ends and, thanks all for attending.

Off 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](#).