

Whangarei District Council Finance and Support Committee meeting – 26th September 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. He advised that everyone could get down on their knees at 0926hrs for the "Shake Out" drill. *Will the meeting last till then? Some only go 10-15 minutes, suppose they could get 'Morri' to do one of his speeches to drag it out a bit?*

Warwick advised there was an apology for Cr Shelley Deeming.

Cr John Williamson introduced Victoria Randle, Civil Defence Emergency Management Officer Whangarei District at Northland Regional Council. Victoria advised that at 0926 hrs there was to be an 'Earthquake Drill' and all were encouraged to take cover using the "Drop, Cover & Hold" when the whistle sounded.

Time now at 0902hrs, Item No. 1. Minutes of a Meeting of the Finance and Support Committee held 22 August 2012 (Page 1)

Moved:? , Seconded? (Couldn't hear who moved & seconded)

These were received with no discussion required.

With the time still at 0903hrs, Item No.2. Financial Report for the Two Months Ending 31 August 2012 (Page 3)

Warwick asked Group Manager Support Services Alan Adcock to 'do his 10 minute report'.

There you go they need to pack this out to last till the 'Earthquake Drill'

Alan advised that the lower than, expected budgeted debt was due from rates coming in early in the first quarter. but it will come back next month. *Sorry about the lower debt folks, it's not from good management but people paying their rates up front.*

Debt was now at \$159.194 million and was well within our limits. *Weren't they going to keep your debt at \$135 million?*

Moved: Cr Brian McLachlan, Seconded: Cr Merv Williams. (Well I think it was Merv, this chair doesn't announce these things clearly)

Cr Brian McLachlan asked if staff could explore an option (page 20, Monthly Movements) to include 'forecasts'.

Cr Warwick Syers asked if it was in there already in "Expected Spend".

Cr Merv Williams had a couple of questions in relation to Page 8; were the targeted water rates included, like those of Whangarei Heads, in the 'Activity Targeted Rates'?

Cr Warwick Syers advised they were in the capital contributions.

It was clarified they were in the top line, in targeted rates.

Cr Merv Williams also had a query on Economic growth (Page 12) and were promotional tourism figures in these figures.

Time was now at 0922hrs and on to Item No. 3, Quarterly Economic Monitor June 2012 on Whangarei by Infometrics (Page 24)

Jude Thompson, WDC Chief Operating Officer gave a brief and advised that they were taking a safe position. It is well worth a read of the report.

Cr Kahu Sutherland asked if council was assisting businesses in the city who were struggling, offering any relief on leases or rents on council owned properties.

It was now 0926 and Jude Thompson blew the whistle for the drill (but we had witnessed whistles going around the offices outside prior to this one)

Any one heard of the "[Whistle Blowers Act](#)"?

Councillors performed well with the drill..... were they used to ducking for cover? The room was still for nearly a minute as people emerged from under desks, alongside walls and the places they felt were safe for such an event. All was still; not a lot of movers or shakers in this area!

The recommendation was moved: Cr Phil Halse, Seconded: Cr Sharon Morgan. Cr Kahu Sutherland comment on the drill, claiming there was not a lot of room under the desk.

CEO Mark Simpson asked should councilors pass a requirement of being able to fit under a desk.

Cr Phil Halse had a query.

Aaron Edwards asked why Whangarei 'bucks the trend' in Northland and nationally on accommodation.

Cr Sharon Morgan claimed Whangarei also bucked the trend on building consents.

Jude Thompson gave some explanations of large projects recently undertaken in Whangarei.

Morris Cutforth advised that he received updates weekly from WINZ on employment and these were taking steps in the right direction. *Are they sending you information on Situations Vacant also?*

Cr Warwick Syers advises at 0934hrs that the meeting ends and, thanks all for attending.

Off to the library for a coffee and 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](#).