

Council Briefing Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday, 15 July, 2020
Time: 9:00 a.m.
Location: Council Chamber
Forum North, Rust Avenue
Whangarei

In Attendance

Cr Shelley Deeming (Chairperson)
Cr Gavin Benney
Cr Vince Cocurullo
Cr Nicholas Connop
Cr Ken Couper
Cr Tricia Cutforth
Cr Jayne Golightly
Cr Phil Halse
Cr Anna Murphy
Cr Carol Peters
Cr Simon Reid

Not in Attendance

Her Worship the Mayor Sheryl Mai
Cr Greg Innes
Cr Greg Martin

Scribe C Brindle (Senior Democracy Adviser)

Cr Shelley Deeming chaired the briefing.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Her Worship the Mayor, Councillors Greg Innes and Greg Martin.

2. Reports

2.1 LTP Planning and Regulatory Services

The purpose of the briefing is to give an overview of planning and regulatory services activities and the context in which they operate.

Cr Deeming convened the meeting and handed over to Alison Geddes (General Manager, Planning and Development). Ms Geddes way of introduction, provided a brief overview of the activities undertaken by the Planning and Regulatory services arm of council. Ms Geddes then covered

the key issues facing this area of council in the short, medium and longer term.

Presentations on the activities undertaken by the four separate departments: District Planning, Resource Consents, Building Control and Health and Bylaws; were conducted by.

- Robert Burgoyne (Senior Planner, District Plan) – District Plan
- Murray McDonald (Manager RMA Consents)
- Paul Cook (Manager Building Control)
- Reiner Mussle (Manager Health and Bylaws)
- Tony Collins (Manager District Development)

The content of their presentations is covered in the agenda report and the presentations (attached).

Comment on questions raised included:

District Plan

- Legislative amendments – are automatically included in the plan e.g. legislative requirement. Optional amendments are brought before council for a decision.
- Integration of tangata whenua provisions into plan. Currently there is no council policy. The proposed Plan Change includes an over arching description that doesn't have rules, objectives and policies.

RMA Consents

- Assurance given that consents can be issued with the requisite timeframe (6 months). Projects that have received government funding that require resource consent, need consent to be granted within a year or funding may be withdrawn. Mr McDonald confirmed every endeavour would be made to ensure consent timeframes could be met in terms of these applications. The message from central government is clear, council's shouldn't unnecessarily block projects that are important to the country.
- Council's ability to stop developer conditions e.g housing must be of a certain standard, on subdivisions is limited. This is an issue for central government to address.
- Alignment of capital works with consenting, consultation. The organisation is adapting so that the consents, consultation etc processes start before the money is available in the LTP.

Building control

- Earthquake compliance – 13 years left to comply. The Ministry has recently provided some guidance, it appears there are some discretionary exemptions Territorial Authorities can offer.

- Retention building control officers. There is currently a national shortage of building control officers. Most councils are looking for more officers and experience. Kainga Ora are offering high salaries for consenting roles. The WDC employee retention strategy is to offer a variety of incentives and benefits, including flexible working hours, work from home arrangements and a good working environment (culture).
- New building consent exemptions – changes to the Building Act allows for large single storey detached buildings with a maximum floor area of 30 square metres to be constructed without a consent. Essentially this type of building is just a 'sleep out'.
- MultiProof – (national multiple-use approval) is a way in which multiple buildings of a similar design can be constructed, fast tracking the building consent process. A MultiProof certificate is a statement by MBIE that a set of plans and specifications for a building complies with the Building Code. The approval process is through MBIE, a building consent is still required for each building. Refer MBIE's website for further information.
- System for managing earthquake prone buildings - the system and requirements around earthquake prone buildings (including change of use) are set out in the Building Act. Anyone planning substantial alterations to an earthquake prone building or part, must do the required seismic work at the same time as any alterations.

Health and Bylaws

- Fencing of Swimming Pools – 90% inspections completed. Transitioning to business as usual.
- Legislation requires council to operate a dog pound. The facility must meet animal welfare requirements. Council cannot ignore wandering, dangerous dogs. Council do not euthanise due to accommodation issues.
- Signs in public places – Public places bylaw applies. Refer signage complaints to regulatory staff.

A break was taken from 11.11am to 11.19am.

District Development

- Growing productive base of Maori freehold land – issues are around governance, multiple ownership rather than the operational farming methods
- Subdivision – building good relationships with developers a lot of work has been done around capability and understanding pathway through – pre-lodgement meetings are working well.
- Transmission mast Parihaka – a placement mast is required, this is for discussion with iwi. In the near future a summary report will go to Council regarding the options and the discussions to date.

- Economic development role in council – valuable role, gesture appreciated by developers.
- Airport – strategy and direction will be for elected members to decide.

The workshop closed at 12.08pm.