

Council Briefing Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, 13 August, 2020
Time: 10:30 a.m.
Location: Council Chamber
Forum North, Rust Avenue
Whangarei

In Attendance Her Worship the Mayor Sheryl Mai
(Chairperson)
Cr Gavin Benney
Cr Vince Cocurullo
Cr Nicholas Connop
Cr Ken Couper
Cr Tricia Cutforth
Cr Shelley Deeming
Cr Jayne Golightly
Cr Phil Halse
Cr Greg Innes
Cr Greg Martin
Cr Anna Murphy
Cr Carol Peters
Cr Simon Reid

Scribe Sue Reid (Democracy Adviser)

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cr Halse for early departure at 11:00 a.m.

Cr G Martin convened the meeting at 10:30 and said, as members of the Road Safety Trust Programme were in attendance, item 2.6 would be taken first on the agenda. As Cr Martin is a member of this Trust, he handed over the Chair to Her Worship the Mayor for item 2.6.

2. Reports

2.6 Review of Road Safety Promotion Activity Services

Mr Jeffrey Devine (Strategy & Planning Manager, NTA) commenced the presentation by outlining the Road Safety Promotion Activity and the delivery of service.

Mr Devine said they were looking at rolling over the contract for another twelve months to have an opportunity to undertake a review. He highlighted the key challenges and major issues around road safety in Northland and outlined the programmes delivered by the Road Safety Trust. The difference in how Northland delivers this activity is that a coordinator is provided to coordinate the delivery of programmes with third parties. A lot of these third parties are voluntary and provide time and resources to deliver across the district.

The Northland Road Safety Review had been undertaken under Section 17A of the Local Government Act review and Mr Devine detailed the eight options to deliver this activity going forward. He said central government wanted to get councils more involved in activities to determine what programmes are delivered and what outcomes are achieved and that NZTA have some national directives they want to see coming out of the programme.

Mr Devine said Option 6 is the preferred option and that councils need to be more involved in programme development, delivery and outcomes and to celebrate successes of the programme. The programmes and outcomes are fully covered in the agenda.

The next steps are to develop a review over the next eleven months and to have a new contract in place 1 July 2021.

Questions and comments from Elected Members:

- There was general support for Option 6, with safety, training and education being mentioned as priorities.
- Mr Devine was asked what assurances there were around evaluation of the programmes to ensure they were effective. He responded that is why NZTA have instructed Council to undertake this review and to be more involved in the programmes in order to get the outcomes expected by NZTA.
- Mr Devine was asked if the programmes are meeting the need and he said a report on participation rates and some of the outcomes is included in Council's monthly operational report. NZTA want more regional focus on development and delivery of programmes and to get the state highway included in the programmes.
- People who are involved in the programmes are passionate about outcomes and improvements and are out there getting the job done amongst the community. Mr Devine was asked for justification that the NTA is not just creating another position. He responded that the delivery of programmes is complex for council and is already managed by the NTA. In their view it is essential to be able to provide the Regional context required by NZTA that a resource on a regional basis has to be allocated to NTA to manage the contracts better.

- Mr Calvin Thomas (Northland Transportation Alliance Manager) said to think of NTA as Council's representative as part of a wider safety team that delivers the strategy and assets and it is one of the functions they do on behalf of Council.
- Mr Devine said we are very fortunate that the Road Safety Trust puts funds into projects and the reporting from the Trust is fine.
- There was a query that Ms Gillian Archer's role is being advertised at the moment and Mr Devine said Ms Archer had decided to retire and the Trust is looking for a replacement. He said Council's arrangement with the Trust is a contractual arrangement for delivery of service and we have to go through the review process to satisfy NZTA as they are providing a large portion of funding. He cannot say the contract will be awarded to the Trust as it has to go through a procurement process.
- Mr Devine was asked how the programmes are delivered and he responded that the coordinator develops the programmes and organises funding. He said a lot of local organisations provide their time or service for free and other funding comes from a variety of different sources which is the intention of the delivery model. Mr Devine said the benefit of this delivery model is that we get community and third-party involvement and it is seen as a community-based project rather than a council-based project.
- NZTA have procurement processes but also the current delivery model.

The workshop continued with Cr Greg Martin in the Chair.

2.1 Whau Valley New Water Treatment Plant - August 2020 Update

Mr Simon Weston (General Manager – Infrastructure) gave a recap of the new plant which is currently being constructed and Mrs Marie-Katrin Richter (Team Leader – Project Management) continued the presentation. She said there had been a six-week delay due to Covid-19 and a few problems with suppliers providing items such as concrete in May but the main contractor, Broadspectrum, had tried to make up time and she was confident the plant would be commissioned in February/March 2021.

Questions and comments from Elected Members:

- Mrs Richter confirmed that the plant can be commissioned now the dam level is at 100%. She also confirmed that a tally of special costs arising from Covid-19 was being kept.
- In response to a query around incentivizing the contractor not using the contingency, Mr Weston responded that there is no ability in the NZ Standard Condition of Contract to do so. He said a contingency for unexpected issues has to be agreed as quite often you come across things that were not anticipated during the design. He said, in this contract, a contingency was included to cover for additional lengths of piling should this be required. Six to eight extensions which were allowed

for have been used, but everything has been well managed on site. Having a Beca engineer on site looking at any arising issues together with the contractor has meant quick resolutions of any issues.

- Mrs Richter said they saw the project being under budget at just under \$25 million.
- In response to a query about issues with structural steel, she responded that this has been imported from overseas and certified that the right material as being used by checking back to the supply chain.

2.2 Access over Council Reserves - Norfolk Avenue Reotahi

Ms Hearther Osborne (Senior Planner IPCW) gave the background to the current situation and where we are at the moment. She explained the six options presented and said the issue had been brought to the last Council meeting where they were instructed to approach the property owners to see which options they would like to pursue. This was done at an onsite meeting and Council has been approached to pursue Option 3 which was the recommended option. The next step is to take it to council for a decision to resolve the issue.

Ms Osborne confirmed residents are aware there is a cost and the value set for that will be part of the item coming back to Council.

2.3 The Roding Efficiency Group - WDC Roding Report

Mr Devine presented the Roding Efficiency Group WDC Roding Report and said all the measures currently exist but have been pulled into one tool for reporting. He gave Elected Members a summary of the report and said reports for the three Northland councils can now be compared.

Responding to a question on service performance and whether they had improved, Mr Devine said they are the KPI measures which were set at the last LTP. He said, for a variety of reasons, some of those measures had not been achieved and because they were set four years ago, they are unrealistic now as policies have changed. They are looking to address more appropriate measures in the next LTP based on the new maintenance contracts.

2.4 Proposed Kamo Rd and Bank St Bus Lane Trial

Mr Devine presented this item and said the intention was to make it more attractive for people to catch a bus and use it as a reliable commuter service.

Questions and comments from Elected Members:

- There were mixed comments from Elected Members with some supporting the trial and others feeling it was the wrong approach and was not solving the problem of people getting through intersections quickly enough.

- Some Elected Members were not sure it would address the issue and Increased bus frequency would assist with the message but this fell under the regional council. Mr Devine said the NRC had been involved in the development of this proposal and the NRC are to consider an increase in the number of buses at peak travel times to support this proposal. He said a bus and combined T2 lane was proposed to avoid buses waiting in the queues that form at traffic lights. The bus lane would effectively be a clearway for one or two hours during the morning traffic peak only. It was the intention to have a bus lane to allow the buses to get ahead in the queue at traffic lights to make buses more attractive to commuters and free up parking facilities in town for people coming in to shop.
- It should not detract from the provision of better infrastructure such as bus shelters.
- The bus lane trial would impact on businesses.

2.5 Proposed Rose St Bus Hub Upgrade

Mr Devine presented this item and said Council had approved to upgrade this facility rather than relocate it. He said the changes match up with the plans for the CBD and also with the regional council in relation to improvements fitting in with their bus routes and how they move through town, especially with the bus trial.

Questions and comments from Elected Members:

- In response to a query, Mr Devine said this is a preliminary design and the next stage of the process will be a detailed design which will include the pedestrian link through Vine Street car park. He said it is all about increasing the bus service patronage by making it more attractive and is part of the integrated plan for the CBD.
- Mr Devine was asked how much of the lawn in the middle will be taken and he responded about 5 metres. They had looked at another alternative to the widening of Rose Street but it was not practical as the buses needed to be loaded from the left and shelters need to also be provided on the left-hand side of the bus. He said landscaping at the bus hub will be incorporated in the next step as part of the detailed design, in accordance with the Complete Streets Master Plan.
- In response to a comment that only three buses at a time were needed at the bus hub, Mr Devine responded that the hub is used as a transfer station for the school children in the mornings and evenings where they swap buses to go to their destination. This also occurs for people wanting to go to the hospital. He said the hub has been designed to cater for current and future growth in buses and the main driver is to be able to provide bus shelters in an attractive situation for people waiting for a bus.

- In response to a query as to whether, in terms of the Master Street Plan, Option 2 aligns with the rest of that plan Ms Shelley Wharton (Manager – Infrastructure Planning and Capital Works) responded that they would need more time to look at the detail.
- It was mentioned that convenient and secure places should be identified for Park 'n Ride facilities, where cars can be parked when taking the bus.

3. Closure of Meeting

The workshop concluded at 12:22.