

Council Briefing Meetings Minutes

Date: Tuesday, 22 August, 2017
Time: 9:00 a.m.
Location: Council Chamber
Forum North, Rust Avenue
Whangarei

In Attendance

Her Worship the Mayor Sheryl Mai
(Chairperson)
Cr Stu Bell
Cr Crichton Christie
Cr Vince Cocurullo
Cr Tricia Cutforth
Cr Shelley Deeming
Cr Sue Glen
Cr Jayne Golightly
Cr Phil Halse
Cr Cherry Hermon
Cr Greg Innes
Cr Greg Martin
Cr Sharon Morgan
Cr Anna Murphy

Also in attendance: Rob Forlong (Chief Executive), Sandra Boardman (General Manager - Community), Alan Adcock (General Manager – Corporate), Jill McPherson (General Manager – Strategy and Democracy), Jo Wheat-Connelly (Manager - ICT), Jason Marris (Manager – Democracy and Assurance), Nicolene Pestana (Team Leader – Democracy), Victoria Randall (Emergency Management, Civil Defence – NRC), Graeme MacDonald (Emergency Management, Civil Defence – NRC).

Facilitator: Victoria Randall

1. Apologies

There were no apologies

Her Worship the Mayor convened the briefing at 09.00am. Cr Murphy's apology for being late was noted. Cr Cocurullo arrived at 09.06am.

Her Worship the Mayor advised that a 2018-2028 LTP schedule containing the 2017 LTP meetings has been provided to elected members at this briefing. This schedule serves as a reminder to the elected members of the length and breadth of the LTP Process.

2.1. Northland Civil Defence Emergency Management LTP Briefing

Victoria Randall reviewed a short presentation entitled Civil Defence Emergency Management Activity Group Briefing 2017 LTP. Copies of the presentation were not made available for the briefing.

The main focus areas are the following:

- Hazard Risk Reduction;
- Performance measures to be included in the LTP (there are currently no performance measures);
- Business continuity management;
- Shared services must be strengthened with an increased contribution required from councils across Northland for CDEM Professional Services, specifically for CDEM Officers, a Group Recovery Manager and Welfare.

The Core CDEM Work Programme for Council consists of five main areas namely:

- Provision of trained staff for key CDEM roles;
- Asset Management for example the Tsunami siren network. The elected members were shown a map with the current tsunami networks. There are currently 91 tsunami sirens in the Whangarei district, mostly in areas with the greatest number of inhabitants. There are still gaps in the network. Across Northland, there are approximately 165 tsunami sirens. There are also nine Tsunami information boards which were recently piloted for the first time. It is hoped that the number of these boards can be increased in order to place them at more locations. These boards are significant to educate locals and visitors about the best action to take when there is a tsunami warning. Management and testing of assets and implementation of new assets is ongoing.
- Civil Defence Centres – WDC is responsible for opening a new Civil Defence Centre.
- Community Response Group support - the elected members were shown a map of community response groups which cover large proportions of the district. There are 17 community response groups in total. There are still gaps but these will increase in the future and so there is a need for appropriate support to the community if there is a Civil Defence Emergency.
- Volunteer support - volunteer groups need to be trained and managed, volunteer groups will grow in the future.

Northland Civil Defence Group Shared Services

- Currently includes:
 - an on call CDO / initial response roster;
 - welfare management and welfare group coordination;
 - public information management;
 - recovery management;
 - support for community response plans / groups;
 - developing and supporting of a controller's pool.
- What is needed:
 - A region wide alerting system. There are various alerting systems such as the Red Cross Hazard App, social media on the Northland Civil Defence Facebook page, websites and e-mails and texts. One level of information across the whole of Northland is being considered;
 - The aim is to close the gap as there are shared challenges, shared solutions and shared resources;
 - One on call duty officer to deliver all services. Welfare management overseen across Northland to support duty officers. CDO/ initial response roster for all (including monitoring and alerting);
 - Welfare management;
 - Welfare group coordination;
 - Public information management;
 - Recovery management across all districts;
 - Develop and support training and exercises;
 - Community response across Northland;
 - Support for community response plans / groups;
 - Develop and support a controllers pool.

The elected members were shown slides depicting the following:

- Civil Defence Emergency Management current expenditure;
- Current investment per head in Civil Defence Emergency Management across Northland;
- The number of professional Civil Defence Emergency managers for each region.

Comments and questions from elected members

- *Are there sirens in the middle of Kensington?* Victoria advised not in Kensington but there a number at the town basin.
- *Has climate change been taken in to account in the costing as it is a cost to council which council has to take into account.* Victoria advised that climate change is not reflected in the figures.
- *Would staff be employed in their own roles or would they be full time employees dedicated to civil defence?* Victoria advised that currently full time

employees have their own roles but choose to volunteer for civil defence. The NRC is currently recruiting two new positions dedicated to CDEM.

- *With regards to the LTP process currently underway, are there any planned projects which should be included in the LTP?* Victoria advised projects are ongoing, extra considerations are Hazard Management, Risk reductions, professional emergency management.
- *Preparing, planning and training is a key aspect of CDEM. Response is a small part of CDEM, an important part of response is how to serve the community to provide basic needs. The arrangements currently in place do not seem to allow the NRC to provide these services adequately. The contribution from WDC should be used to lead a programme to monitor projects, reduce hazards and engage another emergency services manager. The elected members would require a sense of the work programme.*

2.2. LTP Assets and Operations - Support Services

This report should be read in conjunction with the agenda report.

- **ICT**

Jo Wheat-Connelly reviewed the ICT section of the presentation.

Goals for the future:

- Managing IT systems to provide better services.
- Services must be delivered for the whole council, not part of council.
- One core system for the whole of council. Big factors in the one core system are mobility, data and cloud.
- There are contracts in place to maintain service provision via third parties.
- Projects currently undergoing: Trilogy Phase II – transforming into a digital council.
- ICT wants to be business-led not technology-led.
- Council must ensure that we maintain services for the next ten years. This can be done by creating more services which are digital by default. The cost of an electronic transaction in comparison to a physical transaction is huge. Council must consider a backend technology structure to make it work efficiently to deliver digital service. Digital services must be end to end. Digital platform must be seamless and simplistic.
- The business model of central government is changing.
- ICT Strategic Plan: to reduce the cost of ownership in order to continue to build on top of services, more telephony system to be moved to the cloud, digital platform.
- Councils to do list for 2017 – 2020: Upgrade GIS and asset systems, consolidate organisational reporting data in a “warehouse”, implement enterprise workflow, implement an organisational wiki and real time services,

implements spatial analytics online, customer e-services across all service functions, implement a full electronic LIM from beginning to end, publish council performance “realtime” online, provide open data publishing, mobilisation of asset and regulatory functions.

Comments and questions from elected members

- *How all the changes are introduced is very important, what if sections of the community elect not to use the digital platform?* Jo advised that the option to retain support for people who do not want to go digital is there.
- *Are there any external review of provisions put in place?* Jo advised yes, there is a peer review and an external audit.
- *Who owns our data currently and where does our data sit?* Jo advised that its spread across the business, there isn't a central business owner. Council's data is in Sydney but that does not mean that Australia owns the data. Jo advised that they own the software, council owns the data. The Australian government must first institute court proceedings to obtain the data. Cannot gain access to it without undergoing court proceedings.
- *What if there is a loss of connection while the data is stored in Sydney?* Jo advised that council has redundant networks which can be used to create connectivity.

The briefing adjourned at 10.45am for tea and commenced again at 11.00am.

- **Communications**

Alan Adcock reviewed the communications section of the presentation.

Different organisations use different forms of communication which align to one overall business strategy. Council uses various methods of communicating with the public ie through websites, print, radion, social media and yet people are not sure what it is that council does. Branding is important and our branding must reflect what council does.

Future for communications:

- Strategically align to deliver core services, based on strategy in LTP;
- Keep content current. There are different types of customers and council must ensure that it is communicating with customers who are not digitally capable.
- Translate to customers what customer services council provides.

Comments and questions from elected members

- *The communication put out by council does not get the message across to the ratepayers that this what council does with the rates that they pay.*
- *Our council logo is very downplayed.*

Councillor Murphy left the briefing at 11.09am.

- **Democracy and Assurance**

Jason Marris reviewed this section of the presentation.

The work done in D&A is not measured in money but is time based.

- Impact of technology: The introduction of eScribe has moved the creation of democratic agenda's from a manual to an electronic system.
- D&A is moving towards ensuring more and different types of engagement with the community.
- D&A reflects on legislative changes and moves with these changes.
- D&A is seeking to ensure more transparency and improving time frames.
- Key projects are LG elections (every three years) and representation review (every 6 years).

Comments and questions from elected members

- *Has there been any changes to the LGA recently?* Jason advised not recently.
- *Have there been any complaints about the way we engage?* Jason advised that there has been feedback from the community that council should engage more and that the consultation process can be improved.

- **Maori Relationships**

Jill McPherson reviewed this section of the presentation.

The LTP makes provision for council to facilitate Maori participation in decision making and building Maori capacity to participate. Council needs to be reviewed on this. Te Karearea meetings are held monthly.

Hapu are requesting financial support which is not in budget. Council must engage with Hapu in order to reevaluate their plans and assist Hapu to negotiate for funding support from council.

Comments and questions from elected members

- *Progress must be made with Maori relationships as treaty claims are coming to Northland and council must be prepared.*
- *Is there funding for Hapu's request for financial support?* Jill advised that some funds are available but provision needs to be made for co-governance resources.

- **People and Capability**

Rob Forlong ran through the section on People and Capability.

Councils restructure is complete and the focus now is on training and development in order to work more effectively across the organisation and organisational culture.

Comments and questions from elected members

- *Does HR have the capacity to handle staff requirements?* Rob advised that council is a very lean operation at the moment. If the elected members want to change the HR process, more resources must be put into it but Rob does not think this is necessary as HR is a strong department. One of Rob's functions is to report to the elected members on staff turnover and staff satisfaction. This has been reported to the elected members before.
- *Need good policy in place and need resources to do that.*
- *Are more district planners needed to make more things happen?* Rob advised that the RMA is complicated. Council is trying to simplify things in order to avoid red tape but if the elected members want to change the District Plan faster, then more planners are needed. Adding to staff numbers for new positions would need approval from the elected members.

- **Financial Management**

Rich Kerr presented the financial management presentation

Key trends

- Increased financial accountability across council.
- Compiling reports across council which enables council to make decisions to run the business more effectively.
- Council needs to provide finance training for non-accountants to improve financial understanding.
- With real time data reporting, council can view the business now as opposed to a review of what occurred 4 – 6 months ago.
- The rating system must be reviewed to make it more simple.
- Council has improved its procurement policies for better interaction with suppliers and limiting council's risk.

Comments and questions from elected members

- *Council needs to be careful about how suppliers are responding to procurement.* Rich advised that council has a balanced approach to procurement and costs are kept down.
- *Ratepayers want to see that projects are being completed, there is no accountability to ratepayers.* Alan advised that council is very open to the public and monthly reports on council's operations are provided to the public.
- *There are projects that do not get done when council says that they are going to be done, is council working on balancing the work load and improving it? There needs to be more transparency regarding deferment of projects.* Alan

advised that project detail is discussed in committee meetings and focus groups but this can be brought to council meetings for the elected members to be fully briefed.

Councillor Cutforth left the briefing at 12.06pm.

Annual Ratepayer's report

Alan and Rob reviewed the annual ratepayers report with the elected members.

Her Worship the Mayor closed the briefing at 12.41pm.