

Council Briefing Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday, 30 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), Simon Weston (General Manager – Infrastructure), Jill McPherson (General Manager- Strategy and Democracy), Alan Adcock (General Manager - Corporate), Dominic Kula (Manager - Infrastructure Development), Andrew Carvell (Manager - Waste and Drainage), Aubrey Gifford (Acting Manager - Parks and Recreation), Thane Richardt (Waste and Drainage Asset Engineer - Waste and Drainage), Shaun Dixon (Strategic Asset Co-ordinator - Parks, Parks and Recreation), Nicolene Pestana (Democracy Advisor).

1. Apologies

There were no apologies.

Her Worship the Mayor welcomed the Elected Members and commenced the briefing at 9.00am.

2. Reports

2.1 Wastewater LTP Briefing

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

Thane Richardt reviewed the presentation and explained the content of each slide as outlined in the agenda report and presentation.

Presentation slide headings

- What we do
- Key facts – waste water
- Legislative requirements
- Wastewater satisfaction
- Public toilets satisfaction
- Proposed LOS changes
- Proposed performance measures
- Challenges
- Renewals – survival model
- Renewals
- Growth
- Asset data
- Strategy
- Summary

Comments and questions from elected members

- Wastewater satisfaction *The 53% satisfaction in wastewater for Hikurangi is quite low when so much work has already been done. This is a large area to have so much dissatisfaction. Simon Weston advised that since 2012, a significant amount of money has been spent to improve wastewater and this will be reflected.*
- *What methodology was used to determine satisfaction?* Thane advised customers were polled using the satisfied, not satisfied and neutral methodology.
- *Satisfaction is steadily improving and is above target in 2017. The most highly satisfied wards are the wards with high population density, although there are some that are below target.*
- Public toilets satisfaction
- *In general satisfaction is high.*
- *Would like to the satisfaction levels raised a bit. 70% is not good enough and council should be improving it.*

- *If the satisfaction levels for wastewater are considered, council has achieved satisfaction but if you consider the last performance measures its stayed the same.*
- Proposed LOS changes
- *There are some proposed changes to clarify that council is providing levels of service in declared service areas.*
- *Shouldn't the whole district be covered as opposed to only declared service areas? Council is trying to determine the boundaries as to where they provide services and where not. Page 14 of the report shows the areas which are declared service areas.*
- *If we have different levels of service per areas, council must be clear as to the reason for the level of service in a specific area.*
- *A key question is whether council is increasing the areas to where services are delivered.*
- *Is council going to alter its waste management contract? Thane advised that council is concluding its contracts with an idea of what council intends to achieve.*
- *How does WDC stand in comparison to other councils? Simon advised that Water NZ has a survey monkey amongst all councils in NZ which reflects how councils are doing. In the water space, WDC is doing quite well and in some aspects WDC is leading.*
- *Levels of service for public toilets should be looked at equally across the district not just where toilets are highly used. Simon advised that there are two instances in which council decides to expand service areas namely need and development.*
- *How does council ensure services to areas which are growing but not in the designated service areas? Thane advised that waste water assessments as required by legislation are done on a regular basis to determine where services are needed.*
- *When looking at service areas, you must respond to the growth mode. Equally you have the challenge of renewals. How do you weight the challenges of growth versus renewals? Simon advised that council is working hard to get on top of renewals and ensure that the existing systems are replaced and kept up to date. Where there is rapid growth, assessments will be frequently done. There are still several townships that are deemed to satisfactory but may not be so in the future.*
- Andrew Carvell advised that an example of designated areas where council provides a service would be areas on council's waste water service network. There are some areas where the developer has decided not to connect to council's wastewater system and thus council does not provide a service to those areas.
- Proposed Performance measures

- *Why is it that critical assets take 24 months to replace?* Council advised that this is not always so but the replacement of assets is based on finances and backlogs.
- *Elected members would like to see performance measures from 2005 to compare this.*
- *It's a judgment call where to spend money. How much money is there to fix assets when there is so much that needs to be done.* Council advised that it was important though to identify critical assets for renewal.
- *With regards to performance measure 11, council should be encouraging residents to link onto WDC's wastewater system and not rely on septic tanks. Council is only measuring performance on the reticulated system and yet the non-reticulated system is where the complaints arise from.*
- *Although the service levels have not been costed, the performance measures are going to fall into the LTP and council needs to have a discussion on service levels and performance measures to measure the percentage of satisfied customers.* Rob advised that the discussion will come later and this briefing is to set the scene. Simon advised that he will provide the national service levels in order to compare how council rates nationally.
- *A discussion on septic tanks should also be held.*
- Challenges
- Treatment plants will need some form of upgrade.
- Renewals remain a challenge.
- *What does council need to do to fix compliance issues?* Andrew advised that the biggest issues were decided on in the last LTP and the work from this is starting now.
- *Dealing with renewals as they come up but with the asset system we have, have studies been done to determine what we are dealing with?* Andrew advised that different criteria affect pipes such as location and decay but a huge amount of data is needed to develop models.
- Renewals – Survival mode
- The elected members were shown slides of various pipes and the condition of these pipes. There is a lot of variability in pipes, sometimes due to location, sometimes due to other factors but age is not the only determinant of condition. The elected members were shown survival modes of pipes. All pipes start off on 100% and as time progresses, they decrease in their durability. It also depends on the material used. Earthenware shows the most decay. Age is not the only factor but location is a big factor. PVC and concrete lasts quite a long time. CCTV data has been captured to assess the durability of the pipes.
- There are also different failures based on the location.
- The elected members were also shown slides of pipes in a failed condition. Andrew advised that there are still pipes that have not yet been found. Replacement of the failed pipes must be spread out over the length of the LTP to deal with the backlog but there are also pipes that need to be replaced over that time through normal wear and tear.

- *Is the amount of money needed required to replace or repair the assets?* Andrew advised anything above a certain level of failure will be replaced.
- *When a pipe is replaced, is a camera test done before replacing?* Simon advised yes, the pipes are not replaced based on age. If the pipe is not repairable, it is replaced. If it is old but still in good condition, it gets repaired.

Asset data

- Andrew advised that there is a disconnect between the assets and the assets in the database which is something to be considered. The information in the database is not detailed enough for example we do not know how deep the pipes are or how big the manholes are. Although there are some gaps in the database, the models to depict the data.
- Simon advised that ten years ago, it was expected that all areas would be fully developed and then the global financial crisis stopped a lot of development and as a result the high flows of development did not materialise. In Ruakaka the studies done on population growth show immense growth but the levels of wastewater are very low to what was predicted. There are certain pipelines in Ruakaka which need to be renewed.
- *If developers are sub-standard, council needs to talk about getting higher standards from developers.* Simon advised that this is being reviewed.

2.2 Stormwater LTP Briefing

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

Thane Richardt reviewed the presentation and explained the content of each slide as outlined in the agenda report and presentation.

Presentation slide headings

- What we do
- Key facts – storm water
- Legislative requirements
- Customer satisfaction
- Proposed LOS changes
- Proposed performance measures
- Challenges
- Stormwater pipe condition
- Renewals – survival model
- Renewals
- Climate change
- Flooding
- Overland flow paths
- Water quality
- Asset data
- Strategy

- Summary

Comments and questions from elected members

- Defined service areas but not cast in stone, reviewed periodically and can be moved.
- To assess stormwater service, service assessments must be reconciled with LTP.
- Customer satisfaction took a little bit of a dip in 2016.
- *Stormwater is more than just pipes, the elected members have only received information on pipes, what about drains or streams? Is council including streams and drains in the calculations?* Andrew advised yes, drains and pipes have been included in the key facts. Thane advised that there is an overlap between WDC and NRC.
- *Where is the line drawn between WDC's responsibility and NRC's with reference to stormwater?* Andrew advised WDC's responsibility is where there are existing council services which are not working correctly.
- *WDC does have a responsibility to make adequate provision for stormwater to run to. In service areas where subdivisions have been allowed, stormwater is not running adequately.* Simon advised that development engineers are now part of WDC and discuss development with WDC.
- *Correct data must be provided to the elected members in order for decisions to be made with regards to the inner city centre. Data is critical and council needs to put some time and money into stormwater.*
- The NRC has been in discussion with WDC with regards to the draft regional plan which will be made public shortly.
- *With regards to subdivision if we keep on piping, it is going to cost. Council should be looking at new technology to manage flooding better, there are good solutions which are less costly.* Andrew advised that council is looking at other solutions but with new technology comes an ongoing maintenance responsibility which can get expensive.
- It is proposed that the current level of service should be broken into two levels of service to specify levels of service.
- *Habitual flooding is not ideal, are the levels of service too light?* Andrew advised that the current concerns do not reach the level of service. If we had to change the levels of service, we would change the costing.
- *The stormwater pipes condition is alarming.* Thane advised that if contamination was a problem, we wouldn't only see this in selected pipes but across the board.
- *It terms of value, how much does Marsden impact on WDC's figures?* Andrew advised that the skewing of the figures by Marsden is minimal.
- Biggest challenge is funding. Average value of stormwater assets is 14 % of WDC total assets but funding does not reflect that.

- The CCTV inspection of pipes shows a discrepancy in that 40% of pipes within the 10-20 year age bracket are in excellent condition but in the 0-10 year age grouping, 40% of the pipes are in poor condition. This suggests that more construction supervision is needed.
- The deterioration in stormwater pipes is a lot quicker than in wastewater pipes. About 50% of the pipes are going to last about 63 years.
- It is required by central government that climate change be taken into account. This presents some challenges, particularly in the CBD in terms of pipes that are discharging into the Hetaua River.
- We are close to 100% knowing where the assets are and what material the assets are made of but we are still unclear in what condition they are, how deep they are, the capacity of the pipes.
- *How reliable is the data?* 85% reliable, 20% needs modification, to effectively manage the asset, we need good data.

2.3 Parks and Recreation LTP Briefing

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

Simon Weston reviewed the presentation and explained the content of each slide as outlined in the agenda report and presentation.

Presentation slide headings

- Services we provide
- Key issues
- Facilities
- Land provision
- Current LTP Years 4-10 Renewals Gap Analysis
- AMP Renewals Comparison
- Recent projects

Comments and questions from elected members

- *Parks are very visual as opposed to stormwater and wastewater which are not so visual, how do they compare?* Simon advised that over the past ten years more money has been put into wastewater and then stormwater but parks are needed to attract visitors.
- *Whangarei's assets are our coastline but recreation is more than just organised sports with strong parent bodies, where there is a real need, recreation must be looked at.*
- *Have we identified main areas where land must be purchased?* Sean advised that draft report will be available soon to reflect where to focus energy and money.

- *Must be fair about facility maintenance grants, look at all grants in the district as some are not receiving grants.*
- *Must look at sport and recreation, not just support.*
- *Also look at capacity for example the Hatea Loop's capacity is diminishing.*
- *Coastal protection – WDC is not here to protect people's private beaches.*
Simon advised that policy in this regard has been adopted.
- *WDC needs a robust policy on changing facilities with clubs.*
- *If WDC puts a sports and recreational facility in place, we need to be 100% committed to ongoing maintenance. Perhaps we should consider more informal recreation.*
- *WDC needs a good recreational strategy.*
- *There is a frustrating disjuncture between NZTA and WDC, particularly on the side of roads, this needs to be addressed in the plan. Simon advised that WDC could take over maintenance of some of the NRC / NZTA's projects by lobbying government or taking control.*
- *Little walkways are looked after by community groups, will WDC be looking after those walkways?* Simon advised WDC looks at usage and basic maintenance scheduled on these, put through as CRM's.
- *Parks must have a bold vision as with Kensington Park.*
- *How much funding is required to clear the backlog?* Simon advised no clear amount identified, over the years money has been put into other projects instead of the backlog and the backlog has gotten further behind. The LTP must have a strategy to deal with the backlog.
- *Are cycleways and roadways determined as more important or as they are needed.* Simon advised that these are shared projects between roads and parks.

Her Worship the Mayor closed the briefing at 12.03.