

Council Briefing Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, 3 May, 2018
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 Gavin Benney
Cr Crichton Christie
Cr Vince Cocurullo
Cr Tricia Cutforth
Cr Shelley Deeming
Cr Sue Glen
Cr Phil Halse
Cr Cherry Hermon
Cr Greg Innes
Cr Sharon Morgan
Cr Anna Murphy

Not in Attendance

Cr Greg Martin

Scribe C Brindle (Senior Democracy Adviser)

Her Worship the Mayor convened the meeting.

1. Apologies

Cr Greg Martin (absent) and Cr Shelley Deeming (early departure)

2. Report

2.1 Long Term Plan 2018-2028 Consultation Issues and Options Report

Today's briefing will cover:

- Recap - how we got to this point
- Overview of the key issues raised during consultation and options for discussion
- Next steps.

Mr Forlong began by acknowledging the process to date and emphasised council should in their approach:

- be clear on what is in and what isn't in the plan. Council should also be cognisant of the expectations of the community. There are past examples of not being clear on the expectations of the community.

There may be some flexibility in the future e.g. move capital projects between years, may have 'windfalls' e.g. property sales that allow us to do more or pay down debt.

Changes to government policy over the next 12 months may require readjustments next year (through the Annual Plan process).

In response to the question "Do we have the flexibility to deal with any funds from the Provincial Growth Fund?" Mr Forlong advised the council have the ability to set aside money for unspecified projects or works, however traditionally council haven't chosen to do that. The legislation doesn't allow much flexibility. However, adjustments can be made through the Annual Plan process. Today we are working with what we have now.

Over and above the budget established for the Consultation Document a review has established:

- \$500k Opex
- A small amount of debt head room which can be used.

The leadership team gave an overview of early engagement and the finance and infrastructure strategies.

Jill McPherson spoke on:

- *Early engagement* proved to be extremely helpful it meant we were clear about what was important to the community before we started writing the Consultation Document. What we took from early engagement was that people generally like what council are doing and often wanted more of the same.

Alan Adcock covered:

- *Financial strategy:*

Balanced budget – means today's ratepayers pay for their wear and tear of our assets

Maintaining rates increases at LGCI plus 2% - generating operating surpluses to fund the needs of a growing community, asset renewals and service improvements.

Debt Limit

– indexed to growth and inflation (to maintain buying power)

- Additional amount to fund significant new assets – civic centre/performing arts.

Feedback from the submissions indicated there was very little concern about the debt level rising. In terms of a balanced budget it was noted there are 'pinch points' in Year 1 and Year 5 of the plan. However, there is debt capacity to address these anomalies. Council's financial strategy is sound.

Simon Weston presented on the:

- *Infrastructure strategy*
 - Provides for required renewals over the life of the strategy
 - Prioritises stormwater renewals to maintain levels of service – additional \$3.8m in LTP for stormwater
 - Provides for improved information on assets
 - Meets expectations for increased amenity and provides for growth.

Submissions Summary

- 687 submissions received
- 116 submissions heard by council
- General support for:
 - Continued focus of core infrastructure, including stormwater
 - More funding for roads/footpaths
 - Increasing community-led resourcing
 - More community assets
 - Preference for modified status quo for rates.

Overall feedback from the community is to keep improving the district, its infrastructure and amenities. Hot topics from the consultation are:

- Sports facilities
- Seal extensions
- Roading – general
- Community development and funding
- Playgrounds and skateparks.

Summary of issues and options by activity

A summary of key issues for each council activity along with a full analysis of submission issues is provided in the agenda report.

The leadership team spoke on the key issues, options and proposed recommendations relating to their respective portfolios:

- Overview of the key issues relating to core assets – Simon Weston
- Community Facilities and Services – Sandra Boardman
- Civic Centre and Rates – Alan Adcock
- Concurrent Consultations – Jill McPherson
- Fees and Charges – Alison Geddes.

Review submissions

Topics not covered or missed from the submissions feedback (report) were listed for discussion. Council then reviewed the submission issues, discussion points were noted:

- Rates and Airbnb's vs Motels – Why were they categorised as a separate category?
- Surpluses too high?
- GMO Narrative

- Contractor availability vs capital program
- How should we respond to requests for reduction in operational expenditure?
- Whau Valley Water Treatment Plant
- Using total debt vs core debt + special debt
- PGF – setting aside a local share?
- Recreation Strategy – unknowns – how do we prepare for these?
- Community Development Framework – integrating all aspects including community funding
- Community contribution to community development compared to central government
- Smokefree policy
- Social and pensioner housing / leadership / strategy
- Facilities Partnership – too small to match requests – need framework
 - need to manage expectations
 - maintenance funding
- SUIP's – in regard to commercial
- \$\$ for requests for facilities / projects
- Community property maintenance
- Blue / Green total cost
- Climate change
- Response to submitters?

Transport

- Seal extensions – need details for decisions
 - cost per km
 - priority list and criteria – ratepayers want a lower standard (LoS) than NZTA
 - EES – set – overspec – life cost
- Include flooding Punaruku
- NZTA changes in policy – may change criteria for subsidies e.g. footpaths / EV's. Need to be prepared for this. If we get “windfalls”, how do we allocate our share in LTP?
- In LTP, what do we know now? – state this
- How do we deal with uncertainties? – state this
- Unsealed roads maintenance needs reviewing
- Footpaths – LoS not as good outside city boundaries – consistency across District
 - renewals need attention (e.g. Bank Street)
 - mention Raumanga specifically
 - Look at better road sharing between footpaths and vehicle carriageways
- Carparking – need to allocate new facilities / areas – not included – submissions say they want more. Ensure Tutukaka included.
- Why are we missing out on new investment in the city centre?
 - is one reason “car parking”?
 - car parking not always the answer e.g. slow street add to business success
 - to retain “main street” nature
- Walking = cycling
 - add Waipu Stage 3 – Regional strategy nearly complete - to Council in May / June
 - Tikipunga to Ngunguru – Regional strategy nearly complete – to Council in May / June

- Street Lighting
- Traffic Calming
 - innovative techniques should be used e.g. design / narrowing roads / tactical urbanism
- Need a list of requests (more than the budget...) – how do we know if we budgeted enough? \$100k/year
 - getting priorities wrong – criteria set by NZTA
 - need a prioritized list
 - Onerahi / Parua Bay by schools
- Speed limits
- Pull-over areas – signs / tar seal maintenance needed on pullover areas on Whangarei Heads Roads (not for parking) – need a fund? \$100k/year.
- CBD – need to complete strategy
- Congestion – SH maintenance and traffic flow issues
- Community mowing – funding them, berms.
- Weed control – concern about glyphosate (round-up)
 - NRC should be doing more – need coordinated approach
 - More budget? Weed management on road reserve
- Walkway Maintenance – Otangarei / Tikipunga
 - priorities / budget?
- Bring forward – Ruakaka Beach Road / one-lane bridge
- Bus terminal – bring budget forward
- Are we preparing for alternative transport initiatives?
- Water supply
 - fluoridation – who pays? (Probably rate payer)
 - Havelock!
- Water quality
- Solid Waste
 - battery drop off point – need to tell people where – comms story on recycling / promotion generally / ELO Solutions
 - Transfer station hours unfriendly – 2015 hours
 - review hours (when they are open not just how many hours)
 - functions
- Wastewater
- Signage re Freedom Camping dumping (Whangaruru etc)
- Dump stations at treatment plants and related to freedom camping areas
- Septic tank inspections - \$ - fees and charges = next version
- Ruakaka ocean outfall – no need to continue to consult, have consent?
- Stormwater
 - Treatment
- Flooding -Maunu School + Austin Road – in programme
- CRM's - \$\$ to enable proper response?
- Community-led projects / community funding
 - increase \$\$
 - ongoing support of groups will always be needed
 - need framework for all budgets
 - organization support
 - facilities – Need to know whether they can continue to fund operations and maintenance

- community-led / village planning projects
- Facilities requests – manage expectations - need to make it clear that not all can be funded.
- Mention all localities that came in with place-based submissions – have only included some
- CCTV monitoring \$\$ increase – make sure we can do what we say
 - \$1.74m over 10 years
 - more of a programme for Raumanga and Otangarei – increase in \$\$
- Community Property – increase maintenance budget now rather than in 3 years. Address the wording.
- Capitaine Bougainville theatre upgrade to digital
- Policy on funding club buildings
- More events \$\$
- Stage II Puna Rere walkway, Waimahanga walkway - \$\$ to complete them
- Bring forward – Toll Stadium lighting
 - Ruakaka Cemetery land purchase
- Town basis Precinct development \$\$
- Rural Urban Split to be ok
- Hihiaua park area drainage to facilitate events \$\$
- Substitute soccer for hockey in bringing forwards + bring forward Bream Bay Drinking Fountains
- Land purchase – bottom of Kamo Hill (NZTA owned).

A lunch break was taken from 1.12pm to 1.45pm.

During the lunch break the requests for increased budgets and projects to bring forward noted during discussion, were compiled into a list.

Requests for increased budgets	Projects – bring forward
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kiwi House – roof maintenance, LoS improvements - Seal extensions - Kamo hill land purchase - Safety improvements for roads - Increased funding for events - Weed and berm management on road reserves - Digital format for theatre - Punaruku Road flooding *Opex budget - Community Property maintenance budget - Ball clock - Promotion of recycling - Connectivity issues in Raumanga - Transfer station hours - More facilities/service levels – Otangarei - Treating Stormwater 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ruakaka Community land purchase - Tikipunga soccer - Bream Bay fields - Ruakaka Beach Road/One Lane bridge - Rose Street bus station - Property purchase – Waipu Activity Plan - Toll Stadium lighting

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CCTV monitoring and network - CRM response capacity - Hihiaua drainage - Community Led Development - Town Basin precinct - Puna Rere and Waimahanga Walkways - More new playgrounds | |
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The review of submissions was suspended to enable discussions on the Civic Centre to proceed.

Civic Centre

Discussion then focussed on the proposed Civic Centre (refer pages 10, 11 and 12 of the agenda report). Staff sought feedback from Elected Members on their preferred site. Comments/feedback included:

- Change the RSA from a back up option to a parallel option
- Percentages for both the RSA and Forum North total 60%, indicates preference is not for the CBD site
- Consider the CBD site if it provided multiple benefits e.g. funds available for other projects
- Parking and traffic issues at CBD site
- Building costs in CBD significantly higher
- Potential financial advantages for CBD site e.g. lease or strata title arrangement
- Seeking expressions of interest from developers would indicate a commitment to proceeding with CBD site
- Rising sea levels – CBD site too close to sea
- Referendum on this matter?
- Support public/private partnership rather than increasing the debt level to \$240m
- Develop Civic Centre/Library/Arts precinct
- What happens to the submission proposing an alternative site?
- Have there been conversations with developers? Is there a commitment to a particular site?
- Numbers/percentages don't reflect actual. Submissions could not be made via the website unless an option for the civic centre was ticked. Confusion over location of both CBD and Forum North. Some people thought both options are located in the CBD and ticked CBD by mistake.

Views were diverse. Staff will continue to recommend their professional opinion which is to seek expressions of interest for the CBD site but continue to further develop the RSA site option.

Review submissions continued

At the conclusion of the discussion on the Civic Centre council continued with the review of submissions, commencing with Democracy and Assurance on page 60 of the agenda report. Discussion points were noted:

- Democracy and Assurance – video link to council chambers – check the cost

- Bio-security - Environmental Hub – not a priority given what else we have to do
- Bank Street revitalisation – part of CBD/City Centre Plan and associated revitalisation
- Housing and related issues – what is council's role in housing.
 Enabling – affordable housing through urban planning?
 Develop a housing strategy in collaboration with the sector (facilitation role)?
 Council is currently working with MSD and Housing NZ on land available for housing (note on deliberations report). Report to be presented to next Community Development Committee.
 Increased rents – council's role?
- Airport – stop work on new airport? Report on new airport June or July.
- CDEM use of Marae – do we have funds to upgrade these?
- Maori Partnership – need to be preparing for treaty settlement claims – check. Te Huinga – representation.
- Democracy and Assurance –
 District Plan enabling?
 30/50 Implementation Plan – 2018 census information will enable us to predict better.
- Procurement, Contractors and Maintenance -
 Maintenance of gravel roads – monitoring.
- Bi-lingual signage – will mean cost increases. Be clear what our responsibilities are in terms of the LGA & RMA vs central governments responsibilities
- Rates
 - Pan charges – Celtic Barn, Waipu – what is our response?
 - Commercial SUIPs
 - Cap on numbers?))
 - By floor (minimum floor area)?) need more options)
 - No SUIPs?) but change would) next
 - Not on historic buildings?) require re-consultation) review
 - Exclude NRC rates?) Compliance/monitoring)
 - Related to number of pans)
 - Airbnb – some not affected by SUIPs (some meet the criteria) – wait to see what happens in Auckland and Queenstown. Consider in next review.
 - Multi-use category – re-establish it? Why was this changed in the first place? Why change it? 2 x commercial rate – what happens in other areas? Part of “commercial”. Transition to commercial? Remission or don't remission?
 - Targeted rates – Snooks and Brooks Road seal extensions. Using targeted rate for seal extensions? Consider for decision making.

At the completion of the review of submissions, due to time constraints, it was decided to defer the review of the list of additional projects etc until Monday.

Cr Christie left the meeting at 3.50pm during discussion on the rates policy.

Cr Cutforth left the meeting at 3.55pm during the targeted rate for seal extensions discussion.

Cr Cocurullo left the meeting at 3.58pm during the targeted rate for seal extensions discussion.

The meeting adjourned at 4.15pm to be reconvened at 2pm on Monday 7 May 2018, Council Chambers.

Minutes Reconvened Council Briefing

Date: Monday, 7 May, 2018
Time: 2.00pm
Location: Council Chamber
 Forum North, Rust Avenue
 Whangarei

In Attendance	Her Worship the Mayor Sheryl Mai (Chairperson) Cr Stu Bell Cr Gavin Benney Cr Crichton Christie Cr Vince Cocurullo Cr Shelley Deeming Cr Sue Glen Cr Phil Halse Cr Greg Innes Cr Greg Martin Cr Sharon Morgan Cr Anna Murphy
Not in Attendance	Cr Cherry Hermon Cr Tricia Cutforth
Scribe	Jennie Thomas (Democracy Adviser)

Her Worship the Mayor reconvened the meeting at 2.00 pm.

1. Apologies

Cr Cherry Hermon and Cr Tricia Cutforth

Cr Cocurullo joined the meeting at 2.52 pm.

Jill McPherson, General Manager Strategy and Democracy, reminded elected members that after early engagement requests from the community and themselves were collated. These requests fell into the main categories that we subsequently used to prioritise projects:

1. Delivering core services with appropriate maintenance
2. Improved amenity
3. More to see and do

and

- Finishing projects before we do more
- Enough Opex budget allowed for new projects

The requests from elected members on Thursday's briefing for increased budgets, projects and bring forwards were compiled into a spreadsheet handout to work through.

Jill advised that staff have looked for head room to respond to the consultation document submissions. The capital pinch point will be Year 5 in relation to debt levels. Head room from the Opex budget has been identified with \$400k in Year 1, \$600k in Year 2 and \$500k therein. This funding is coming out of the Opex budget so it will not have to be substituted from other projects. Grants are Opex.

There was a query on whether project substitution could occur across Council silos. It was explained that Roding would be different from other departments due to the NZTA subsidy but funding could be added from other areas to Roding.

There was a range of discussion and suggestions on the various requests listed from the preceding briefing discussion.

Issue	Request	Further Discussion/Comment
Seal extensions	Increase annual budget to \$1 million	Ability of contractors to cover further seal extensions and maintain the road maintenance programme was discussed.
Albany Road, One Tree Point	Funding for piping open drains on side of road, building a footpath and improving lighting.	There was support to address issues. Albany Road could already be included in the matrix.
Digital Format for Capitaine Bougainville Theatre	To provide digital format for the theatre.	Was not seen as a priority for this LTP.
Stormwater	Stormwater treatment	There is some room to add treatment to work programme.
Hihiaua drainage	Hihiaua drainage would cost in the vicinity of \$100K.	It was agreed that this could be considered for the next LTP with the next stage at the Hihiaua Cultural Centre completion possibly another three years away.
Parks	More new playgrounds and/or land purchase	There is already funding for three new skate parks and three playgrounds in the first draft.
Punaruku Flooding	Punaruku flood management.	Flood management of the road would be \$2m plus. The operating budget can pay for flood markers. Staff would like to do some research on sea level rising, tides etc. It was recommended to advise the public how long this process would take.

Town Basin Precinct	Enough budget to complete projects in Town Basin (Hundertwasser Precinct)	There is very little funding to do any works around the Hundertwasser site. Additional work could be looked at when the Hundertwasser is completed.
Roading Complaints	Funding for CRM responses.	Operational issue of response through call centres. Challenges during peak times (storms).
Events	A fund for attracting events to Whangarei. \$200k from Year 2.	A strategy is needed to have funds available for opportunities that arise for appropriate events.
Kiwi North and Clarke Homestead	Funding for roof replacement of Kiwi North and repairs to Clarke Homestead – requested \$500,000 contribution.	It was thought that the Clarke Homestead repairs should be prioritised due to the conditions of the roof reported in the submission but easier to fundraise for.
Transfer station hours	Increase opening hours to previous levels. Approximately \$150,000.	Uretiti station was initially discussed and then it was requested to review and include all transfer stations.
Okara Marina proposal	\$5m loan in principle.	Would be subject to agreement and conditions. The debt and loan would cancel each other out - zero change to balance sheet.
Bank Street footpaths	Include in City Centre Core and upgrade footpaths.	Need to confirm budget for footpath upgrade.
Otangarei	Otangarei funding for increased levels of service and more robust bus shelters	Investigate bring forward of lighting to sports fields. Discussion on replacement of bus shelters.
Rose Street bus terminal	Request to bring forward funding to Year 2.	Discussion on whether NRC would be able to provide funding to support this. Staff will confirm.
Whangaruru/Bland Bay Community Centre	Seed funding for \$125,000	It was requested that a commitment from Council be given as early as possible to assist with further fundraising.
Old Boys Marist Rugby Club	Funding for the new building proposed for rugby club on Pohe Island \$600-\$800K.	Query on whether this is already funded elsewhere – check and confirm.
Waimahanga Track	\$50,000 already in budget to address safety issues.	Community divided on completion. May receive a subsidy for cycleways project.
Waipu activity park and land purchase	Funding is in the plan for the building of an activity zone.	Suggestion to use the budget to purchase land, rather than for the facility. Staff need to discuss with landowners to ensure purchase.
Kamo Hill land purchase	Land purchase for park.	This land is identified as available for treaty settlement. Could investigate

		a lease.
Hatea Drive car park	Improve layout to enable a greater number of car park spaces	Costing required for improvements.
Raumanga Connectivity	Funding needed to improve connectivity/walkways.	There is \$25,000 to do a spatial analysis including safety issues for Raumanga. Subject to Kamo cycleway completion there could be budget to provide further funding.
Otangarei connectivity, Puna Rere Drive	Funding required to complete walkway	General sense was to invest in Otangarei connectivity. Complete walkways locals use to access supermarkets etc.
Road safety and calming (Whg Heads pullover areas)	Increase budget and include pullover areas and signage on Whangarei Heads Road and provide school crossing.	Priorities would need to be investigated and established. Investigation to ascertain whether projects would meet NZTA criteria for funding.
Waipu Bern Maintenance (volunteer funding)	Increase in the mowing grants budget pool – contestable access to funding.	A lot of volunteer groups require funding to continue to assist with weed maintenance.
Roading Weed Maintenance	Funding for land care groups to deal with noxious weeds outside NRC strategy.	Discussion on roading maintenance contracts component for road reserve weed maintenance. NRC targeted rate would not be able to be used for road reserves.
Property maintenance (Council as landlord)	\$50,000 per year for next 10 years for community property maintenance.	Ensure this is for maintenance of Council owned property.
Ball Clock	\$320,000 requested for engineering.	Provide funding early in the plan to show commitment to project.
Community-led development	More funding.	Would like to see more locations funded. Discussion on whether prefunded communities should continue to receive funding. An acceleration of funding to other communities was requested. Would existing staff be able to deal with increased amount of communities?
Promotion of recycling	Increasing budget for contractor to provide further education.	Discussion on Council partnership providing assistance with waste minimisation.

There was further discussion on other requests for funding to be brought forward. These included:

Issue	Further Discussion/Comment
Ruakaka Cemetery land purchase	Have identified the characteristics for a cemetery in Ruakaka. Now working on suitable sites.
Tikipunga soccer hub	Feasibility study likely to take a year.
Bream Bay new fields	Design work is underway for two new fields. Sand ridge needs to be removed. No respondents to tender for removal of sand. Delays for new fields are likely. There is budget for irrigation, drainage and lights.
Ruakaka beach road maintenance	One way bridge.
Ruakaka Beach Road access thru Rama Road	Meeting was advised that the residents don't want this access.

Elected members were asked for any further discussion on requests from the briefing that had not been covered in the session to date.

- Continued Developer and Resource Consent Pre-Application Meetings to support housing affordability.
- The meeting was advised the Camera Obscura had not received funding from Foundation North as it will be Council owned. If we are going to own it where is our contribution?
- CCTV – Kamo is already included.
- Hockey is covered in the recreation strategy. Further investigation needed. The Emergency Helicopter is still based at Kensington.

There was a query regarding projects submitted but which may not qualify for the Provisional Growth Fund and whether they would then be funded through the LTP.

Jill McPherson advised that there was still some work to be done before the deliberations.

Cr Murphy left the meeting at 4.11pm

Closure of meeting – The meeting concluded at 16.50 pm.