

SOUTH WAIRARAPA DISTRICT COUNCIL

10 AUGUST 2016

AGENDA ITEM D2

RESULT OF 2016 TECHNICAL REVIEW OF COUNCIL'S FUNCTIONS UNDER THE BUILDING ACT BY MBIE.

Purpose of Report

To inform Councillors of the outcome of the 2016 Technical Review by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) of the Council's functions under the Building Act.

Recommendations

Officers recommend that the Council:

- 1. Receive the information.*
- 2. That the Chief Executive determine what actions are required to ensure Council undertakes its functions under the Building Act in accord with the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's recommendations.*

1. Executive Summary

The Technical Review was carried out by MBIE in late June 2016. The findings were that;

- a) the Council performs a number of its functions under the Act effectively and efficiently, but that
- b) some significant gaps exist in consequence of recent legislative changes and increased expectations on the standard required when undertaking Council functions.

2. Background

The technical assessment was completed on 27 to 29 June 2016 as required under the Building Act and Regulations. Council's functions under the Act had been reviewed once previously.

The purpose of the audit is to ensure the Council meets the requirements set out in the Act and Regulations relating to such matters as Building Warrants of Fitness, issuance of Compliance Schedules and Fencing of Swimming Pools.

This is done by examining what the Council is actually doing in response to its functions under the Act including what our procedures say, but more importantly, that the required outcomes of the Building Act in terms of the ongoing safety and sanitation of buildings is being achieved.

The review was undertaken by personnel of MBIE.

3. Discussion

3.1 Focus

During its on-site visit, the assessment team (Mike Reedy and Clare Botha, members of MBIE's Consent System Team) assessed Council's on the technical operations, the management system, the competence of key personnel, and the methods and procedures used in undertaking Council's duties.

A number of Council's staff were engaged in those processes including the Team Leader Building, inspectors and administrative support staff. The CE and Group Manager also meet the reviewers and attended the final debrief at the end of the review.

3.2 Information Review

Information gathering included, but was not limited to, review of records, discussions with management and technical and support personnel and the inspection of buildings.

3.3 Audit Result

The 2016 review resulted in "passes" being noted in a number of areas but also observations of "opportunities" for improvement.

Many of the matters raised are already being addressed and we expect to have made solid progress on these by the years end.

In particular the review in identifying the opportunities for improvement made recommendations on the adequacy of resources to undertake this work.

In that respect MBIE recommended one additional staff member be appointed to focus on Councils functions under the Act, particularly undertaking BWOFA audits, clearing the backlog of Compliance Schedules and carrying out swimming pool audits.

As a general comment on this recommendation, it is agreed that additional resource is required. However and depending on the type of auditing schedule and methodologies applied, this could range from 0.5 FTE to the 1 FTE recommended by MBIE.

MBIE have indicated in the review report that they *"will do some follow up work during the 2016/17 financial year, which commenced on 1 July 2016, to assess progress in dealing with the recommendations of [the] report"*.

4. Conclusion

Councils Building Act functions have been reviewed and many areas are currently satisfactory. However recommendations have been made to improve performance in this area relating to the adequacy of staff resources.

Contact and Reviewing Officer: Murray Buchanan, Group Manager,
Planning and Environment Group

