

SOUTH WAIRARAPA DISTRICT COUNCIL

19 SEPTEMBER 2013

AGENDA ITEM D3

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Purpose of Report

To update Councillors on the Chief Executive activities.

Recommendations

Officers recommend that the Council:

1. *Receives the information.*

1.1 Staffing

For approximately one week, SWDC had a full complement of staff for the first time in a number of years.

Steve MacArthur tendered his resignation. Steve had been with us for about 15 years. We are recruiting to fulfill this role

Murray Buchanan joins us as Group Manager Planning and Environment. Murray is already proving his worth with advice in areas that had been problematic.

Sara Sutherland has also been appointed as Amenities Administrator, Sara joined us in a temporary capacity covering for Kara McKelvey while Kara was on extended leave, and we are pleased to be able to offer Sara this full time role.

1.2 Occupational Health and Safety

There were no incidents reported since the last Council meeting.

Murray Buchanan will be tasked with ensuring we are compliant in this area.

As we do not directly hire "outside" staff our exposure to risk is low, however we are still required to fulfill our obligations.

1.3 Local Government Commission/Governance Review

Since the lodging of the reorganisation application there has been a lull in activity.

The Local Government Commission has a number of other applications to consider – Hawkes Bay and Far North.

The timelines have moved from initial estimates, with the "preferred option" not expected until March/April 2014. Consultation will then commence.

It is apparent that this process will take some time to run.

At the time of preparing this report we had just received a request for information from the Commission regarding asset management plans. This will be responded in due course.

1.4 Meetings

1.4.1. CE Forum/Mayoral Forum

Two CE Forum meetings have been attended

While there has been some discussion on Regional matters the majority of the discussion has been "over the hill" centric. This is an interesting observation as it highlights that while the Wairarapa is included where prudent; the Wairarapa has very different issues.

For example, there is a significant shared service push in the IT area which on the surface of it will generate significant dollar savings for the participating authorities.

If the Wairarapa authorities were to participate in this IT initiative in all likelihood IT spend would increase.

The other interesting observation is that shared services need not be undertaken by all LA's in an area, it can be successful if only a subset of LA's work collaboratively. This applies in the Wairarapa as well. I think the feeling that all LA's in an area (NZ wide) should be involved for shared services to be successful has held back progress in some areas.

The key initiatives being considered are:

- IT – back office services
- Spatial and Transport Planning
- Regional water
- Economic Development

1.4.2. Greytown District Trustlands Trust

An informative round table discussion was held to identify issues and ways to assist the trust through their development programme in Greytown.

Murray Buchanan will be the point of contact, these developments cut across all disciplines within Council.

1.4.3. Financial Reporting Standards

A day was spent in Palmerston North trying to come to grips with the new financial reporting standards.

As SWDC is deemed "small" there are reporting concessions (mainly around the note disclosures and some reconciliations) that will reduce some

disclosures we are required to make, however the proof will be in the final preparation.

This is a positive step, as it is acknowledgement that one size doesn't necessarily fit all. Hopefully this will be the start of further rationalisation.

While these standards are not fully implemented until 2015, because comparative information will be required to be reported under the new standards we need to start thinking about this now.

1.4.4. Martinborough Town Hall

Following the two recent earthquakes, the town hall has been assessed on two occasions.

Following a meeting with Michelle Grant, Eastern Consulting, it was decided the "yellow sticker" the building.

Yellow stickering is a process of notifying the public that a building is earthquake prone, but the owner is still of the opinion it can be utilised.

There are a couple of known areas that are closed due to a higher level of risk.

1.4.5. Aratoi Regional Trust

A discussion was held with representatives from Aratoi Regional Trust with a view to incorporating all Wairarapa LA's in the funding agreement that currently only includes Masterton DC.

While SWDC has funded Aratoi independently, the aim of the agreement is to provide more certainty for Aratoi, allow SWDC to have some input into the high level KPI's (e.g. more formal reporting), and identify areas where services are specifically supplied to South Wairarapa.

1.4.6. Regional Irrigation

I attended a meeting of interested parties in the regional irrigation project.

The meeting heard presentations on the current preferred sites, and some background on those that had been eliminated; the Waitua committee process; communications around the irrigations project.

Toward the end of the meeting there was a round table discussion where individual issues could be raised.

The three hour meeting finished on the dot of 8pm – pretty impressive chairmanship, and I think the fact that the meeting ran exactly to time reflects that everyone had the time to make the points they needed/wanted without being allowed to overtake the meeting. In this way the meeting was very useful.

1.5 Annual Plan / LTP actions

The LTP and 2013/2014 Annual Plan actions are attached as Appendix 1.

These actions have been prioritised, and actions closed have been removed from the schedule.

1.6 Elections

The electoral process is well underway, and nominations have closed.

There is still background work required to prepare for voting, but the busy period has passed.

1.7 Featherston Land Swap

Letters have been written to the Minister of Local Government, Minister of Land Information, and Minister in Charge of Treaty negotiations.

We are awaiting a response to these.

1.8 Wastewater Update

A meeting was held to discuss future wastewater initiatives, with the various bodies of work that had been required to support our three wastewater consents presented.

This meeting provided a significant amount of guidance for those preparing the consenting documentation.

Featherston continues to be problematic for us due to the volume of discharge, the fragile receiving environment, and the I & I issues in Featherston.

Greater Wellington appear to be accepting of a "catchment" based approach where improvements in one of our three sites will be taken into account when considering solutions at other sites.

The application preparation is progressing, with lodgement of Greytown and Martinborough due January. Featherston requires more work and will take longer to ascertain the best solution.

2. Discussion

2.1 2012/13 Annual Report

The big task of compiling the 2012/13 Annual Report is well underway.

It is planned to have the main report items ready for distribution to Councilors on 19 September.

The Draft Annual Report is not required to be adopted for audit; however the final Annual Report will need adopting prior to the end of October.

A team of up to four Audit New Zealand staff will be onsite for three weeks commencing 30 September.

2.2 Rate Arrears

Efforts continue on rate arrears. The table below outlines the situation as at 17 June 2013, and excludes multi ownership Maori land.

Date	Amount \$'000	Number	Days since installment due	SWDC component \$'000 (81%)
30 June 2011	\$851	631	31	\$689
1 August 2011	\$780	463	64	\$632
28 November 2011	\$969	760	7	\$785
1 March 2012	\$925	690	7	\$740
16 March 2012	\$830	602	23	\$672
23 March 2012	\$790	555	30	\$640
1 June 2012	\$855	722	10	\$692
19 June 2012	\$730	632	31	\$591
10 September 2012	\$947		21	\$767
15 February 2013	\$820	565	57	\$664
17 June 2013	\$913	740	27	\$739

These levels are disappointingly high. Follow up letters have been sent. An additional "annual" penalty is applied to all outstanding amounts as at 30 June – this is applied in the first couple of weeks of July.

Following the application of this penalty we will be writing to those who have an interest in any of the properties (e.g. mortgagors) demanding payment.

As has been requested by Council, a more aggressive approach will be taken on arrears.

2.3 LGOIMA Requests

Colin McKenna, Featherston Volunteer Fire Brigade asking details as to the ownership, rental and insurance of the Featherston Heritage Soc. Bldg.

Four requests from the University of Canterbury seeking flood reports 10/11 April 1980 Featherston; flood reports 17 January 1990 Greytown; storm reports 1 August 1975 Greytown; and storm reports 16 June 1980 Featherston Borough.

Jarrod True, Harkness Henry Lawyers, Hamilton seeking details as to whether any gambling consent has been granted in past 5 years which is inconsistent with the established Gambling Policy.

Adam Hutchinson represents CamperMate a free iPhone and Android application that uses the device GPS to show the users location and nearby toilets, dump stations, recycling bins, laundromats and also accommodation options such as campsites. Seeking detail of locations of campsites, names and locations.

Catherine Mitchell: Regarding correspondence between SWDC and the NZTA and Central Government regarding roading subsidies.

Contact Officer: Paul Crimp, Chief Executive