

SOUTH WAIRARAPA DISTRICT COUNCIL

8 AUGUST 2012

AGENDA ITEM D1

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

Purpose of Report

To report to Council on general activities since the Council meeting on 27 June 2012.

Recommendations

The Chief Executive Officer recommends that Council:

1. *Receive the report.*

1. Finance

The draft end of year accounts to 30 June 2012 will be tabled.

2. General

As Chief Executive I spend a considerable portion of my time attending meetings that can be strategic or operational in nature. The strategic issue that is consuming a significant amount of time at present is the Wairarapa Governance Review Group meetings which have increased in frequency over the past few weeks. These meetings have involved the commissioning of reports on Wairarapa Governance by Morrison Low and engagement in survey of residents within the region undertaken by Colmar Brunton as part of the study commissioned by Wellington City Council. As part of the public engagement process I have also attended meetings with submitters to the PriceWaterHouseCoopers report and meetings with Iwi. By the time that this report is presented at the August Council meeting I will have attended a meeting with the Wellington Region Local Government Review Panel chaired by Sir Geoffrey Palmer.

Below are examples of some issues that have been across my desk in the period since the June Council Meeting.

2.1 Martinborough Library

The decision to close the Martinborough Library was made after considering a structural engineer's initial assessment of the building indicating that the library building was 5% of earthquake code. It was felt that as the library was used on a daily basis by residents and visitors, and that many of the users were children, the safest option was to close the building. A

temporary arrangement using a portacom building located in the carpark at the rear of the library has been set up in the interim while a more permanent solution is sought.

Immediately following the decision to close the Martinborough library building I attended the LGNZ Annual Conference in Queenstown where one of the sessions was on earthquake prone buildings. The presentations made at this session and the discussions that followed reinforced my view that closing the Martinborough library was the correct thing to do given the information that we had received.

2.2 Wastewater Consents

I have been ensuring that I receive regular briefings on progress with the wastewater consents. Details of these consents will be included in the Infrastructure and Services Report. In brief however, the Featherston Wastewater consent resulted in a Section 92 request for more information. This has been provided and the consent was lodged on 24 July. Martinborough's consent application will be lodged on 31 August and Council Officers are working through the details of the Greytown consent with the assistance of Perception Planning.

During a briefing session I was alerted to a problem that has occurred with a small concrete transfer chamber at the Martinborough sewerage ponds. I visited the ponds with the Group Manager, Infrastructure and Services, Mark Allingham, and saw that the problem appeared to be caused by the erosion of the concrete interior of the chamber. Contractors were on site relining the chamber and it is expected that the relining will be completed by the first week in August. This will ensure that there is no seepage from the transfer chamber.

2.3 Building Consent Issue

From time-to-time I receive complaints from builders that Council is not processing their building consents quickly enough. I always investigate these complaints and I regularly discover that Council Officers are not at fault. Often the situation is that a builder or his/her agent has submitted a request for a consent that is inadequate and this triggers a request from Council for more information. I had a case recently in which it was stated that Council had taken more than two months to process a consent. On investigation I found that on receiving the consent Council had assessed the request within eight days and had requested additional information from the builder who had asked his agent to provide the information. The delay rested firmly with the builder's agent who failed to provide adequate information in a timely way. This scenario is not unusual and it is frustrating for Council Officers to be seen as the reason for delays which are caused by agents employed by builders and developers.

2.4 Facilities Hire

Requests for the hire of Council buildings and rooms continues to be an area that presents some challenges. I regularly receive requests to allow the facilities to be rented for a reduced or zero fee. My approach to these requests is to apply Council's policy which is detailed in the policy manual under the heading of *Concessions for Charitable and Like Community Organisations and Groups*. The policy allows a 50% concession for eligible

organisations and groups. There is provision in the policy to allow the Chief Executive, under special circumstances, to make a variation to the Policy.

3. Other Meetings Attended

Date	Meeting/Engagement
25/6/12	Rural and Provincial Meeting- Wellington
28/6/12	Civil Defence and Emergency Management Meeting - Upper Hutt
28/6/12	June Mayoral Forum – Upper Hutt
12/7/12	Meeting with NZTA to discuss Professional Services Procedural Audit
15-17/7/12	LGNZ Conference Queenstown
20/7/12	Coordinating Executive Group Sub-Committee Meeting – Upper Hutt A number of Wairarapa Governance Review Group meetings were attended during the period.

4. Financial, Legal and Policy Implications

None in particular.

Contact Officer: Dr Jack Dowds, Chief Executive Officer