



FINANCE, AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE

Minutes from 11 August 2021

- Present:** Councillors Leigh Hay (Chair), Garrick Emms, Brian Jephson (from 11:20am), Ross Vickery, Brenda West, Mayor Alex Beijen, and independent member Kit Nixon.
- In Attendance:** Katrina Neems (Chief Financial Officer), Harry Wilson (Chief Executive), Karen Yates (Policy and Governance Manager), Charly Clarke (Finance Manager) and Zoya Huxford (Information Officer) and Suzanne Clark (Committee Advisor).
- Conduct of Business:** The meeting was held in the Supper Room, Waihinga Centre, Texas Street, Martinborough and was conducted in public between 10:00am and 11:32am except where expressly noted.
- Also in Attendance:** Daphne Geisler.
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Open Section

A1. Apologies

FINANCE, AUDIT AND RISK RESOLVED (FAR2021/22) to accept apologies from Cr Pam Colenso and Cr Brian Jephson.

(Moved Cr West/Seconded Mayor Beijen)

Carried

A2. Conflicts of Interest

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

A3. Public Participation

Ms Geisler spoke on the public's right to request information under the Local Government Official Information Act (LGOIMA), for that information to be provided in a timely manner, and for the answer to be of a high standard. Ms Geisler requested that a publicly available database of LGOIMA responses be published on Council's website.

A4. Actions from Public Participation

Ms Yates undertook to address the concerns raised by Ms Geisler under agenda item B2 Official Information Request Topic Trends 1 July 2020 – 30 June 2021, and to respond to Ms Geisler directly on any other outstanding matters.

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A5. Extraordinary Business

FINANCE, AUDIT AND RISK RESOLVED (FAR2021/23) that report 'A5 Local Government Members Determination 2021/22' be added to the meeting agenda. The report was omitted from the agenda in error and due to the financial nature of the report needs to be considered at the earliest opportunity.

(Moved Cr Hay/Seconded Cr Emms)

Carried

Local Government Members Determination 2021/22 Report

Mrs Neems confirmed that the proposed uplift in salaries had been included in the LTP budget but that the uplift in allowances had not been budgeted for.

Members discussed aligning the hearing fees to Carterton and Masterton District Councils, not accepting the uplift in fees due to public perception and the recent rates rise, whether the pay rise could be declined, and reviewing fees and salaries of elected members around the region.

As a consequence of the additional information required on salary uplift, recommendation six lapsed and a new recommendation was proposed. Council would be asked for a decision on salaries.

FINANCE, AUDIT AND RISK RESOLVED (FAR2021/24):

1. To receive the Local Government Members Determination 2021/2022 Report.
(Moved Cr Hay/Seconded Cr West) Carried
2. To further investigate remuneration from 1 July 2021 – 30 July 2022, with regards to the ability to decline a pay rise, in order that a decision can be made by Council.
(Moved Cr Hay/Seconded Cr West) Carried
3. To recommend to Council that the proposed hourly rates for hearing fees are subject to further investigation into the rates adopted by Masterton District Council and Carterton District Council with the intention that they are aligned if possible.
(Moved Cr Hay/Seconded Cr Vickery) Carried
4. To recommend to Council to **not** adopt the Remuneration Authorities option of elected members claiming a travel allowance of \$37.50 per hour after the first hour of travel on Council business for the 2021/22 financial year.
(Moved Cr Hay/Seconded Mayor Beijen) Carried
5. To recommend to Council to **not** adopt the Remuneration Authorities proposed communication allowance of \$2,150.00 per year per councillor for the 2021/22 financial year (increased from \$1,190.00 the previous financial year).
(Moved Cr Hay/Seconded Mayor Beijen) Carried
6. To note that the communication allowance will be paid monthly from August 2021 covering the period up to the date of the Local Government election for current councillors.
(Moved Cr West/Seconded Mayor Beijen) Carried

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A6. Minutes for Confirmation

FINANCE, AUDIT AND RISK RESOLVED (FAR2021/25) that the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee minutes from the meeting held on 16 June 2021 are a true and a correct record.

(Moved Cr Hay/Seconded Cr Emms)

Carried

B Information and Verbal Reports from Chief Executive and Staff

B1. Corporate Services Report

Mrs Neems answered members' questions on inclusion of an uplift in interest income in the Long Term Plan forecasts, rates arrears, rates rebate applications, changes to insurance cover for water tightness, and mitigation plans to reduce exposure to building claims.

The risk register would be made available for the next meeting.

FINANCE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE RESOLVED (FAR2021/26) to receive the Corporate Services Report.

(Moved Cr Hay/Seconded Cr Vickery)

Carried

B2. Official Information Request Topic Trends 1 July 2020 – 30 June 2021

Ms Yates with support from Ms Huxford gave the background to the report being prepared and answered questions raised in the public forum.

Ms Yates answered members' questions on the number of LGOIMA requests made, when an information request becomes classified as a request under the LGOIMA, and training staff on LGOIMA matters.

Councillors acknowledged the public's right to request information under LGOIMA as a function of Council and democracy. Some members advocated for proactive release of information.

Mr Wilson noted the recent improvement in processing and timeliness of LGOIMA responses.

FINANCE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE RESOLVED (FAR2021/27) to receive the Official Information Request Topic Trends Report.

(Moved Cr Hay/Seconded Cr West)

Carried

B3. Action Items Report

Members discussed solid waste disposal, waste minimisation, increasing central government levies, a desire to dispose of some waste streams locally, and reviewing data sets supplied by Infometrics and Sense Partners for data that might assist Destination Wairarapa.

FINANCE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE RESOLVED (FAR2021/28) to receive the Action Items Report.

(Moved Cr Hay/Seconded Mayor Beijen)

Carried

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B4. Final Audit Report 30 June 2020 Annual Report

Mrs Neems noted that the Audit NZ recommendations were about improving process and noted that all necessary measures had been implemented. Members discussed the change in signoff process for Mayoral expenses. As soon as the Chair of FAR was alerted to the suggested improvement processes suggested by Audit NZ in May 2021, Cr Hay checked and signed off all YTD expenses for the 2020/21 financial year on 12 May 2021. This process will be continued for subsequent expenses. Cr Hay is satisfied that this procedure is prudent and satisfies Audit NZ's suggestions.

Mr Wilson was confident that Wellington Waters' reporting processes were now robust but noted that a full 12 months of data would not be available for the 20/21 Annual Report.

FINANCE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE RESOLVED (FAR2021/29) to receive the Final Audit Report for the financial year ended 30 June 2020.

(Moved Cr Hay/Seconded Cr West)

Carried

Cr Jephson joined the meeting at 11:20am.

Cr West left the meeting at 11:28am.

Cr West returned to the meeting at 11:29am.

C. Public Excluded Business

The general subject of each matter to be considered while the public is excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter, and the specific grounds under section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this resolution are as follows:

Report/General Subject Matter	Reason for passing this resolution in relation to the matter	Ground(s) under Section 48(1) for the passing of this Resolution
Confirmation of Minutes from 16 June 2021	Good reason to withhold exists under section 7(2)(a)(c)(f)	Section 48(1)(a)

This resolution (FAR2021/30) is made in reliance on Section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interest or interests protected by section 6 or section 7 of that Act which would be prejudiced by the holding of the whole or relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting in public are as follows:

Reason for passing this resolution in relation to the matter	Ground(s) under Section 48(1) for the passing of this Resolution
The withholding of the information is necessary to protect the privacy of natural persons, including that of deceased natural persons.	Section 7(2)(a)
The withholding of the information is necessary to protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence or which any person has been or could be compelled to provide under the authority of any enactment, where the making available of the information would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information, or information from the same source and is in the public interest that such information should continue to be supplied.	Section 7(2)(c)(i)

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The withholding of the information is necessary to protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence or which any person has been or could be compelled to provide under the authority of any enactment, where the making available of the information would be likely otherwise to damage the public interest.	Section 7(2)(c)(ii)
The withholding of the information is necessary to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions by or between or to members or officers or employees of any local authority, or any person to whom section 2(5) applies, in the course of their duty.	Section 7(2)(f)(i)
The withholding of the information is necessary to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the protection of such members, officers, employees, and persons from improper pressure or harassment.	Section 7(2)(f)(ii)

(Moved Cr Hay/Seconded Mayor Beijen)

Carried

Confirmed as a true and correct record

.....(Chair)

.....(Date)

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