

## **FINANCE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE**

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**REPORT and MINUTES** of a meeting of the **FINANCE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, 5 Baring Square West, Ashburton, on Thursday 14 February 2008, commencing at 12.30 pm.

**PRESENT:** Councillors K L Holmes, N A Brown, R C Beavan, J A Everest, R J Kilworth, J A Kingsbury, K W P Lowe and J A Sparks.

Also in attendance Councillors L J Leadley, I J Burgess and B A Tasker; Finance Manager, Corporate Services Manager, Community Planning Manager and Committee Secretary.

**APOLOGY:** His Worship the Mayor, M B O'Malley (absent on Council business) **Carried**

### ***Confirmation of Minutes***

“That the minutes of the Finance and Community Services Committee meeting held on 13 December 2007, be taken as read and confirmed.”

Kingsbury/Kilworth **Carried**

### ***Matters Arising***

#### **River Terrace**

It was noted that the Parks Manager will be in attendance to provide the Committee with a report on the River Terrace area being used for green waste disposal.

### ***Corporate Services Activity Reports***

“That the reports be received.”

Kilworth/Brown **Carried**

#### **Technology One**

The Corporate Services Manager reported that the upgrade of the financial computer system is continuing with the installation of an additional module that will allow budgets to be entered directly by departmental managers. The installation won't be completed in time for it to be used for this year's budget process.

#### **Web Pages**

The Corporate Services Manager was requested to investigate the types of information being sourced from Council's web site. It was noted that people accessing the site from North America and Europe form the highest user group.

#### **NZ Post**

NZ Post is introducing a new addressing standard which will have an impact on Council's computer system. A joint council group is investigating this and the Corporate Services Manager will provide further reports on the outcome along with cost implications. Mr Allen said that it is apparent that the NZ Post's 1 July 2008 deadline won't be able to be met.

#### **Councillor Communication**

The provision of laptops for Councillors is being investigated and this will include a survey of Councillors to establish their requirements.

### **Broadband Internet**

The Corporate Services Manager reported on a joint stakeholder initiative (LGNZ and TUANZ) looking to improve broadband internet access throughout New Zealand by using local authorities to provide fibre optic cabling to property boundaries. Mr Allen explained that the cabling is capable of running Broadband and other technologies and provides opportunity for reliable future expansion. He said that the financial implications are not yet clear and this will be the subject of further reports to the Committee. Information showing that NZ is below the OECD average in its number of Broadband users was tabled.

It was suggested that an issues and options report be prepared to give Council the opportunity to fully consider the proposal.

### **Customer Services**

Reference was made to the Council office being closed from 21 December to 3 January and whether the option of opening between Christmas and New Year has been considered.

The Property Manager and the Parks Manager attended the meeting at 1.00 pm.

The Parks Manager acknowledged the Committee's concern that an area of Council owned land on River Terrace is being used for the depositing of green waste. Mr Askin explained that Parks staff are using this area to dispose of fill from the cemeteries, green waste and similar material to gradually build up the area for beautification. He referred to similar work which was carried out on a nearby area previously overrun with blackberry and old mans beard.

The Parks Manager will ensure that access is available only to Parks staff and authorised contractors. The Committee also requested that a management plan be developed for this activity.

### ***Local Governance Statement***

#### **RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL**

“That the Local Governance Statement 2008 be adopted.”

Brown/Sparks

**Carried**

### ***Ashburton District Population Report***

The Community Planning Manager reported that the population statistics report will be made available to local organisations and on Council's web site. He explained that the projections reflect the growth trend in the last five year period.

The Committee requested the deletion of the statement that *an assumption could be made that existing schools and facilities are likely to be adequate for the future*. It was considered that this conflicts with the district's growth trends.

“That the report, as amended be received.”

Lowe/Brown

**Carried**

### ***Community Services Activity Reports***

“That the reports be received.”

Everest/Beavan

**Carried**

### **Annual Report**

The Finance Manager reported that all of Council's assets will be revalued and a change in accounting policy will see annual revaluations being undertaken in the future.

### **Newcomers Network**

The Community Planning Manager explained that research is being carried out by a consultant and the Ministry of Social Development. A detailed report is expected by the end of March. Mr Thomas said that funding for the project has been provided through the Department of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Social Development and the Ashburton Trust and the various groups and agencies will continue to work together after the report has been completed to identify ways in which the district can be made easier for people to move to and live in.

### **Mayor's Social Wellbeing Forum**

The Deputy Mayor has been appointed to chair the Forum on 22 February, which will include central government, local government and community representatives. The forum will focus on key issues for this district's social wellbeing and the way in which adequate resources can be provided.

### **Tinwald Domain Development**

It was reported that work is continuing on the development plan for the reserve with the Plan expected to be completed within the next two months. Clarification was sought on the whether the Riding for the Disabled group had been included in consultation.

### **Library**

Use of the public internet has been high in the reporting period and the Corporate Services Manager agreed to investigate whether an additional PC is required.

### ***Proposed Declassification of Reserve 1391 – Corner Back Track and Accommodation Road***

“That the matter lie on the table meanwhile, and further information be sought with regard to the District Plan implications.”

Kilworth/Sparks

**Carried**

### ***Finance Activity Reports***

“That the reports be received.”

Brown/Lowe

**Carried**

### **Financials**

The Finance Manager reported that the Ashburton wastewater loan is likely to incur a rate of 8.7% and a report will be provided to Council once a rate is confirmed. The 25 year loan will be raised for a two year period initially.

The Committee requested an additional report by way of graph information to show annual changes and comparisons in the reserve account. This will be provided to the Committee's next meeting.

The format of the investment report will be altered and future reports will summarise stocks and bonds that have been sold.

### **Arundel-Rakaia Gorge / McFarlanes Roads**

Tenders were called for the sale of land, closing on 12 February. The Property Manager reported that three tenders were received and are being evaluated.

### **Fire Sheds**

The Property Manager is negotiating the change in requirements for the Mayfield shed that will provide ambulance storage. Meetings with local fire units have been arranged by the Rural Fire Officer and the Property Manager will be in attendance to discuss requirements for the units' facilities.

### **Library and Resource Centre**

The Property Manager reported that a major water leak occurred in the library on 23 January and budget provision has been made to carry out replacement of the damaged section of the roof in this financial year.

The Committee heard that flooding also occurred in the Resource Centre on that day and the damage that occurred was a result of apparent vandalism. Mr Rooney said that a tennis ball was found lodged in a downpipe. The cost of replacing some equipment in the Safer Community Council office will be met by that agency and Council will fund the excess. The cost of repairing the building will also be met by Council.

The Property Manager was asked for an update on his meetings with the Riding for Disabled group's use of the Resource Centre and Mr Rooney advised that his last meeting was prior to Christmas.

### ***Items taken with the public excluded (1.53 pm)***

"That the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting:

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:

| <b>Item no</b> | <b>General subject of each matter to be considered:</b>  | <b>In accordance with Section 48(1) of the Act, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter:</b> |  |
|----------------|--|--|--|
| 8.1            | Confirmation of Minutes – 13/12/07<br>• Property Matters<br>Property Matter<br>[now in open meeting]<br>Ashburton Performing Arts Centre Trust | Section 7(2)(h)<br>Section 7(2)(h)<br>Section 7(2)(h)<br>Section 7(2)(i)   | Commercial activities<br>Commercial activities<br>Commercial activities<br>Conduct of negotiations |
| 8.2            | Property Matter  | Section 7(2)(h)  | Commercial activities  |
| 8.3            | Property activity reports  | Section 7(2)(h)  | Commercial activities  |
| 8.4            | Methven Heritage Association<br>NZ Grain & Snow Centre   | Section 7(2)(i)  | Conduct of negotiations  |

Brown/Lowe

**Carried**

The Committee resumed in open meeting and concluded at 3.00 pm.