

FINANCE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

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 7 May 2009, commencing at 1.30 pm.

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

Also in attendance Councillors L J Leadley, I J Burgess, P W Reveley and B A Tasker; Manager Democracy & Community Services, Finance Manager, Corporate Services Manager, Property Manager and Committee Secretary.

APOLOGY: His Worship the Mayor, M B O'Malley **Carried**

Extraordinary Business

“That pursuant to Section 7(2)(A) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 the following item be introduced as extraordinary business and considered as item 4.8:

- Property Matter
To receive an update further to the Property & Investment Subcommittee -30/04/09

Brown/Burgess **Carried**

Confirmation of Minutes

“That the minutes of the Finance and Community Services Committee meeting held on 26 March 2009, be taken as read and confirmed.”

Brown/Sparks **Carried**

Matters Arising

Scales Road Nature Reserve

Cr Lowe reported that the Harris Family have confirmed their acceptance of the Scales Road nature reserve being named in recognition of their contribution to protecting this land.

Corporate Services Activity Reports

The Records & Administration Manager and Customer Services Manager were in attendance.

“That the Corporate Services activity reports be received.”

Brown/Beavan **Carried**

Telecom Network

The Corporate Services Manager introduced the representatives from Chorus.

Chris Dyhrberg spoke about the Government’s Broadband initiative which has received 122 submissions and is currently being reviewed by the Ministry of Economic Development. It was noted that this Council and Electricity Ashburton have made submissions.

Key points from the Chorus presentation on enhancing New Zealand’s Broadband network were:

- Upgrading Broadband delivered over copper network (fibre is overlay to homes)
- From Telecom’s perspective they support the government’s fibre optic initiative and have suggested a national approach which they would be involved in.
- Chorus maintain and build the physical network and ensure equal access to the network.

- Opening up local exchange so other companies can put their equipment to deliver services direct to customers.
- Creates more competition and provides better differentiation of services.
- Fibre to the node – decreasing distance between equipment (exchange) and customers by using a cabinet (VDSL2 enabled) near the customer connected back to the exchange.
- 18 new whisper cabinets (anti graffiti coated) to be installed in Ashburton district. Have consulted with residents and all concerns have been resolved.
- Will provide Council with publications and information that can be included in community newspapers.
- 327km existing fibre cable existing (approx 2% national fibre network).
- Rolling out ADSL + (Broadband). The upgrade proposes two exchanges – Ashburton and Methven.
- Ashburton is one of the few places in NZ having fibre to the home installed – currently in Bridge Street and going to Racecourse Road developments. Chorus has a policy extending fibre optic to the home in any new subdivision (greater than 50 properties) where fibre is in place.
- NE industrial area, because it's commercial, will be made fibre capable and infrastructure will be put in place in place to access. May also be serviced by copper network.
- Upgrading Methven exchange to be ADSL+ capable.
- New upgraded technology has peak connection speed
- End of 2011 will have all new exchanges in place.
- \$574m being invested into new mobile network to deliver 3G services. Launching end of May.
- 10 mobile sites in Ashburton – all will offer fast mobile broadband from this month.
- As a new company want to introduce communication with councils – agree that accessing infrastructure / works needs to work in with Council's work programme (eg reinstating footpaths).
- Between now and 2011, only a small amount of footpath digging will be required – this to be discussed with Council to ensure pipes are laid and work is brought forward to meet Council's programme.
- Have set out timeframes that are set by Commerce Commission, however recognise that it covers 84% but remaining 16% needs coverage. Have made a commitment to find ways to address those areas. Cost of delivering services to these areas are high – need to find a cost effective business case. This objective will be met by working with communities who can identify where their priorities are.
- Opportunity for Chorus and Electricity Ashburton to work together – eg where other companies have fibre laid that can be accessed.
- Since the 2006 snow have been installing external generator plugs in cabinets – all cabinets in rural areas have been completed in Ashburton district. Working with Council's Emergency Management officer.
- Can look at a private / public partnership to address the need for improved services in rural areas.
- Part of Telecom's proposal to government is to deliver a fibre optic cable to every school and hospital in the country – allows cabling to remote areas that can then be leveraged off to connect to households.

The presentation concluded at 2.25 pm.

Council documents

In response to a request from Councillors who would like to find a way of disposing of unwanted confidential Council papers, the Manager Democracy & Community Services agreed that a process will be put in place for document collection and disposal.

Ombudsman correspondence

The Manager Democracy and Services advised that requests for information under the Privacy Act and the Official Information & Meetings Act are recorded in a register and responded to within the statutory timeframe of 21 days. These requests are not reported to Council, other than as a reference in the annual report as to whether those requests have been responded to in the appropriate time.

Democracy & Community Services Activity Reports

The District Librarian and Parks Manager were in attendance.

“That the Corporate Services activity reports be received.”

Everest/Lowe

Carried

Draft Community Plan

Cr Leadley expressed his, and the Mayor’s, disappointment at the level of community input at Council’s Community Plan public meetings and open day. He suggested that the viability of these meetings will need to be reconsidered in the future.

R Beavan reported that the feedback from the presentation to social services groups has been very positive.

Library stocktake

The District Librarian reported that options for carrying out more frequent stocktakes have been investigated. Four options were discussed with the conclusion being that closing the library to the public to allow a complete stocktake remains the most cost effective and least disruptive option. The District Librarian also explained that stocktaking is somewhat constrained by the ability of the computer system available.

Rural Reserve beautification

On behalf of the Methven community Cr Lowe thanked the Parks Department for the work that was carried out in Methven prior to Anzac Day.

The Parks Manager reported that the memory wall at the Rakaia cemetery is progressing and it is to be completed within a month.

Vandalism and Security

The Manager Democracy & Community Services reported that because of new security requirements in the Domain, there has been a change made to Council’s security service providers for the next 12 months. This will include a higher security profile and a programme targeted at making the domain unattractive for criminal activities. Mr Rollinson said the increased cost of approximately \$6-7,000 per annum will be offset by not having to meet repair costs. Infringement fees are being determined by the Regulatory Manager.

Cr Leadley spoke about the need to have street lights replaced more quickly.

- **Domain fence vandalism**

The Manager Democracy & Community Services reported that the \$500 reward, which received additional funding from other community members, was not uplifted as evidence against the person(s) responsible was inconclusive.

Staff Retirement

Mr Ian Mowat, Council Water Ranger, was welcomed to the meeting in recognition of his impending retirement on 15 May 2009, following 21 year's service to the County and District Councils.

The Committee adjourned for afternoon tea at 2.55 pm and resumed at 3.23 pm.

Finance Activity Reports

“That the Finance activity reports be received.”

Kilworth/Sparks

Carried

Financials

The financial reports were presented for the period ended 31 March 2009.

- Capital on roading is under-spent as a result of the works programme being delayed.
- Development contributions – the Finance Manager will report further once information is to hand on the total number of outstanding development contribution charges. The Proclaim system is being modified to ensure this part of the process is not omitted in the future.
- The Elmwood subdivision (shown as unbudgeted expenditure) has likely been omitted – P Brake to check to ensure the correct process has been followed).
- It was noted that the total Advances shown in the balance sheet (p9) and Investments (p13) – differ – P Brake to check.
- Will include on investment page a heading showing loan guarantees in future reports – noted the Event Centre is the only loan guarantee – will report regularly.
- Next report (May) will show Westpac loan facility being picked up – currently leaving on call at 4.15%. Eventually taking advice to lock rates in.

Library roof

Following the recent heavy rain some leaking has occurred in the upper level of the Library roof.

Elderly Persons Housing

It was reported that 68 new heat pumps have been installed and the programme to provide each of Council's housing units is halfway towards completion.

Rangitata Camping Ground

Council's overall camping ground strategy will include Rangitata.

The Property Manager advised that budget information had been provided to the Property & Investment Subcommittee. It was noted that \$140,000 had been budgeted to upgrade the Rangitata camping ground, however costs are now likely to reduce to around \$75,000. Mr Rooney said that Council has the option to either limit numbers staying in the camping ground, or provide additional toilet facilities to meet Council's own regulations. A report will come back to Council as this developed at which time a draft camping ground management structure / charging regime will be known.

Business transacted with the public excluded (3.49 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:

Item no	General subject of each matter to be considered:	In accordance with Section 48(1) of the Act, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter:	
8.1	Confirmation of Minutes – 26/03/09 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Property matters• Audit & Budget Subcommittee• Ashburton Aquatic Park Trust	Section 7(2)(h) Section 7(2)(h) Section 7(2)(h)	Commercial activities Commercial activities Commercial activities
8.2	Property Subcommittee	Section 7(2)(h)	Commercial activities
8.3	ACL Ltd Draft Statement of Intent	Section 7(2)(i)	Conduct of negotiations
8.4	Property Matter	Section 7(2)(h)	Commercial activities

Brown/Everest

Carried

The meeting concluded at 5.05 pm.