4.4 ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

REPORT and **MINUTES** of a meeting of the **ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, 5 Baring Square West, Ashburton, on Thursday 11 June 2009, commencing at 1.30 pm.

PRESENT: His Worship the Mayor, M B O'Malley; Councillors R J Kilworth (Chair), R C Beavan, L J Leadley, B A Tasker, I J Burgess, J A Kingsbury, P W Reveley and J Sparks.

Also in attendance Crs K L Holmes, K W P Lowe and J A Everest; Environmental Services Manager, Building Services Manager, Regulatory Manager and Committee Secretary.

APOLOGY: Cr N A Brown **Sustained**

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:

- Fees and charges – building activity
  To adjust building consent fees and charges to address the shortfall identified."

Brown/Burgess **Carried**

Confirmation of Minutes

"That the minutes of the Environmental Services Committee meeting held on 30 April 2009, be taken as read and confirmed."

Kingsbury/Leadley **Carried**

Extraordinary Business – Building Activity charging regime

The Environmental Services Manager reported that declining building consent applications have produced a projected funding shortfall in the building services department in the 2009-2010 year. Mr McKenzie explained that currently all inspections are charged at $100 without consideration of travel or time required to get to the inspection site.

It was proposed that a graduated inspection fee be introduced incorporating a travel surcharge. Inspections would incrementally increase by $10 for each 20 kilometres travelled from the Council office. This recommendation was not fully supported on the basis that the zone process would not be transparent and would be difficult to administer. The Committee instead agreed that a $120 inspection fee be applied to all inspections in all areas.

"1. That the report be received.

2. That Option 3 of this report be adopted as the charging regime for building inspections, ie $120 fee for inspections in all areas."

Sparks/Leadley **Carried**

Activity Reports

"That the reports be received."

Tasker/Burgess **Carried**

Building Services Information Meetings

The Building Services Manager reported that two meetings were held during May – one with local plumbers and drainlayers and a further meeting with builders, designers and suppliers. Both meetings were well attended and provided an opportunity to update tradesmen and the building industry with current legislation and changes.

Building Consent Processing

The Committee noted the decreasing demand for building inspections and questioned the proposal to employee two further staff in the department when building activity is declining.

The Environmental Services Manager explained that because of an increased demand for information at the building department counter as well as the need to respond to the requirements imposed by central government, in particular the need for comprehensive internal auditing systems, an additional administration position is necessary. The decision to appoint another inspector will be reviewed in 4-6 months.

Private Plan Changes

- G McFail

Six submissions have been received opposing the application for a Private Plan to develop a subdivision on Trevors Road. A summary of submissions will be prepared and further submissions called for.

- Ashburton Aquatic Park Charitable Trust

The hearing took place on 9 June. A number of submitters were satisfied with the pre-circulated evidence and Planner's report and subsequently withdrew their requests to speak.

Senior District Planner

The Environmental Services Manager reported that applications received for this position are being assessed.

District Plan Review

A meeting to discuss heritage matters has been scheduled for 2 July, with representatives of NZHPT, Council's consultants and members of the Heritage Subcommittee.

Group II Plan Change

The review of the Group II sites (areas of significant conservation value) has been completed and the Plan Change will be progressed through the Committee on 30 July. Consultation with stakeholder groups is being undertaken and a workshop has been scheduled for the Committee on 23 July to prepare the preliminary information and timetable for the Plan Change.

Resource Consent Process

The Environmental Services Manager referred to the MfE survey of councils' consent processing times where Ashburton was ranked 59. It was noted that while 71% of Council's non notified consents had been processed within the statutory timeframe, it was not possible to process any of the notified consents on time. Mr McKenzie explained that this is often a result of not being able to get consultant input within the timeframe.

It was noted that the 'Affected Person Approval Form' is currently being reviewed. The form will be made available on Council's web site.

Food Safety

The Regulatory Manager reported that inspections of approximately 75 food premises have been completed with most found to be excellent or good. A number of businesses have indicated their interest in taking part in the NZ Food Safety Authority's voluntary implementation programme to meet the requirements for registration under the new Food Act which comes into effect next year. Council's Environmental Health Officers have undergone the relevant Auditor training and will be approaching food businesses and assisting with the programme.

Trade Waste

The Regulatory Manager reported that the classification of premises / dischargers has been completed and approximately 341 permitted and 37 conditional activities have been identified. He referred to a memo from the Operations Manager advising that a number of objections to these classifications have been received from businesses / activities who are requesting a review. The process for the review will be the subject of a report to Council on 30 June and progressed through the Operations Committee on 23 July.

Animal Control

The contractor's reports for April and May were received.

The Regulatory Manager referred to a complaint received at Rakaia following damage caused by goats wandering in the cemetery. Council's Forester has undertaken to repair the boundary fence to prevent the animals from getting through.

Septic Systems

The Building Services Manager reported that a number of wastewater (septic) systems have been installed throughout the district without building consent; a requirement since the Building Act came into effect in 2004. Mr Fields explained that retrospective consents are no longer accepted and it is proposed to allow a 30 day amnesty for property owners to obtain a certificate of acceptance without incurring a fee. Public notice of this amnesty will be given.

Business transacted with the public excluded (2.35 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:	
12	• Confirmation of minutes 30/04/09	Section 7(2)(f)	Maintain conduct of public affairs

Beavan/Burgess **Carried**

There being no resolutions passed, the Committee resumed in open meeting and concluded at 2.40 pm.