

COVID-19 Response Committee

AGENDA

Notice of Meeting:

A meeting of the COVID-19 Response Committee will be held on:

Date: Monday 18 May 2020

Time: 1.00pm

Venue: Council Chamber

Membership

Mayor	Neil Brown
Deputy Mayor	Liz McMillan
Members	Leen Braam
	Carolyn Cameron
	John Falloon
	Rodger Letham
	Lynette Lovett
	Angus McKay
	Diane Rawlinson
	Stuart Wilson

14 May 2020

COVID-19 Response Committee

Timetable	
1.00pm	Meeting commences
1.05pm	Ian Mackenzie (Chair Ashburton Community Water Trust and John Wright (Manager BCI Ltd)

ORDER OF BUSINESS

- 1 Apologies
- 2 Extraordinary Business
- 3 Declarations of Interest

Minutes

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| 4 | COVID-19 Response Committee – 14/05/20 | 3 |
| 5 | COVID-19 Economic Recovery Advisory Group – 13/05/20 | 5 |

Business Transacted with the Public Excluded

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| 6 | Ashburton Community Water Trust
Section 7(2)(h) Commercial activities | 9 |
|---|--|---|

4. COVID-19 Response Committee- 14/04/20

Minutes of the COVID-19 Response Committee meeting held on Thursday 14 May 2020, commencing at 9.30am, via Zoom.

Present

His Worship the Mayor, Neil Brown; Councillors Leen Braam, Carolyn Cameron, John Falloon, Lynette Lovett, Angus McKay, Liz McMillan and Stuart Wilson.

In attendance

Hamish Riach (Chief Executive), Jane Donaldson (GM Strategy & Compliance), Sarah Mosley (Manager People & Capability), Paul Brake (GM Business Support), Neil McCann (GM Infrastructure Services), Bevan Rickerby (Economic Development Manager), Ruben Garcia (Communications Manager), Andy Guthrie (Assets Manager).

Governance support: Aisling O'Reilly (Zoom co-ordination) and Carol McAtamney (Minutes).

1 Apologies

Councillors Rodger Letham and Diane Rawlinson

Sustained

2 Extraordinary Business

Nil.

3 Declarations of Interest

Nil.

4 Confirmation of Minutes

That the minutes of the COVID-19 Response Committee meeting held on 7 May 2020, be taken as read and confirmed.

Cameron/Lovett

Carried

5 Ashburton Water Zone Committee 2019 Annual Report

Bill Thomas joined the meeting at 9.35am and worked through the Ashburton Water Zone Committee 2019 Annual report.

That the Ashburton Water Zone Committee 2019 Annual Report be received.

Lovett/McKay

Carried

6 Covid-19 Social Recovery Advisory Group

A report was prepared to consider whether there was a need for Council to establish a community social recovery advisory group following the effects Covid-19 has had on the district.

The Chief Executive advised that following investigations it was considered that the existence of Safer Communities provides support in this area.

1. That Council:

1.1 Receives the report

- 1.2 **Acknowledges** that Council's Civil Defence welfare response currently ends 90 days after the emergency is declared over, although is subject to Government review and associated uncertainty.
- 1.3 **Acknowledges** the existence and capability of Safe Communities, and subject to close liaison and communication with Safe Communities, does not establish a separate Social Recovery Advisory Group.
- 1.4 **Monitors** the situation in terms of the social recovery needs of the Ashburton District arising from Covid-19 via a strong connection to Safe Communities, and has an open mind to altering the manner it supports the social recovery of the District in the future, subject to a specific decision of Council to do so.

McMillan/Falloon

Carried

7 LGNZ Three Year Business Plan 2020

That Local Government New Zealand Business Plan 2020/21 – 2022/23 be received.

McKay/Cameron

Carried

The meeting concluded at 10.00am.

13 May 2020

5. Covid-19 Economic Recovery Advisory Group

Minutes of the Covid-19 Economic Recovery Advisory Group meeting held on Wednesday 13 May 2020, commencing at 3.00pm, via Zoom.

Present:

Mayor Neil Brown, Hamish Riach (Chief Executive), Bevan Rickerby (Economic Development Manager), David Clark (Federated Farmers), Andrea Lee (Registered Master Builders Assoc.), Greg Donaldson (Greg Donaldson Contracting), Nicky Milmine (Somerset Grocer), Roger Sutton (Chief Executive, EA Networks), Karl Jackson (Kaiwhakahaere-GM, Arowhenua), Aaron Chudleigh (Talleys), Bob McDonald (Health 2K), James Urquhart (NZ Ski – Mt Hutt Ski Area), Simon Wareing (Wareings Transport), Michaela Blacklock (General Manager, Canterbury Employers Chamber of Commerce).

Also present:

Aisling O'Reilly (minutes)

1 Apologies

Nil.

2 Extraordinary Business

Nil.

3 Declarations of Interest

Nil.

4 Terms of reference

The terms of reference, adopted by Council for the advisory group, were accepted.

5 Verbal updates from attendees

– Bevan Rickerby:

Got essential services in Ashburton App at beginning of lockdown. Has been informing businesses of what is going on as much as possible. Directing businesses to the Chamber of Commerce website for advice. Developed a webinar series which is on the Council's website. Can use it for your own staff or for others within your sector. Webinar information will be shared after this meeting. There is the opportunity for some people within this group or other businesses to become mentors for others. Have been working with Ara to get some projects up and running to support reemployment opportunities. Run some courses to help support people seeking employment. MSD will be helping to fund this.

- **Mayor Neil Brown:**
Council have reduced rates but did not cut any services. Important to keep projects going and keep spending to keep the economy going and create employment. Council are also ensuring they buy local where possible to do so.
- **Bob McDonald:**
Retail sector pretty shaky at the moment. Talk of businesses reducing staff. Likely for a lot of people to be reducing hours of their staff.
- **Greg Donaldson:**
All staff are back. Work to do but been having trouble getting permission to get on with Council work - possibly slower due to people working from home. Have laid out a staggered start approach for staff. Some people may have to work Saturday and Sunday. Advice from other contractors is that they are keen to spend locally and keep the local businesses running.
Greg was advised to get in touch with Neil McCann or Hamish Riach if he was experiencing roadblocks to get some work started again.
- **James Urquhart:**
Rangitata Rafts have gone into hibernation for 12-18 months and some staff have been laid off. Owner/operators of accommodation businesses have been covering all tasks within their business to keep costs down. There are some hotel/motel businesses in Methven and Ashburton that will close if the budget does not offer any relief. Compliance costs (outside of Council) will be what puts the pressure on businesses.
Noted that Mt Hutt will be quickly going back to full speed when we get to Level 1. Will be looking to increase staff levels from 62 up to possibly 100.
- **Nicky Milmine:**
Hospitality all currently open but quiet. A lot of restaurants are doing takeaway service. Staff hours have certainly been reduced.
- **Roger Sutton:**
Selling less energy but still doing ok. Trying to give local contractors work to keep things going. Asked the question of how we get fundamental information out there for people in the community. Knowing what is happening around the place is important for people at a time like this. Advice is to do things in the economy that don't cost as much as bigger projects. Seeing that things are happening gives people hope. Let people in the community know that there is chance to revisit ideas/decisions.
- **Andrea Lee:**
From building perspective – people are generally busy. Some builders have had jobs put off as customers are concerned about losing jobs. Some builders are not being compliant on site to date. Overall seems as though they haven't been hit too hard.
- **Hamish Riach:**
Snapshot from building and planning teams stats: have continued to do some consents work during the lockdown period and LIMs have started coming in again.

- **Simon Wareing:**
Some parts of the business have carried on as normal and others have stopped completely. Farming has carried on relatively well during this period. Coming into winter now will be a slower time of the year. Not looking at any redundancies at this stage.
- **Aaron Chudleigh:**
Have been busy throughout. Noted that the potato industry will be impacted globally. People are not eating at restaurants, etc. so this industry will be impacted by the reduction in demand. Biggest issue post lockdown is being short on staff. The business is heavily reliant on immigrant workers. A lot of people left New Zealand right before lockdown. Would love to be able to hire New Zealanders but not sure if there will even be enough people to fill the void of immigrant workers who have left. Question is how we get some of the unemployed people to this area to fill the jobs that are now vacant.

ANZCO and Talleys often take management teams out of town and out of the regions and provide rewards – happy to now support local and perhaps there will be some corporate deals that can be offered locally. If there were discount structures put in place for the big companies they could support this.
- **David Clark:**
Trucking companies have been able to continue to service the farming industry which is a positive. Not confident the agricultural sector will be unaffected by the situation. Consumers will have less money to spend. Grain process holding up well. Beef prices have gone down. Regulation/compliance is having a huge impact on operating costs. A lot of dairy farmers rely on immigrant labour. Many are on visas and are here because of essential skills. It would be easy for government to decide to try and get Kiwis to take up these jobs instead so there is a risk that some workers will not get their visas extended.

Contracting industry has been reliant on a lot of people travelling from overseas (e.g. the UK) and then going back home after 24 months. Where there were once low numbers of job applications from Kiwis, there has been an increase in applications. Need to give some thought to year round tourist activities. Projects and improvements on walking tracks for example should be put forward.
- **Karl Jackson:**
Compared to rest of country, will possibly not come out of this too badly. Going to back to roots again and manufacturing and farming is what is going to prop this economy up. Need to focus on domestic tourism. Looking at this as an opportunity. Have projects ready to go and will be employing locals. Tourism for Iwi has taken a hit. Will tentatively reopen some places in the spring and see what happens from there.
- **Michaela Blacklock:**
Have been speaking the Labour Market Manager for Canterbury and is keen to be a conduit on behalf of this group at a regional level. The Regional Skills Leadership group is being set up at the minute and is also happy to act as a conduit for information in and out for this group. Canterbury Employers Chamber of Commerce has been contracted by NZTE (New Zealand Trade and Enterprise) and MBIE to run a helpline as a resource for everyone to use. If business owners need support, encourage people to call this number: 0800505096. This is a 12 month project.

The helpline is open to everyone, not just CECC members. CECC are updating their website daily and trying to keep information as accurate as possible for everyone to access. Business Mentors New Zealand is a government funded group and CECC work in conjunction with them. This group can be used for people who need this kind of support and mentoring. If people want to become a mentor within the community, Michaela is happy to act as the conduit for this but will also share the contact details.

6 Actions

- Aisling to send email to group to share information on upcoming webinars held by ADC and CECC.
- Michaela to share the contact details of the Business Mentors New Zealand group.
- Bevan and Hamish to work with Michaela on how to get more visibility around Business Mentors New Zealand to make it more visible for people and see how it can add more value.
- Group to email Bevan with any ideas between now and next week to collate for next agenda.
- James to get Bruce Moffat to email group with information on domestic tourism campaign that he is working on.

7 Next Meeting

Wednesday 20 May 2020, 3pm.

The meeting concluded at 4:20pm.