



EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MINUTES

MINUTES OF AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE WESTLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL, HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 36 WELD STREET, HOKITIKA AND VIA ZOOM ON THURSDAY, 11 NOVEMBER 2021 COMMENCING AT 3.30PM.

The Council Meeting was live streamed to the Westland District Council Youtube Channel and presentations are made available on the council website.

1. MEMBERS PRESENT AND APOLOGIES

Chairpersons	His Worship the Mayor	
Members	Cr Davidson	
	Cr Hart (via zoom)	Cr Hartshorne (via zoom)
	Cr Kennedy (via zoom)	Cr Keogan (via zoom at 3.35pm)
	Cr Martin (via zoom at 3.36pm)	Cr Neale (via zoom at 3.46pm)
	Kw Madgwick	

NGĀ WHAKAPAAHA APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Deputy Mayor Carruthers and Cr Martin.

ABSENT

Kw Tumahai was noted as absent.

Moved Cr Davidson, seconded Cr Hart and **Resolved** that the apologies from Deputy Mayor Carruthers and Cr Martin be received and accepted.

STAFF PRESENT

S. Bastion, Chief Executive; L. Crichton, Group Manager: Corporate Services; S. Baxendale, Group Manager: District Assets; D. Maitland; Executive Assistant, E. Rae, Strategy and Communications Advisor (zoom); M. Smith, Committee Secretary.

Also in attendance was Martin Ross, Engineer Three Waters and Petrina Cannell, Three Waters Assets Engineer.

2. WHAKAPUAKITANGA WHAIPĀNGA DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Interest Register had been circulated via Microsoft Teams and was also available on the day in the council chambers. No additions or amendments have been noted.

3. PŪRONGO KAIMAHI STAFF REPORTS

- **Three Water Reform – Three Waters Campaign**

Cr Keogan joined the meeting via zoom at 3.35pm.

Cr Martin joined the meeting via zoom at 3.36pm.

The Chief Executive (CE) spoke to this item and advised the purpose of this report is for Council to consider the next steps regarding the Three Waters Reform program now that Central Government has mandated that all Councils must be part of the reform.

The CE spoke to the background of the Three Waters Reform and advised that council staff are evaluating the impacts to the Westland District now the reform has been mandated. Main areas of impact are:

- The balance sheet has been reduced by 17%
- Significant net asset reduction of \$83.7m
- Future rates increases to cover council stranded assets, an increase over the current LTP first year of 2.4%, with an average of 9% thereafter.
- A large transition process within council due to the mandated reforms which will have huge impacts for Council held portfolios.

Westland District Council has been invited to join a group of councils, the "Three Waters Campaign" to create a larger voice to Central Government against the decision to mandate the reform. A Memorandum of Understanding for this group has been finalised with a financial contribution of \$10,000 towards legal advice being requested from each council involved.

His Worship the Mayor made a statement attached as appendix 1.

Cr Neale joined the meeting via zoom at 3.46pm.

Moved His Worship the Mayor, seconded Cr Davidson and **Resolved** that:

- A) Council receive the report.
- B) Council resolves to become a Campaign Partner in the Three Waters Campaign.
- C) Council resolves to sign the Three Waters Campaign Memorandum of Understanding.
- D) Council resolves to contribute \$10,000 towards the Three Waters Campaign program of works.
- E) Council resolves to appoint His Worship Mayor Smith as the representative of the Three Waters Campaign both as a Plenary member (with voting rights) and as a member of the Oversight Group.

Cr Martin, although in attendance at the meeting via zoom, abstained from voting.

His Worship the Mayor thanked the Community, Staff and Councillors for their support.

**DATE OF THE NEXT ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING – 25 NOVEMBER 2021
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 36 WELD STREET, HOKITIKA AND VIA ZOOM.**

MEETING CLOSED AT 3.50PM

Confirmed by:

Mayor Bruce Smith
Chair

Date:

His Worship the Mayor's Statement to the Three Waters Reform Mandate

Our primary role is to take the concerns of ratepayers to Wellington.

It's not our role to attempt to sell Wellington's agenda on Three Waters to our ratepayers.

Where are the Labour MPS who are meant to represent our interests? They have gone to ground.

You will have seen the members of yet another three waters working group announced yesterday. This is smoke and mirrors and not one mayor from any council that has engaged with their community was appointed.

The owners of the assets on behalf of their communities are the Councils.

50% of the working group are Iwi Representatives with no ownership of the assets, but have the same rights and interest of all in Westland as ratepayers.

This council has always supported the supply of good water delivered by councils, and as community leaders can't see how the proposed reforms benefit our communities.

This council voted to engage with our community and the feedback was massive and I congratulate you all for seeing clearly the risk of waiting before engaging and ensuring our communities' voice via feedback was received.

Some councils read the tea leaves wrong, and their ratepayers unlike ours and a number of other councils, will have no chance to express a view as to if they support the three waters reforms. The discussion went from a voluntary option to opt in or out with feedback to government by the 30th of Sept, followed by the chance for full consultation with rate payers, to a mandated theft of our three waters assets when 60 of 67 councils said NO WAY.

Government will need to pass legislation, setting aside clauses in the local government act that requires full consultation on such a significant issue.

They can do that and with 60 of the 67 councils in New Zealand not opting in that's a direct attack on both our ownership rights on behalf of our communities and our democracy.

The focus on water causing health issues by government is mischievous, with councils around New Zealand supplying clean healthy water with very few exceptions. There are many reports naming New Zealand in the top ten suppliers of drinking water in the world.

The 34,000 people quoted getting sick each year was taken by the Government from a 2016 report and was an estimate of both water and food poisoning cases. The actual health department figures are a fraction of the 34,000 claimed.

We have suggested government puts the regulator in place and revisit the supply and ownership structure in 6 years. By then the regulator will have developed tested sensible standards and councils will have evidence to understand credible costs.

The government claims that opposition is political.

Of course it is. Just as the Three Waters Reforms are political as the case for change has not be made. The transfer or confiscation, of for many Councils 30% of total assets, for an 8 cents in the dollar payment is reckless and their communities will not support it.

Nor do the Greens, Act, National, New Zealand First, Grey Power, Federated Farmers, the Taxpayers Union and 95% of New Zealanders.

The proposed governance structure is complex, removing almost all local democracy.

Lesley Creighton our Corporate Services Manager has set out clearly that the statement made by government that councils will still own the assets is complete and total nonsense.

The Three Waters Assets paid for by generations of ratepayers in Westland go from the balance sheet and nothing replaces them.

Our Westland community will, like most others in the country, pay increases in rates over what was agreed in the LTP of 9% every year and you will get a water bill from the water supplier who will almost certainly be an overseas based company.

In the letter sent to Minister Mahuta we promised there would be pushback if the reforms were mandated and our assets stolen.

This government because of its numbers can do whatever it likes and that's a reality we need to understand, the polls are already slamming government and that will get much worse over the next 12 months.

Our legal obligation is to our ratepayers and while we are only an ant amongst the elephants our voice must be heard, and the best way to do that is join with other likeminded councils with Mayors that place democracy first.

Let it begin today.

- *His Worship the Mayor, Bruce Smith*