

1. Report: Whangarei District Council Briefing Wednesday 6 April 2016

Report of a Briefing to the Whangarei District Council held in the Council Chamber, Forum North on Wednesday 6 April 2016 at 9.00am

Present:

Her Worship the Mayor S L Mai, Crs S J Bell, S J Bretherton, C B Christie (9.08am), P A Cutforth, S J Deeming, S M Glen, P R Halse, C M Hermon, G C Innes, G M Martin, B L McLachlan, S L Morgan and J D T Williamson

In Attendance:

Chief Executive (R Forlong), Group Manager Support Services (A Adcock), Group Manager Positive Growth (J Thompson), Governance Manager (J Marris), Legal Counsel (K Candy), Policy and Monitoring Manager (P Waanders), Resource Consents Manager (A Hartstone), Team Leader District Plan (M McGrath), Policy Planner (N Murphy), Policy Planner (R Burgoyne), Support Assistant (L McColl) and Senior Meeting Co-ordinator (C Brindle)

1 Elections 2016 – Protocols for Elected Members during pre-election period

Facilitators: Her Worship the Mayor
K Candy

Power Point presentation: 16/34904

Her Worship the Mayor convened the meeting.

K Candy covered the content of the Briefing as outlined in the power point presentation and agenda report. Ms Candy provided an overview of both the organisation and elected members responsibilities to ensure political neutrality during the pre election period.

Ms Candy asked Members to direct any queries to either herself or the Governance Manager Jason Marris.

2 Whangarei District Plan – Draft Minerals Plan Change

Facilitators: HWM
P Dell

Power Point presentation: 16/37811

The purpose of the Briefing is to work through the draft plan change and finalise a consultation path to follow.

Her Worship the Mayor convened the meeting.

P Dell by way of introduction spoke about the history of the 500m setback in regards to quarries and questioned whether Council should retain the buffer zone as well as 500m setback. The purpose of the buffer zone was to externalise noise effects, an additional 500m buffer was given to prevent reverse sensitivity and encroachment of development. It was clarified that the proposed plan changes would not affect smaller quarries, the proposed changes would only affect large quarries.

N Murphy covered the content of the Briefing as outlined in the agenda item and power point presentation.

Ms Murphy re-iterated that the aim is to protect the mineral extraction areas from reverse sensitivity. The regional direction is to show regionally significant mineral resources on District Plan maps. Iwi Management Plans – iwi will be notified. The draft new rules require Cultural Impact Assessments (CIA) district wide, CIA's will assist in determining the scale of the activity. There was some discussion about whether a CIA is necessary for all mineral consents. Concerns raised that the requirement for a CIA may delay the process. P Dell acknowledged further work/fine tuning to be done on CIA's and how it could be linked to the Sites of Significance work. Mining cannot be undertaken in Sites of Significance to Maori. Sites of Significance and Mineral Extraction areas need to be aligned.

It was clarified that land within the buffer zones is not necessarily owned by the quarry. Rules apply to areas within Mineral Extraction Areas (outlined on pages 27 – 34 of the agenda). You cannot currently build a house within a buffer zone without Resource Consent. There needs to be clarification with regards to the building of habitable developments versus non habitable buildings.

P Waanders provided an explanation on the difference between operating within a Mineral Extraction Area (MEA) and outside of an MEA. All extraction greater than 5,000m² would require a resource consent. Previously the volume was 500m² but this was increased to align with the Regional Council volume and also better reflected smaller operations.

It was confirmed that the MEA rules are applicable to all mining including mercury mining, sand and limestone quarries.

In response to a question from the floor about the number of resource consents council has issued for mineral extraction A Harstone clarified very few (if any) for new quarry, a few for expansion of quarry.

The proposed amendment to GBC Winstone Mineral Extraction Area was discussed. Two options were presented – option 1 – adopt the overburden area (becomes part of Council's plan change and must be notified by council), option 2 – do not adopt overburden area at this stage – requirement to consult GBC's responsibility and they could then submit on the Plan Change. Discussion on the best process to take this forward ensued.

Her Worship invited Ian Wallace of GBC Winstone to comment from the public gallery. Mr Wallace outlined the future plans for the quarry. Winstones want to expand so the future quarry is not restricted to the current overburden area blocking expansion, the intention is to start placing overburden on the site within 2 years. Technical studies and consultation with residents is still needed. Draft plans only at this stage, work in progress.

The difference between option 1 and 2 is that option 1 requires staff and resources. P Dell was of the opinion that option 2 is a better process however he accepts that if staff work closely with the company to resolve the landscape issue and undertake a pre-consultation programme option 1 could be a viable option. Mr Dell reminded council of the necessity for the plan change to be finalised in order to progress the rural strategy by July 2016.

Councillors opinions on the two options were mixed, as Council cannot make decisions at Briefings the Chief Executive advised staff would take on board comments made today and would use their discretion to determine the most appropriate way to proceed.

The Briefing closed at 11.07am