



REPORT OF THE ORDINARY MONTHLY MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 29 CIVIC AVENUE, GORE ON TUESDAY 10 MARCH 2009, AT 4.00 pm.

PRESENT His Worship the Mayor (Mr Tracy Hicks JP), Cr Harvey (Chairperson) Crs Bolger, Davis, Dixey, Dixon, Gardyne, Grant, Heller, Highsted, McLennan and Sharp.

IN ATTENDANCE The Chief Executive (Mr Steve Parry), General Manager, District Assets (Mr Paul Withers), General Manager, Corporate Services (Mr Russell Duthie), Parks and Recreation Manager (Mr Ian Soper), Roding Manager (Mr Murray Hasler), Aquatics Manager (Kim Peterson), Arts and Heritage Curator (Jim Geddes), Library Manager (Jane Robinson), Community Development Officer (Colleen Te Au), Planning Consultant, (Keith Hovell) attended from 4.32pm, Corporate Support Officer (Mrs Tracey Millan) and two members of the public in the Gallery.

1. COMMUNITY SERVICES BULLETIN

Cr Harvey welcomed the new Community Development Officer, Colleen Te Au and wished her well in her new role.

The Committee perused the Community Services Bulletin containing reports from the Animal Control Contractor, Asset Manager, Utilities, i-Site Centre Manager and the Roding Manager.

Cr Harvey congratulated the District Arts and Heritage Curator on another successful moonshiner's festival, despite the wet weather.

Gore Visitor Centre Report (18.18.1)

His Worship was pleased with the initiative taken to promote country music throughout the year, outside of the Gold Guitar time and thought the event would only get bigger and brighter.

In response to comments mentioned in the report about tourists wanting to visit a hotel/bar to listen to country music, Cr Heller advised the Gore RSA provided music on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings.

Report of the Parks and Recreation Manager (18.1.2)

The Parks and Recreation Manager advised the moonshine trail held at Dolamore Park recently had been a resounding success and was set up for a sound future.

The Manager was pleased about Bannerman Park and Gore Main Street Gardens both being accepted as gardens of significance by the New Zealand Gardens Trust. He thought the prestigious tag would entice the gardening fraternity to visit Gore to enjoy the plant collections.

The Manager advised the new public conveniences to be located in Main Street were completed and the tentative date of 21-22 March had been set for the changeover of the new conveniences.

The Manager advised Errol Allison had completed maintenance work on the trout statue in January after four years with no maintenance. The statue suffered a reaction from the sunlight, so a touch up would be required every three to four years to retain the colour intensity and to prevent rusting.

In response to Cr Harvey, the Manager thought the structure would stand the test of time, if regularly maintained.

In response from Cr Dixey, the Manager advised the New Zealand Gardens Trust Executive Officer, Liz Morrow, came from the North Island. Cr Dixey questioned some of the critique comments from New Zealand Gardens Trust. The Manager agreed there were issues with the critique from last year and this year, that would be followed up when appropriate.

In response to His Worship, the Manager advised there were only a handful of gardens of significance in Southland.

Report of the Aquatics Services Manager (24.11.1)

Cr Harvey thought the end of year figures were pleasing and thought the Manager and her team should be congratulated.

In response to Cr Dixey, the Manager advised that the January figures for the Mataura pool were high because there had been a lot of support initially from the public when the pool opened.

RECOMMENDED on the motion of Cr Dixey, seconded by Cr Sharp, THAT the Community Services Bulletin be received.

J Geddes and K Peterson departed the meeting at 4.15pm.

2. LIBRARY BOOK BUDGET (25.1.1)

A memo had been received from the Library Manager detailing the processes used to purchase library books.

Cr Harvey commended the Manager for the clean out of old library books and tidy up of the library.

The Manager advised there had been positive comments from the public about the clean out, which had made room for new stock to come in.

The Planning Consultant now attended the meeting at 4.25pm

RECOMMENDED on the motion of Cr Davis, seconded by Cr McLennan, THAT the information be received.

The Library Manager departed the meeting at 4.16pm.

3. DRAFT ALCOHOL STRATEGY (50.53)

A memo had been received from the Chief Executive together with a draft alcohol strategy for the Gore District. The draft strategy had been developed via funding received from the Crime Prevention Unit of the Ministry of Justice and utilised the expertise of specialist alcohol consultant, Mr Ron Tustin.

The draft strategy was a combination of that work and highlighted a number of areas in which the community could make a meaningful difference to reducing the adverse affects of alcohol abuse. It was not a quick fix and would require long term perseverance and leadership from the Council and other key community agencies identified in the report to bring about positive change. It was proposed that the final strategy would be the direct responsibility of the Council's new community development officer in terms of its implementation.

In response to Cr Harvey, the Chief Executive advised that the Councillors would approve or request amendments to the draft. The draft would then go to full Council in two weeks time. He suggested that the draft then go to the public for comment, with Councillors pinpointing any aspects of the consultation process if they so wished. Ultimately through a submissions hearing, the Council would then make the final decision on the strategy.

Cr Harvey agreed with some aspects of the draft policy. He thought that Gore was very similar to most other small towns in New Zealand where alcohol was an issue. In the past prohibition had not worked. A change was needed in attitude towards alcohol. That approach had worked with reducing the number of smokers in New Zealand. Statistics revealed 75 % of crime related matters in the community had a relationship with alcohol. The cost for the Council in alcohol related matters had been quite noticeable with damage to the gardens and graffiti around the town.

Cr Dixey thought the E's of Success on page eight of the document had some positive points on the way of approaching the problem of alcohol. On page 18, paragraph 5.3.7, he disagreed fairly strongly on some aspects, although some points were true, but some were a fairytale.

Cr Harvey agreed with Cr Dixey. He thought that the Council should not intrude on people's privacy.

Cr Davis thought an amendment was required on page 4, paragraph 2. Gore was a town, not a city. She also thought Councillors should not step on boundaries.

Cr Heller agreed with Cr Davis. He wondered where the draft strategy had been. Page 6, paragraph 1.4.4, page 11, paragraph 4.3.4 and page 12, paragraph 4.3.5 needed to be updated, before the strategy report could be put out to the public.

The Chief Executive advised the strategy had been formulated in the later part of 2006 and had been finished around March 2008, and although it had not laid idle, it had not been a priority. This had been due to the lack of availability of someone to drive the project and the Community Development Officer appointment had been crucial to that implementation. He thought Cr Heller raised a good point. The document would be updated but the most important aspect was that the Council was happy with most of it. He acknowledged the changes required regarding the role of the Council, and the statistics.

Cr Davis thought the report highlighted the fact that alcohol was easily attainable by the under age drinking youth in the community, but did not elaborate on how and why that was happening.

Cr Gardyne thought a lot of the document was outdated and wondered the purpose of some of the content in the statistics. He thought that unless there was action from a national level, the strategy was a waste of time.

In response to Cr Harvey, the Chief Executive thought that about one third of the Council's throughout New Zealand had an alcohol strategy in place. Invercargill had already adopted its strategy. Some aspects of the strategy were very similar in terms of having a Licensing Trust in place.

Cr Dixey advised that the Gore District Youth Council had been keen to get involved with the alcohol strategy three months ago. While change would be difficult, it needed to be driven within the community. There were people in the community who were keen to see the research and something done about it. He was not sure how they would go about it.

His Worship had been very pleased to see the strategy had finally shown up. It had taken some time to get there and he bore some of the responsibility for that. However, the Council at least had the document that could be discussed with the community and he believed that while the document was not perfect it could be built into something that could be very useful.

In response to Cr Dixey's comments about page 18 about the Council, if the second sentence was removed, the comments were really very good. They were the sort of things that the Council should be doing, showing leadership in the community. He suggested if every second person in the community had been asked what the major issue was, most of them would say youth and alcohol. It needed to show leadership by getting the strategy out to the public, getting the Youth Council involved and other agencies around the community. He believed that the new community development officer would drive the strategy along.

Cr Dixon thought that primary school children needed to be targeted early, and educated about alcohol to break the cycle of alcohol problems within families in the community.

Cr Dixey did not want to see the issue become a dumping ground for schools.

Cr Harvey thought that "Harold the Giraffe" from The Life Education Trust ran a really good programme to educate youth on alcohol.

Cr McLennan thought the document was obsolete. Once submissions had come in from all interested groups he thought a lot of the document could be rewritten.

His Worship thought changes in statistics were needed, but the whole document did not need to be rewritten.

RECOMMENDED on the motion of Cr McLennan, seconded by Cr Sharp, THAT subject to the incorporation of updated statistics, the Council approve the release of the draft alcohol strategy to the public for formal consultation, and note that final adoption of the strategy will not be undertaken until such time as community views have been ascertained and considered.

The meeting concluded at 4.31pm.