



REPORT OF THE ORDINARY MONTHLY MEETING OF THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 29 CIVIC AVENUE, GORE ON TUESDAY 10 MARCH 2009, AT 4.32 pm.

PRESENT His Worship the Mayor (Mr Tracy Hicks JP), Cr Davis (Chairperson) Crs Bolger, Dixey, Dixon, Gardyne, Grant, Harvey, 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), Roothing Manager (Mr Murray Hasler), Corporate Support Officer (Mrs Tracey Millan) and one member of the public in the gallery.

1. OPERATIONS BULLETIN

The Committee perused the Operations Bulletin containing reports from the Animal Control Contractor, Asset Manager, Utilities and the Roothing Manager.

Report of the Roothing Manager (2.1.7)

In response to Cr Davis, the Manager confirmed the reseals had been completed early. It had been especially pleasing to hear the unsolicited comments coming from members of the public about the performance of Black Tops construction.

Cr Grant was more than impressed by the professionalism of the Reaby Road reseal. He had had favourable feedback from members of the public as well.

Report of the Asset Manager, Utilities (2.1.7)

Cr Harvey reported that some Councillors had visited the oxidation ponds and Mataura wetlands the previous Friday. He had been impressed and enlightened. He complimented the Essential Services department on its progress.

Crs Sharp and Davis were equally impressed about the worthwhile visit and thanked the staff for the tour.

In response to Cr Dixey, the General Manager, District Assets updated progress on the wells. One of the test drills had gone well, but the other test drill had not been promising. A boiled water notice had been issued. The drilling on the well had impacted on the tepidity of the water in the well, however it had been caught very quickly and the notice had been a precautionary measure that would be withdrawn the next day.

In response to Cr Gardyne, the General Manager advised that the tests completed were compliant with the drinking water standards. The test was more mineral based. The tests were not that regular but were needed to see what was happening with the ground water.

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

2. PRESENTATION FROM ENVIRONMENT SOUTHLAND (46.24.4)

Mr John Prince, Environmental Information Manager and Gemma Scott, Environmental Technical Officer presented an update on air quality monitoring in the Gore District.

3. PRESENTATION FROM NEW ZEALAND FIRE SERVICE (50.6.1.2)

Mr Brendan Nally, Area Manager for the Southern Region Fire Service and Mr Jim Matheson, Chief Officer of the Gore volunteer fire brigade, were in attendance and presented information on recent structural changes to the New Zealand Fire Service.

4. GOODWIN ROAD – CONSTRUCTION ZONE (3.1.7)

A memo had been received from the Roding Manager regarding the proposed construction zone that would be established on a section of Goodwin Road, Waimumu.

Solid Energy had carried out sight benching excavation work adjacent to the Goodwin Road/haul road intersection and had also installed control signs on the haul road approaches that made the intersection as safe as it could.

Solid Energy needed to use road legal trucks to cross the public road which was a significant additional cost to the company.

There was a measure that the Council could take to enable Solid Energy to legally cross Goodwin Road with off road trucks.

To allow this the Council could declare the crossing point to be a "Construction Zone" which it was authorised to do under Clause 12 of the Heavy Motor Vehicle Regulations 1974.

Two options were detailed.

The Manager thought a construction zone was the best solution for the problem. He thought that it would have little or no impact on the public. Solid Energy would pay for any damage to the road where it crossed.

In response to Cr Davis, The Manager advised that no submissions were required to be completed. The Council was obliged to contact and advise LTNZ that it had declared the area a construction zone. It allowed Solid Energy to legitimise its operation.

In response to Cr Dixon, the Manager advised the Council could revoke its decision at a later date.

In response to Cr Gardyne the Manager advised the road would be gravelled. Traffic volumes had dropped off significantly since domestic sales at the Goodwin coal mine had ceased.

In response to Cr Grant, the Manager advised a couple of farm owners, employees and intermine traffic were the only users of the road and that closing the road could possibly be an option to be looked at a later date, if and when instigated by Solid Energy.

Cr Gardyne thought if the through traffic of heavy trucks became the predominant traffic, then for the people using the public road, would it not be the Council's responsibility to future proof the site with a concrete surface?

The Manager thought that although the problem had been there for a long time, the situation - apart from the lower traffic volume and along with the compulsory stops on either side and benching that Solid Energy had put in - showed the priority would always be for public traffic. He was not suggesting that priority be given to the intermine traffic.

Cr Highsted said he was very familiar with the site and the problems that had been going on for some time. The straightening of the road had made a significant improvement. He thought the turning traffic caused the more damage than straight through traffic.

RECOMMENDED on the motion of Cr Dixon, seconded by Cr Dixey, THAT the Council declare the section of Goodwin

Road intersecting the Solid Energy haul road to be a construction zone, on the condition that Solid Energy is responsible for the cost of repair of damage to the section of road within the construction zone, and installing and maintaining at its cost compulsory stop signs on the haul road approach to the intersection.

5. ROAD NAME CHANGE – SECTION OF MEDWAY STREET (3.24.2)

A memo had been received from Melanie Craig, Director of Itic Design Ltd requesting the Council to consider changing the name of the section of Medway Street (SH1) between the Mataura River Bridge and Hokonui Drive (SH94) to Trout Lane.

The Manager advised there had been a slight development; an article in the newspaper about the issue and there had been negative comment from a neighbour to the proposal. It was really up to the Council to consider whether it thought it was worth proceeding. Since the article had been published, he had not received any comment either in support or against the proposal.

Cr Dixey said he would not want to see the section of the street called Trout Lane, as it was not a lane to begin with. He did not want to see any action taken.

Cr Grant thought that the part of Medway street being discussed was often not associated with Medway Street, even by long time locals.

Cr Dixey thought it was more of a terrace and perhaps more signage was needed.

His Worship concurred with Cr Grant. Although the street name did not appear to be a problem with other street residents, perhaps the status quo should remain, although it would be good to have consultation with other shop owners regarding their views.

Cr Heller wondered if the Roding Manager had misquoted M Craig, because she said she had a studio on that section of Medway Street and had had clients who had not visited her studio previously; that assumed her studio was on the other side of the section of street. He said there was no business there at the moment, yet the Southland Times stated the reason for the name change was to avoid confusion for her customers when her new studio opened.

He advised he visited some business owners on Medway St and they were all opposed to the name change and thought it might have been a bit of a public relations exercise. They wondered why she had not approached them first before writing to the Council saying one thing and then contacting the Southland Times. He thought it had been a good advertising stint for her. He believed the status quo should remain.

Cr Harvey had also visited business owners on Medway Street and had received the same reaction as Cr Heller.

In response to Cr Grant, Crs Harvey and Heller confirmed they did know the section of the street was part of Medway St prior to the issue being raised.

Cr Highsted thought there would be little cost involved in speaking to Medway Street business owners. He could see no harm in asking for feedback.

Cr Harvey thought if there had been real local support for the name change, the Council would have heard about it.

Cr Davis thought back to the recently changed section of Railway Esplanade to Latham Lane. The residents involved had all gotten together and approached the Council as a whole.

The Roding Manager thought that situation had been slightly different as Latham Lane had been residential area, where as Medway Street was a business area. The business owners would incur stationery costs, because of an address change.

Cr Gardyne thought Mrs Craig could well have done her homework and got support from other property owners on Medway Street first. He thanked Cr Heller for completing the survey at no cost to the Council.

RECOMMENDED on the motion of Cr McLennan, seconded by Cr Dixon, THAT the status quo for that section of Medway Street (SH1) between the Mataura River Bridge and Hokonui Drive (SH94) remain.

6. LEITHAN ROAD CONDITION (3.24.4)

A report had been received from the Roding Manager in response to concerns that had been expressed by Cr Gardyne regarding the condition of the gravel section of Leithan Road.

The Manager advised he had carried out an inspection on Leithan Road and found most of it had been in a very acceptable condition, with the exception of a couple of isolated spots that had corrugations. The corrugations were not as bad as he had thought, considering the dry conditions and the steep and windy road. These had been caused by the prolonged dry period that caused dust to blow away. The fine material was needed to bind the material together. When the dry material blew away big bare patches or corrugations appeared.

The Manager said the section of road had been identified in the LTCCP and it had been noted in the maintenance contract that the road was an area that was difficult to maintain. The Manager had recently been talking to a resident on Leithan Road and had detailed what the Council proposed to do longer term. His report outlined what measures would be taken before winter to give the situation a longer lasting solution, but there could not be any guarantees due to high altitude and topography.

In response to Cr Dixon, the Manager thought the cost for the measures outlined would be \$10,000 or less for the stretch of road. There would be an allowance for area wide pavement treatments on gravel roads. A small area of treatment had been completed further down the road and had achieved a reasonable outcome.

Cr Dixon thought it could be worthwhile to offer an educational driving programme to farmers in general that travelled around hill sections. Upgraded driving skills could go a long way to stop corrugations.

The Manager said it had been mentioned at the recent grading demonstration that driving techniques did sometimes contribute to corrugations and potholes appearing, however, sometimes they were unavoidable.

In response to Cr Gardyne, the Manager advised that the length of area that needed treatment would be 2 – 2.5kms that would be covered with either one or both treatments.

Cr Gardyne did not think Leithan Road was an alpine Road. He thought the problem had arisen through a lack of maintenance gravel over a long period of time. He did not think it had anything to do with the way people drove their vehicles.

Cr Bolger asked if the Manager considered the road had been maintained properly.

The Manager disagreed. Leithan Road was a road in the district that was most frequently affected by snow. There were roads in the Kaiwera area that were also affected by snow, but they had a lower traffic volume. Different materials were also involved. Comparing the roads was a bit like comparing chalk and cheese. The Manager did not believe that the problem had been the alleged lack of gravel being applied. In his view sufficient gravel had been applied. Other factors that caused the gravel to leave the road were what caused the problem.

RECOMMENDED on the motion of Cr Dixey, seconded by Cr McLennan, THAT the report be received.

The meeting concluded at 6.15pm.