

Minutes of a meeting of the Gore District Council, held in the Council Chambers, civic administration building, 29 Bowler Avenue, Gore, on Tuesday 22 November 2022, at 4.42pm

Present His Worship the Mayor (Mr B R Bell), Crs Dickson, Gardyne, Highsted, Hovell, MacDonell, P McPhail, R McPhail, McKenzie, Phillips, Reid and Stringer.

In attendance The Chief Executive (Mr Stephen Parry), GM Community and Lifestyle (Mr Rex Capil), GM Critical Services (Mr Jason Domigan), GM Corporate Support (Ms Lornae Straith), GM People and Culture (Mrs Nicky Cooper), GM Communications and Customer Support (Sonia Gerken), Governance Manager (Susan Jones), 3 Waters Asset Manager (Mr Matt Bayliss), Roading Asset Manager (Mr Murray Hasler), 3 Waters Operations Manager (Mr Aaron Green), Aquatic Services Manager (Mr Martin Mackereth), Library Manager (Ms Lorraine Weston-Webb), Facilities Administration Officer (Mr Neil Mair), Digital Communications Specialist (Ms Kaitlyn Wright) and 25 members of the public in the gallery.

1. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST (SC3529)

His Worship declared a conflict of agenda item 9 – Mayoral expense claim – trip to Wellington to attend new Mayor’s training.

Cr Highsted noted agenda item 8 also pointed to a potential conflict for His Worship. Did he intend to stand aside while that matter was discussed? His Worship advised he did not intend to declare a conflict. The matter related to an appointment by the Chief Executive essentially and as Mayor, he did not determine who was appointed.

Cr Stringer declared a conflict in agenda item 9 – Mayoral expense claim – trip to Wellington to attend new Mayor’s training.

2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The Council noted that the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 6 October had previously been confirmed for correctness and signed by the Chief Executive and the previous Mayor, in accordance with Standing Orders.

RESOLVED on the motion of Cr R McPhail, seconded by Cr Phillips, THAT of the minutes of the swearing in meeting of the Gore District Council, held on Wednesday 9 November 2022, as presented, be confirmed and signed by the Mayor as a true and complete record.

3. UPDATE ON SPRING CLEAN PROGRESS AT THE GORE AQUATIC CENTRE (SC3454)

A report had been received from the Aquatic Services Manager advising that the spring clean maintenance project had commenced at the aquatic centre on 5 September.

Two issues had arisen soon after the pools had been emptied. The first was that the float valve for the leisure pool had snapped off. The second was having to remove all grout from the pool floors and walls to a depth of 5mm. That equated to just over 10,000 metres of grout. Further issues arose with hairline cracks being discovered in all of the toilet bowls and urinals along with damaged flusher units and shower heads. These were all replaced. The gib in the reception area and meeting room had soft spots due to water leaks. Lateral ties were required to be put into the beams above the pool to help with possible building movement. The shade sails had degraded and were replaced. Hot water cylinders had leaked and there were time delays with the structural engineer providing drawings and requirements for the strengthening work. A series of photographs accompanied the report depicting various stages of the upgrade work.

Cr Reid moved THAT the report be received.

The motion was seconded by Cr Dickson.

Cr Reid congratulated the staff for their hard work and obviously everyone in the community was happy with upgrade. The communication about the progress and delay was also appreciated.

Cr MacDonell said there appeared to be a lot of extra work undertaken and asked if it been completed within budget. The Chief Executive deferred to the GM Corporate Support who confirmed there were some additional works undertaken but these had been done within budget. The GM Community Lifestyle Services assured the Council that the Aquatic Services Manager had played a strong hand in managing the financial budget for the maintenance programme. He also acknowledged the extra effort undertaken by the staff to ensure it remained within budget. Some local contractors were also involved with ensuring the refurbishment was completed within budget.

The motion was put and it was carried.

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4. NAMING OF THE LIBRARY AND JAMES CUMMING COMMUNITY CENTRE (SC2980)

A report had been received from the Library Manager seeking confirmation of the name of the new library and community rooms in the James Cumming Wing building. There had been several iterations of what the project had been referred to during the redevelopment work.

At a January 2022 design team meeting, the preferred signage for the community centre had been selected. A copy of the images depicting the signage over the entrances to both the library and the community rooms had been circulated with the agenda. The building name Library and James Cumming Community Centre had been agreed to at the January 2022 meeting.

Cr Reid moved THAT the report be received.

The motion was seconded by Cr Stringer.

The motion was put and it was carried.

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Cr McKenzie asked if the public had been consulted about the naming of the new building. The Chief Executive understood the name of the building had been included on a plan. The General Manager Communications said when the visuals of the building had been initially circulated the naming had been included on it.

Cr Highsted asked if the Council was making a decision on the naming. The previous Council had been keen to have a public debate about the naming, but was it too late now. The Chief Executive said it was not too late, and the report hinted at what the building should be called. He recalled the previous Council had expressed concern at what the building was being referred to in the community. There was a strong expectation in the community that the name "James Cumming" should be preserved and that had been attached to the community rooms. The Library Manager advised it was a question from the Council and the report was clarifying what had been discussed. The Facilities Administration Officer advised some of the signage was already in production and if there was to be a change there may be additional costs incurred.

Cr R McPhail said there had been a number of comments about what the building should be called and there was a desire to retain a reference to James Cumming.

Cr R McPhail moved THAT the building be referred to as the James Cumming Community Centre and Library.

The motion was seconded by Cr Hovell.

His Worship asked about the consultation and how it had been received. The General Manager Communications advised there had been no feedback received. She added

there were separate entrances to both facilities and there would not be one full name on the building. The Chief Executive asked if the Council would be satisfied with referring to the building as the James Cumming Community Centre and Library without having to amend any signage.

Cr R McPhail accepted there would be two separate entrances but believed reference to the full name of James Cumming Community Centre and Library should be contained in print and publications.

Cr Dickson asked that there be a reference to James Cumming and the history surrounding his donation that enabled the original James Cumming Wing to be constructed displayed inside the facility. The Facilities Administration Officer advised there had been a large photo of James Cumming along with details about the contribution he made in the original building. Both had been retained and the intention was to include them in the new building.

Cr Highsted suggested that information about James Cumming be included in the library which would have more foot traffic than the community centre itself.

Cr Phillips suggested that there be consideration given to having a sign outside the building, perhaps in the garden area, stating the full name of “James Cumming Community Centre and Library” that could be seen from both entrances.

The motion was put and it was carried.

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5. MATAURA RIVER CROSSING/LONGFORD SHARED BRIDGE NEXT STEPS (SC3446)

A report had been received from the 3 Waters Asset Manager seeking direction from the the Council regarding the next steps to be taken for the Mataura River Crossing/Longford Shared Path project.

The upgraded East Gore plant had been designed to supply the entire Gore township with water that met the requirements of the New Zealand Drinking Water Standards 2018 (NZDWS). Currently only approximately 65% of Gore’s water was being supplied through the East Gore plant with the remaining 35% being treated at the Hilbre Avenue treatment plant. To allow the East Gore plant to treat all of Gore’s water, two interconnecting pipelines between the Jacobstown Well field and the East Gore plant must be installed (the pipeline).

In 2018, the Council identified an opportunity to combine this pipeline project with a project to construct a pedestrian and cycle bridge (the Longford Shared Bridge) to improve access between East and West Gore. One of the critical factors for the Council making this decision was that Waka Kotahi was potentially willing to co-fund the construction of the bridge. The preferred location for a pedestrian and cycle bridge had been determined to be near Surrey Street. While that was not the most direct

route for the new pipeline, Waka Kotahi's position was that if it was a co-funder, the primary purpose of the bridge was as a transport link.

Applications for the resource consents for a single span, cable-stay bridge located at Surrey Street had been lodged in July 2020. The consents were initially granted, however, the decision was appealed by the Waimea Plains Preservation Trust (the Trust). In March 2022 the Environment Court upheld the Trust's appeal against the decision to grant the resource consents.

This was a significant set-back for the Council's strategy to centralise drinking water at the East Gore plant and left the project at a crossroads. After considering the various options, it was believed the Council now had two options, as follows:

- To continue to explore opportunities for a dual-purpose bridge to carry the pipeline as well as provide a pedestrian/cycling link, or
- Solely focus on getting the new pipeline across the Maitara River.

It was also worth noting that Waka Kotahi co-funding of any bridge would be very much dependent on the final option that was chosen and its funding ability at the time. A copy of a letter from the Chief Executive of Waka Kotahi following a review of its investment target had been circulated with the agenda. The letter explained that due to various challenges in the construction industry and a reduction in forecast revenue, there had been a need to revise allocated funding budgets. There had been a reduction in funding for walking and cycling improvements which did not bode well for the Council for a future application for funding assistance from Waka Kotahi for a dual-purpose walking and cycling bridge.

RESOLVED on the motion of Cr Phillips, seconded by Cr Dickson, THAT the report be received.

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Cr Gardyne asked if there was room on the existing State Highway bridge for two pipes. The 3 Waters Asset Manager advised it was something that would need to be investigated. It was unlikely there would be sufficient space in the existing service ducts, but there could be room elsewhere on the bridge.

Cr Hovell was reluctant to move away from the option of walking and cycling across the bridge. He was curious about the criteria that 3 Waters would look at using in terms of assessing the options before the Council, including the financial costs of the different options. In addition, he thought the Council needed a high level assessment of the options including cultural impacts and how critical the timing was. Did the Council have time to go through the consenting process again and what sort of costs would be involved. There were also technical complexities. He thought the Council needed an overview report about the different options to consider but in his view, it should still include walking and cycling. If there was no funding forthcoming from NZTA what did that expose the Council to? He was highlighting the need to focus on cultural, environmental and visual impacts. There had been four options identified in

the report, but there may be more. He did not want to rule any other option out for consideration.

In response to His Worship, the Manager advised Cr Hovell had alluded to quite a lot of complexity associated with a dual-purpose bridge. Going down that path would require a robust assessment to be completed. The purpose of the report before the Council to go through the options assessment would incur quite a lot of work and cost. Focusing only on a pipeline across the river, a lot of the complexity would be removed. He would like some direction from the Council before spending any money on the dual-purpose option. Around timing, he thought a dual-purpose bridge would take longer and would need to go through a resource consent process. By opting for directional drilling or attaching a pipe to the existing State Highway bridge, the chances were no consent would be required which would reduce the timing. The key driver behind the project was to make sure all of Gore had drinking water that was compliant with the NZ Drinking Water Standards (DWS) and until the pipe was across the river, sections of the western side of Gore would not have compliant drinking water.

In response to His Worship, the Manager said currently there was no specific date as to when the Council needed to reach compliance with DWS but he suspected with the establishment of Taumata Arowai there may be some dates imposed.

Cr P McPhail said the Council needed to have the community behind it with whatever option was chosen and ensure it was well informed. There had been a lot of money spent already. Cr Highsted understood that the previous Council had ruled out the State Highway bridge and directional drilling. He thought before anything happened, there needed to be a high level report with a rough order of cost and some basic visuals to go to the community with. He thought there were two options – a pipe across the existing bridge or a dual-purpose bridge. The last process had failed in terms of consultation by not liaising with the community. Cr Dickson agreed there needed to be community consultation and it wanted to be involved. There was another option which may need Environment Southland approval which was putting a pipe into the river bed.

The Manager was aware that had been suggested, but believed getting the required consent could be extremely difficult and it was highly unlikely that the required approvals would be obtained. It could certainly be investigated. He thought Hokonui Runanga would be interested in an application. Cr Dickson suggested also involving Iwi very early on in the consultation process.

In response to His Worship, the Manager said there had been a number of discussions regarding the project. There had been a consent required through Environment Southland about the initial proposal and then there had been further discussions since the Environment Court decision.

Cr Reid agreed with Cr Highsted's comments. The Council had two options and they should be investigated and engage with the community. Cr MacDonell also agreed

with Cr Highsted. He did not support having a pipe attached to the existing bridge. There was a huge flood risk.

Cr Phillips was annoyed at the time the project was taking. The Council initially wanted a pipe across the river, then it became a shared bridge. The Council was four years down the track and it had spent a lot of money. The staff were asking the Council for direction. He urged the Council to make a decision so the project could proceed and get the water across the river. There needed to be future proofing. The best option was to get the staff to report and get the project done. He wanted to do it once and do it right.

Cr Phillips moved THAT a report be requested from staff about a dual-option bridge with walking and cycling options carrying pipes from Maitland Street.

The General Manager Critical Services said regardless of what type of bridge was constructed, there was no guarantee it would be approved. The environmental impact needed to be considered. Cr Phillips understood what the pros and cons were. If the process was correctly undertaken this time, there would be some success and that included consultation.

Cr Hovell had closely followed the previous consent process and on the basis of that he would not like to have the Council put all of its eggs in one basket about a potential site for putting a structure across the river. There were other examples that were available for a crossing point from Nelson Street and elsewhere. Until there was a high level report that compared the various options, he thought it unwise to agree it should be consulted on. He wanted to have a rough order of costs and assessment options provided. In his view, the Council needed to consider 4-5 options and then choose two to compare and go to public consultation with. He acknowledged the Manager's comments but thought there was time to consider the next steps.

Cr Highsted said he would second the motion if the location was not specific and there was some flexibility in a dual-purpose crossing. Cr Phillips said after going through the process, he believed the Council had a better chance to specify where the bridge would be. It was about thinking what was best for now and the future. Cr Highsted said in his view, the Council needed the community to tell it what it preferred – either a dual-purpose bridge or a pipe across the river.

The Chief Executive thought what the meeting wanted was an analysis of a dual-purpose bridge that could potentially carry just water and wastewater pipes or walking and cycling on a select few locations from Maitland Street and two or three other locations towards the existing State Highway bridge, high level costings and imagery associated to share with the community and proceed on that basis. Knowing there was still a direct drilling option under the river was a point of last resort if the costings proved challenging. He was acutely aware since the previous design had been priced, the construction market had increased appreciably and NZTA had advised its funding options may be unavailable.

Cr Dickson understood NZTA funding was not available if the Council went with the Maitland Street site. That meant the Council would have to fund the full cost and it needed to know if the community was willing to meet that.

The Chief Executive said the Council was aware that NZTA's funding for walking and cycling projects had been reduced. It had a marked preference for the original site for the bridge. With updated estimates of cost, it may become clear about which option was feasible and likely to proceed for community consultation.

Cr Gardyne had been involved with the Pyramid bridge that had taken seven years. When tenders had been invited, there were alternative tenders received that resulted in a significant saving. He thought a design and build process could speed the process up once a site had been determined. There could be an innovative design provided. Cr P McPhail said a key aspect of the initial proposal had been the design and having options for designs would be worthwhile. Cr MacDonell said the further the bridge was down the river, the more pipe needed to be installed and that added additional cost. Being closer to Maitland Street would be more cost effective.

Cr Gardyne said the shortest route would be the best one, but the river banks were not as stable at Maitland Street and there may need to be some flexibility.

Cr McKenzie clarified there was no resource consent required to go under the river. The Manager confirmed that was his understanding. Cr Hovell said the District Plan had a provision that if earthworks took more than three months there was a consent required to disturb ground including under the river. In the case of MVM, it had two extensions but it did not need a consent from Environment Southland.

His Worship thought the general consensus was for a bridge.

The Manager said there would be a reasonable amount of money required to investigate the options and get the high level costings. Did the Council want staff to consult with the community and continue with a dual-purpose bridge or just focus on a pipeline before the investigation work was undertaken? Or, did the Council want the investigation work completed first and then consult with the community. Cr Reid thought the community needed to see what the options as to what it preferred.

Cr Hovell did not see the need to incur costs to ascertain what the costs would be. What the Council needed to know was a rough order of costs for the other sites. At a high level he was not expecting a detailed breakdown of design. The design was probably one of the critical issues that the public may want to comment on. In some respects, it might be better not to have any numbers included. Prior to going out to consultation the Council should determine a couple of options. Design was also important as well as location.

Cr Hovell moved THAT the staff report back to the Council in terms of options that may be available for a bridge that provides for the three alternatives referred to at

various locations in the river so that further direction can be provided for detailed assessment and that be a high level assessment of the different effects.

The motion was seconded by Cr Reid, was put and it was carried.

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6. GORE DISTRICT COUNCIL RECYCLING UPDATE – RETHINKING WASTE (SC0689/SC3332)

A report had been received from the General Manager Critical Services providing an update to the Council on the Rethinking Waste project and a potential timeline to develop recycling options and consultation. It also identified a process for the Council to incorporate increased recycling options for community consideration.

In 2020, the Council significantly reduced its kerbside recycling options offered to the community. The changes had been forced by collapsing markets for recyclable product, a contentious and ultimately abandoned tender process for kerbside recycling and a lack of Government direction on waste minimisation initiatives.

Recent changes on all of those fronts had prompted a rethink about how the Council should be positioning itself in respect of achieving greater outcomes with waste minimisation.

The Council commenced a kerbside recycling service for both Gore and Mataura in 2012. The service, which involved mixed glass, plastics, cardboard, paper, and tins had been enthusiastically embraced by those receiving the service. However, the progressive withdrawal or collapse of overseas markets around 2019, placed significant questions on continuing with a recycling service where the product could only be stockpiled or landfilled due to a lack of interest from overseas buyers.

Rising costs of kerbside recycling, together with diminishing markets for the product, caused the Council to make the difficult decision to discontinue offering a recycling service except for the collection of mixed glass, once per month. This decision, in effect, placed recycling on 'life support' pending the emergence of Government direction and/or the revival of recycling markets. The Council's thinking at the time had been to keep the recycling infrastructure in place and endeavour to maintain good habits of residents wanting to recycle, albeit with a base minimum of glass.

At the same time, in recognition of the reduced level of service, the Council opted to allow green waste to be deposited at the Gore refuse transfer station free of charge. That approach also recognised that there was a stiff penalty to pay for waste that ended up in a landfill and therefore ensured that green waste was not placed in the red kerbside bin was a positive step of diverting that stream of waste from the landfill.

In addition, the impact of the gradually increasing waste disposal levy could not be underestimated. Set at \$10 per tonne in 2009, it had recently increased from \$20 to \$30 per tonne from 1 July 2022. The pricing would continue to rise appreciably over the next two years with the Government planning on increasing the levy up to \$60 per

tonne from 1 July 2024. Waste minimisation to avoid the sharp rise in costs in landfill disposal had both financial and environmental advantages.

After several years of promise, the Government finally revealed its future direction for waste minimisation and recycling in New Zealand, earlier in the year. The consultation proposal developed by the Ministry for the Environment centred around three connected initiatives, as follows:

- A container return scheme
- Standardised kerbside recycling collection
- Separating business food waste from general waste

There had been encouraging signs about changing market conditions, to give new hope that recycling could again be pursued with a positive environmental outcome. A copy of a report from Ahika Consulting who had been assisting the Council with finding a way forward from its 2020 exit from recycling with the exception of glass, had been circulated with the agenda. A recommendation in the report had been to resume kerbside recycling centering around the collection of aluminium, steel and plastic as a mixed bundle that could be placed in one bin. The recommendation was made on the basis that there was a ready market for those products and a potential market existed for glass separately while cardboard and paper were adequately dealt with by the Gore Pakeke Lions.

WasteNet was due for an operational review. Its governance structure had lost momentum with no formal meetings having been held for more than two years. The Ahika report also recommended the Council consider employing its own Waste Minimisation Officer.

RESOLVED on the motion of Cr R McPhail, seconded by Cr Phillips, THAT the report be received.

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Cr Dickson noted the crushing of glass had been referred to in the report. She believed there was a market for clear glass and wondered if a report could be provided about how easily glass could be separated. She also noted food was a large volume of waste that also released methane. The Government had taken a stance on having food removed from the waste stream and she felt there should be funding from the Government for that.

His Worship noted there had been some work undertaken by the Otago Mayoral Forum about waste and further investigations could be undertaken. The General Manager said the recommendation from the consultant was to utilise glass locally and it would be interesting to ascertain what sort of market there was. The intention was to crush glass and look at how it could be utilised across different areas such as bedding material. The key aspect with glass was avoiding having to transport, the cost of which was significant in its full form. Separation of glass also came with a cost.

Cr Highsted asked if other options could be explored rather than a full kerbside glass collection. There were glass igloos provided in other towns and cities particularly for students to dispose to. There was a local group in the community that was already involved in the recycling programme and it needed to be included.

Cr R McPhail wondered if there might be funding from central Government towards a Waste Minimisation Officer. The General Manager said staff would certainly be looking at every option and would bring a full suite of options back to the Council for consideration, including levy funding. Cr R McPhail was aware of the huge number of people in the community who wanted some type of kerbside recycling service to resume. Regarding the levy, the Council should be actively encouraging the community recycling groups. The cardboard that was recycled by the Pakeke Lions Club amounted to about 650 tonnes annually and that saved a lot of cost by not having to take it to the landfill.

Cr Hovell supported a report being provided. Recycling had been a constant issue in recent months and during the run-up to the elections. The Youth Council was also supportive of a recycling programme. Cr Reid added the Pakekes also recycled aluminium but was not sure it was well known amongst the community.

His Worship asked if staff had looked at an expression of interest for contracting out the entire service. The Chief Executive said the previous system had been contracted and if there was to be a reinstatement or modification of it, it would still be a contracted service. There was no in-house service for refuse collection. His Worship asked if there was an intention to work alongside the Invercargill City Council. The General Manager said there were pros and cons about having a fully contracted service, however, it may be able to be done at a slightly cheaper price. The con was what it took out of the community and the Council needed to be aware of the economic situation. For Southland, its location from main centres was an issue.

Cr Hovell moved THAT the Council note the willingness of Invercargill City Council, Recycle South and Bond Contracts Ltd to support and reintroduce a kerbside recycling collection service for Gore and Mataura.

The motion was seconded by Cr R McPhail.

Cr Hovell said the motion was about noting the willingness and he did not think it needed to be debated. Cr Dickson wondered whether the costs of Recycle South had changed. The General Manager wanted to ensure there was a willingness from the Council to obtain the costs and staff would investigate a suite of options for consideration by the Council and community.

The motion was put and it was carried.

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Cr Dickson moved THAT if there is still a willingness to resume a kerbside recycling collection service, the scope and assessed costs of any such service be identified and

then be the subject of community engagement with a view to resuming a full scale kerbside recycling service from 1 July 2023.

The motion was seconded by Cr R McPhail.

Cr Phillips asked if the date to resume a service of 1 July 2023 was achievable. The General Manager said that was the intention. Any deviation would be reported back to the Council. In response to His Worship who asked if there was any opportunity for the service to commence earlier, the General Manager did not believe so. The date was selected in order to fit in with the annual plan.

Cr Highsted said the motion did not pause on a cost issue. It would mean resuming a service from 1 July 2023. There was no option for the Council to put it through a financial model, annual plan or debate around the table. He believed it was important to go through an annual plan process. It was a significant issue but it had to go through a process being the annual plan.

The Chief Executive said Cr Highsted made a good point, however it was not essential to consult on the annual plan if there was no significant departure. However, this matter would be a significant departure and the fact there would be community consultation about the service may be sufficient. The fact that costs would be included may be reasonably compelling and provide the outcome. He thought there was sufficient checks and balances. Cr Highsted said experience told him to disagree. Staff were being given a mandate on the issue. There was no pause. The motion stated the service would be resumed after community consultation.

Cr Hovell moved as an amendment THAT if there is still a willingness to resume a kerbside recycling collection service, the scope and assessed costs of any such service be identified and subject to approval by the Council, then be the subject of community engagement.

The amendment was seconded by Cr Highsted.

The amendment then became the motion, was put and it was carried.

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Cr Reid moved THAT the Council give consideration to employing a dedicated Waste Minimisation Officer through the 2023/2024 Annual Plan process.

The motion was seconded by Cr Highsted.

Cr MacDonell asked if the position would be full or part-time and what the likely cost would be. His Worship said it would be considered as part of the annual plan process. The General Manager said there was a move across the country for Councils to have Waste Minimisation Officers manage the activity. Anticipated costs would be included in the annual plan process. His Worship expected there would be more understanding of the position through the annual plan process. Cr Stringer asked whether the person

would come with any powers and responsibilities, such as acting on fly tipping issues. His Worship thought that would still to be determined. The Chief Executive said the Officer's role would be more around education, communication and promotion of best practice. Issues around fly tipping was the responsibility of the Council's regulatory staff.

The motion was put and it was carried.

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The meeting adjourned briefly and resumed at 6.01pm

7. MAYORAL EXPENSE CLAIM (SC3528)

His Worship advised all costs relating to his private Personal Assistant attending the new Mayor's training in Wellington in October had been accepted by him. He would not be seeking reimbursement from the Council for her costs. The report was therefore withdrawn.

8. EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT FOR HIS WORSHIP THE MAYOR (SC3528)

A report had been received from the Chief Executive profiling the request from His Worship the Mayor for a dedicated assistant. Secretarial support for the Office of the Mayor had traditionally been provided by the Council's Corporate Support staff. A dedicated secretary or administrative support for the office of the Mayor had not been provided or required over the past 20 years. A new position of Executive Assistant to the Mayor and the Chief Executive had been established earlier in the year.

The Chief Executive understood that following the amount of publicity arising from the election of His Worship, a private personal assistant had been engaged to assist with media enquiries. The private Personal Assistant had continued to assist His Worship with diary management, press releases and travel bookings. In some instances, the private Personal Assistant had committed the Council to costs despite not being a Council employee. The current situation was confusing and posed a reputational risk to the Council.

Should the Council approve the establishment of a dedicated position of Executive Assistant to the Office of the Mayor, a management of change process would need to be conducted with the current Executive Assistant to the Mayor and Chief Executive. The process would attract additional costs for the Council.

The Chief Executive understood His Worship had received advice from other Mayors that he should look to have his own dedicated Personal Assistant and not share that resource with a Chief Executive or others.

After conferring with other Chief Executives in the region, it had been confirmed that the Mayors of the Southland District and Invercargill City, together with the Chair of Environment Southland, did not have a dedicated Executive Assistant. All of those

positions utilised a shared service model with either the Chief Executive or another senior executive.

It was understood a part-time position of 27.5 hours per week was envisaged with the estimated cost including salary, superannuation, training, travel and establishment costs (office support), estimated to be in the vicinity of \$70,000 - \$85,000 annually (that had an impact of increasing rates by approximately 0.4%). The cost was not contained within the current Council budget.

As the private Personal Assistant of the Mayor was the partner of Cr Stringer, Cr Stringer had a conflict of interest and would need to remove himself from the debate and the chambers while the particular item was discussed and resolved.

His Worship explained the reason for the item on the agenda. He had had his own PA assisting him and did not think it was fair to use the current EA given the level of media interest he had received since his election. He did not think it fair to take that resource away from the Chief Executive. The recommendation was a matter of political discretion. His initial thought about hours, salary and job description would need to be resolved by the Chief Executive. He asked if there was any support for the position.

Cr Hovell thought procedurally there should be a discussion and from it, a motion developed.

Cr Highsted moved THAT the request for a dedicated EA for the Mayor be declined.

He advised no other Mayor in Southland had a dedicated EA. He was concerned at the suggested costs of 85k. He was deeply concerned at the potential employment ramifications and the management of change process. The community would be better served by investing money into other areas. The Mayor had campaigned on getting back to basics and eliminating vanity projects. In his view, he believed the role could be view as the Mayor's own vanity project.

The motion was seconded by Cr Reid.

Cr Reid said the Council was too small for a dedicated position. The Council already had an EA who supported the Mayor and Chief Executive and who could be a flight risk if her role was not being taken seriously. The Mayor had campaigned on back to basics and this was absolutely not back to basics. She could not support it.

Cr R McPhail said the commentary about the media interest had resulted from His Worship's sudden high profile. The Council had communications staff and communication had been part of the rationale proposed. He agreed with other Councillors that it was a luxury item. No other Council had such a position.

Cr Phillips said his main concern was with clause 4.1 in the report and the intention not to share the resource with the Chief Executive or others. He hoped that the

Council was transparent in all of its actions. The comment had flawed him and he would not be supporting the request.

Cr McKenzie said because of the Mayor's age and with new Councillors, he knew the Mayor probably needed extra assistance. He was aware the Mayor had been under a lot of pressure from media and he backed the request. He was not sure of the need for a full-time position. His Worship said he had proposed a part-time role.

Cr Dickson was concerned about the cost. There were other costs in addition to a salary. In the current climate, another .4% on rates would affect ratepayers. She realised the Mayor may have a lot of extra work to do and agreed with Cr McKenzie about extra pressure, but she did not think the Council could absorb the costs.

The motion was put and it was carried.

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Cr Hovell thought once the Committee structure was confirmed he suggested the Chief Executive might report on administrative and governance support to elected members and how their needs may be met.

9. ADOPTION OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS REGISTER AND APPOINTMENT OF REGISTRAR (SC3529)

A report had been received from the Chief Executive advising that the Local Government (Pecuniary Interests Register) Amendment Act 2022 would come into force on 20 November 2022. The Act placed an obligation on each elected member of a Council or Community Board to accurately record their financial interest in companies, trusts and real estate. Accurate compilation of member interests was compulsory and must be completed within 120 days for elected members coming into office. For elected members of the Gore District Council, the compliance date would be 11 February 2023.

In order to comply with the Act, the Council needed to appoint a registrar to oversee and maintain the register of interests. The registrar must create guidance documents for the members to help them complete the forms. A summary of all information received had to be made available on the Council's website and all records must be kept for seven years.

Cr Gardyne moved THAT the report be received and noted.

The motion was seconded by Cr Dickson.

His Worship said the register of interests form that had earlier circulated to Councillors would be updated and staff were working with Invercargill City Council.

The motion was put and it was carried.

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Cr MacDonell moved THAT the Council approve the General Manager Corporate Support to be the registrar of the Pecuniary Interest Register.

The motion as seconded by Cr Reid.

His Worship said given the nature of the work still to be undertaken he wondered whether appointing a registrar should be delayed. Cr Hovell thought there needed to be a registrar appointed to report on the register.

The motion was put and it was carried.

2022/141

10. MATAI RIDGE – STREET NAMES (SC3333)

A memo had been received from the Chief Executive advising that the Matai Ridge residential subdivision was now well advanced, with sealing of the new roads in the subdivision scheduled for completion by the end of November. With the advancement of the development, thought had been given to the naming of the two roads that comprised the subdivision. A copy of the subdivision plan along with the Council's Road Naming Policy had been circulated with the agenda.

RESOLVED on the motion of Cr Reid, seconded by Cr R McPhail, THAT the Council endorse the street names of Kahikatea Drive and Kowhai Place within the Matai Ridge residential subdivision.

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11. COMMITTEE STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE 2022-2025 TRIENNium (SC3528)

His Worship advised the report would be held over until the December meeting.

His Worship added the in-committee agenda would also be held over until the December meeting. There was no urgency with the matters to be considered. He wished to have the minutes of the 6 October extraordinary Council meeting audited to ensure due process had been followed.

The meeting concluded at 6.28pm