

Minutes of an ordinary meeting of the Gore District Council, held in the Council Chambers, civic administration building, 29 Bowler Avenue, Gore, on Tuesday 18 March 2025, at 4.00pm.

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

In attendance The Chief Executive (Ms Debbie Lascelles), General Manager Corporate Services (Ms Lornae Straith), General Manager Critical Services (Mr Jason Domigan), Governance Manager (Susan Jones), senior Communications Officer (Ms Bonnie Mager), Governance and Corporate Support Manager (Mrs Amanda Drew), Strategy and Policy Advisor (Mr Leon Mitchell), Regulatory Manager (Mrs Frances Shepherd), 3 Waters Capital Projects and Asset Manager (Mr Riaan Rossouw), Community and Economic Development Manager (Mr Guillaume Willemse), Mataura Community Board Chairperson (Mrs Nicky Coats) and five members of the public in the gallery.

1. CONFLICT OF INTEREST (SC4080)

Cr R McPhail advised he was a member of the Gore RSA Executive Committee with a potential conflict with clause 8.4 – Proposal to adopt the existing Class 4 Gambling and TAB Venue policies. He would not participate in the discussion.

2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLVED on the motion of Cr Dickson, seconded by Cr P McPhail, **THAT** the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Gore District Council, held on Tuesday 18 February 2025, as presented, be confirmed and signed by the Mayor as a true and complete record.

RESOLVED on the motion of Cr MacDonell, seconded by Cr Gardyne, **THAT** the minutes and recommendations of the ordinary meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee, held on Tuesday 11 February 2025, as presented, be confirmed and signed by the Mayor as a true and complete record.

RESOLVED on the motion of Cr Gardyne, seconded by Cr Fraser, **THAT** the minutes and recommendations of the ordinary meeting of the Assets and Infrastructure

Committee, held on Tuesday 4 March 2025, as presented, be confirmed and signed by the Mayor as a true and complete record.

3. PRESENTATION FROM GREAT SOUTH (SC3084)

Ms Chami Abeysinghe, Chief Executive of Great South, was in attendance at the meeting, together with Ms Suzanne Hotton, General Manager Corporate Services and Mr Steve Canny, General Manager Strategic Projects. They provided an update on the activities of the organisation. A copy of the presentation had been circulated with the agenda.

Mr Canny reported on the Chatton Formation Deep Aquifer mapping and modelling which had recently been approved for public release. Mr Mark Frood, General Manager Tourism and Events joined the meeting online and spoke to the tourism and promotional aspects of the presentation.

Cr P McPhail referred to the data where events had 500 people attending and whether there was any specific data relating to Tussock Country that had 60 events held over a week. Many events in Gore did not have 500 people attending. Was that information available? Ms Abeysinghe would obtain the data and send through to the Chief Executive. In response to Cr Dickson, Ms Abeysinghe would check the data held about young people who were not in employment and who may be able to assist with the aquaculture industry.

Cr Reid asked if there was an opportunity to work alongside organisations like Habitat for Humanity for reasonably priced accommodation, particularly for single, older people. Ms Abeysinghe said she would feed that back for the strategy being worked on. Cr Phillips asked about the increased planting of trees in the area and whether Great South had considered the locations and how the harvested logs may be processed. Mr Canny said current forest plantings had been identified. There were very large tracts of productive farm land being converted to forest. In terms of future needs, Great South had identified reasonably well but it was individual farmers who determined what land may be converted to forest. Great South was looking at the impacts it would have across the region and whether there were opportunities to diversify with other industries. Many of the forestry plantings being planned would not reach maturity until at least 2050 and beyond.

The representatives from Great South departed the meeting at 4.36pm

4. MATAURA COMMUNITY BOARD MEETING MINUTES (SC3535)

A copy of the minutes of the Mataura Community Board meeting held on Monday 10 March 2025 had been circulated with the agenda.

RESOLVED on the motion of Cr Stringer, seconded by Cr Phillips, THAT the Council receive and note the minutes of the meeting of the Mataura Community Board, with

the exception of item 6 (resignation of member), which was subject to a separate report on the agenda.

2025/07

5. MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS TO 31 JANUARY 2025

A report had been received from the senior Finance Manager together with a copy of the management accounts to 31 January 2025.

The Council had recorded a deficit of \$531k as at 31 January which was favourable compared to a budgeted deficit of \$1.448 million. The key drivers were the financial contributions received for the library redevelopment project and the second stage of the Kaiwera wind farm.

RESOLVED on the motion of Cr MacDonell, seconded by Cr Fraser, THAT the Council receive and note the management accounts to 31 January 2025.

2025/08

6. MAYORAL REPORT (SC4080)

A copy of the Mayoral report about activities over the month of February had been circulated with the agenda. A copy of the four monthly report from Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) had also been circulated.

Cr Dickson referred to the Ratepayer Assistance Scheme asked what it meant. She would not like to think ratepayers could borrow money from LGNZ to pay their rates. His Worship said the Scheme was something the new Local Government Minister was looking at. He expected there would be more information to come. The Chief Executive said her understanding was the Local Government Funding Agency terms would be made available to people not involved in local government, eg businesses. It was not for ratepayers to access in order to pay their rates.

Cr Dickson referred to the commentary on water services reform and the levies proposed to be collected by the Commerce Commission and Taumata Arowai to contribute to the water services regulatory functions of Taumata Arowai. She said it was proposed to be a total \$5.44 per person but questioned whether the Government should be recovering money from ratepayers. Cr Fraser noted the new Minister had *“acknowledged local government was fatigued by waves of reform and that a lot of the cost and burden that fell on local government was because of central government legislation”*. His Worship said the Minister was interested in reviewing some of the costs that were being levied on local government.

RESOLVED on the motion of Cr Phillips, seconded by Cr Stringer, THAT the Council receive and note the Mayoral report.

2025/09

7. DECEMBER 2024 QUARTERLY ECONOMIC MONITOR REPORT FOR THE GORE DISTRICT
(SC4083)

A report had been received from the Corporate and Governance Manager together with a copy of the Infometrics December 2024 Quarterly Economic Monitor report for the Gore District. The Council had recently subscribed to Infometrics Regional Economic Profile and the Quarterly Economic Monitor which provided a focused and timely insight into how the Gore local economy had performed over the previous quarter through commentary from Infometrics regional economists and a range of economic indicators. The commentary included leading economic indicators, property market shifts and social indicators along with comparisons in the Southland region and New Zealand.

Cr Hovell noted the Gore District was on the “wrong side of the ledger” in all categories. The issue facing the Council was what was it going to do about it? Once the Long Term Plan was out of the way, he thought the Council should consider the impact of the report. He noted there were a number of empty spaces in the central business area. Cr Fraser referred to the unemployment figures. The Community and Economic Development Manager said the data would have been extracted from the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) and the number of people on benefits. He added the Mayor’s Taskforce for Jobs (MTfJ) had a limited budget and worked very closely with schools and tried to catch those students who may otherwise fall through the cracks. His Worship said the programme was ultimately set up to catch those 16-17 year olds who left school without having employment to go to. He added the programme had assisted 32 young people this year from an initial target of 20. Cr Fraser did not think it was the Council’s responsibility, but MSDs.

Cr P McPhail concurred with Cr Hovell’s comments. A recent meeting of the retail group prompted questions about how the Council may be able to assist. The Manager had also attended the meeting and had engaged with the organiser of the forum to provide assistance.

Cr Phillips thought the MTfJ programme was very good for the area. He noted the average income figure and questioned where it came from. The Manager said it was an average. The General Manager Corporate Services added the figure was household income which could include two or more people. Cr Phillips would like to see a more in depth breakdown. The Chief Executive said the report was generated from standardised data sets. Any further breakdown would require an economist to be engaged which would come at a cost.

Cr Stringer asked what was driving the GDP figures. The Manager was unsure. It consisted of multiple criteria and assumed it would be the same nationally. He would endeavour to find more information. Cr Hovell thought once eventually released, the 2023 Census data would provide more detailed information about some of the categories included in the report.

RESOLVED on the motion of Cr MacDonell, seconded by Cr Phillips, THAT the Council receive and note the December 2024 Quarterly Economic Monitor report for the Gore District.

2025/10

8. RESIGNATION OF MATAURA COMMUNITY BOARD MEMBER – INTENTION TO APPOINT UNSUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE (SC3537)

A report had been received from the Governance Manager advising the Council of the recommendation of the Mataura Community Board to appoint the highest voting unsuccessful candidate from the 2022 Board elections to replace Colleen Lieshout. The resignation of Mrs Colleen Lieshout as a member of the Mataura Community Board had been received on 23 February 2025 and was effective immediately.

Cr Phillips acknowledged Mrs Lieshout for her work in the Mataura community and as a member of the Community Board.

His Worship asked how much staff time would be required with the process of appointing the candidate. He said there were only three meetings left before the elections. The Chief Executive said there would be an impact on workload and the need for an extraordinary meeting. His Worship disagreed with the recommendation, especially when there were only three meetings left. The alternative recommendation would be not to fill the vacancy. Cr Dickson concurred. Cr R McPhail also concurred. He was interested in hearing the viewpoint of the Board Chairperson and Cr Phillips.

Cr Phillips thought it was fair to approach the highest unsuccessful candidate, even though there were only three meetings left. Cr Fraser believed the Council should support the wish of the Community Board.

Cr Fraser moved THAT the Council:

- a) receives and notes the *Resignation of Mataura Community Board member – intention to appoint unsuccessful candidate* report,**
- b) resolve, in accordance with section 117 (3)(a) of the Local Electoral Act 2001, to appoint Constance Waihape by virtue of being the highest voting unsuccessful candidate at the 2022 Mataura Community Board elections;**
- c) resolve, in accordance with section 118 (1)(a) and (b) to give public notice of the resolution and the process by which the person named in the resolution was selected for appointment;**
- d) note that the expiry of the prescribed period of 30 days will be 17 April 2025; and**
- e) note that on the basis the selected candidate accepts the appointment, the Council will, at an extraordinary Council meeting to be held on 17 April, confirm the appointment described in clause b) above.**

The motion was seconded by Cr Phillips.

Cr Stringer said there should not be any cost to a democratic voice in a democratic society.

Cr Hovell asked if the proposed appointee declined, did the Council approach the second unsuccessful voting candidate. His Worship said it could, but the same process would need to be followed. Cr Phillips said the timeframe would then be against the Council for appointing anyone else.

The motion was put and it was carried.

2025/11

His Worship and Crs Dickson, MacDonell and McKenzie voted against the motion and asked for their votes to be recorded.

9. PROPOSAL TO AMEND AND ADOPT THREE FINANCE RELATED POLICIES (SC0110)

A report had been received from the Strategy and Policy Advisor advising the Council of the need for three finance related policies to be amended and adopted prior to the Council approving the Long Term Plan (LTP) Consultation Document.

The General Manager Corporate Services had put forward suggestions for several minor and technical amendments to three finance related policies. The policies all had a bearing on the LTP. The policies with proposed amendments were as follows:

- Liability Management Policy;
- Investment Policy; and
- Remission of Rates Policy.

The policies had amendments due to:

- previously approved by the Council that had not been actioned; and/or
- suggestions from the Council's auditors (Deloitte New Zealand); and/or
- updates required due to changes in legislation or to better reflect requirements of legislation; and
- took the opportunity to modernise and standardise the formatting of policies.

Commentary on each policy had been included in the report together with an outline of each amendment. There would be an additional minor change prior to the adoption of the Long Term Plan due to a decision on the credit rating process currently being undertaken. In usual circumstances, the policies would have been considered first by the Audit and Risk Committee, however, due to timing and the need to adopt the policies prior to the LTP Consultation Document, they needed to be considered and adopted by the Council.

Cr MacDonell referred to clause 3.14 in the Liability Management Policy and internal borrowing. The General Manager said internal loans were used and they were offset against other activities. Cr MacDonell said a lot of Council debt was not repaid and

the loans were rolled over. The General Manager said technically a loan was repaid at maturity and if there were funds available to reduce the loan amount, they were applied.

Cr MacDonell referred to clause 4.2 of the Remission of Rates Policy and noted each fte was required to have a value of \$10,000 or more. He thought he figure should be around \$50,000. The General Manager said figure related to the rating relief that the Council was able to provide as an economic development incentive.

Cr Dickson asked if the Council was still supporting the Local Government Funding Agency (LGFA). The General Manager said it was a very good organisation and rigorous reporting was required for any covenants imposed. Gore could not go beyond 10% of its interest cost versus revenue. Being a member of the LGFA provided better borrowing options for the Council.

RESOLVED on the motion of Cr Phillips, seconded by Cr R McPhail, THAT the Council:

- a) receive and note the proposal to amend the following finance related policies:
 - (i) Liability Management Policy;
 - (ii) Investment Policy; and the
 - (iii) Remission of Rates Policy.
- b) approve the amendment and adoption of the Liability Management Policy;
- c) approve the amendment and adoption of the Investment Policy;
- d) approve the amendment and adoption of the Remission of Rates Policy; and
- e) delegate authority to the Chief Executive to make any final editorial amendments to any of the above documents.

2025/12

10. PROPOSAL TO AMEND AND ADOPT THE ASSET MANAGEMENT POLICY (SC0110)

A report had been received from the Strategy and Policy Advisor advising the Council of the need for minor amendments to the Asset Management Policy as part of the Long Term Plan (LTP) review process. The General Manager Critical Services had suggested minor and technical amendments to the Policy. The purpose of the policy was to outline the principles, requirements and responsibilities for undertaking asset management across the Council's infrastructure assets underpinned the standard of living and the policy supported the Council's long term strategic goals.

RESOLVED on the motion of Cr Dickson, seconded by Cr P McPhail, THAT the Council:

- a) receive and note the proposal to amend the Asset Management Policy;
- b) approve the amendment and adoption of the Asset Management Policy; and
- c) delegate authority to the Chief Executive to make any final editorial amendments to the Asset Management Policy.

2025/13

11. PROPOSAL TO ADOPT THE EXISTING CLASS 4 GAMBLING AND TAB VENUE POLICIES
(SC0110)

A report had been received from the Strategy and Policy Advisor seeking the adoption of the existing and unchanged Class 4 Gambling and TAB Venue policies.

The existing policies were required to be reviewed every three years as directed by section 105 (2) of the Gambling Act 2003 and section 97 (4) of the Racing Industry Act 2020 respectively. The Audit and Risk Committee had agreed with the proposal to adopt the unchanged and existing policies. A review would be undertaken within the next 12 months. If the Council did not adopt the policies, then it would be failing in its duties under section 102 (5) of the Gambling Act 2003 and section 97 (4) of the Racing Industry Act 2020.

Cr Fraser asked if there had been any significant legislative changes. The Advisor advised no. Cr Stringer referred to online gambling and whether there anything able to be considered in the policy. The Advisor replied at this stage, there was no opportunity to include online gambling. However, it could be considered when the policy was reviewed later in the year.

RESOLVED on the motion of Cr Reid, seconded by Cr MacDonell, THAT the Council:

- a) receive and note the proposal provided to the Audit and Risk Committee meeting on 11 February to adopt the existing and unchanged policies:
 - (i) Class 4 Gambling Policy**
 - (ii) TAB Venue Policy****
- b) approve the adoption of the existing and unchanged Class 4 Gambling Policy; and**
- c) approve the adoption of the existing and unchanged TAB Venue Policy.**

2025/14

12. PROPOSAL TO AMEND AND CONSULT ON DOG CONTROL BYLAW AND DOG CONTROL POLICY
(SC0110)

A report had been received from the Strategy and Policy Advisor advising of the need for the amended Dog Control Bylaw and Dog Control Policy to be approved for public consultation. A copy of the updated draft Bylaw and Policy had been circulated with the agenda.

The Dog Control Bylaw was due to lapse at the end of May 2025. Suggestions for several minor and technical amendments had been proposed and were included in the report. Renewals and amendments to bylaws required public consultation to be undertaken. It was proposed that the Dog Control Bylaw and Dog Control Policy were included in the public consultation at the same time as the Long Term Plan consultation.

Cr Stringer referred to the schedule A map of rural areas and specifically the area at Waikaka that outlined where dogs were prohibited. Waikaka had previously held Tux

dog trials at the park. The Regulatory Manager said all reserves were prohibited to dogs but staff were unaware of dog trials being held at the venue. The Council would work with dog trial organisers in the future.

Cr Phillips thought there needed to be some education and signage on the areas where dogs were not permitted. Cr McKenzie asked people wanted to have more than two dogs, did they need to apply for approval. The Manager confirmed anyone who wanted to have three or more dogs required a permit and staff worked with them on a case by case basis.

RESOLVED on the motion of Cr MacDonell, seconded by Cr Hovell, THAT Council:

- a) receive and note the proposal to amend the following documents:
 - (i) Dog Control Bylaw
 - (ii) Dog Control Policy
- b) approve the amended Dog Control Bylaw to go out for public consultation;
- c) approve the amended Dog Control Policy to go out for public consultation;
- d) delegate authority to the Chief Executive to make any final editorial amendments to any of the above documents prior to the public consultation; and
- e) consider holding an extraordinary Council meeting prior to expiry of the existing Dog Control Bylaw.

2025/15

13. PROPOSAL TO AMEND AND CONSULT ON THE SIGNIFICANCE AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY (SC0110)

A report had been received from the Strategy and Policy Advisor advising the Council of the need for the amended Significance and Engagement Policy to be approved for public consultation. The existing policy was reviewed every three years in conjunction with the Long Term Plan (LTP) process. Details of the proposed amendments had been included in the report.

RESOLVED on the motion of Cr Reid, seconded by Cr Dickson, THAT the Council:

- a) receive and note the proposal to amend the Significance and Engagement Policy;
- b) approve the amended Significance and Engagement Policy to go out for public consultation; and
- c) delegate authority to the Chief Executive to make any final editorial amendments to the Significance and Engagement Policy prior to the public consultation.

2025/16

14. PROPOSED NATIONAL WASTEWATER ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE STANDARDS (SC0595)

A report had been received from the General Manager Critical Services that provided a high-level overview of the recently released proposed national wastewater

environmental performance standards (the Standards) and seek feedback from the Council on any direction to draft a submission on the Standards.

A copy of the discussion document on the Standards had been circulated with the agenda, together with a presentation from the General Manager.

On 25 February 2025, the Water Services Authority – Taumata Arowai (the Authority) began consulting on the proposed national wastewater environmental performance standards. The goal of wastewater standards was to put in place a clear framework to respond to a national infrastructure challenge, and to set clear expectations about the treatment of wastewater in a way that helped Councils as they planned for, funded and obtained consents for the necessary infrastructure upgrades.

The proposed standards were expected to:

- result in significant cost and time efficiencies for consenting of wastewater treatment plants, in a way that responded to the bow wave of reconsenting of wastewater infrastructure over the next decade;
- strike a balance between the cost of upgrading wastewater infrastructure while ensuring that public health and environmental outcomes were achieved;
- create national consistency to give Councils the certainty needed to plan and fund the significant infrastructure upgrades that much of New Zealand's aging public wastewater networks required;
- set clear expectations about treatment quality to assist with community engagement about different options to manage wastewater; and
- ensure that, as a sector, there was good quality wastewater performance data to identify what was working well as well as opportunities for improvement.

The initial suite of four proposed wastewater standards covered the most common wastewater management activities. These included:

- discharge of treated wastewater to water (including tailored treatment requirements for small wastewater treatment plants);
- discharge of treated wastewater to land;
- the beneficial reuse of biosolids; and
- managing overflows and bypasses.

Consultation on the proposed standards was open until 5.00pm on Thursday 24 April 2025.

The General Manager said the discharge to water would effectively be a 3-step process. It involved categorising the receiving environment, understanding the treatment and monitoring requirements and implementation through consent conditions.

Cr Gardyne asked who would assess each river. The General Manager said there was a calculation factor that was applied. Each of the treatment limits had different

criteria. In response to His Worship, the General Manager said he was not totally confident about the variabilities between the proposed sensitivities. The Standards were only proposed at this stage and may change. There was work to be done once the treatment limits were confirmed. Until the legislation was in place, nothing was guaranteed. There would be ongoing monitoring costs to the Council once the Standards were in place. Cr Fraser understood there were already monitoring costs. The General Manager said there were, but a lot of the consents that current monitoring related to were older.

In response to Cr P McPhail, the General Manager said the current consents were effectively through a wetland process but a piped source. It was still a discharge to water. That was why the Council had not undertaken any further discharge to land at this stage. Following a discussion with Environment Southland, the Council intended to place its current wastewater consent applications on hold until the Standards were finalised. There needed to be some clarity around what the Standards may mean. The Standards were expected to be finalised in August-September 2025.

The General Manager thought the Standard would be beneficial, but the devil was going to be in the detail. His Worship added the Minister for the Environment had attended a recent Mayoral Forum and any wastewater consents that could be paused related to consents that had already expired, which Gore had.

Cr Fraser asked if the Standards were financially sustainable. What was the cost going to be? The Council had already spent a significant amount of money on its consents to date. The General Manager said the intent of the Standards was to ensure wastewater discharges were affordable for communities. Staff needed to have an understanding of that and have a discussion with Environment Southland and Hokonui Rūnanga to ensure they were achievable. The Council wanted to deliver good quality services to the community that were affordable.

Cr Hovell said it appeared the Council had until 2040 to get a programme in place. He wondered whether there was any value in saying much more than stating the Council supported the approach. His Worship disagreed. He said the Standards were one of the most important things to submit on because of the financial impact on the community. Cr Phillips said the amount of money that could be saved was high. There were some concerning costs especially with stormwater separation projects. The Council needed to submit its views on the proposed Standards.

His Worship referred to the low sensitivity and medium limits and the variation between the two. Was it worth suggesting a sliding scale or a mid-point? Ammonia-nitrogen measurements also seemed very high. He thought monitoring overflow costs impacted and slowed the transition to fix the issues. Cr Dickson asked how the Council compared with others. The General Manager said it was very difficult to compare. It did not help that Gore had stormwater and wastewater combined so in high rain events there was a lot of run-off going into the wastewater system. There was an ongoing programme of work to deal with the separation projects. The proposed

upgrades were hard to predict. The goal was to understand the Standards and see where they landed then undertake a review of the impact on the Council.

Cr Stringer assumed the sensitivities were taken from under the river. Would there be any benefit taking some of Gore's to Mataura. The General Manager said probably not but there were intermittent steps the Council could take to enable less flow. Cr Phillips questioned the word "regularly" desludging the oxidation ponds. The General Manager said there could be ongoing complications in the future. Cr Dickson asked about nitrogen levels and if they were treated would that have an ongoing effect? The General Manager said the treatment plant to be built was to get an improved discharge to the environment. There would be mechanisms through that process to assist with nitrogen levels.

RESOLVED on the motion of Cr Phillips, seconded by Cr Fraser, THAT the Council:

- a) receive and note the report on the Proposed National Wastewater Environmental Performance Standards;
- b) direct that staff draft a submission on the Proposed National Wastewater Environmental Performance Standards; and
- c) provide direction on any key focus areas for the submission.

2025/17

RESOLVED on the motion of His Worship, seconded by Cr Hovell, THAT the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting.

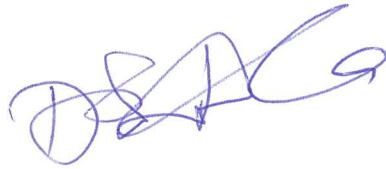
The general subject of each matter to be considered while the public is excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter, and the specific grounds under section 48 (1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this resolution are as follows:

General subject of each matter to be considered	Reason for passing this resolution	Ground(s) Under Section 48(1) for the passing of the resolution
4.1 Confirmation of the minutes of the public excluded Council meeting held on Tuesday 18 February 2025 4.2 Confirmation of the minutes of the public excluded meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee, held on Tuesday 11 February 2025.		The public conduct of this part of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which there is good reason for it being withheld. Section 48(1)(a)

This resolution is made in reliance on section 48(1)(a) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interest or interests protected by section 6 or section 7 of that Act which would be prejudiced by the holding of the whole or relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting in public.

AND THAT those in attendance be permitted to remain at the meeting.

The meeting concluded at 6.09pm

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'D. B. A. G.', written in a cursive style.

Signed: A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'D. B. A. G.', written in a cursive style.

