

Response to information request from Otago Daily Times

17 July 2023

Dear Grant

We are pleased to provide you with the final tranche of information requested on 24 May and then updated 22 June.

We have collated emails between Mayor Bell and CEO within the timeframes you specified. My apologies if there are some double ups from the emails sent to you last month.

Some information has been redacted in accordance with the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act Section 7 (2)(a) to protect the privacy of individuals.

Thank you for your patience in waiting for a response.

If you are unsatisfied with the response, you are entitled to lodge a complaint with the Office of the Ombudsmen. You can find more information on its website <http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz>

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sonia Gerken".

Sonia Gerken
GM Communications & Customer Support

From: [Ben Bell](#)
To: [.Councillors \(with e-mail\)](#); [Stephen Parry](#); [Rex Capil](#)
Subject: Clearing the air before todays meeting
Date: Tuesday, 22 November 2022 11:18:40 am

Hi All,

If we could all meet in my office at 2.30pm to have a recap about the summit and clear the air before we step into the public arena.

Steve and Rex, if you are available can you please come along to mediate and give guidance.

Cheers,

Ben

From: [Ben Bell](#)
To: [Rex Capil](#); [Sonia Gerken](#); [Lornae Straith](#); [Jason Domigan](#); [Stephen Parry](#); [.Councillors \(with e-mail\)](#); [Nicky Cooper](#)
Subject: Re: Pushing back summit start time
Date: Sunday, 20 November 2022 9:36:53 pm

Hi Rex,

Thank you for your input and response at this late time on a Sunday night.

Totally in line with you there, so I have included all 4 of your points into the schedule already. You each have a half hour block as per the schedule to introduce yourselves and talk about your topic. The topics just gave you something to focus on that I thought might be useful for councillors but ultimately I can't force you and you can talk about what you like, relevant to your area and experience.

As for the conversation about the relationship breakdown I think we address that and get it out the way early, that is what we did today and it seemed to work.

Point 3 was going to be that conversation about what good governance looks like which is in the schedule too. The MC has a plan for a workshop type section which worked at KCDC. I will talk to the MC about doing a Roundtable of the elected members and a bit about themselves too.

A 10am start is fine, if you could communicate that that would be really helpful. To save confusion, elected members will still start at 9.30am but we will do a recap of yesterday while we wait for your arrival.

In attendance from my understanding are: Keith, Glyenns, John, Cavey, Paul, Stewart, Joe and Myself.

Hopefully that's everything and I'll catch you in the morning.

Cheers,
Ben

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From: Rex Capil <rcapil@goredc.govt.nz>
Sent: Sunday, November 20, 2022 8:11:02 PM
To: Ben Bell <bbell@goredc.govt.nz>; Sonia Gerken <SGerken@goredc.govt.nz>; Lornae Straith <LStraith@goredc.govt.nz>; Jason Domigan <jdomigan@goredc.govt.nz>; Stephen Parry <SParry@goredc.govt.nz>; .Councillors (with e-mail) <Councillors@goredc.govt.nz>; Nicky Cooper <NCooper@goredc.govt.nz>; Rex Capil <rcapil@goredc.govt.nz>
Subject: Re: Pushing back summit start time

Thanks Ben and all Councillors and SMT

A couple of things (from me personally as I have not had a chance to converse with Steve or any others) with regards your email tonight.

Last week when we had no information from you on the Summit and were discussing how we could best professionally provide input - I had stressed with our SMT we need to spend time introducing ourselves and ensuring our elected members understand and appreciate

the skills, aptitudes and experience that each and every one of our SMT bring to the table.

The other thing i wish to put forward is that this SMT at GDC is the most cohesive and united SMT I have experienced in my 20 years involvement with SM Teams in the LG sector. I can offer some actual examples of poorly functioning to the point of dysfunctional SMT and associated relationships with elected members and governors. My experience is from an officer perspective but also from an experienced governance perspective also. I think you will appreciate more of this when I give my introduction of myself tomorrow

The other thing we have done as a SMT is proactively identified areas of professional input that we will discuss tomorrow - these correspond reasonably in line with topics that were identified on the programme you shared on Friday with us.

The other thing we as a SMT have recognised is that we would like to hear from each and everyone of you as elected members - in terms of what do you each and collectively see success look like in 2025 aka what will your legacy be as a council and how do you intend to attain this.

Can you please confirm which elected members will be in attendance tomorrow?

As far as pushing back the time to start tomorrow - can I suggest a 10am start - so we can get to Cromwell in plenty of time to present the following schedule

1. SMT personal/professional introduction
2. SMT present professional conversation piece as per each item/topic identified to be covered.
3. elected member opportunity for legacy conversation - what does success look like for you collectively and individually in 2025?
4. As mentioned your address and discussion regarding relationship breakdown with the SMT and subsequent discussion - which needs to be full and frank and as you say "honest conversations"

Look forward to your confirmation of this arrangement for tomorrow

Rex

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From: Ben Bell <bbell@goredc.govt.nz>

Sent: Sunday, November 20, 2022 6:15 PM

To: Sonia Gerken <SGerken@goredc.govt.nz>; Lornae Straith <LStraith@goredc.govt.nz>; Jason Domigan <jdomigan@goredc.govt.nz>; Stephen Parry <SParry@goredc.govt.nz>; Rex Capil <rcapil@goredc.govt.nz>; .Councillors (with e-mail) <Councillors@goredc.govt.nz>; Nicky Cooper <NCooper@goredc.govt.nz>

Subject: Pushing back summit start time

Hi Team,

Sorry for the late notice but there was a point raised by councillors that we should move the start time for tomorrow back 30 minutes for the staff and driving councillors.

So now the summit will start at 9.30am. Don't stress if you arrive early, we will be here setting up.

As a side note, there were a number of concerns raised by councillors today that I have taken the time to address and work through including the ongoing relationship with staff and councillors. I think it is fair to offer staff the same discussion. I will rework the schedule to address these issues tomorrow and spend sometime having some honest conversations and answering questions. I fully acknowledge the relationships are not great at the moment but I hope you, as the councillors did today, can come with an open mind so we can work a way forward together.

Look forward to seeing you tomorrow!

Cheers,
Ben

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From: [Ben Bell](#)
To: [Robert McKenzie](#); [Paul McPhail](#); [Stephen Parry](#); [Rex Capil](#); [.Councillors \(with e-mail\)](#)
Subject: Re: Clearing the air before todays meeting
Date: Tuesday, 22 November 2022 1:48:21 pm

Hi Cavey,

I have booked out the meeting rooms downstairs for some more space, you will need to sign in at reception though.

Cheers,
Ben

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From: Robert McKenzie <RMcKenzie@goredc.govt.nz>
Sent: Tuesday, November 22, 2022 1:07:35 PM
To: Paul McPhail <PMcPhail@goredc.govt.nz>; Stephen Parry <SParry@goredc.govt.nz>; Rex Capil <rcapil@goredc.govt.nz>; Ben Bell <bbell@goredc.govt.nz>; .Councillors (with e-mail) <Councillors@goredc.govt.nz>
Subject: Re: Clearing the air before todays meeting

Question from a newbie do we all need to sign in for the catch up with Ben and where will it be as his office may be a bit on the small side cheers cm

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From: Paul McPhail <PMcPhail@goredc.govt.nz>
Sent: Tuesday, November 22, 2022 12:32:49 PM
To: Stephen Parry <SParry@goredc.govt.nz>; Rex Capil <rcapil@goredc.govt.nz>; Ben Bell <bbell@goredc.govt.nz>; .Councillors (with e-mail) <Councillors@goredc.govt.nz>
Subject: Re: Clearing the air before todays meeting

Good idea ill be there. regards Paul

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From: Stephen Parry <SParry@goredc.govt.nz>
Sent: Tuesday, November 22, 2022 11:49:55 AM
To: Rex Capil <rcapil@goredc.govt.nz>; Ben Bell <bbell@goredc.govt.nz>; .Councillors (with e-mail) <Councillors@goredc.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: Clearing the air before todays meeting

Hi,

Yes, I am available.

Cheers

Steve

From: Rex Capil <rcapil@goredc.govt.nz>
Sent: Tuesday, 22 November 2022 11:24 am
To: Ben Bell <bbell@goredc.govt.nz>; .Councillors (with e-mail) <Councillors@goredc.govt.nz>; Stephen Parry <SParry@goredc.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: Clearing the air before todays meeting

Hi Ben et al

I can make myself available – I will rearrange my other meetings

Rex

From: Ben Bell <bbell@goredc.govt.nz>
Sent: Tuesday, 22 November 2022 11:19 am
To: .Councillors (with e-mail) <Councillors@goredc.govt.nz>; Stephen Parry <SParry@goredc.govt.nz>; Rex Capil <rcapil@goredc.govt.nz>
Subject: Clearing the air before todays meeting

Hi All,

If we could all meet in my office at 2.30pm to have a recap about the summit and clear the air before we step into the public arena.

Steve and Rex, if you are available can you please come along to mediate and give guidance.

Cheers,
Ben

From: [Ben Bell](#)
To: [Stephen Parry](#)
Subject: Re: CONFIDENTIAL AND WITHOUT PREJUDICE : Finding ways forward to put the Gore District first
Date: Tuesday, 13 December 2022 1:22:37 pm

Hi Steve,

Thank you for your response, I am glad that you are acceptable to this process.

Totally agree with you, face to face is the best way to have a discussion of this nature to achieve the best results.

[REDACTED]

I will take your advice on board and provide the councillors with a confidential brief at the conclusion of the council meeting this afternoon.

For transparency, these are the notes I will be sticking too and I will not go into any further detail at this time, however I will continue to keep the council updated where appropriate (in a way we both agree too).

“Thank you Councillors for staying for a few minutes. I just wanted to take the opportunity to brief you on a matter that I ask is kept in confidence at this stage. While Steve was on leave I did some reflecting on how we can all best move forward as a council through this time of change post the election. Yesterday morning I wrote to Steve asking if he was willing to engage in a process with me, starting with an open and honest conversation with a neutral facilitator. Steve has agreed and we are now in the process of setting something up, hopefully before Christmas. I’ve reached out to LGNZ who have suggested someone suitable, who I have had the opportunity to talk with today. Steve will get the same opportunity if he has not spoken with him already. My hope and expectation is that this process will give us both a better understanding of how best to work with each other, and to give us some concrete and tangible ways forward, putting the Gore District first. Steve has asked, and I agree, that this be kept in confidence, and I will update you at the appropriate time.”

In the meantime, It has been recommended by LGNZ that [REDACTED] is a good option to facilitate a discussion between us. For transparency, I have never [REDACTED] and have only had a very brief conversation with [REDACTED] about this process. It is my understanding [REDACTED] get in touch with you.

If we are both agreeable to using [REDACTED] then let’s look to lock in a date before the break.

Kind regards,
Ben

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From: Stephen Parry <SParry@goredc.govt.nz>

Sent: Monday, December 12, 2022 10:46:14 PM

To: Ben Bell <bbell@goredc.govt.nz>

Subject: CONFIDENTIAL AND WITHOUT PREJUDICE : Finding ways forward to put the Gore District first

Hi Ben,

Thank you for your email and the offer of independent mediation to canvass issues in regard to our working relationship.

I am agreeable in principle to attending mediation on a without prejudice basis but qualify this by emphasising that this needs to be conducted in a face to face environment and not via an on line platform. In my experience, honest face to face dialogue is the best means by which to unravel problems and meaningfully explore possible solutions.

[REDACTED]

In order for the issues to be resolved there will need to be an appropriate written road map or action plan for the future that will need to be adhered to.

Further, as the full Council is my employer and the issues in contention potentially run deep into the employment relationship, I believe that you should inform the Council that this mediation is to take place. This ideally could be done in a confidential briefing following tomorrow's Council meeting. Any agreed actions or outcomes from the mediation need to have the support of the Council for the process to be successful.

I await further advice on a potential date and venue for the mediation.

Kind Regards,

Steve

From: Ben Bell <bbell@goredc.govt.nz>
Sent: Monday, 12 December 2022 9:54 am
To: Stephen Parry <SParry@goredc.govt.nz>
Subject: Finding ways forward to put the Gore District first

Morning Steve,

I have been doing some reflecting while you have been on leave.

For a number of reasons, I believe it is clear we are all finding the current period of transition challenging.

This is somewhat not surprising after a change of Mayor after such a long period of time. I am constantly reminded that it is not good for the Gore District nor local government as a whole to have our issues played out in the media, which they are, still.

The centre of any effective and high performing council has to be the relationship between CE and Mayor. This then sets the tone and expectations for broader relationships with Councillors and staff. While I believe you and I have been communicating and looking to get on with our important work, during what has been a hectic time post election, there are clearly some underlying issues that need to be addressed.

With us both being in our roles until at least 2025, we have to find a way to navigate this time of change, and to avoid escalation of some of the current challenges. The distractions and costs that would come, if we don't, is something I think we can both agree would be unacceptable and unfair to the people we serve.

I would like us to start with an open and honest conversation with a neutral, independent, and expert facilitator. I have reached out to LGNZ to suggest someone suitable as I know this is an area of expertise for Susan, the CE. She has said she will liaise with the President of Taituarā (in confidence) on a suitable person too, and also so that they know there is a process in place. I hope you are agreeable to this process.

I think it is fair that we both speak to any facilitator individually before any meeting to make sure that we are comfortable with the suggested person.

My hope and expectation would be that this process will give us both a better understanding of how best to work with each other to give us some concrete tangible ways forward, putting the Gore District first.

If it is logistically possible I would like this all to take place this side of Christmas so we can have some time off and come back with a reset in mind.

I'm looking forward to hearing back from you once you've had the opportunity to think about this. In the meantime we have our Council meeting on Tuesday and I will see you then if not before hand.

Cheers,

Ben

From: [Ben Bell](#)
To: [Stephen Parry](#)
Subject: Fwd: New year update from the Mayor
Date: Monday, 16 January 2023 3:17:55 pm

Just FYI

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From: Ben Bell <bbell@goredc.govt.nz>
Sent: Monday, January 16, 2023 3:12 PM
To: .Councillors (with e-mail) <Councillors@goredc.govt.nz>
Subject: New year update from the Mayor

Happy New Year Councillors!

Hope you have had a wonderful holiday period taken some time to wind down with friends and family.

Before we get too far into what will be a very busy year for Government, there is a decent update from the summer break, so strap in.

Meeting with Steve

As you are all aware me and Steve spent some time at the end of last year working through some issues and clearing the air. I won't go into specifics due to confidentiality but overall, it went well.

To give you some confidence, with Steve's permission, I will touch on some comments made in the summary statement of facilitation.

- We mutually acknowledged that some of the internal communications have not been great from either of us.
- We both agree that for the future, we will take a "no surprises" approach
- To help this succeed, we have booked in weekly catch ups as well as an agreement to keep each other in the loop especially regarding external media that will concern either of us.

I'll be the first to admit that this is just a starting point and there is still relationship building to be done, but I personally feel we are heading in the right and most importantly same direction.

Dunedin Hospital

On New Year's Day, the Southland and Otago mayors got together over zoom to talk about the 90M dollar cut to funding for the Dunedin hospital. There was a combined press release that went out and I have included a link below if you would like to have a read. There has been a letter sent to the PM as well as relevant ministers and Labour MPs in the region requesting an urgent meeting to discuss these cuts.

[Southern mayors seek urgent meeting with Health Minister Andrew Little | Stuff.co.nz](#)

I have offered up my support just as Mayor at this stage. From my point of view, cuts to key

features like the pavilion will drive up costs and wait times in the construction process resulting in political gain now and our region paying for it in the long run. Given there a shortage in hospital services across the wider region and most of our critical patients go to Invercargill or Dunedin, it is hugely important for the Gore District and the wider Southland region that this is done correctly.

I would be keen to hear if there is support amongst councillors and a willingness to get involved. On the contrary if there is councillor belief and good reason that we should stay away from a movement like this. I am yet to have in depth discussions with the Hokonui locality and hospital on this issue which I will do in due course. For now, there isn't much further involvement on our end, as Mayors closer to the issue are awaiting a response from Wellington.

I will keep you in the loop as this matter progresses.

Tour of Gore

As you all should have seen there has been an invite sent out by Emily regarding a tour of Council properties and facilities on the 26th of Jan. This is a great opportunity for new and returning councillors to see Council-owned property & facilities within the district, which we will be making influential decisions over the next few years. This will kick off at 9am with a library tour with an aim to be on the bus by 9.30am. This will be a full day event with a drink or two at the end. A tour bus, lunch and hi-vis will be provided. Please bring appropriate footwear.

If you have anywhere you are really interested in or a site you think would be important for elected members to visit, please let me or Steve know and we can try and fit it in. My understanding is Steve is going to send out a schedule later this week.

Upcoming Meetings

As you are all aware we are having an extraordinary meeting on the 24th of Jan, this is to get the remuneration approved before it is sent to the remuneration authority so that you all can be paid correctly. Me and Keith have also worked with Steve to finalise the appointments to other committees. We have tried to keep some consistency and place people where they wanted to be. An agenda for this meeting will be out later this week. Staff have indicated they want to have a quick information session with elected members after the meeting on Tuesday while we are all together. This is primarily to discuss recycling and the bridge project. This should only take 30mins or so.

Rural and Provincial is coming up at the start of March. For those who don't know R&P is a two-day conference held in Wellington to hear from ministers and important speakers as well as network with other elected members. Mayors and CE's commonly attend but if there are any elected members who would like to come along, please let me know. Flights and accommodation will be provided however due to the cost, I will limit this to a maximum of two councillors per trip. These sorts of conferences are fairly regular so if there is a large amount of interest, we will make sure that everyone gets the opportunity.

Gore Show BBQ

We have the Gore Show coming up on the 4th of Feb. Sonia has suggested that elected members run the BBQ as a great opportunity to engage with the community. I'm sure there will be more

information to follow leading up to the day but if people could get back to me or Sonia regarding their availability for this weekend, given it is Waitangi Weekend, that would be fantastic.

Councillor Calendar

It was raised by councillors late last year that they would appreciate having access to the Mayors calendar or a similar councillor calendar. I have been advised the workload to share my calendar and keep it relevant to councillors would be unsustainable, as would preparing a calendar weekly for elected members with a 6 week outlook as had been done in the past.

Our current working plan is to create a master calendar for all councillors and populate it with the most important stuff first, I.e. council meetings and committee meetings and then add to it with meetings to be aware of from my calendar. This is a working project so input on what you would like to see would be welcome.

That's all for now, looks like we have a busy year on the horizon, but with some awesome projects nearing completion, like the highly anticipated library!

If you would like any more info on any of these topics, shoot me an email and I will try to provide it.

Have a great week!

Cheers,
Ben

From: [Ben Bell](#)
To: [Stephen Parry](#)
Subject: Draft email to elected members
Date: Friday, 13 January 2023 1:22:04 pm

Hi Steve,

Could you please look over the highlighted parts of this email before I send it out just to double check I am not misrepresenting the facts.

Once I have your approval, I will send it out.

Cheers,
Ben

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To give you some confidence, with Steve's permission, I will touch on some comments made in the summary statement of facilitation.

- We mutually acknowledged that some of the internal communications have not been great from either of us.
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If you would like any more info on any of these topics, shoot me an email and I will try to provide it.

Have a great weekend!

Cheers,
Ben

From: [Ben Bell](#)
To: [Stephen Parry](#)
Subject: CONFIDENTIAL AND WITHOUT PREJUDICE - ROADMAP
Date: Wednesday, 8 March 2023 4:12:30 pm
Attachments: [REDACTED]

Hi Steve,

Following on from yesterday's conversation, it is important that we agree to a roadmap similar to that provided by [REDACTED] from the medication session.

To provide some clarity, this roadmap has sat with me for the past two weeks, and [REDACTED] one of those weeks the main reason for delay is my concerns with points 6 and 7 in this roadmap.

When the roadmap was sent to me, I was surprised at the inclusion of those points, considering they weren't discussed at the meeting. I am agreeable to the first 5 points (with some minor tweaks) and would have been acceptable to sign off on the roadmap, however, with the inclusion of the last two points It has taken me some time to process those and understand how those may play out.

Given that [REDACTED] is no longer involved in the process we will have to come to an agreement between us. I believe we are in a position to have this conversation, around namely the final two points, one on one without the need for an external party.

Following this, whether we decide to agree or disagree on a way forward, this can be followed up by an email for a record of the conversation.

Please let me know if you are comfortable with this approach and I will talk to [REDACTED] about setting up a time, otherwise, if would like to suggest a different approach, I would be open to considering it.

Cheers,
Ben

**Agreed Road Map for assisting an effective and professional working relationship moving forward
between Stephen Parry and Ben Bell**

16 February 2023

1. Both Mayor Ben Bell (Ben) and Chief Executive Stephen Parry (Stephen) are committed to developing a constructive working relationship for the betterment and advancement of the community that they mutually serve.
2. Both Ben and Stephen acknowledge that communication prior to Christmas 2022 has not been adequate to form and maintain an effective working relationship.

[REDACTED]

5. Both Ben and Stephen agree to move forward in their working relationship on a no surprises basis. Towards this end, they have committed to hold weekly meetings to keep each other informed of current and upcoming developments in their respective roles. In addition, where at all practicable any future communications to either the Council or the news media by either person which relates to the other will be discussed and agreed to before the proposed communication is disseminated.

[REDACTED]

From: [Ben Bell](#)
To: [Stephen Parry](#)
Subject: Legal Fees - IN CONFIDENCE AND WITHOUT PREJUDICE
Date: Wednesday, 15 March 2023 4:55:32 pm

Hi Steve,

Following a meeting with the Performance Appraisal Committee this afternoon, the committee has come to the decision that they will endorse the recommendation of [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] If there is a report produced, as the chair of the committee, I will be able to endorse that the recommendation came from the Performance Appraisal Committee.

If you would like comment from the committee to be included in the report, as I was not privy to the discussion, Keith would be comfortable providing some context. I have also recommended that he speaks to the report when it comes to council on behalf of the committee.

I look forward to putting this behind us.

Cheers,
Ben

From: [Ben Bell](#)
To: [Stephen Parry](#)
Subject: RE: Roadmap and meeting notes from 13 March - IN CONFIDENCE AND WITHOUT PREJUDICE
Date: Wednesday, 15 March 2023 4:01:01 pm

Hi Steve,

Sorry for the confusion.

For clarity, as stated in the meeting, I will not be recommending [REDACTED]
This is my decision as an individual, for the reasons outlined in the meeting and summarised in the document. However, I was comfortable with bringing this request to the Performance Appraisal Committee (which I have since done) and seeing if the committee will endorse the request. I will update you on what the committee decides and if the committee decide to endorse the request, it will be my duty as chair of that committee to bring that to council for approval. If the committee doesn't decide to endorse the recommendation, I will also notify you.

I am comfortable to add that paragraph to the record, however without the last sentence.

"I also said that you in turn cited the insurers being placed on notice, as a reason to instigate mediation."

I don't recall those comments being made, and the only reason I know that is that I would strongly object to that statement as I didn't cite that the insurers be placed on notice, nor was that my reason for a facilitated conversation.

Hope this provides some clarity, the committee is meeting this afternoon so I will be able to provide you with the outcome tomorrow.

Cheers,
Ben

From: Stephen Parry <SParry@goredc.govt.nz>
Sent: Wednesday, 15 March 2023 2:21 pm
To: Ben Bell <bbell@goredc.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: Roadmap and meeting notes from 13 March - IN CONFIDENCE AND WITHOUT PREJUDICE

Hi Ben,

I am somewhat troubled by the suggested amendment. Just so I am clear, you are not recommending [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] ? Further, is that a stance taken by you as an individual or the Performance Appraisal Committee?

On the summary of points compiled at our meeting on Monday, I agree it is

reasonably accurate with one significant exception. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] In response, I said that behaviours leading up to Christmas were clearly serious to the point of Councillors asking that our insurers be placed on notice of a potential legal liability [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I also said that you in turn cited the insurers being placed on notice, as a reason to instigate mediation. I believe this information needs to be incorporated into the record of our discussion.

I look forward to your clarification on these points.

Regards,

Steve

From: Ben Bell <bbell@goredc.govt.nz>

Sent: Wednesday, 15 March 2023 1:43 pm

To: Stephen Parry <SParry@goredc.govt.nz>

Subject: Roadmap and meeting notes from 13 March - IN CONFIDENCE

Hi Steve,

Please find the attached proposed roadmap and brief record of our conversation on the 13th of March.

For transparency, here are the changes made from [REDACTED] to the version attached.

Point 3

- Changed last sentence to include both parties.

-

Point 4

- Added additional sentence to provide clarity for [REDACTED]

[REDACTED].

-

Point 5

- Removed “agree to” in last sentence. This wasn’t discussed at the meeting but on reflection, while we should be notifying each other about media, in line with our no surprised approach, we do need to allow for potential disagreements in approach.

-

Point 6 & 7

- Removed point 6 & 7. Replaced point 6 with agreed to way forward (from meeting).

-

-

If I could get a returned signed copy when you are comfortable that would be grand.

Cheers,

Ben

Record of key points from one on one without prejudice meeting between Stephen Parry and Ben Bell on 13th of March 2023 (IN CONFIDENCE)

- Ben decided it was best to go through each point with changes to get approval from Stephen.
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- As a compromise Ben suggested he bring the matter before the Chief Executives appraisal committee to see if they would support the recommendation. Both Ben and Stephen agreed that this would be a practical way forward and would also help mitigate the liability resting on Ben of making a decision on behalf of the entire council. Ben assured he would update Stephen after a special meeting of the appraisal committee.
- For point 7, Ben asked further questions around [REDACTED]

From: [Ben Bell](#)
To: [Stephen Parry](#)
Cc: [Keith Hovell](#)
Subject: RE: - IN CONFIDENCE AND WITHOUT PREJUDICE
Date: Wednesday, 22 March 2023 3:26:58 pm

Hi Steve,

For transparency and to keep you in the loop as much as possible, after having a conversation with Keith, I will seek advice as to whether I can [REDACTED] streamline the process and to put this behind us once and for all.

On the contrary, if this isn't possible, the aim is for a meeting with full Council on the 28th of March at 3pm, prior to our LTP workshop.

Keith - if we are to go down the meeting route could you please assist by working with Rex to have this organised.

Regards,
Ben

From: Stephen Parry <SParry@goredc.govt.nz>
Sent: Wednesday, 22 March 2023 12:29 pm
To: Ben Bell <bbell@goredc.govt.nz>
Cc: .Councillors (with e-mail) <Councillors@goredc.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: - IN CONFIDENCE AND WITHOUT PREJUDICE

Thank you. If you need any procedural advice on scheduling the meeting , you may like to confer with Rex Capil.

From: Ben Bell <bbell@goredc.govt.nz>
Sent: Wednesday, 22 March 2023 11:43 am
To: Stephen Parry <SParry@goredc.govt.nz>
Cc: .Councillors (with e-mail) <Councillors@goredc.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: - IN CONFIDENCE AND WITHOUT PREJUDICE

Hi Steve,

I will seek an urgent meeting with full Council and notify you once I have done so.

Regards,
Ben

From: Stephen Parry <SParry@goredc.govt.nz>
Sent: Wednesday, 22 March 2023 10:16 am
To: Ben Bell <bbell@goredc.govt.nz>

Cc: .Councillors (with e-mail) <Councillors@goredc.govt.nz>

Subject: - IN CONFIDENCE AND WITHOUT PREJUDICE

Good Morning,

I refer to the email below in regard to a recommendation to be submitted to the full Council in regard to resolving issues that arose out of our mediation. I was taken aside by Keith Hovell during the health meeting at Hokonui Runanga yesterday afternoon and advised that the report he was working on for the Appraisal Committee would not be tabled at the Council meeting (held last night). This surprised me and when I asked why, Keith only made an oblique reference to a discussion with you.

I find this wholly unsatisfactory for a host of reasons. The Appraisal Committee or parts thereof, appear to be operating under the misguided belief that it is my employer and gatekeeper for the Council. This is not correct. The Council is my employer and the Council needs to be kept informed of concerns, risks and developments in respect of my employment.

It is also a concern that the Chief Executive's Performance Appraisal Committee is operating without an approved Terms of Reference set by the full Council.

I record that the mediation was instigated by you as Mayor and to the best of my knowledge acting as an individual, in response to concerns expressed by Councillors and senior staff. These concerns resulted in the Council's insurer being put on notice. I entered into the mediation, which occurred on 19 December, in good faith . I was unaware of how the mediation came to be arranged as that was organised through your office.

Completion of the mediation was hindered by an account [REDACTED] being sent to you in late January and remaining unpaid. I was unaware of this until the mediator called me [REDACTED] in early March. I asked the General Manager Corporate Support to pay the account to avoid embarrassment for the Council. The mediator then terminated the engagement as he did not think he could bring an impartial mind to complete the process.

I now find myself involved in an incomplete process, where a Council approval is required, yet the elected members who have the knowledge of [REDACTED] process are disinclined to bring the matter before the Council.

I record the fact that I have at all times endeavoured to find a low impact resolution to the matters in dispute. This is my last gasp attempt at achieving that by bringing my employer (not a select line-up) into the fold and being made aware of this matter [REDACTED]

I believe I deserve to be heard by a meeting of the full Council as a matter of urgency. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Please direct any response through all Councillors.

Thank you

Stephen Parry
Chief Executive

From: Ben Bell <bbell@goredc.govt.nz>
Sent: Wednesday, 15 March 2023 4:55 pm
To: Stephen Parry <SParry@goredc.govt.nz>
Subject: Legal Fees - IN CONFIDENCE AND WITHOUT PREJUDICE

Hi Steve,

Following a meeting with the Performance Appraisal Committee this afternoon, the committee has come to the decision that they will endorse [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] If there is a report produced, as the chair of the committee, I will be able to endorse that the recommendation came from the Performance Appraisal Committee.

If you would like comment from the committee to be included in the report, as I was not privy to the discussion, Keith would be comfortable providing some context. I have also recommended

that he speaks to the report when it comes to council on behalf of the committee.

I look forward to putting this behind us.

Cheers,

Ben