

Minutes for a meeting of the Sustainability and Wellbeing Committee of the Waikato District Council held in the Council Chambers, District Office, 15 Galileo Street, Ngaaruawaahia on **MONDAY, 26 FEBRUARY 2024** commencing at **12.31PM.**

Present:

Cr L Thomson (Chairperson)
Cr C Beavis
Cr C Eyre – *from 3.54pm*
Cr J Gibb – *[via audio visual conference]*
Cr M Keir – *departed at 1.33pm returning at 1.34pm*
Cr M Raumati – *departed at 12.51pm returning at 12.53pm & departed at 1.28pm returning at 1.34pm*
Cr P Thomson
Cr T Turner
Cr D Whyte – *departed at 2.42pm returning at 2.47pm*

Attending:

Mr W Gauntlet (General Manager Community Growth)
Ms A Diaz (Chief Financial Officer)
Mr T Whittaker (Chief Operations Officer)
Mr J Ebenhoh (Planning and Policy Manager)
Mr V Ramduny (Strategic Initiatives and Partnership Manager)
Ms B Shepard (Economic Development Advisor)
Mr D Sharma (Three Waters Reform Project Manager)

Mrs K Brotherston (Democracy Advisor)

Guests

Mr N Turner – Country Manager, Blue Float Energy – *from 12.31pm to 1.42pm.*
Ms N Choudhary – Project Development Associate, Blue Float Energy – *from 12.31pm to 1.42pm.*
Mr M Jones – Managing Director, Veros Consulting – *from 12.58pm to 2.30pm.*
Ms A Hadfield – Strategic Projects Director, Veros Consulting – *from 12.58pm to 2.30pm.*
Mr M Udale – Strategic Property Lead, Frequency Consulting – *[via audio visual conference] from 12.58pm to 2.30pm.*

The meeting opened with a Karakia.

APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Agenda Item 1

Resolved: (Crs Turner/Whyte)

THAT the Sustainability and Wellbeing Committee accepts the apologies from Crs Patterson and Matatahi-Poutapu for non-attendance and Cr Eyre for lateness.

CARRIED

S&W2402/01

CONFIRMATION OF STATUS OF AGENDA ITEMS

Agenda Item 2

Resolved: (Crs Ngataki/Reeve)

THAT the agenda for a meeting of the Sustainability and Wellbeing Committee held on Monday, 26 February 2024

- a. all items therein be considered in open meeting; and**
- b. all reports be received; and**
- c. in accordance with Standing Order 9.4 the order of business be changed with agenda item 6.4 (Housing Strategy) being considered after agenda item 6.1 (Blue Float Energy).**

CARRIED

S&W2402/02

DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Agenda Item 3

There were no disclosures of interest.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Agenda Item 4

Resolved: (Crs Raumati/Keir)

THAT the minutes for a meeting of the Sustainability and Wellbeing Committee held on Wednesday, 1 November 2023 be confirmed as a true and correct.

CARRIED

S&W2402/03

ACTIONS REGISTER – FEBRUARY 2024

Agenda Item 5

The report was received [*S&W2402/02 refers*] and no further discussion was held.

REPORTS

Blue Float Energy

Agenda Item 6.1

The report was received [*S&W2402/02 refers*] and the following discussion was held:

- The Economic Development Advisor introduced herself explaining her role within Council before providing a brief overview of the partnership and handing the floor over to the Blue Float representatives.
- Blue Float Energy's County Manager introduced himself to the Committee explaining the Offshore Wind project was a significant project for the region. He noted that Blue Float Energy desired to maintain a fully informed open and transparent approach to the project.
- He provided a brief overview of Blue Float Energy's work within the energy landscape before sharing a PowerPoint presentation that outlined their development principles, phases of the project, the importance of Offshore Wind within the energy landscape as well as the strategic importance for Waikato region.
- The Chairperson thanked the team from Blue Float Energy for their presentation and their early engagement with the Committee and opened the floor for questions.
- Clarity was sought on the height of towers and blades, as well as health and safety procedures. In response, the Committee was advised that work environment, including the marine environment as well as working at height meant there was inherent risk and a significant focus for Blue Float.
- Enquiries regarding sustainability and recycling of materials were made. In response, it was noted the scope was very high as the towers were made from steel. Historically, the blades were an issue for recycling, however, a lot of work had been conducted in this space globally and fully recyclable blades were starting to be produced and used within the market.
- Concern was expressed and enquires made regarding possible impacts on the environment:
 - Diversion of bird migration – it was noted that workshops were being held with locals to ensure their knowledge was included.
 - Sea Mammals - it was noted that the key risk to mammals was in the construction stage, particularly noise.
It was highlighted that currently, due to the New Jersey Offshore Wind petitions regarding whale deaths, there was a lot of misinformation

circulating and this would need to be managed through engagement and information sharing.

- Fish and shellfish – currently, there was only data available on commercial fishing. An expert panel had been appointed, survey design work looking into the impacts on fish/shellfish was underway and it was estimated that design work would be completed later this year.
- Clarification was sought and received on the difference between fixed and floating towers.
- A query was raised in relation to co-governance, co-design and engagement. It was noted that engagement had commenced with Waikato Tainui before transitioning to coastal groups who had been invited to participate in discussions. Cultural impact statements had been developed along with a well-rounded environmental programme that met the needs of stakeholders. It was further noted that there was a desire to initiate a steering group.
- A query was raised in relation to skills training and education delivery. In response, it was noted that New Zealand would require new jobs to build and operate this project. There had been discussions directly with Tertiary Education providers pertaining to current available courses, where/what regions jobs would be available in, niche job roles and what jobs could be done by locals.
- Clarification was sought and received on the stability of wind offshore compared with on land. It was noted that building in the ocean was more expensive, however, the wind was stronger and more consistent. It was highlighted that the scale as an important factor to consider as offshore turbines were able to generate significantly more power than onshore turbines.
- A query was raised relating to materials being fabricated locally or pre-fabricated and assembled locally. It was noted that while towers could be fabricated within New Zealand, it did not have the size and scope to manufacture large blades. What was realistic was to assemble and install locally using New Zealand workforce.
- Clarification was sought on economic development, it was noted that the current project activities were restrained due to legislative requirements and early detailed analysis would not commence until 2026 onwards.
- A query was raised relating to the pathway to Huntly and if it would be trenched on the seabed or overhead transmissions. It was noted that the several contributing factors such as conditions on the coast, operating uptime and maintenance would inform the decision.
- The Committee enquired what support if any from Council was required. In response, it was noted that contacting the Energy Minister may aid in gaining regulatory certainty from Central Government.

Support and advice on how to engage with the community would be beneficial to the project and aid in understanding local perspective and strengthening relationships.

- The Chairperson acknowledge the level of interest this project had within the Committee and community before thanking the presenters for their time.

Waikato District Council Housing Strategy

Agenda Item 6.2

The report was received [*S&W2402/02 refers*] and the following discussion was held:

- The Strategic Initiatives and Partnership Manager provided an overview of the development of the strategy which included the engagement undertaken, key strategic considerations and the key issues the housing strategy is seeking to address including:
 - Affordable housing,
 - Housing for Maaori and papakaainga,
 - Intergenerational and multigenerational housing,
 - Provision of diversified types of housing,
- He also highlighted the fact that the Strategy acknowledges the three waters, roading and community facilities infrastructure challenges Council faces which may affect facilitating housing delivery relating to:
 - Funding of new infrastructure,
 - Ageing infrastructure,
 - Fragmented land ownership (where land has been zoned for development),
 - The rural nature of Maaori freehold land,
 - Cross-boundary growth considerations in relation to Hamilton and Auckland,
 - Aligning social infrastructure (schools, parks, community facilities and services) to community needs.
- The Strategic Initiatives and Partnership Manager introduced three guest speakers.
- Veros's Managing Director thanked the Council's Strategic Initiatives and Partnership Manager for his work and dedication to the strategy, before explaining that the process had been very collaborative. It was noted several key factors within the strategy were aged housing stock which was not fit for purpose, deficit within the district, growth and demand was projected to occur.
- The Council's role within the strategy was recognised as an enabler ahead of regulator. It was noted that housing was a generational journey, and progress had to be made.
- Discussion ensued with some of the key topics considered including concerns pertaining to the enabling function, flexibility, collaboration/connection/data collection from other Councils, regulatory issues, partnerships and how to include other entities to ensure Council's role as enable was maintained.
- Clarification was sought on the definition of 'Maaori Housing'. It was noted that 'maaori housing' encompasses all different areas for example where maaori live,

whether they are renting or own land. It was noted that this definition also applied to non Maaori. Support and/or enablement of Maaori to build on Maaori-owned freehold land instead of Maaori housing was noted.

- Some concerns around the tone and writing style of the document were raised and discussed. It was noted that in principle, the Committee agreed and was supportive of the strategy however, felt some tweaks to the strategy and action plan were needed for example:

Word changes:

- page 58 – instead of ‘agree’ change wording to ‘consider whether’,
- page 68 - change wording to ‘housing is appropriate to the area and meets the needs of the community’,
- page 71- instead of lead and coordinate, change wording to ‘Support with Waikato housing initiatives’,
- page 75 – regarding land purchase change wording to ‘consider whether’,
- page 75 – instead of ‘continue to bring all providers together’ change the wording to ‘coordinate or enable’,
- page 75 – spelling of wastewater needs corrected,
- page 76 – change the words ‘big moves’ to ‘aspirations’ or something similar,
- page 76 – point one (1) change the word drive,
- page 81- change wording to ‘bring this to council for a decision/guidance’,

Tone changes:

- page 63 – graphics are aligned with the tone, however, it appears that the action plan has not been aligned.
 - Page 70 – what does success look like and how would this be measured?,
 - page 76 – point nine (9) this section needed to be heavily clarified with awareness and clear council decisions, along with approval of ratepayers.
- The Strategic Initiatives and Partnership Manager suggested the councillors email further word change suggestions or comments to him directly. He will then make the necessary adjustments and circulate them to the committee before the report goes to Council.

Resolved: (Crs Keir/Raumati)

THAT the Sustainability and Wellbeing Committee:

- a. endorse the Waikato District Council's Housing Strategy pending word changes on the strategy and action plan, and that**
- b. the document be circulated to councillors prior to the document going to Council for adoption.**

CARRIED

S&W2402/04

The meeting adjourned at 3.00pm and resumed 3.55pm.

Three Waters Reform Better off Funding Special Project Update – February 2024
Agenda Item 6.3

The report was received [*S&W2402/02 refers*] and the following items were discussed:

- The General Manager of Community Growth provided a brief overview of the report including expenditure, and communications on the project before opening the floor for discussion and comment.
- Discussion ensued with some of the key topics considered including timeline, CCTV funding for Tamahere showing different amounts, communication plan, sharing information with the community, OPEX and what that looks like in terms of funding.

ACTION The General Manager of Community Growth to circulate the communication plan with the committee via email and follow up regarding the possibility of the data pulled through incorrectly for Tamahere CCTV

Rural Ward Discretionary Fund Report
Agenda Item 6.3

The report was received [*S&W2402/02 refers*] and the following discussion was held:

- The Chief Financial Officer provided a brief summary of the report before opening the floor for discussion and comment.

- A brief discussion ensued and clarification was sought and received on invoice referencing, discretionary funding checking process and definition of rural funding. It was noted that to ensure each part of the district received support from the discretionary funding each community board and two community committees had funding attached, everyone else falls under 'rural'.

The chairperson finished the meeting with a karakia and some words of appreciation for the work that staff have undertaken behind the scenes.

There being no further business the meeting was declared closed at 4.13pm.

Minutes approved and confirmed this day of 2024.

Cr L Thomson
CHAIRPERSON