

# MACKENZIE DISTRICT COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, FAIRLIE, ON TUESDAY 12 FEBRUARY 2008 AT 1.30 PM

### PRESENT:

Dave Pullen (Chairman)  
John O'Neill (Mayor)  
Leon O'Sullivan  
Graeme Page  
Graham Smith  
Evan Williams

### IN ATTENDANCE:

Glen Innes (Chief Executive Officer)  
Bernie Haar (Asset Manager)  
Frank Ledingham (Manager – Roothing)  
Rosemary Moran (Committee Clerk)

### CATTLESTOPS:

The Chairman welcomed John Simpson from Mt Hay, Paddy Boyd from Haldon Station and Nicola Hornsey from Tasman Downs and introduced them to the committee members. He explained that the visitors attended at the invitation of the Mayor to express their concern about the Council's *Cattlestops Maintenance Policy*, adopted on 11 October 2005, under which all cattlestops on the District's roading network were to be retained in Council ownership, maintenance of cattlestops would be carried out by the Council for a uniform annual fee to provide for the maintenance of sealed approaches and the construction of new sealed approaches where considered necessary for traffic safety, and any capital costs will be charged directly to the landowner benefiting from the cattlestop.

Nicola Hornsey said she believed that because the Council had assumed ownership of all cattlestops, responsibility for their maintenance should be part of its role of maintaining the roading network in the District.

She asked if Council would consider reviewing its policy and if so what the process would be.

The Chairman said that the policy had been developed to ensure that the costs associated with cattlestops were incurred by the beneficiaries, ie the land owners.

John Simpson suggested that the cattlestops were also of benefit to the general public, noting that the Lilybank Road where he lived was used extensively by tourists. He said that cattlestops had been part of the roading network for about fifty years and felt that they should continue to be maintained by the Council. He said that while it might be practical for down country farmers to fence roadsides and preclude any need for cattlestops on public roads, it was not feasible to him to fence ten kilometres of roadside.

Cr Williams clarified that because a subsidy was available for the maintenance of cattlestops, affected land owners were charged only the unsubsidised portion of the cost.

The Mayor said that debate had been prompted by consideration of complaints received about rural roads and requests for improvements and seal extensions. He noted that the Roothing Manager at the

time had consulted about ten local authorities all of whom had the same policy. He acknowledged Mr Simpson's contention to the contrary.

The Mayor said that maintenance of cattlestops was funded by the Rural Works and Services rate, not by the General Rate. He said the subsidies available addressed the fact that the roads were used by visitors and tourists; there were strict criteria for gaining subsidies. He noted that 54% of the cost of maintenance was paid by taxpayers.

Paddy Boyd said that Haldon Station had maintained the cattlestops on the property for the last twenty five years. The Mayor acknowledged the apparent unfairness in Haldon's case.

Nicola Hornsey questioned the legitimacy of Council's policy, given that all cattlestops were to be retained in Council's ownership.

The Asset Manager said it would not be proper for land owners to undertake only the level of maintenance on cattlestops which they thought was appropriate. Also it was not practical for the Council to inspect every cattlestop and provide a report to each land owner along with a time frame for any work to be completed.

The Chairman suggested that the annual fee of \$140 per cattlestop was reasonable. The Asset Manager noted that because of the concerns that had been raised by some land owners about the policy, and unpaid invoices sent out for the 2005/06 year, it had been decided to delay sending out invoices for the 2006/07 year until the issue had been resolved.

In response to comments regarding the cost of fencing if cattlestops were removed, the Mayor agreed it would be enormous. However he noted that maintenance of the roading network was funded by ratepayers and it was considerably cheaper for farmers to have the benefit of cattlestops than to have to erect kilometres of fencing. He did not consider it was fair to expect ratepayers to fund cattlestop maintenance.

John Simpson suggested that cattlestop use could be reduced considerably if vehicles drove through bypasses when there was no stock in the adjacent blocks. He considered that since approaches to cattlestops had been sealed, maintenance costs should be minimal because much of the earlier damage had been done by grader drivers.

The Chairman explained that the accounts for maintenance represented the actual costs incurred, ie \$20,000 per year.

The Asset Manager explained that the Council received a monthly claim from its contractor which identified all the work done on each activity. He said work on cattlestops included seal maintenance, welding, cleaning, painting and signage. He noted that the current subsidy was to be reduced by 3% which would be reflected in increased costs for land owners; however he considered that \$20,000 was not expensive for about 70 cattlestops.

He said that prior to 2006 the Council had been including cattlestop maintenance in general road maintenance and claiming subsidies. The local share was funded by the Works and Service rate. Council had now identified that component and charged the beneficiaries individually.

Paddy Boyd said his fear was that, if he agreed to pay the current charge of \$140 (which he thought was realistic), it had the potential to escalate to perhaps \$1,400 in three or four years.

The Asset Manager said the reality was that all costs rose over time. Everyone had to pay more. He considered it was unlikely the level of maintenance on cattle stops would change. They would quietly

deteriorate over time as concrete broke down and he was sure that when it was time to replace them, the owners would have the opportunity to replace them to Council's standards thus avoiding contractor's costs, or remove them.

The Chief Executive Officer asked if land owners would be prepared to fund the cost of all maintenance required by the Council if the policy were to be dropped. He noted that the sole purpose of a cattlestop was to control stock.

Paddy Boyd said that 99% of the damage to the cattlestops was done by the public. He suggested that the owners of land at the ends of roads would be more amenable to paying the charge.

Cr O'Sullivan suggested that it would be difficult to develop an equitable funding formula to reflect the various circumstances of land owners, eg those at the ends of roads.

The Chairman advised the visitors that with a schedule of the maintenance carried out on cattlestops in the previous year and the number of landholders who were happy with the current policy, he intended to ask the Committee to reconsider the policy. He undertook to advise them of the decision following the Operations Committee meeting to be held 1 April 2008.

The Chairman thanked the visitors who left the meeting at 2.30 pm.

#### **I APOLOGY:**

Resolved that an apology be received from Cr McDermott.

**Evan Williams/Graeme Page**

#### **I MINUTES:**

***Resolved that the Minutes of the meeting of the Operations Committee held on 6 November 2007 be confirmed and adopted as the correct record of the meeting.***

**Graeme Page /Evan Williams**

#### **MATTERS UNDER ACTION:**

##### **3. Building Maintenance Programme:**

The Mayor requested that report on the Building Maintenance Programme be made available reasonably early in the budget process.

#### **III REPORTS:**

##### **1. ROADING - MINOR IMPROVEMENTS 2007/08**

This report from the Manager – Roading presented options and the items recommended for the 2007/08 minor improvements programme.

***Resolved that the report be received.***

**Graham Smith/Graeme Page**

Resolved the following Minor Improvements Programme as agreed by the working party be confirmed:

<b>Item</b>	<b>Estimated Cost \$</b>
<b>Clayton/Kerrs Road</b>	
Intersection Improvements (completed)	6,000
<b>Lilybank Road</b>	
Ford Improvements (completed)	11,200
<b>Haldon Road</b>	
Stoney River Bridge approach seals +200m Haldon Station (seal past house policy) (approved)	12,000
<b>Intersection Seals (extend to 150 metres)</b>	
Cannington Road/Burnetts Road leg	12,600
SH8/Rocky Gully Road leg	8,500
SH8/Richardsons Road leg	12,300
<b>Intersection Seals</b>	
Middle Road/Plantation Road 4 legs @ 60m	24,000
SH 73/Middle Valley Road leg 60m extension	6,000
<b>School Road</b>	
Seal Gap (205m)	20,500
<b>Clayton Road</b>	
Extend Culvert	10,000
<b>Contingencies</b>	<u>19,900</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$143,000</b>
	<b>Graeme Page /Evan Williams</b>

## **IX PUBLIC EXCLUDED:**

Resolved that the public be excluded from the following part of the proceedings of this meeting namely:

- Road Maintenance Contract – Pukaki Ward Contract Time Extension

<b><u>General subject of each matter to be considered</u></b>	<b><u>Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter</u></b>	<b><u>Ground(s) under Section 48(1) for the passing of this resolution</u></b>
Road Maintenance Pukaki Ward Contract No 1128 – Time Extension	To protect information where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it	48(1)(a)(i) That good reason exists for not discussing the matter with the public present and is not outweighed by the public interest

This resolution is made in reliance on Section 48(1)(a)(i) 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 the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting in public are as follows:

*Road Maintenance Contract No 1128 Pukaki Ward Contract Time Extension - To protect information where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it. Section 7(2)(b)(ii).*

**Evan Williams/Graeme Page**

**THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS THE  
MAYOR DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED  
AT 2.55 PM**

**CHAIRMAN:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_