



## CHAIR'S REPORT

**TO:** Environment & Planning Committee

**FROM:** Michael Higgins, Environment & Planning Committee Chair

**REFERENCE:** S611

**SUBJECT:** **CHAIR'S REPORT – REPORT EP09/10/08** - Report prepared for meeting of 8 October 2009

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The past six weeks have, in most respects been “Business as usual”. I wish to acknowledge the work of Rob Smith, acting manager for the E&P Department of Council. He has responded to issues as they arose and communicated well with Councillors. There have been a number of compliance issues requiring consideration. These have resulted in additional resource consent applications, and in one case a decision to pursue a remedy through legal process.

I am pleased to report that the release of decisions regarding the zoning of Richmond West occurred on time, and they appear to have been well received.

I joined with Mayor Kempthorne, Steve Markham and Neil Jackson in a meeting with representatives from Nelson City Council to develop a frame-work that will lead to establishing council policy on the future management of Tasman Bay. It is a subject that has been on the “to do list” for some time now, and while progress will not be fast, it will happen and is included in our agenda today.

I have attended two seminars on the implementation of changes to the RMA. One was an in house staff discussion for TDC, MDC and NCC. The purpose was to ensure that everybody worked from the “same page” from 1 October. The other seminar was organized by MoE as one of about 22 discussion groups nation wide to explain the changes being made. My impression is that in the short term, changes will not be significant and from the Tasman District Council point of view can be accommodated without difficulty. The duration of consent processing will need to be defined, and a clear understanding between applicants and the Tasman District Council on expectations of information provision to Council as it relates to the ability to process within a short time. My experience is that applicants often develop the consent application through the consideration process, which minimises work requirements but does take a longer time. Council would not want to be penalised for using this co-operative model. It will be interesting to see how many applicants ask for Commissioner Hearings on resource consents. It is important that Tasman District Council hearing panels maintain the confidence of applicants through this process.

I have agreed to an “In Committee” discussion regarding motorcycle sports today, to enable frank discussion on expectations going forward.

In conclusion, welcome back to our manager Dennis Bush-King. I look forward to hearing of his experiences in Europe, and advice that he will have from that.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Higgins". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Michael Higgins  
**Chair, Environment & Planning Committee**