

REPORT

TO: Members, Engineering Services Committee

FROM: Chair, Trevor Norriss

DATE: 17 July 2008

SUBJECT: **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Welcome to today's meeting – there are a few issues of concern and some good news that I wish to share with the committee in this report.

Good news first. The McGlashen Avenue, Queen Street and Oxford Street intersection improvements are out for tender. There has been considerable interest from contractors in the Ruby Bay realignment project and hopefully it will soon be out for tender and a favourable price received. The new Richmond town centre (Sundial Square) is complete. My congratulations to the contractors involved for the professional manner in which they have conducted themselves in a rather confined area. And finally, the Pearse Valley Bridge replacement is underway.

Three of the above projects have involved many hours and years of staff and Council time and it is pleasing to see them finally underway.

As a Council and member of Local Government New Zealand we should be rattling the cages of the present government who appear to be ignoring issues regarding fuel taxes for roading projects in New Zealand not being spent on what they are being collected for. If we are not careful we could see considerable amounts of this fund being siphoned into sea travel and propping up the railway. This would certainly be a great disadvantage to our district with no railway or any other viable options other than roads. We need to keep our very careful eye on this one.

The new road user charges clearly give no benefit to vehicle owners to own a new environmentally-friendly diesel vehicle. In fact it makes a complete nonsense of government policy encouraging lower emissions.

I listened to a very interesting presentation by a group trying to encourage the community to get together and plan car pooling in our communities rather than expecting councils and ratepayers to subsidise public transport. The presenter was 100% correct. This is something we can all do ourselves to use less fuel and save dollars.

The Regional Transport Committee meeting with Local Government NZ and the Minister scheduled for 17 July was cancelled. As a result I cannot report the outcome of issues regarding the re-amalgamation of Transit and Land Transport NZ or the make-up of the Regional Transport Committee until the meeting is re-scheduled.

It is regrettable that at a time when so many of the projects he has been involved with are coming to fruition that Council has received the resignation of our Transportation Manager, Roger Ashworth. As Engineering Chairman I have valued Roger's knowledge and help in solving many of the gripes and groans that come to Council – in my case my fourth term as Chairman.

Roger has tolerated my intrusions more than any other Engineering staff member but bar one instance has always helped to achieve satisfactory results for Council and our ratepayers. I'm sure the committee will join with me in wishing Roger all the best for the future and thanks for the way he has dealt with us all.

Roger – I will miss our annual submissions to Transit NZ and your look of alarm every time I knock on your office door – thanks for all your help.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Trevor Norriss". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

Trevor Norriss
Chair - Engineering Services Committee