

REPORT

TO: Members, Engineering Services Committee

FROM: Chair, Trevor Norriss

REFERENCE:

DATE: 15 March 2006

SUBJECT: Chairman's Report for MARCH 2006

As Chairman of Engineering Services I need to express some concern at the cutting back of the Engineering budget in the areas of water, stormwater and sewerage upgrades. It appears that we have plenty of money for more of the fluffy projects and yet the core services still get hammered. It is all very well to have many of these dream projects still on the 10-year plan, but at a time when incomes are well back, many of these are unaffordable.

As a ratepayer I know only too well the consequences of the projected rate rise – 28% in my own case – the increase is more than some people pay in total! And for what? Rural ratepayers who are further away from many of these services etc. are paying an unfair burden under our present rating system.

Regional Land Transport Meeting

I will ask Cr Bryant to give a brief update as I could not attend this last meeting.

Special Purpose Roads

It is unbelievable that under the new Land Transport Management Act there is no provision for any new special purpose roads. The Graham Valley Road is one of the main roads into a major tourist destination, namely the Kahurangi National Park. The vast majority of traffic on this road is not local but tourists, and this is increasing annually. Typically, Government don't mind taking revenue generated by this, but appear to have gorse in their pockets when it comes to funding services that help generate the revenue. I believe as a Council we need to push this issue harder to the powers that be.

TRMP Section, Rivers and Lakes

Council's Engineering Services fought long and hard to get this global consent and any attempts to undermine it should be sent packing. Any extra costs involved should be picked up by the department of council requiring it.

Most other areas will be covered in today's agenda.

Finally, I would like to thank Valerie Gribble who has been our Engineering Secretary nearly as long as I have been Chairman. Without her keeping an eye on what the Chairman is up to on a weekly basis, there would have been numerous slip ups. Valerie seemed to have a sixth sense when it came to keeping me on the straight and narrow. Thanks again Valerie.

I would also like to welcome Robyn Scherer to the team and encourage you all to pop in and introduce yourselves.

Regards

Trevor Norriss
Chair - Engineering Services Committee