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MKS/ChairRep

Report to Wellington Regional Council
from Margaret Shields, Chairperson

Chairperson's Report

1. Christine Arnot

Councillors are asked to join with me in paying their respects to Chris Arnot our Section Leader, Employment Services in the Employment Relations Department, who passed away last week after a long illness. Chris had been employed by the Council for 11 years. The Council staff was well represented at her funeral and I know a number of our staff were very close to Chris in her last days.

2. Welcome

The Councillors are asked to join with me in welcoming Wayne Hastie in his new role as Council Secretary. I am sure Wayne will do well in his new position and will understand clearly that his brief is "to keep the Councillors out of jail".

3. Auckland Regional Council Visit

You will recall that I mentioned on a previous occasion that I was having discussions with Chairperson, Gwen Bull of the Auckland Regional Council about a visit by that Council to this Council later this year. Tentative dates of 26-27 September 2002 have now been diaried for this visit. It is very important, I believe, that Auckland and ourselves work very closely together as we have major issues in common, particularly public passenger transport issues and transport strategies.

4. Retiring Members of Parliament

With the forthcoming election and several Members of Parliament retiring, I will be writing to a number of those Members that this Council has had close contacts with over a number of years and who will not be seeking re-election. It is my sincere hope that when the new Parliament is elected that we re-establish close working relationships with Members of Parliament. Ideally, this would include both Constituency Members and

List MPs based in the Wellington Region. It would be a very positive move, in my view, if we could have those Members working in harmony for the good of the Wellington Region.

5. **Rail**

Councillors, of course, are now receiving regular updated reports on progress with the Tranz Metro Joint Venture. There will be, in addition, Workshops and formal reports to the Policy, Finance and Strategy Committee at appropriate stages.

6. **WRC Electoral Officer**

The Local Electoral Act 2001 requires that “there must at all times be an Electoral Officer appointed by the Local Authority to exercise the powers and carry out the duties conferred on the Electoral Officer.....”. The Electoral Officer cannot be the Chief Executive of the Council, unless the Local Authority concerned is satisfied that no other course of action is reasonably practicable in the circumstances. In the past the Council Secretary has been the Regional Council’s Electoral Officer and accordingly it is proposed that Dr Hastie be appointed to this role.

Recommendation

That the Regional Council appoint Wayne Hastie, Council Secretary, as the Wellington Regional Council’s Electoral Officer.

7. **Mayoral Forum**

I attended the Mayoral Forum recently together, with some regional MPs, at Wellington City Council and it was decided that the Forum is to be held quarterly. An invitation has been extended to our Deputy Chairperson to attend and the Committee Chairs of the relevant Committees to also attend when there are issues being discussed relating to their area of interest.

Recommendation

That the Report be received.