

# KAIKOURA DISTRICT COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT 9.00AM ON WEDNESDAY 21 DECEMBER 2011, IN MEMORIAL HALL SUPPER ROOM, ESPLANADE, KAIKOURA.

## AGENDA

1. *Apologies*
2. *Open Forum – Session for members of the public wishing to comment on items included in this agenda.*

*The Council meeting will adjourn following this item and will resume following the Finance and Policy Committee meeting.*

3. *Matters of Importance to be raised as Urgent Business*

4. **Minutes to be Confirmed:**

    ■ *Council 16/11/2011*

*page 82*

**Reports to be Adopted:**

    ■ *Works & Services Committee 16/11/2011*

*page 87*

    ■ *Environmental Services Committee 16/11/2011*

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    ■ *Finance and Policy Committee 16/11/2011*

*page 91*

    ■ *Social Services Committee 7/12/2011*

*page 92*

    ■ *Tourism & Development Committee 9/11/2011*

*page 96*

5. *Matters arising from Confirmed minutes*

6. *Minutes Action List Update*

MEETING	ACTION REQUIRED	BY	DATE ACTIONED
	<b>21 SEPTEMBER 2011</b>		
Council	Investigate artificial seawall protection along the Esplanade for inclusion in the Long Term Plan	Asset Manager	In Progress
	<b>16 NOVEMBER 2011</b>		
Council	Provide a copy of the freedom camping survey to full Council	District Planner	In Progress
Council	Provide a copy of the final Signs Bylaw to Council	Planning Officer	A copy has been emailed to Councillors
Council	Report on the number of shares Council holds in Civic Assurance	Chief Executive Officer	Council holds no shares in Civic Assurance

7. *11.30am NZ Police Update*

- **An update from Kaikoura Police will be provided in Public Excluded**

8. *Youth Council*

- A representative of the Youth Council will be in attendance at 1.00pm to present this item.

9. *Public Forum*

<i>TIME</i>	<i>NAME</i>	<i>SUBJECT</i>
1.30pm	Ralph Hogan	Petroleum extraction around Kaikoura – oil industry liabilities.

10. *Social Services Committee Representatives* *page 101*

11. *Temporary Road Closure – Kaikoura Roots Festival* *page 103*

12. *Response to Concerns Raised by the Oaro/Goose Bay Rural Fire Party* *page 106*

13. *Committee Updates*

14. *Mayor’s Report* *page 111*

15. *Urgent Business*

16. *Council Public Excluded Session*

*Moved, seconded that the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting, namely*

- Confirmation of Minutes of Council Public Excluded meeting on 16/11/2011*
- New Zealand Police Update*
- Clarence Forest*
- Community Facilities Charitable Trust Update*

*The general subject matter to be considered while the public is excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter, and the specific grounds under Section 48(1) and 7(2)(i) of the Local Government Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this resolution are as follows:*

<b>General subject of each to be considered</b>	<b>Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter</b>	<b>Grounds of the Act under which this resolution is made</b>
Minutes of the Council Public Excluded meeting 16/11/2011	The exclusion of the public from the whole or the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting is necessary to enable the Local Authority holding the information to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, commercial activities.	<b>Section 48(1)(a) and 7(2)(h)</b>
New Zealand Police Update	The exclusion of the public from the whole or the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting is necessary to protect information which is subject or which a person has been or could be compelled to provide under the authority of any enactment, where	<b>Section 48(1)(a) and 7(2)(c)(i)</b>

	the making available of the information would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information or information from the same source, and it is in the public interest that such information should continue to be supplied.	
Clarence Forest	The exclusion of the public from the whole or the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting is necessary to protect information where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information.	<b>Section 48(1)(a) and 7(2)(b)(ii)</b>
Community Facilities Charitable Trust Update	The exclusion of the public from the whole or the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting is necessary to protect information where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information.	<b>Section 48(1)(a) and 7(2)(b)(ii)</b>

## Social Services Committee Representation

At the beginning of 2011, a Social Services Subcommittee was established to look at the 'Kaikoura Community Action Plan 2007' developed from the 'Kaikoura Community Report' done by Family Services in 2006.

Phase One of the Action Plan focused on working with stakeholders to develop a stock take of existing services, service gaps and overlaps, community needs and development opportunities.

Phase Two was the action planning phase. This phase outlined the actions required by providers and funders at local, regional and national levels to implement the responses to the community report's findings.

Phase Three of the Action Plan ensured that actions were implemented.

We are now reviewing the Action Plan to determine the impact of the changes and to identify further opportunities for improvements. This Action Plan will become the guiding document for the Social Services Committee.

The subcommittee believes the best outcomes for families will be achieved through collaborative partnerships between the community, the government (both central and local) and the non – government organisations and groups involved. The potential benefits of collaboration include better processes, improved relationships, improved services planning co-ordination between government and non-government agencies, a greater capacity to respond to local needs and more efficient use of resources.

The current local priorities as identified from the 'The Kaikoura Local Services Mapping' are as follows:

1. Education and Learning
2. Housing
3. Income
4. Sustainable development
5. Gambling
6. Health Service Provision: Maternity health care and Mental health care
7. Family Violence
8. Level of service provision

The Social Services Committee decided at their meeting on the 7<sup>th</sup> of December to add Youth to this list.

The Social Services Committee is currently made up of representatives from the following sectors/organisations:

Elected Members (3)	
Te Whare Putea (1)	Health Sector (1)
Te Tai O Marokura (3)	Education Sector (1)
Runanga (1)	Kaikoura Ratepayer Association (1)
Kaikoura Youth Council (1)	Kaikoura Police (1)
Kaikoura Police (1)	Disability Sector (1)

The Committee looked at agency representation which would further enhance and move the goals of the Social Service Committee forward and have made the following recommendation to Council;

***That the following additional organisations/ sectors be represented on the Social Services Committee;***

- ***Medical Centre / Primary Health Organisation***
- ***Kaikoura Hospital / Canterbury District Health Board***
- ***St John***
- ***Kaikoura High School (Student)***
- ***Mental Health Sector.***

Given the Kaikoura Ratepayer Association is not active the following recommendation is also made;

***That the Kaikoura Ratepayers Association be changed to a Community representative.***

Authors: Community Development Officer  
Executive Officer  
Endorsed by the Chief Executive Officer

## Request for Temporary Road Closure

An application (attached) has been received from L Harnett, organiser of the Kaikoura Roots Festival to temporary close the following roads from 8am on Saturday 14 January until 5pm on Sunday 15 January 2012;

- Old Beach Road from Schoolhouse Road intersection to Skevingtons Road intersection.
- Harnetts Road from Old Beach Road to the Wilderness Road intersection.

The road areas to be closed are marked in black on the attached map.

Signage stating 'road closed', 'diversion' and 'please stop' will be put in place and each of the intersections where the road is blocked will be manned by security personnel.

Under the Local Government Act Schedule 10 (11A) Council may agree to temporarily close the road. A notice of its intention to consider closing the road must be advertised. Objections can then be heard and if after considering the objections the controlling authority decides to close the road further public notice must be given. Council has advertised that it would be considering these temporary road closures and no objections have been received.

Council has temporarily closed the road for previous festivals.

***Recommendation:***

***It is recommended that under the Local Government Act Schedule 10 (11)(e) the Council agree to close Old Beach Road from Schoolhouse Road intersection to Skevingtons Road intersection and Harnetts Road from Old Beach Road to Wilderness Road from 8.00 am on Saturday 14 January 2012 until 5.00pm on Sunday 15 January 2012 for the purposes of the Kaikoura Roots Festival.***

Author: Executive Officer  
Endorsed by the Chief Executive Officer

## **Response to Concerns raised by the Oaro / Goose Bay Rural Fire Party**

At the Council meeting held on 16 November 2011, the Treasurer of the Oaro Goose Bay Rural Fire force raised the following issues concerning the ongoing workings of that fire party;

- a) The Principle Rural Fire Officer has possibly implicated the Kaikoura District Council by misappropriation of funds, for the purchase of a fire truck which is not based at Goose Bay.
- b) The Principle Rural Fire Officer has refused to follow the express direction of his superior to supply the Oaro Goose Bay fire force with all of the requested insurance and medical form information.
- c) The Principle Rural Fire Officer has for several months refused to notify the rural public that, because the Oaro Goose Bay fire force has been almost totally unable to respond to any fire callout since 3 July 2011, lives and property were and still are at risk.
- d) The Principle Rural Fire Officer has openly declared his refusal to communicate with some of our elected officials.
- e) The Principle Rural Fire Officer may have managed to muzzle the media by preventing a fire force article supplied to the Kaikoura Star on 3 July 2011 from being published.
- f) The Principle Rural Fire Officer has been observed using the \$174,000 new fire truck as his personal little run about in Kaikoura.
- g) The Principal Rural Fire Officer has illegally removed the emergency old fire hose which was donated by a sponsor to the Oaro M community. He has also removed the stand-pipe necessary for quick local action. The 52 house Oaro M community has three fire hydrants, but, it now has almost zero fire-fighting protection.
- h) The Principle Rural Fire Officer has deliberately uninformed, misinformed and lied to the fire force members
- i) The Principle Rural Fire Officer has shown discourtesy and lack of judgment by entering the fire shed and removing items of equipment without notifying anyone in advance.
- j) The Principle Rural Fire Officer has failed to encourage anyone to join the Kaikoura Volunteer Rural Fire-Force groups in the last two years, and if he remains in his Principal Rural Fire Officer position, the Oaro Goose Bay VRFF will become very seriously weakened by resignations.

As a result the Council resolved that a report be provided by the Chief Executive Officer at the December meeting regarding the issues raised.

Below are responses to the issues raised:

- a) **The Principle Rural Fire Officer (PRFO) has possibly implicated the Kaikoura District Council by misappropriation of funds, for the purchase of a fire truck which is not based at Goose Bay.**

The Kaikoura District Council is the Rural Fire Authority for Kaikoura. All vehicles and equipment are subsidised through National Rural Fire Funding and upon completion of purchase and delivery the equipment ownership remains the property of the Rural Fire Authority. Funding subsidies from National Rural Fire are available on a yearly application and are subject to approval from National Rural Fire Authority however not all requests are granted.

The PRFO wrote a supporting application to NRFA and Kaikoura was one of seven successful applications to be accepted and contracts were signed for the purchase, build and delivery of the vehicle and pumping unit. Upon agreement for the vehicle the PRFO was informed by NRFA that the price of the vehicle had increased to \$178,000 and the contribution from the Kaikoura District Council would be \$58,000. Discussions were held with representatives of the Goose Bay / Oaro fire party as

there was only \$35,000 from the Canterbury Community Trust granted which was being held in the Kaikoura District Council accounts.

A short fall of \$23,000 was identified and the PRFO advised on two options; (a) re-investigate the options of purchasing a smoke chaser utility (b) Council could try to find additional funding avenues and council would apply for funding for the Goose Bay team. The Goose Bay team advised they would be best suited to source the \$23,000 required and was willing to use their contacts and knowledge to secure the short fall. The PRFO proceeded to continue with the signing of the contracts for the purchase of the rural fire appliance.

Progressive payments were required for each stage of the vehicle and the PRFO was advised that the fire party was struggling to secure the additional \$23,000. The Kaikoura Council paid the progressive payments throughout the build; the Council also paid the final payment. The Council completed the payments so as not to hold up the progress of the vehicle. Additionally the already granted \$35,000 was the first progress payment on the vehicle.

The \$23,000 shortfall was eventually paid over time. The payment schedule is below;

Date	Amount	Our Reference	Description
11 Dec 2009	35,000.00	Receipt 107517	From Canterbury Community Trust
29 Nov 2010	-73,749.00	Pmt D09143	Paid TCL Isuzu
15 Dec 2010	-34,000.00	Pmt D09149	Paid SPEL Ltd
15 Dec 2010	-8,699.96	Chq 030775	Paid Tyco Safety Products
24 Dec 2010	49,168.46	Receipt 113849	National Rural Fire Subsidy
21 Jan 2011	28,468.06	Receipt 114022	National Rural Fire Subsidy
17 May 2011	11,000.00	Receipt 115425	Oaro/Goose Bay Fire Party
20 May 2011	-40,336.86	Pmt D09720	Paid SPEL Ltd
22 Jun 2011	26,891.24	Receipt 116214	National Rural Fire Subsidy
28 Jun 2011	12,000.00	Receipt 116324	Oaro/Goose Bay Fire Party
20 Jul 2011	-169.00	Chq 030920	Paid Tyco Safety Products
	<b>5,572.94</b>	<b>Balance held</b>	

All amounts are excluding GST.

What Council hasn't done in the past is request copies of final funding applications by community groups where Council has supplied letters of support. In future copies of applications will be requested to ensure the applications fit with Council's letter of support. To date we have been unable to obtain copies of the lodged applications and are pursuing that matter further.

- b) The Principle Rural Fire Officer has refused to follow the express direction of his superior to supply the Oaro Goose Bay fire force with all of the requested insurance and medical form information.**

AMP is the insurance provider for National Rural Fire and the Kaikoura District Council use AMP as a provider through NRFA. KDC can claim reimbursement costs through NRFA.

The PRFO received insurance forms on the 7 June 2011 and advised the Goose Bay team at the AGM held 3 July 2011. It was made clear that AMP requires members over 65 years to obtain a medical or there will be no insurance cover. The PRFO informed the fire team not to rush out to get medicals until he had clarification of the medical requirements.

The team has been advised to complete their medicals at the medical centre and the Fire Authority will cover the costs. Only a basic medical is required.

The Goose Bay Fire Party have received information from Council and from AMP insurance providers (Vero). They have been advised of the requirements and that Council will cover the costs of medicals – only one member has taken the opportunity to complete a medical. In other words the Principle Rural Fire Officer has followed the express directions of his superior and supplied the fire force with all the information at his disposal.

- c) **The Principle Rural Fire Officer has for several months refused to notify the rural public that, because the Oaro Goose Bay fire force has been almost totally unable to respond to any fire callout since 3 July 2011, lives and property were and still are at risk.**

The communities of Goose Bay/ Oaro and Peketa have and continue to have sufficient fire response capabilities. All fire calls regardless of the incident are directed through the 111 call centre. The New Zealand Fire Service under section 15 agreement provides initial response to all fires and emergencies in the Kaikoura District in both urban and rural locations. The Goose Bay Rural Fire team has only limited training for vegetation rural fires and is only able to provide limited vegetation fire control. The New Zealand Fire Service is the provider for all incidents within the Kaikoura District and if requested rural teams will provide assistance to any emergency response as directed through the PRFO. Some members of the Kaikoura Rural Fire team have been trained in structure fires and motor vehicle incidents. If requested for assistance by the New Zealand Fire Service or additional fire authorities and emergency providers then this team may be deployed as directed by the PRFO.

The coastal corridor from the south of the Kaikoura Airport to the bottom of the Hundalees is within the Department of Conservation rural fire safety margins and fire control is currently the Department of Conservation's responsibility. There is no official agreement for the District Council to provide a fire team or fire resources and response in this area nor legally does the Council have authority for fire control. This is also the case for about 85% of the Kaikoura District however the District Council rural fire teams will assist with neighboring fire authorities but the Council will look to be reimbursed for fire suppression costs.

Fire calls in the area have been swiftly responded to by the fire service with support from the central rural fire team. Goose Bay in 2010 had only 4 fire call outs and none since July.

The comment that lives and property are now at risk is therefore totally without foundation as explained above.

- d) **The Principle Rural Fire Officer has openly declared his refusal to communicate with some of our elected officials.**

The elected officials and some members of the Goose Bay fire team verbally resigned at the special meeting on Sunday 4 September 2011. A new team of six members was formed and willing to continue but the resigned officials have now decided they will not be resigning and the disruption has continued amongst the team.

Some members are now operating with the central team and wish to be distanced from allegations and contradictions from the elected officials and their few followers. The New Zealand Fire Service local brigade, the Kaikoura rural fire team, some members of the Goose Bay rural fire team and PRFO wish to continue working with those individuals who wish to enhance a volunteer rural fire party as such the PRFO had been advised by the Chief Executive Officer to deal with only those who wish to make a positive contribution. The allegation is therefore correct but on the advice of this superior.

**e) The Principle Rural Fire Officer may have managed to muzzle the media by preventing a fire force article supplied to the Kaikoura Star on 3 July 2011 from being published.**

Any media articles relevant to the District Council and its rural fire and emergency operations being supplied by employees need to be accurate, not misleading and approved by the emergency manager before publication. The elected officials have failed again to follow advice given and advised the PRFO that written application to media locally and outside the Kaikoura District would be supplied by them.

The PRFO advised that as employees to the fire authority and under the code of conduct with the New Zealand Fire Service Commission of which Rural Fire Authorities are affiliated they would be exposing themselves to possible legal action by bringing the Fire Authority into disrepute and therefore needed to give serious consideration towards their actions and misleading correspondence.

I am unaware of the media ever being 'muzzled' by a local authority. This is one thing that is nye impossible to do without going through the courts. The statement is therefore incorrect.

**f) The Principle Rural Fire Officer has been observed using the \$174,000 new fire truck as his personal little run about in Kaikoura.**

The new 4x4 appliance has been driven as requested by the National Rural Fire Authority to get the mileage up to 2000 km as there had been a fault identified with the new appliances. The fault in these trucks occurred at 2000km where the truck completely died however the Kaikoura Districts truck has not shown the fault. The kilometers currently are 2545 and a log book showing appliance use is kept.

This appliance has attended 8 fires since its arrival 28 May 2011. The vehicle was used when the PRFO vehicle had broken down but this has also contributed to achieving the requested mileage on the truck. The appliance was housed at the PRFO property with off street parking while the fire shed was to be altered however no action has happened with the alterations so the vehicle is now housed in the central depot and is available for use by any rural fire members who hold the current heavy vehicle license and has undertaken training on this vehicle. The truck is not used for a run about nor, as suggested, a taxi. The allegation as suggested cannot be substantiated.

**g) The Principal Rural Fire Officer has illegally removed the emergency old fire hose which was donated by a sponsor to the Oaro M community. He has also removed the stand-pipe necessary for quick local action. The 52 house Oaro M community has three fire hydrants, but, it now has almost zero fire-fighting protection.**

Fire equipment in Kaikoura, as set by national standards needs, to comply with the required pressure testing, servicing and auditing. The districts fire equipment in 2009 was overdue and in desperate need for pressure testing and servicing. As explained to the elected officials several times, the PRFO took some gear from each depot had it tested and used that equipment to make a full replacement kit then completed hose/kit exchanges starting with the Kekerengu Fire Depot. This forward planning would not leave any depot at any stage without sufficient response equipment.

The PRFO become aware of the hose pack situated at the Oaro M community when an elected official informed him that there was a pack of hose for pressure testing. The hose was one pack that contained 3 lengths of 41mm percolating hose. This hose had grass, thistles and weeds growing through it and

was completely rotten. The elected official had the key for the phone box and traveled with the PRFO to unlock the phone box door and assisted with the removal. Due to the fact the 41mm hose was rotten, the couplings were removed from the hose and the hose was dumped and this was completed by staff at the Department of Conservation Rural Fire Depot in Rangiora. The elected official was instructed to remove the key and stand pipe and decommission the phone box as a fire store which was completed.

The hose at Oaro would never have been used due to the fact the hose was 41mm and the hydrant and stand pipes are 70mm, there were no nozzles and no reducing adaptors. A 41mm hose would not fit into a 70mm hydrant nor would it sustain the water pressure or volume. Other equipment discarded from Goose Bay was hose held together with electrical tape and wire. The equipment posed a threat to the personal safety and safe operating procedures of any fire crew member especially dealing with equipment under high water pressures. These pressures will kill instantly with inappropriate use and use of faulty un-serviced equipment. The PRFO acted appropriately under the Health and Safety Act and Council's responsibility towards reducing or eliminating hazards in the work place and the legal liabilities that would occur if an accident was to happen.

**h) The Principle Rural Fire Officer has deliberately uninformed, misinformed and lied to the fire force members**

The PRFO has not nor had any intentions of misinforming or lying to any fire members. The allegations are without basis and reflect the breakdown in trust, respect and civility that has grown between some Goose Bay, current and former, fire party members and the Principal Rural Fire Officer.

**i) The Principle Rural Fire Officer has shown discourtesy and lack of judgment by entering the fire shed and removing items of equipment without notifying anyone in advance.**

The Goose Bay Fire Depot was lacking equipment and is better stocked now than it was 2 years ago. A Wajax Pump had \$1000.00 spent on it for the rebuild of the pump section. This pump was continually operating without sufficient water supply and as these pumps are water cooled the unit self destructed, the pump was rebuilt at the Department of Conservation fire depot in Renwick, South Marlborough.

Four packs of hose were removed and returned to their rightful owners. Most of the replacement hose is from the Kaikoura Fire Depot as the team has been operating with the Goose Bay team until the new Depot was erected. The PRFO has the ability to move equipment around the district for fire protection at his/her own discretion. The fire equipment is for the entire district and not for one sole depot. Equipment removed from Goose Bay needed testing and the elected officials were well aware of this. Since the July 2011 AGM some resources and written logs are unable to be located as they have been removed from the Fire Depot without the authority of the PRFO. Again the above statement reflects the breakdown in trust between the PRFO and some former and current members of the Goose Bay fire party.

**j) The Principle Rural Fire Officer has failed to encourage anyone to join the Kaikoura Volunteer Rural Fire-Force groups in the last two years, and if he remains in his Principal Rural Fire Officer position, the Oaro Goose Bay VRRFF will become very seriously weakened by resignations.**

Smaller isolated rural communities will always struggle to attract new recruits. All recruits must be physically and mentally fit and willing to complete rural fire courses and competencies. Regular relevant fire trainings must be attended and most senior citizens of a retiring age as the case is in the Oaro/Goose Bay communities would not meet the standard requirements set by National Rural Fire Authority.

There has been a marked reluctance to undertake training, consequently this indicates the Goose Bay team is not performing as per the requirements of the constitution and with refusal of most members to complete the medicals there is no choice but to invite the interested members who wish to continue in a volunteer capacity and to undertake training to amalgamate into the Kaikoura team. This is currently taking place.

The allegation that the PRFO has failed to encourage anyone to join the Volunteer Rural Fire Force Group is factually incorrect.

The attitude of some current and former members of the Goose Bay team seriously brings into question their desire to work within an environment that is becoming more professional and safety conscious in today's climate of risk reduction for volunteers. If volunteers can not or will not work within the changing world of increased training, health and safety and generally being "fit for purpose" then the best thing they can do is retire or undertake a volunteer role that does not require them to meet external standards. At this juncture the Kaikoura central team is attracting volunteers quite readily therefore the reduction in members in Goose Bay may reflect on how the existing operation has been led.

The allegations made against Council's PRFO are groundless. They reflect poorly on those who made them and clearly highlight the loss of trust and respect held for each other by both parties. This attack on the PRFO is continuing and is highlighted in the recently circulated Oaro Goose Bay newsletter and signed by a "resigned crew leader".

For the sake of continuing with an effective rural fire force in the Oaro/Goose Bay area it would be appropriate for all those volunteers dissatisfied with the PRFO to resign from their position to enable those who do want to "carry on with the job" to get on with working constructively with the PRFO, undertake the appropriate training, acquire the skills necessary and generally "be fit for purpose" and to establish an effective volunteer rural fire fighting unit.

***It is recommended that the authors of "The Kaikoura District Council Rural Fire Authority – An endangered species" be advised that their allegations are without basis or merit.***

## **Mayor's Report**

I attended the Canterbury Mayoral forum on the 21<sup>st</sup> November.

A discussion was held regarding Environment Canterbury. Mayors will need a view or position early next year as to future of Environment Canterbury, if we go for the previous model that is what we will get. There is a view of a possible part elected and part commissioner type model for the future. The present commissioners are appointed until the next local body elections.

Christchurch City are struggling to find experienced staff within support and engineering, they need 125 extra staff. They are in a hole and losing experienced staff to contractors. Waimak are also experiencing difficulty. It takes five years to get a new recruit up to standard. Christchurch City, Waimak & Selwyn Councils have pressure on their payrolls.

I attended the Mayors Taskforce for Jobs core group meeting in Wellington on 7 December. A discussion was held on industry support for apprentices. The work being done in Kaikoura by Angela Blunt and Susi Haberstock in identifying and supporting youth into work or training is having a positive effect and we must continue to support this process in times of financial constraint.

The new cabinet is in place; Nick Smith replaces Rodney Hide as the Minister of Local Government. Expect some activity from Nick Smith.

Thank you to Councillors and staff for your efforts in the past year and enjoy a break over Christmas.