



28 August 2020

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Dear Anita and Richard

I refer to your letter of 18 August seeking assurance and evidence that the Council is taking proactive steps to restore trust and confidence in its ability to meet the challenges in front of it, and the Crown's expectation of a high-performing Council.

Council has met twice since receiving your letter, and I attach the reports which have been presented to Council. The reports were initially received in public excluded, to allow for free and frank exchange of views. On the first occasion, Mr Hardie joined the meeting to answer questions from councillors.

On 25 August, Council made the following resolutions:

1. *That the report "Department of Internal Affairs – Request for Information" be received; and*
2. *That Council determine to proactively address the issues by coming up with a plan as requested by the DIA; and*
3. *That Council appoint Bruce Robertson as their independent governance expert; and*
4. *That Council request the Chief Executive and Council Leadership Group, with guidance from Mr Robertson, to outline a draft plan for consideration at an Extraordinary Council meeting on Thursday 27 August at 3pm; and*
5. *That the final plan be considered in public at an Extraordinary Council meeting on Thursday 3 September at 3pm; and*
6. *That the Chief Executive and Mayor advise the DIA of Council's immediate response, and timeframe for further work.*

The Mayor also presented a report to Council, and from this the Council resolved:

1. *That the Invercargill City Council formally receives the letter from Anita Balakrishnan and undertakes to seek appropriate high quality independent advice to assist in achieving the objective contained within the letter.*

On 27 August, the Chief Executive and Mr Robertson met with the Council Leadership Group and agreed the report attached. It was presented to an Extraordinary Council meeting, where the following resolutions were made:

1. *That the report "Framework for Department of Internal Affairs Plan" be received; and*

2. *Council requests the Chief Executive and Mr Robertson to prepare a list of candidates for Council to commission one to undertake the evaluation of the current standard of governance performance;*
3. *Councillors to provide feedback to Mr Robertson by end of day, Saturday 29 August, on the key issues they see as impacting Council's performance, for inclusion within Council's overall plan for presentation to the DIA;*
4. *Councillors to provide comment to the Chief Executive on their training requests for inclusion in the final draft plan;*
5. *Endorse the plan approach to addressing the issues;*
6. *Councillors to provide feedback to the Chief Executive no later than end of Monday 31 August on the key decisions to be made;*
7. *Councillors to identify any other issues they wish to have included in the draft plan;*
8. *Request that the Chief Executive provide budget advice on the financial implications of the final draft plan;*
9. *Recognise the final draft plan incorporates an action for the Chief Executive to engage in regular dialogue with the DIA and endorse this;*
10. *Request that the communications plan be updated and provided to all elected members, confirm that the Mayor and Chief Executive are the nominated spokespersons, and incorporate the communications strategy in the final draft plan.*

At yesterday's meeting it was resolved to alter the date of Council's next meeting, to be Friday 4 September at 9.00 am, to accommodate the presence of Mr Robertson at that meeting.

You will see from the dates incorporated into the resolution, and from the appendices to the report that Council has committed to addressing the matters swiftly. It is intended that by Friday of next week, Council will be in a position to commission the evaluation of current standard of governance performance and to provide responses to you on the remaining matters you have requested.

If you require any further information, please don't hesitate to contact me. You will see that Council has resolved I have ongoing dialogue with you, and I am sure we will be in contact soon.

Yours sincerely



Clare Hadley  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**