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MKS/CHAIR REPORT

Report to Wellington Regional Council
from Margaret Shields, Chairperson

Chairperson's Report

1. New Year Greetings

A Happy New Year to all, Councillors and Staff. It will be a very busy year ahead as we have major decisions facing us this year; also there are very significant legislative changes on the drawing board.

2. Philip Warren QSO JP

As most of you are only too well aware, the late Phil Warren was a larger than life figure who gave everything he did 150%. Sadly, Phil died recently at the early age of 63.

Phil was a passionate Aucklander and many of his successful tilts at windmills helped increase public awareness of Regional Councils.

I attended the funeral, together with Mr Maguire, as well as sending a message of condolence on behalf of the WRC. In keeping with the Warren family's wishes, a donation was made to the Cancer Society in lieu of a floral tribute.

3. Kapiti Coast District Council: Water Seminar

At the invitation of Kapiti Coast District Council, Councillors Buchanan, Turver, Werry, appropriate officers and I attended a Water Resources Seminar convened by that Council on Monday, 28 January.

Other participants included the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment, Dr Morgan Williams and Dr Stephen Palmer (District Officer of Public Health).

The seriousness of the issues facing the District Council was clear.

4. **My Holiday!!**

While in the UK over the holidays, I took the opportunity to update myself on some major issues there that relate to matters facing us.

Firstly, rail privatisation in the UK has generally proved an unmitigated disaster. I am obtaining further copies of a newly released book that was recommended to me by Officials I spoke to in the UK. This damning critique makes most interesting reading and I will be making it available to Councillors and others likely to be interested. In addition, there is a policy review document, "Getting Back on Track" produced by the Senior Research Fellow on transport issues at the Institute of Public Policy Research.

Secondly, whilst in Spain and the UK, I also made some inquiries about renewable energy resources. Much use is now being made of windpower in Europe. Its price is now competitive with fossil and nuclear fuels. As a consequence of this price competitiveness and because of the lesser impact on the environment, there is increasing dependence on windpower and growing interest in the utilisation of tidal and wave energy in Europe.

As most of you will be aware the price of motor vehicle fuels in the EEC are much higher than in New Zealand. However, these high prices are still not a deterrent to the user of the motor vehicle. Also in Europe, there are significant tolls for use of motorways for most vehicles, especially trucks, on preferred routes.

5. **New Years' Honours**

I was pleased to see a former member of the first WRC, Mr Reg Moore, honoured in the New Years' Honours list. Mr Moore represented, initially the Hutt County, and latterly the short-lived Wainuiomata District on the Regional Council up to 1989.

6. **Relations with Territorial Authorities**

I am very encouraged by efforts of Councillors to improve relations with their colleagues from Territorial Authorities.

I also appreciate responses to correct inaccurate statements being made by some of the WRC's critics.

7. Carter Observatory Board

Councillors will recall that one member of the Carter Observatory Board is appointed by the Minister of Science on the nomination of this Council.

Formal advice has been received that the Minister will be re-appointing the Council's nominee, former Regional Councillor, Robert Shaw.

Recommendation

That the Report be received.

MARGARET SHIELDS
Chairperson