

Community Reference Group

Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday 1 March 2022 at 5.30pm

Venue: Microsoft Teams online meeting

Present:

Name	Organisation
Matt Ball	Ports of Auckland
Alistair Kirk	Ports of Auckland
Harriet O'Hara	Ports of Auckland
Nigel Ironside	Ports of Auckland
Mike Blackburn	Parnell Community Committee
Paul McLuckie	148 Quay Street
Tim Coffey	Local Resident
Bill Endean	Local Resident
Jarrold Hepi	
Luke Niue	

Apologies: Ross Inglis, Rick Ellis, Dennis Knill, Gayle Bennett, Pippa Coom

Agenda

TIMING	AGENDA ITEM	OWNER	SLIDE
5:30pm	Welcome and confirmation of last meeting's minutes	Matt Ball	
5:35pm	General business update	Matt Ball	
5:45pm	Half year results	Matt Ball	
6:00pm	Environmental Update	Nigel Ironside	
6:30pm	AOB	Matt Ball	
6.40pm	Close	Matt Ball	

Open:

Matt Ball opened the meeting at 5.35pm and reminded everyone of meeting etiquette for using Microsoft Teams.

The minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed and the agenda for the current meeting presented at 5.35pm.

General Business Update - Matt Ball - GM PR and Communications

It has been an interesting and difficult start to the year. We are still working through global and local supply chain issues which has led to a build up of containers at the container terminal and down at Multi-cargo.

The port was so congested around the new year that we had to stop taking in ships for 48hrs because the container terminal was so full.

Waiting to see what happens in the wider supply chain regarding Omicron. We are getting feedback from our supply chain partners and they are reporting staff absences are having an impact. Kiwi rail has been impacted so we have fewer trains, less trucks. Overall, the port feels a lot quieter at the moment.

Omicron response

We have had controls in place for two years, focused on keeping COVID out of the port both from the border via ships and at the community end too. Our controls have worked pretty well, and we have managed to limit the spread of COVOD-19 throughout the port – we have not had large outbreaks on the port, whereas some ports in Australia have had to stand down hundreds of staff. More recently with government changes coming in, and with having access to a good supply of RAT (Rapid Antigen Test) tests, we can test all staff coming on site,

and therefore keep the port running. The highest absence rate at the moment is about 20-22%.

Half Year Results

Our half year results are out, and we describe them as being reasonably good. Our breakbulk volumes are up – we have seen a 24% increase in our volumes at multi-cargo, and the same increase in cars. Higher volumes mean profit is up, but so are costs – largely due to COVID implications. Profit is up by 8% and we are paying a dividend to the council of \$2.114m.

Safety

We have been doing a significant amount of work on safety at the port. We are working our way through recommendations that were made in a health and safety report early last year. We are about half-way through these recommendations and will aim to have all the recommendations implemented by the end of the financial year.

Automation

Finally, we have started retesting automation. We have been able to get our overseas vendor, who is based in the Netherlands, into the port. Due to COVID travel restrictions, we weren't able to get them onsite, but now having them on the port means they can assist with testing and addressing issues with automation as these issues arise. It's very useful having the people who designed and built the software on-hand. At the moment, we are dealing with issues as and when they arise, all the while trying to stay positive.

Matt then handed over to Nigel Ironside for an environmental update.

Environmental Update - Nigel Ironside - Senior Environmental Advisor

Nigel began by talking about our dredging consent and disposal consent. We applied for dredging consent in late 2020. We are still working through the appeals; we have had several environmental court meetings with more to come in June and July. Running in parallel to that, we have a High Court judicial review being taken against the disposal consent decision - the EPA granted that consent in 2019, and this is being reviewed by the High Court in June/July.

Noise

Nigel then moved on to address noisy ships that have been at the port recently, specifically the Maersk Nansha. She's not a regular, and we were unaware of the characteristics of the noise profile of the ship before she docked. Once the ship is docked it is quite hard to do anything about the noise. We asked the Captain of the Maersk Nansha if there was anything they could do to reduce the noise

output – however the captain said they only have one generator running and there wasn't much they could do. It's now on a watch list so we know when it is coming and will put it in a different location, perhaps bow south at Fergusson berth, so the noise impact is reduced. We have some management techniques we can use to reduce noise, but this is not always an option if the ship is too big. From a marine safety point of view, we must be quite specific about where these big ships are positioned around the Fergusson wharf.

Nigel then opened the floor to questions about noise.

Bill Endean began the question time by opening a discussion about the alarms from the straddle carriers and the low throbbing sound of the ships that sound 24/7. He stated that the noise is an unacceptable nuisance for residents in Parnell and he thought that the port has control over which ships berth at the port [Note: POAL does not control which ships come to New Zealand]. The issue is with the straddle sirens and low hum from the ships that continue all through the night. Bill is interested to know if the port's recent health and safety review had anything to say about the noise.

Nigel Ironside answered: The straddle alarms are there as a health and safety requirement. This is a tonal alarm; however, this doesn't have to be the case. We are moving toward a broadband squawker alarm, which is only noticeably audible when you are close to the machine, not far away. We have recently purchased six new straddle carriers, all of which are fitted with this new style of alarm. We are working with our engineering team to re-fit our current straddles with these new squawker alarms as well. Nigel acknowledged that the current tonal alarms on the straddles are quite loud and do carry a long way but said there is work underway to try and resolve this issue. We don't have a current time period for this replacement, but we are intending on changing these alarms.

Bill Endean then referred to a previous conversation he had with Matt Ball (GM PR and Communications) where he asked if the port's resource consent requires measuring or monitoring of noise generated by the port, to ensure noise is kept at reasonable limits. Bill was told that no monitoring takes place and asked Nigel if that were true.

Nigel Ironside answered: No, that is not quite true. Under the unitary plan, we have inner and outer control boundaries. The inner control boundary is on Quay Street, and the outer control boundary is further up into the community. Each one of those lines has what they call the average sound levels for daytime and night time that we are allowed to generate, or we must stay under. The average values are the port hum – a general composite of all the noise generated by the port. We monitor it in two ways – the first is that we have developed a 'port noise model' so we can predict noise based on the equipment we use and the activities we undertake, the model will put out a predicted noise envelope of noise made at

the port. We then validate that model by attended monitoring in the community between 3am and 5am to confirm that the model is a) validated properly, and b) the correct level of noise is being identified in the community. We have just updated the model last year, making sure we have the correct sound outputs and monitoring measures. We are currently in the process of doing the validation monitoring. COVID has thrown a spanner in the works, and so our busy periods have not coincided with when they would normally be, and our quiet periods have turned out to be busy periods. We have had a little trouble getting our full suite of validation monitoring done, but we are in the process of doing that now.

Bill Endean asked: Is the validation monitoring done off-site in the community?

Nigel Ironside answered: Yes, validation monitoring takes place in the community.

Bill Endean further expressed his frustration with the ever-present low throbbing sound from these loud ships that have their exhaust facing the community. He described the noise as debilitating and disruptive. Bill stated that this constant throbbing noise is an actionable nuisance.

Nigel Ironside answered: One of the worst characteristics of a low frequency noise like the hum of a ship, is that it is such a long wavelength that it passes through walls. When you are inside, the high frequencies are filtered out by the walls of your home, and you are left with the low “thud thud thud” from the ship. Nigel understands that it is not a pleasant noise, if it’s not disguised by a higher frequency.

Bill Endean asked: Is this noise something that ship owners are aware of? And are the ships designed not to generate so much noise?

Nigel Ironside answered: They are aware of these issues, and in Europe there is a program (NEPTUNE) that looks at the noise generated by ships, and they have produced a scoring system for vessels. This is what we are trying to do in New Zealand – all the ports are sharing information on loud ships. There is a process that ships like the Maersk can introduce to mitigate the noise by introducing a reactive silencer on the omissions – but this is a very difficult process to implement. At the port, we don’t control shipping. Maritime New Zealand are in control of the shipping here in NZ, and all we can do is encourage the shipping lines to try and reduce the noise. We are working with all the NZ ports to encourage shipping lines to reduce noise.

Mike Blackburn said it’s more about the operation times (24/7) rather than the noise. It’s about whether or not people can sleep at night, and people want that peace of mind.

Nigel Ironside answered: The “thud thud thud” that people can hear at night is from the ship sitting at the berth – it has nothing to do with the ship being worked on. If the ship is at the wharf, it will make that sound. The bangs and crashes that happen are an operational noise and we are working to reduce this. We can’t plug the ship into anything at the wharf to reduce the general “thud” sound.

Mike Blackburn asked: Is there anything in the port’s 10-year plan to introduce something where ships can plug in?

Alistair Kirk answered: We are looking at shore power for a number of small ships that regularly come to the port. Right now, there is no international standard around the electrical system for these ships, and very few ships have the ability to be plugged in. We are seeing new ships with this technology being built into them, but it’s not very often we see this. It works well if we have the same ship coming in all the time, but not so well for the big international ships that are always chopping and changing their schedules.

Nigel Ironside said it is worth putting a presentation together for the CRG remembers to talk through what the noise restrictions are and what our noise management plan is.

The discussion around loud noises at the port continued a few minutes further. Please refer to the meeting recording at 35mins for the rest of the discussion.

Paul McLuckie mentioned that the port is a 24-hour operational port, and says they are trying their best – what else can they do? People moved into the Parnell area knowing that there is an operational port in the area.

Bill Endean responded: They began 24-hour operations without regard for the community.

Matt Ball said the port has not recently begun 24-hour operations; the port has been operating 24/7 for as long as he (Matt Ball) has worked there.

Mike Blackburn said there has never been a decibel reading to measure the inside noise, only ever outside.

Luke Niue asked: Nigel, can you please supply us with a list of the ships that Ports of Auckland and other NZ ports have identified as problematic/noisy?

[**Action**] Nigel to provide the list.

Mike Blackburn asked: What ability do you have to manage noisy ships?

Nigel Ironside answered: We can adjust the location of the ship at the port according to how much noise it makes.

Nigel said he hasn't had a conversation with the pilots about how they position ships at Multi-cargo but said this is something he can do.

Luke Niue asked: If we park the noisy ships at the north berth at Fergusson, would that help reduce the noise coming from these ships?

Nigel Ironside answered: Yes, it would reduce the noise, but that area is being used for our automation area. Once that is rolled out and up and running, we can look at the option of using the north berth.

Luke Niue asked: Is the super-heavy scrap metal ship coming to the port any time soon?

Nigel Ironside answered: It is the cargo that makes the noise, not the ship. He is not aware of any scrap metal ships coming to the port any time soon.

Mike Blackburn asked: Are there fewer ships coming into the port at the moment?

Matt Ball answered: Yes, we have fewer ships but more cargo.

Mike Blackburn asked: If the ships are bigger and coming in fuller, are they at the port for longer? Do you now need longer to unload and continue 24/7 to unload the ship?

Matt Ball answered: No, that isn't necessarily the case. There are many different factors impacting the length of time a ship stays in port.

Mike Blackburn asked: When will the port switch to a system that allows the ships to plug in at the port? What is the trigger that will cause the port to make this change?

Matt Ball answered: There is a report on our website that looks into the concept of plugging in (shore power) with cruise ships. It talks about what sort of infrastructure you'd need and what sort of equipment the ship needs to make any investment in shore power worthwhile. There is no overarching body that sets the requirements for ships having shore power.

You can view the Cruise Vessel Emission Reduction Technologies report here: <https://www.poal.co.nz/sustain/Documents/Cruise%20Vessel%20Emission%20Reduction%20Technologies.pdf>

Matt made a comparison to the port's electric tugboat Sparky – we have had to build a charging station and it's no simple job to get power to the tug. We are using four long leads on the charging arm. When you're charging something that has the power and the resources of a small town [like a cruise ship], it requires a chunky amount of infrastructure.

Any Other Business?

Luke Niue asked about the car handling building and how well it is used.

Matt answered: The car handling building is getting well used. Some days are quiet, others are busy, but that's the nature of a working port.

Mike Blackburn asked: Has the port sold property this year to make a profit?

Matt Ball answered: There was a revaluation of investment property which counts in our overall profit – but we subtract that to get the final profit.

Matt Ball thanked the group and closed the meeting at 6:40pm.