



Meeting of the Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee

Date: Wednesday 16 September 2020
Time: 9.00am
Venue: Council Chamber
Hawke's Bay Regional Council
159 Dalton Street
NAPIER

Agenda

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1.	Welcome/Notices/Apologies	
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HAWKE'S BAY REGIONAL COUNCIL**ENVIRONMENT AND INTEGRATED CATCHMENTS COMMITTEE****Wednesday 16 September 2020****SUBJECT: FOLLOW-UPS FROM PREVIOUS ENVIRONMENT AND INTEGRATED CATCHMENTS COMMITTEE MEETINGS****Reason for Report**

1. **Attachment 1** lists items raised at previous meetings that require follow-ups. All items indicate who is responsible for each, when it is expected to be completed and a brief status comment. Once the items have been completed and reported to the Committee they will be removed from the list.

Decision Making Process

2. Staff have assessed the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002 in relation to this item and have concluded that, as this report is for information only, the decision making provisions do not apply.

Recommendation

That the Environment and Services Committee receives and notes the *Follow-up Items from Previous Environment & Services Committee Meetings* staff report.

Authored by:

Annelie Roets
GOVERNANCE ADMINISTRATION
ASSISTANT

Approved by:

James Palmer
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Attachment/s

[1](#) Followups for 16 September 2020 EICC mtg

Follow-ups from Previous Environment & Integrated Catchments Committee Meetings

1 July 2020

	Agenda item	Follow-up item	Responsible	Status/Comment
1.	Councillor Barker Notice of Motion	Referred to 29 July Regional Council meeting	J Palmer	Item on 29 July 2020 Regional Council agenda resolved (as summarised) "staff to investigate establishment of a semi-autonomous unit called 'Climate Mitigation Hawke's Bay' through the 2021-31 Long Term Plan development process including consultation with the community as part of pre-LTP informal consultation"
2	Heretaunga Water Security	Once Tonkin + Taylor report is finalised, staff will prepare a business case to recommend a Heretaunga water storage site or sites for pre-feasibility investigations	T Skerman	Pre-feasibility recommendations for Heretaunga agenda item for decision on today's EICC agenda.
3	Urbanisation of Heretaunga Plains	Resolution to urge Heretaunga Plains Urban Development Strategy ('HPUDS') to take action to protect and preserve productive soils	G Ide	<p>Meeting of the HPUDS Implementation Working Group is scheduled on 14 September (was postponed from earlier in 2020 due to COVID19).</p> <p>The next review of HPUDS due to commence in 2021-22 will consider of a range of issues, including those raised about the Strategy's role in protecting productive soils. The current HPUDS already features the following as one of its six guiding principles <i>"Productive value of its versatile land and water resources are recognised and provided for and used sustainably."</i></p> <p>The HPUDS Review will need to align with national legislation and directions, including the recent 2020 National Policy Statement for Urban Development, plus the Government's new National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land anticipated to be released in early 2021.</p>
4	Integration of Predator Free Hawke's Bay With Council's Strategic Objectives	Arrange a field trip to Whakatipu Mahia for recommendation to 16 September EICC meeting	I Maxwell	A field trip will be planned for the summer months, details will be provided as they become available.
5	Right Tree Right Place Update	Right Tree Right Place concept model and business case to be developed for LTP development process	I Maxwell / C Leckie	Integrated into the LTP development process, with initial business case presentation to 23 September Council workshop

Item 4

Attachment 1

Attachment 1

Item 4

	Agenda item	Follow-up item	Responsible	Status/Comment
6	Heretaunga Plains Flood Control Scheme Level of Service Review Update	Staff to provide an update on the outcomes of the modelling undertaken for the Level of Service Review	C Dolley / M Groves	NIWA has reviewed the modelling for the Tutaekuri river. The outcomes are highlighting the areas which are most vulnerable and this is linked with the conditions assessment. Progress is being on Ngaruroro and Lower Tukituki river models with estimation to be finished by November/December.

HAWKE'S BAY REGIONAL COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT AND INTEGRATED CATCHMENTS COMMITTEE

Wednesday 16 September 2020

Subject: CALL FOR MINOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Item 5

Reason for Report

1. This item provides the means for committee members to raise minor matters they wish to bring to the attention of the meeting.
2. Hawke's Bay Regional Council standing order 9.13 states:
 - 2.1. "A meeting may discuss an item that is not on the agenda only if it is a minor matter relating to the general business of the meeting and the Chairperson explains at the beginning of the public part of the meeting that the item will be discussed. However, the meeting may not make a resolution, decision or recommendation about the item, except to refer it to a subsequent meeting for further discussion."

Recommendations

3. That the Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee accepts the following "Minor Items Not on the Agenda" for discussion as Item 15.

Topic	Raised by

Leeanne Hooper
GOVERNANCE LEAD

James Palmer
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

HAWKE'S BAY REGIONAL COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT AND INTEGRATED CATCHMENTS COMMITTEE

Wednesday 16 September 2020

Subject: CALL FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION NOMINATIONS

Reason for Report

1. To call for nominations by councilors, for HBRC environmental certificates of appreciation.

Background

2. At its meeting on 24 April 2018, the Council resolved:
 - 2.1. Creates three categories for nomination to recognise environmental stewardship, being:
 - 2.1.1. **Environmental Leadership in Business – Te Hautūtanga Taiao me te Pakihi:** Recognises business or local authorities that demonstrate kaitiakitanga, innovation or efficiency, or an ongoing commitment to environmental best practice.
 - 2.1.2. **Environmental Leadership in Land Management – Te Hautūtanga Taiao me te Whakahaere Whenua:** Recognises land users who are committed to environmental stewardship and sustainability in their meat, fibre, forestry or other land use operations.
 - 2.1.3. **Environmental Action in the Community – Te Oho Mauri Taiao ki te Hapori:** Recognises no-for-profit organisations or individuals that are taking action to protect or enhance the environment, or are increasing understanding of environmental issues.
 - 2.2. Calls for nominations to the above categories from Councillors at the Environment and Services Committee held in February and September each year, with the Award being presented to the recipient at the April and November Regional Council meetings with a morning or afternoon tea event.
3. The awards were initiated as a result of councillors' desire to recognise valuable contributions to environmental enhancement by people and organisations in the community in a semi-formal manner as 'nominated' by councillors themselves. Past recipients, by way of example, include:
 - 3.1. **Forest & Bird Hastings and Napier** for Environmental Action the Community in recognition of their involvement in and sponsorship of community and HBRC led planting events, in particular, riparian planting at Pekapeka and along the Karamu Stream
 - 3.2. **Bostocks** for Environmental Leadership in Business in recognition of planting carried out along the Karamu as well as leadership of the GMO Free Hawke's Bay movement
 - 3.3. **James Hunter** for Environmental Leadership in Land Management in recognition of his protection of 51 hectares in QEII Covenants, including 9ha wetlands and regenerating bush/scrublands that would have been lost without intervention, as a Farmer member of group involved with the Massey University award winning study on getting farmers to understand and adopt the newest ideas and innovations from agricultural science, as well as the Huatokitoki Landcare Community Project "Creating a climate for successful catchment management".
 - 3.4. Jill Snelling for Environmental Leadership in Land Management, in recognition of her work turning her farm into a reserve with minimum use of chemicals and a reliance on the old ways of doing things, willingly sharing her knowledge with

others and welcoming groups to gather heirloom seeds/seedlings from her property, as well as supporting the Wairoa nursery project.

- 1.1. Karituwhenua Reserve Trust received the certificate of appreciation for Environmental Action in the Community in recognition of a long history of work stretching back to 1992, planting trees, enhancing the reserve area around the Karituwhenua stream and encouraging birdlife, creating pathways and addressing erosion issues.

Next Process Steps

4. The proposed process leading to the awarding of Certificates is that:
 - 4.1. Councillors email any nominations, including full details of the initiative and supporting information, location, award category and person or group/organisation being nominated, to Leeanne Hooper by 4pm on Wednesday 30 September 2020.
 - 4.2. Nominees' details, including reasons for the nomination and award category, will be collated as an agenda item for councillors' consideration, discussion, and resolution of award winners in public excluded session at the Regional Council meeting on 28 October 2020.
 - 4.3. Successful award recipients will be invited to the 25 November 2020 Regional Council meeting for formal awarding of certificates.

Decision Making Process

5. Staff have assessed the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002 in relation to this item and have concluded that, as this report is for information only, the decision making provisions do not apply.

Recommendation

That the Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee receives and considers the "*Call for Certificate of Appreciation Nominations*" staff report and that Councillors endeavour to provide nominee details as requested, to Leeanne Hooper by 4pm on Wednesday, 30 September 2020.

Authored by:

Leeanne Hooper
GOVERNANCE LEAD

Approved by:

James Palmer
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Attachment/s

There are no attachments for this report.

HAWKE'S BAY REGIONAL COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT AND INTEGRATED CATCHMENTS COMMITTEE

Wednesday 16 September 2020

Subject: REGIONAL WATER SECURITY - COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OPTIONS VIA THE REGIONAL WATER ASSESSMENT

Reason for Report

1. This item updates the Committee on progress with the Regional Water Assessment and seeks feedback and guidance for a proposed community engagement proposal.

Officers' Recommendations

2. Council officers recommend that the Committee notes the progress with the Regional Water Assessment project and provides direction for a community engagement model to assist with future community engagement in making decisions about management interventions for managing water supply and demand.

Executive Summary

3. At its meeting on 2 September 2020 the Corporate and Strategic Committee resolved to:
 - 3.1. *"urgently progress a focussed and targeted engagement strategy with iwi, landowners and wider community on the Regional Water Assessment project to develop broader non-storage policy solutions and interventions for achieving water security in the CHB District, including; water use conservation, efficiency measures, farm systems and land use change, water allocation and recovery policies, recycling water."*
4. After a delayed start because of covid-19, work is underway on the Regional Water Assessment (RWA) but with elevated time pressure in delivery. This is a project part funded by the HBRC under their freshwater security initiatives and partly by PGF funding.
5. The project encompasses 3 main phases, being:
 - 5.1. Phase 1 Data and information framework– stocks and flows of water and supply and user accounts
 - 5.2. Phase 2 Climate change, growth and social/demographic modelling for the development of scenarios to understand the trajectory of the region's future water supply and demand challenges and opportunities.
6. Phase 1 is underway with the consultancy Envirostrat engaged to build the information/data framework. Data sources from a range of councils and agencies are being collated and assessed. This includes an assessment of minimum data requirements and data aggregation. Recommendations to address data gaps will also be part of this phase.
7. This report discusses options for Community engagement with the Regional Water Assessment project. The high level of public interest and the range of management interventions supported by various community interests highlight the need to adopt robust, open and transparent process in agreeing future scenarios and in identifying and assessing suitable options within a longer-term decision making frameworks.

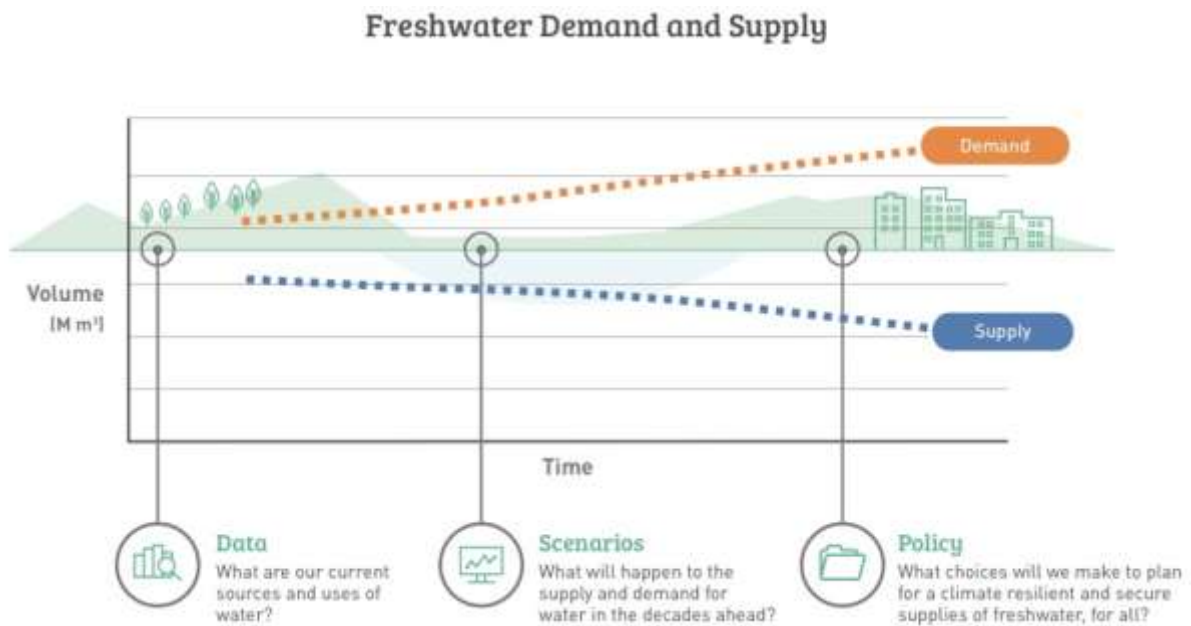
Background /Discussion

8. Attachment 1 includes the most recent version of the Water Security Programme Communications plan, shared with Council on 5 August 2020.
9. Correct positioning of the Regional Water Assessment within the wider water security programme of work is essential. This is because while the council is concurrently

investigating a range of water security options (including Managed Aquifer Recharge and storage options for the Ruataniwha and Heretaunga Plains), this Regional Water Assessment will enable these options to be assessed within a wider context which considers a range of possible future water supply and demand scenarios and in comparison with a wider range of management interventions.

10. This project will provide tools and information to help council and the wider community to make decisions about preferred management interventions and inform regional and territorial councils' strategic and Long Term Plans.
11. The figure below illustrates the key components of the Regional Water Assessment project.

Figure 1: Overview of RWA project



12. There is a high level of interest in water management, and there are several challenges focusing the Council and community attention on current and future management of land and water resources. These challenges include:
 - 12.1. Current water security issues in both the Heretaunga and Ruataniwha Plains, arising from both the limit setting exercises in regional plan preparation and from the severe drought earlier this year and which is still impacting the community
 - 12.2. Encouraging or incentivising greater utilisation of water in areas of more plentiful supply, such as Wairoa
 - 12.3. The climate change impacts on future water supply and river flows and the risks this poses to the on-going water security for Hawke's Bay communities
 - 12.4. The ongoing and increasing need for water to meet expected future demand
 - 12.5. The need to manage scarce water resources and their use in more efficient and sustainable ways
 - 12.6. The sustainable use of land in a way that also meets water quantity objectives.
13. The Regional Water Assessment project will result in development of a natural capital accounting approach and tools that assist the councils and their communities in making decisions about land and water management. It considers both current and future water supply and demand and will develop future scenarios that change water supply and demand including climate change impacts and the impact of urban growth and land use change.
14. These information management systems and tools will enable examination of a range of management interventions that will assist in closing the anticipated gap between supply and demand as illustrated in figure 2 following.

Figure 2: RWA programme structure



Community Engagement Options

15. This report addresses options for ensuring community buy-in and acceptance as the Regional Water Assessment project develops. This project is a component of the overall water security programme being led by the Hawke's Bay Regional Council and both the communication's strategy and the community involvement opportunities will need to be consistent with the overall programme.
16. The expectation is that the four elements of this programme of work will approach a point of clarity / decision in approximately 12-18 months' time. For example, the Regional Water Assessment will be ready for community input, early data from the 3D aquifer modelling will be ready to share with the public and local communities, pre-feasibility analysis (or better) of water storage will be complete and ready for decisions on next steps.
17. All of these elements come together for an informed public conversation around the future of Hawke's Bay's water and the options available to the region to deliver it.
18. Particularly critical to the Regional Water Assessment project is the need to focus people's attention and the discussion on the wider issues and range of solutions rather than the recent focus on storage options. A key aspect of the project is also understanding and preparing for a different water supply and demand future.
19. The project is currently subject to oversight by a steering group consisting of water managers from each of the territorial authorities, and the HBRC Māori partnership and Regional Water Security managers who provide largely technical oversight.
20. We are now proposing to address the community engagement aspects of the Regional Water Assessment project and have identified 3 main options:
 - 20.1. Community reference group or collection of interest groups to follow a community decision making approach (as illustrated by TANK, Tukituki Leader's forum)
 - 20.2. Project team undertakes targeted stakeholder engagement – socializing the RWA and seeking feedback and input into the scenario development and shortlist of policy interventions that will be tested, or
 - 20.3. Establishment of a Community Panel.

21. There are risks and opportunities in all these approaches as summarised in the table below. Given the sense of urgency and short timeframes option 2 would be the most stream-lined and easiest to implement by the project team.
22. Option 3 enables for more considered input by a group of people on a more targeted and formal basis. It has the potential to be much more stream-lined than a community reference group or stakeholder representation model. It enables assumptions to be tested by a wider pool of people than the project team by ensuring input from people with specified expertise with specific terms of reference and in relation to input required and outputs expected.
23. Option 3 is an alternative engagement model not previously used by council for freshwater and the proposal is further discussed below. Option's 2 and 3 better account for the fact that there is currently no new information to discuss with the wider community (the RWA is a primarily a data and modelling exercise after all) but acknowledges the need for a wider input into decisions about scenarios and the types of management interventions that contribute to the outputs from this project.

Table 1: Costs of benefits of engagement options

Engagement option	Costs/risks	Benefits/opportunities
1. Community representative group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer more complex process involving a large group – for set up and management, attendance etc. • Difficulty in reconciling competing ideologies, particularly when seeking recommendations. • Expectations of group members may not be met - leading to dissatisfaction with process. • Lack of specified criteria for membership. • Difficulty in getting full “community representation” • Tangata whenua skepticism of efficacy of participating in these types of forums. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enables wider involvement by interest groups and stakeholders • Wider community understanding of issues
2. Project team direct engagement with key stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May miss some interest groups/people • Potential perception that it is superficial/token engagement. • Not sufficiently independent of HBRC thinking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be rapid and targeted • Focused and efficient
3. Community Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern about degree that panel members reflect wider community views • Concerns about balance /expertise of members • Appointment process may be perceived to be biased 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criteria for panel selection is agreed and transparent • Role of panelists clear • Specified outputs • Enables rapid engagement • Can be supported by additional targeted stakeholder engagement

Community Panel Proposal

24. HBRC has experienced both successes and challenges with collaborative reference groups whose membership is largely constituted on the basis of competing interests and views on the management of natural resources. Particularly so in the case of freshwater. On occasion recently HBRC has adopted a more targeted and focused approach with smaller panels whose primary objective is to give decision makers greater confidence in the processes that ultimately inform key investment and policy decisions. Examples include:
 - 24.1. The RWSS Review reference group that was appointed to receive and provide feedback on that report prior to the final version being presented to Council
 - 24.2. The Capital Structure Review Panel, whose work and recommendations formed the catalyst for the subsequent Port of Napier IPO.
25. Under this proposal, a Community panel could either be chaired (or co-chaired) by HBRC, or operate without HBRC Councillor membership. To maximise its effectiveness the panel should be a small group of no more than 6-8 people. The panel will be made of community leaders drawn from across the region who meet the criteria agreed by Council. For the avoidance of doubt, staff are not proposing a panel of subject matter experts as these skills will be sought in the creation of the report and through project briefs for specific information.
26. Staff have previously sought the views of affected iwi authorities on matters relating to governance and engagement in relation to the Heretaunga and Central Hawke's Bay water security projects. Based on feedback received, it is not unreasonable to assume that tangata whenua expectations would be for high if not equal representation in the membership of this panel.
27. If this option is preferred, it is recommended that, as a *collective*, the panel membership be selected such that panel benefits from experience across the following domains:
 - 27.1. Knowledge of local government and territorial and regional functions
 - 27.2. Familiarity with freshwater issues across the entire Hawke's Bay
 - 27.3. General experience and awareness of the RMA and LGA
 - 27.4. An awareness and appreciation of Māori interests in freshwater management
 - 27.5. Regional and international perspective on the economic impacts of HB primary production, processing industries and trade
 - 27.6. Community education, engagement and consultation
 - 27.7. Environmental advocacy
 - 27.8. Impacts of climate change
 - 27.9. Understanding and appreciation for the role of water across a range of water uses (including community, industrial and commercial water use and use of water in irrigation).
28. It is staff's recommendation that, aside from the Chair/Co-Chair role, political leaders (for example – a selection of councillors from across the region) do not form a part of the membership of the panel. The objective of the RWA is to provide politicians with the tools, information and community input necessary to agree a Regional Freshwater Action Plan that sets out aspirations and prioritised interventions in the years (perhaps decades) ahead. In that regard, the political leadership across the region is the ultimate "customer" of the RWA and would, in staff's view, be better served remaining independent from the completion of the RWA.
29. The panel's role will be divided into two parts. First, to provide feedback and guidance on the delivery of the RWA project plan. Logically this applies to a lesser degree in relation to Phases 1 and 2 of the project which are fundamentally data aggregation and modelling exercises. But the panel would play an important role in shaping the selection

and briefs for the range of policy and investment interventions that Phase 3 of the project will cover.

30. The panel's heavy lifting would commence once the RWA's draft report is complete (currently expected to be in August 2021). Following the panel's own input and design work, the project team would undertake a region-wide community education and engagement process that procures feedback from the wider community on the information, issues and options contained in the draft report. The panel would provide oversight of this engagement step.
31. The panel would then consider and assess the feedback received.
32. At the conclusion of that process the panel will be tasked with finalising the report and provided decision makers with its own conclusions and recommendations. This last step could perhaps be likened to a community hearings process not dissimilar to LTP consultations. The table below summarises this thinking.

Table 2: Role and function of community panel

Role/function of the Panel	Level of effort
Awareness of the data framework phase 1 of the project	5%
Provision of feedback on scenario development and oversight of any work briefs	15%
Development of policy interventions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of interventions to be included • Oversight of work briefs • Oversight of outputs 	30%
Oversight and review of draft report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community feedback assessment • Conclusions and recommendations to decision makers as summary chapter of project report 	50%

33. Council has asked that staff identify an option that will deliver urgent focussed and targeted engagement community engagement. To the extent that the wider community engagement under option 3 does not commence well into next year then this option falls well short of this requirement, despite being very targeted. However wider community involvement can be achieved through the panel by a specific series of discussions (or interviews) with key freshwater stakeholders to ensure that the work done in Phase Three of the project sufficiently captures and assesses the wide range of views on the matrix of storage and non-storage options that need to be considered to drive regional water security over the long term. It should be noted that this would also be the approach taken by staff under Option 2.
34. The level of effort and input required from the Panel suggests that the panel members will need to receive payment and be supported by secretarial services. These will be met by the Regional Water Assessment project. Staff will provide cost estimates should Council select this option and provide further guidance on its preference for panel size and membership criteria.

Options Assessment

35. Staff have identified three options for urgently progressing a focussed and targeted engagement strategy with iwi, landowners and wider community on the Regional Water Assessment project.
 - 35.1. Community reference group or collection of interest groups to follow a community decision making approach (as illustrated by TANK, Tukituki Leader's forum)
 - 35.2. Project team undertakes targeted stakeholder engagement – socialising the RWA and seeking feedback and input into the scenario development and shortlist of policy interventions that will be tested, or

- 35.3. Establishment of a Community Panel.
36. Taking into account the lack of new information on hand, the challenges of convening and managing a potentially larger group comprised of a range of interest groups staff do not recommend Option 1.
37. This report sets out the thinking behind Option 3 in detail. At a basic level it could be described as Option 2 with the addition of an external panel that can provide the community with an additional layer of confidence in the assessment process and final recommendations. Option 2 of course will be more agile and less expensive as this mostly involves the use of staff time and resources already committed to the project. However, there are perhaps political, community and stakeholder imperatives that could make Option 3 more attractive for Councillors in which case there will be resourcing implications that staff believe can be managed within programme budgets. Accordingly, staff do not have a preference as between options 2 or 3.
38. Should Councillors select Option 3, staff will require specific direction on:
- 38.1. Whether HBRC will Chair the panel, and
- 38.2. The size of the panel,
- 38.3. The panel membership selection criteria (Māori representation see paragraph 26, and proposed selection criteria see paragraph 27).
39. With this direction staff can develop a long list of candidates consistent with Council's direction, cost and resourcing requirements, and a draft Terms of Reference for the panel. Final selection would then be a matter for Council or, in the interests of a faster turnaround, a sub-group with Council's delegated authority (e.g. the Chief Executive, HBRC Chair and the EICC Chair).

Strategic Fit

40. This item is part of the Regional Water Assessment which is a component of the Water Security Programme. Council has already confirmed the strategic alignment of the Water Security Programme.

Considerations of Tangata Whenua

41. In relation to the recommendations Tangata whenua involvement in all aspects of the water security programme, including the Regional Water Assessment is expected and management and governance frameworks account for this. The criteria for the community engagement panel that is the subject of this paper specifically seeks that awareness and appreciation of Māori interests and membership of the panel.
42. In relation to the broader project, the project makes provision for the RWA to include a specific and separate section on the views and interests of tangata whenua on water security. Staff have received specific feedback on the strength and value of the cultural case that formed a part of the recent Three Water's review and will be looking to follow a similar approach for this project. The National Climate Change Risk Assessment also provides an excellent example of how an assessment can seek to factor in diverse Māori views and values, or identify and acknowledge gaps in the methodology and options for rectifying the same.

Financial and Resource Implications

43. The establishment of a community panel is provided for by existing Regional Water Assessment project budgets and the wider Water Security Programme.

Climate Change Considerations

44. MfE's National Climate Change Risk Assessment for New Zealand (NCCRA), (<https://www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/climate-change/national-climate-change-risk-assessment-new-zealand-main-report>) published in August of this year, identifies the risk to freshwater water supplies as being central to the most extreme risk – *"Risk to potable water supplies (availability and quality) due to changes in rainfall, temperature,*

drought, extreme weather events and ongoing sea-level rise". Specific reference is made that "[r]ural water supplies are also sensitive to climate change hazards, particularly where reticulated systems are limited or absent."

45. The NCCRA categorised the following as priority risks for the Natural Environment domain:
 - 45.1. N3 - Risks to riverine ecosystems and species from alterations in the volume and variability of water flow, increased water temperatures, and more dynamic morphology (erosion and deposition), due to changes in rainfall and temperature
 - 45.2. N4 - Risks to wetland ecosystems and species, particularly in eastern and northern parts of New Zealand from reduced moisture status, due to reduced rainfall
 - 45.3. N7 - Risks to terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystems, due to increased extreme weather events, drought and fire weather.
46. The NCCRA records, among others, the following Human Domain risks:
 - 46.1. H2 - Risks of exacerbating existing inequities and creating new and additional inequities, due to differential distribution of climate change impacts
 - 46.2. H3 - Risks to physical health from exposure to storm events, heatwaves, vector-borne and zoonotic diseases, water availability and resource quality and accessibility, due to changes in temperature, rainfall and extreme weather events
 - 46.3. H4 - Risks of conflict, disruption and loss of trust in government from changing patterns in the value of assets and competition for access to scarce resources, primarily due to extreme weather events and ongoing sea-level rise
 - 46.4. H6 - Risks to Māori social, cultural, spiritual and economic wellbeing from loss of species and biodiversity, due to greater climate variability and ongoing sea-level rise
 - 46.5. H6 - Risks to Māori social, cultural, spiritual and economic wellbeing from loss of species.
47. The NCCRA records, among others, the following Economy Domain risks:
 - 47.1. E3 - Risks to land-based primary sector productivity and output due to changing precipitation and water availability, temperature, seasonality, climate extremes and the distribution of invasive species.
48. Climate change will impact our freshwater systems in many ways and a transition to more extreme drought-flooding hydrological patterns could have profound consequences for freshwater ecosystems, and severe social and economic impacts. The effects of higher temperatures, declining precipitation and more frequent extremes will have implications not only for land and water management, but also community resilience and well-being.
49. It is safe to say that we expect more extremes, which includes becoming more drought prone and more severe rainfall events leading to flooding, and this impacts the reliability and quality of the region's water resources. We expect temperatures to increase in our lakes, rivers and streams which will affect the freshwater ecology.

Decision Making Process

50. Council and its committees are required to make every decision in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002 (the Act). Staff have assessed the requirements in relation to this item and have concluded:
 - 50.1. The decision does not significantly alter the service provision or affect a strategic asset, nor is it inconsistent with an existing policy or plan.
 - 50.2. The use of the special consultative procedure is not prescribed by legislation.
 - 50.3. The decision is not significant under the criteria contained in Council's adopted Significance and Engagement Policy.

- 50.4. The persons affected by this decision are all persons with an interest in the region's management of natural and physical resources under the RMA.
- 50.5. Given the nature and significance of the issue to be considered and decided, and also the persons likely to be affected by, or have an interest in the decisions made, Council can exercise its discretion and make a decision without consulting directly with the community or others having an interest in the decision.

Recommendations

1. That the Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee receives and considers the "*Regional Water Security - Community Engagement Options via the Regional Water Assessment*" staff report.
2. The Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee recommends that Hawke's Bay Regional Council:
 - 2.1. Agrees that the decisions to be made are not significant under the criteria contained in Council's adopted Significance and Engagement Policy, and that Council can exercise its discretion and make decisions on this issue without conferring directly with the community or persons likely to have an interest in the decision.
 - 2.2. Directs staff to adopt the following model for community engagement for the Regional Water Assessment via:

EITHER

 - 2.2.1. (Option 1) establishment of a Community reference group or collection of interest groups to follow a community decision making approach.

OR

 - 2.2.2. (Option 2) the RWA project team undertaking targeted stakeholder engagement – socialising the RWA and seeking feedback and input into the scenario development and shortlist of policy interventions that will be tested.

OR

 - 2.2.3. (Option 3) establishment of a Community Panel, in which case Committee members will make the following additional directions to staff.
 - 2.2.3.1. Chair of the Panel is to be _____
 - 2.2.3.2. Panel membership to total **6 or 8** of which **no less than 50%** are to be Māori
 - 2.2.3.3. Panel membership to be determined based on the following criteria such that the Panel as a collective:
 - i. Representation from North, Central and Southern Districts
 - ii. Knowledge of local government and territorial and regional functions
 - iii. Familiarity with freshwater issues across the entire Hawke's Bay
 - iv. General experience and awareness of the RMA and LGA
 - v. An awareness and appreciation of Māori interests in freshwater management
 - vi. Regional and international perspective on the economic impacts of HB primary production, processing industries and trade
 - vii. Community education, engagement and consultation

- viii. Environmental advocacy
- ix. Impacts of climate change
- x. Understanding and appreciation for the role of water across a range of water uses (including community, industrial and commercial water use and use of water in irrigation).

AND EITHER

- 2.2.3.4. Delegates Community Panel appointments to a sub-group consisting of the Chief Executive, HBRC Chair and the EICC chair

OR

- 2.2.3.5. Requests that the sub-group consisting of the Chief Executive, HBRC Chair and the EICC chair makes Community Panel membership recommendations to the Council for selection and appointment.

Authored by:

Mary-Anne Baker
ACTING TRANSPORT MANAGER

Tom Skerman
ACTING MANAGER REGIONAL WATER SECURITY

Approved by:

Chris Dolley
GROUP MANAGER ASSET MANAGEMENT

Attachment/s

- [!\[\]\(8ba0a8bc08cfb681721719303df69bb8_img.jpg\) 1](#) Water Security Communications Plan

July 2020

Communications plan for Hawke's Bay Regional Council's integrated freshwater security programme

Introduction

"Freshwater is Hawke's Bay's most precious and valuable natural resource. There is nothing else that plays such a critically important role to the social, economic and environmental future of our region.

"The ultimate wellbeing of our communities and our people depends on how we manage our freshwater resources." Rex Graham, HBRC Chair.

The above position is overarching context in terms of how Hawke's Bay Regional Council leads, manages and engages with the local community and its stakeholders over its multi-year freshwater security programme of work.

This communications plan sets out the principles as to how the Hawke's Bay Regional Council will communicate on its freshwater security programme. It sets out the objectives of the communications; details the materials and resources HBRC will need in order to achieve its objectives; recommends messaging; covers key stakeholder groups and begins to step through the sequence of activity around the commencement of the four work streams.

It does not seek to provide a detailed breakdown or plan for each of the four individual projects as this will require detailed and highly specific communications and stakeholder engagement plans for each of the projects.

Context

This programme of work aligns with several key pieces of current context:

- Hawke's Bay has just come through a serious 2019 / 2020 drought, as have other Councils across the country (e.g. Auckland)
- Communities are demanding political leadership in delivering solutions
- The country is entering into a post Covid-19 economic recovery, with a drive for rapid infrastructure development
- Commitment from the Provincial Growth Fund for acceleration of water security / storage initiatives
- The publication of the the HBRC's Water Security Economic Impact Assessment outlining the impacts to the region of failing to advance water security
- Climate change-related impacts are continuing to be felt – Northland floods, Auckland drought.

The Regional Council has, as a consequence, publicly stated its commitment to actively investigating a range of water storage schemes in the Ngaruroro catchment as well as accelerating and prioritising the investigation and trial of Managed Aquifer Recharge in Central Hawke's Bay.

The Tukituki Leaders' Forum is engaging in the shaping of potential solutions in CHB – effectively picking up the challenge of delivering improved water security for Central Hawke's Bay in a post RWSS context. They will be considering initial sites identified through the scoping level study at the end of July.

Further, HBRC is in the process of employing a dedicated Manager of Regional Water Security. This will provide a clear focus point for stakeholder engagement and communications outside of councillors and the CEO.

All of these elements converge to drive a sense of urgency across the water security programme of work which can afford to be reflected in the HBRC's messaging and approach. With the SkyTEM aquifer mapping project now well underway, the Regional Water Assessment kicking off, confirmation of Heretaunga water storage investigations and guidance received from the Tukituki Leaders' Forum's water storage assessment for Central Hawke's Bay, there is now momentum across each of the projects comprising the work programme.

The programme is now live, is moving relatively quickly and requires more focused, direct and assertive communication across all stakeholder groups.

The programme of work – the four projects

This document covers communications around the four freshwater projects announced to the Hawke's Bay community during the Provincial Growth Fund allocations to Hawke's Bay. They are:

- A whole-of-region freshwater assessment
- The 3D Aquifer Mapping Project
- The Heretaunga Water Storage initiative
- The CHB Water Security Project

While each of these projects can stand alone as a discreet and contained piece of work, they are also integrated and should be positioned accordingly. For example, reaching the pre-feasibility stage of Heretaunga water storage will likely coincide with the completion and publication of the Regional Water Assessment, enabling a more complete conversation with iwi, local communities and stakeholders.

The umbrella of the Regional Water Assessment

It is important that it is clearly understood that while the Regional Council is in action and has accelerated its Regional Water Security Programme, it has not predetermined any one solution. It is committed to engagement, consultation and informed community discussion around the measures which will collectively improve Hawke's Bay's water security.

To this end the positioning of the Regional Water Assessment is vital. While the Council is actively investigating a range of options, it is doing so in parallel with a comprehensive regional water assessment. With the completion of the regional water assessment in August 2021, the Council will be able to start an informed conversation with Hawke's Bay communities around the region's current and future supply and demand dynamics as well as tabling a range of options that can be used to close the gap between supply and demand – for example, storage, MAR, conservation, some potential land use changes.

This way, the regional water assessment comes first and is the pillar around which all options are anchored. It provides the full context around which solutions can be considered, discussed and decided. This approach ensures the conversation with the local community is one of integrity and the best possible information. (See appendix one).

However, it is also important to acknowledge that the Heretaunga and Ruataniwha Plains have been subject to Resource Management Plan Changes, and are already subject to water limits and supply constraints. In the context of water security and allocation, these are the region's most highly productive areas (therefore contributors to the regional economy) and are areas of significant local concern.

Principles of communication

Post Covid-19 and the 2019/2020 drought, there is acute and growing interest in the availability and security of Hawke's Bay's freshwater supplies across the region. This interest will only increase and will at times be periodically intense – during another drought, for example.

Given the interest in freshwater management from across the Hawke's Bay community, the following principles should be applied consistently across how the HBRC communicates and engages around its freshwater security programme:

- **Talk about 'the programme' over the sum of its parts**

Wherever possible the Regional Council should seek to discuss the whole of its water security programme of work rather than as individual initiatives. Clearly there will be detail needed on each of the four projects and engagement will be required on each of them in a standalone capacity at certain times, but the power of the programme is in its integrated nature.

As individual projects running distinctly from each other we miss a huge opportunity to demonstrate a strategic approach and strategic plan in addressing the water security issues.

In continually coming back to an overarching freshwater security programme, the Regional Council can demonstrate leadership across the multiple issues facing water security in Hawke's Bay: from fully understanding the region's future freshwater supply and demand dynamics, to scientifically understanding the region's aquifer systems, to both surface and ground water storage and augmentation initiatives for both water security and environmental benefit.

- **Anchor the programme in climate change**

The Hawke's Bay Regional Council has declared a 'climate emergency', reflecting growing community and Council concern over the impacts on Hawke's Bay of unmitigated climate change. It has commissioned and published significant research showing the negative economic impacts for the region in failing to address water security.

No clearer can the effects of climate change be felt and observed than in the impacts on freshwater. The programme of work fits neatly under the umbrella of the Council's commitments to addressing the impacts of climate change on Hawke's Bay.

- **Lead the discussion; model transparency**

The Regional Council must take the community on this journey with them. Wherever possible, community ownership of the programme, and engagement in it, should be encouraged and fostered. The Council cannot afford to be defensive or apologetic on this programme, nor to allow misinformation to gain a foothold. There needs to be a consistent commitment to engagement but also a determinedness and willingness to disagree with certain stakeholders from time-to-time in pursuit of its freshwater security objectives.

The Council is committed to transparency and, particularly given the critical nature of freshwater management to Hawke's Bay, this programme must be a case study in transparency, proactive communication and engagement.

HBRC should be prepared to move this work forward with confidence on behalf of the region, acknowledging that no piece of work will satisfy everyone. There is an opportunity to be more assertive, direct and unapologetic for more rapidly advancing water storage for the whole of Hawke's Bay within the broader water security programme of work.

Programme objectives

The high-level freshwater security programme objective is to ensure that:

'Hawke's Bay has long-term, climate-resilient and secure supplies of freshwater, for all.'

Sitting underneath these programme objectives are outcomes for each of the projects:

- **Regional Water Assessment**

A regional water assessment and decision tools that directly enables an informed community discussion from which flows policy and investments that promote freshwater supply resilience for communities in the context of climate change impacts.

- **CHB and Heretaunga Water Security Projects**

The development and, subject to viability, delivery of community water storage options in the Heretaunga and Ruataniwha catchments to help future-proof the security of supply and access to freshwater resource for all.

- **3D Aquifer Mapping Project**

Part of the ongoing investment in continually improving our scientific understanding of the physical properties of the region's natural resources – in this case the region's key aquifers. This project supports and informs discussion and decision-making around future water management.

High-level approach to the narrative

The detailed planning for each of the four projects that comprise this programme of work requires a clear, overarching narrative.

This narrative must reflect and speak to the current context in which the programme is being launched, as discussed above.

This programme provides an important opportunity for HBRC to reset its engagement across the Hawke's Bay stakeholders and communities on the issue of freshwater supply and demand. It is an opportunity to start to rebuild trust and confidence and this must start with honest and direct engagement and conversations.

Key points to guide the overarching programme narrative must be future-focused, inclusive and noting that while there's no quick fix, there is urgency.

The following text is a demonstration of how these themes can start to come together in a draft narrative, for discussion and debate:

"Freshwater is Hawke's Bay's most valuable natural resource. The region's freshwater is also coming under increasing pressure from hard limits, moratoriums on new allocations and the challenges of climate change.

In addition to the environmental risks of having less water, ignoring or failing to take action to secure the region's freshwater resources will cost the region up to \$120 million in lost GDP per year by the middle of the century. This is not an option.

In response to this challenge, the Regional Council's freshwater security programme is accelerating its work to tackle the most pressing issue for Hawke's Bay – ensuring secure access to our water resources for the benefit of our environment, our economy and the people of Hawke's Bay: our communities, industries, primary producers and those for whom recreational access to freshwater enhances their quality of life.

Climate change and the increasingly uncertain and extreme weather it brings places greater pressure on us all to jointly develop solutions that protect our access to freshwater, while also protecting the natural environment that makes Hawke's Bay the special place it is.

The work to secure and protect our region's freshwater resources is likely to never be complete. This is going to be an ongoing focus for the Regional Council and for all users of water – not just the primary sector. The burden for better water management also sits with municipal and industrial uses of water. Across all users, there is no quick fix, no single silver bullet and no clear point in the future when this problem is solved. Rather, all elements of water management will be required to play their part, including, for example: increasing water use efficiency and conservation, some land use changes, changes to more efficient horticulture and farming, more freshwater storage and ground water augmentation, investigating active aquifer replenishment and management.

We are now actively working on a range of integrated solutions to begin to tackle this challenge in a strategic way. We are starting with building a crystal clear understanding of our region's supply and demand characteristics and profile for freshwater out to 2050 and beyond, at the same time as securing cutting-edge scientific understanding of Hawke's Bay's major aquifer systems.

At the same time, we are actively moving to targeted solutions to some of our most pressing problems – the impacts of water extraction on both surface and ground water systems.

In order to succeed, this programme aims to rebuild partnerships across Hawke's Bay in service of freshwater solutions that we all aspire to and share. Nothing unites the people and communities of Hawke's Bay more than a desire to secure our region's future through securing our freshwater resources. With this common commitment, we can materially advance sustainable, equitable solutions to our region's freshwater security challenge."

Approach to stakeholder management

The detailed planning assessment of each of these four projects lists well-executed community and stakeholder engagement as success factors. The freshwater security programme represents a multi-year commitment to continuous, deliberate and well-planned stakeholder engagement and consultation if the projects are to deliver on the objectives set for them.

For each of the four projects a clear stakeholder engagement programme will need to be mapped out and executed on a continuous basis. The expectation is that the four elements of this programme of work will approach a point of clarity / decision in approximately 12-18 months' time. For example, the Regional Water Assessment will be ready for community input, early data from the 3D aquifer modelling will be ready to share with the public and local communities, pre-feasibility of water storage and aquifer recharge options will be complete and ready for decisions on next steps.

All of these elements come together for a concerted public conversation around the future of Hawke's Bay's water and the options available to the region to deliver it.

The following table attempts to highlight how a sense of community ownership and participation across this programme of work might occur at a high level:

Project	Interest / desired outcome
Regional Water Assessment	<p>Outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To demonstrate a clear understanding of the region's freshwater supply and demand requirements, both now and into the future. • To use a whole-of-region understanding of freshwater supply and demand to inform both short and long-term water security initiatives and policy. • Engage with iwi and a wide range of other stakeholders (industry, TAs, farmers, communities etc) regarding long-term solutions for water use and management that reflect trends and insights from the water assessment. <p>Indicative activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present back updates and findings to stakeholders and project partners ahead of public release • Provide certain relevant findings or observations to the public via media on an ongoing basis to generate continued awareness, interest and momentum • Run community and specific stakeholder engagement sessions at the three quarter mark of the project to ensure community perspectives and ideas are represented in the final report • Publicly launch the completed report and its key findings through stakeholder events and briefings
Heretaunga Water Security Project	<p>Outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify viable storage sites in the Heretaunga catchment to form a part of the mix of solutions for future-proofing water security • Effective engagement with landowners, neighbours, tangata whenua and key community / NGO stakeholders reduces risk in developing water storage options and ensures the social licence exists for a water storage solution <p>Indicative activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustained engagement with landowners and neighbouring communities in the pre-feasibility phase to ensure understanding and clarity on the scope of the project/s – what it is and what it is not • Comprehensive broader stakeholder engagement on water security programme and the role of water storage while pre-feasibility stage is being conducted • Regular public and stakeholder updates on progress, refinement of possible projects • Key focus on farming, environmental and TA stakeholders

Project	Interest / desired outcome
CHB Water Security Scheme	Outcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify viable storage sites and options (including MAR) in the Ruataniwha catchment to form a part of the mix of solutions for future-proofing water security Effective engagement with tangata whenua, the community and key stakeholders to ensure clear understanding of the proposal, how it would work, what it is and what it is not and seek community support for the initiative Sustained stakeholder engagement particularly in the to ensure understanding and clarity on the scope of the project – what it is and what it is not Increased community understanding through HBRC communications around MAR – what it is, how it works, its limitations, how it could complement other initiatives Regular public and stakeholder updates on progress, refinement of possible projects Key focus on farming, environmental and TA stakeholders
3D Aquifer Mapping	Outcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support interest and understanding of stakeholders, communities and tangata whenua through the delivery of publicly-accessible information that allows them to explore subsurface groundwater systems and understand the region's water / aquifer characteristics Indicative activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a range of communication channels to explain this data and what it means for Hawke's Bay and its water solutions At appropriate intervals and in a controlled way, share updates on this programme, including what is being learned and what the implications are, with communities, sector groups, media, iwi etc Regularly brief media and key stakeholders on data milestones and insights

Item 7

Attachment 1

Stakeholders and partners

It will be the task of the communications team that will support and lead the community engagement around these four projects to determine the right stakeholders that should be engaged, how and at which point. This will require detailed planning.

Iwi are the Regional Council's partners in this work and will be treated as such throughout the programme, including through active participation, review, consultation and elements of project investigation, design and delivery – for example, storage design and construction, the presentation of research and data.

Although this is a somewhat obvious list, the following high-level key stakeholder groups hint at the levels of interest and according levels of engagement that will be required through this programme:

- Ratepayers
- Territorial Authorities
- Central government
- Landowners of water storage projects
- Neighbours and communities surrounding possible water storage projects

- Forest and Bird
- Fish and Game
- Department of Conservation
- Farmers and horticulturalists
- The Provincial Growth Fund
- Irrigators.

Each of these initial stakeholder groups will require significant engagement in their own right. Detailed planning and consistent engagement with dedicated HBRC people will be required here. It's important to acknowledge that, as the HBRC moves ahead more rapidly with its water security programme, there will be detractors.

While HBRC will continue to operate a transparent and inclusive process, there will be times when, in the interests of momentum, Council may agree to disagree with some perspectives. Council should not be overly apologetic about this.

A proposed way of grouping and thinking about engagement with the various stakeholder groups with interests in water and the water security programme can be seen in appendix two.

Integrated communications are critical

Moving forward on these projects under the banner of responding to climate change is a critically important moment for HBRC, and one which must be coordinated, planned and carefully executed over the next two years.

This programme provides an important and unique opportunity to reset a number of critical relationships with key stakeholders across Hawke's Bay, build common ground and accelerate projects of common interest for the benefit of the region.

It provides further impetus to draw a line under previous councils and projects – the RWSS in particular – and enables HBRC to provide tangible leadership on issues of increasing concern to almost every Hawke's Bay resident.

A transparent and proactive approach to engagement and communication will require structure, resource and a commitment to leadership.

A communications team has been established within the Regional Council to support this programme of work with detailed timelines, messaging and stakeholder planning now occurring across all four projects.

Next steps

The purpose of this document is to generate a strategic framework and consistent understanding around the high-level communications approach to this programme of work.

The web pages for the whole water security programme of work are now live and will be continually updated. As landowner conversations kick off over the next two weeks a CRM system has been developed to track and record engagements and conversations within the work programme.

Media engagement around the HBRC's water security programme has kicked off and there is a commitment to continued momentum in explaining the programme clearly to stakeholders via multiple channels, including media.

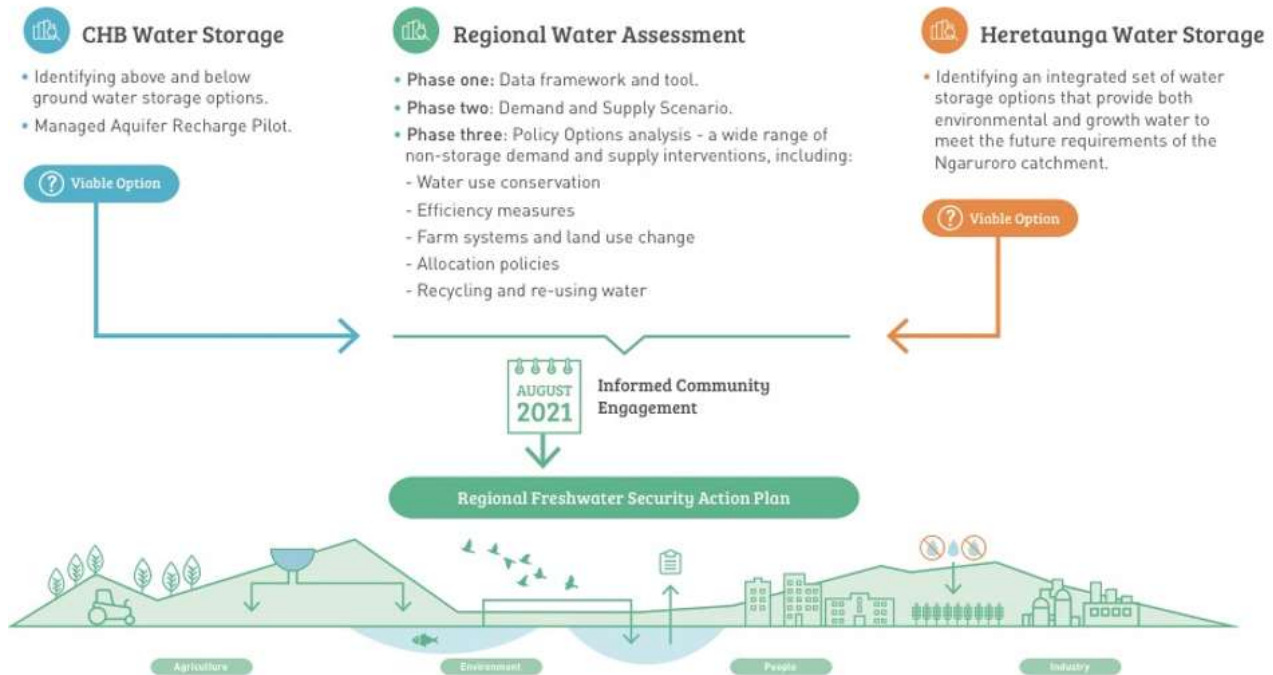
The project will provide a short report to Council on a bi-monthly basis in addition to scheduled Committee and Council meeting updates to ensure alignment of understanding and a high level of oversight as to progress. The communications team now meets regularly.

The most immediate steps now focus on 1:1 engagements with iwi and Heretaunga landowners and their neighbours around possible storage projects in their area, including giving them information packs on the programme of work, with a focus on water storage. At the same time, the Manager of Regional Water Security will be meeting with a wide range of stakeholders and influencers to begin to explain the water security programme in its entirety and ensure clear and direct lines of communication between the community and Council.

The water security website will detail how interested parties can engage with the project directly, set out the criteria it is looking at for water storage in Heretaunga and invite people with potential projects to get in touch directly. This is important in continuing to demonstrate the open mind of HBRC to all possible options.

Appendix one: Regional Water Security Programme Structure

Programme Structure



Appendix two: Water Security Programme: HBRC Key Audience matrix

Item 7

Attachment 1

Keep Satisfied Relevant Interest Groups Ratepayers General Public	Consent Holders Non-represented consent holders	Engage Closely HBRC Councillors Ngati Kahungunu + Taiwhenua groups PSGE's Mayors PDU/MBIE Affected Landowners Relevant Ministers Industry/Sector Groups DOC Conservation Groups Business Sector groups
Monitor Social Media Groups		Keep Informed Local MP's RPC Local iwi Matariki HBRC Staff and contractors Other Regional Councils

HAWKE'S BAY REGIONAL COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT AND INTEGRATED CATCHMENTS COMMITTEE
Wednesday 16 September 2020

Item 8

Subject: WORKS GROUP ANNUAL REPORT

Reason for Report

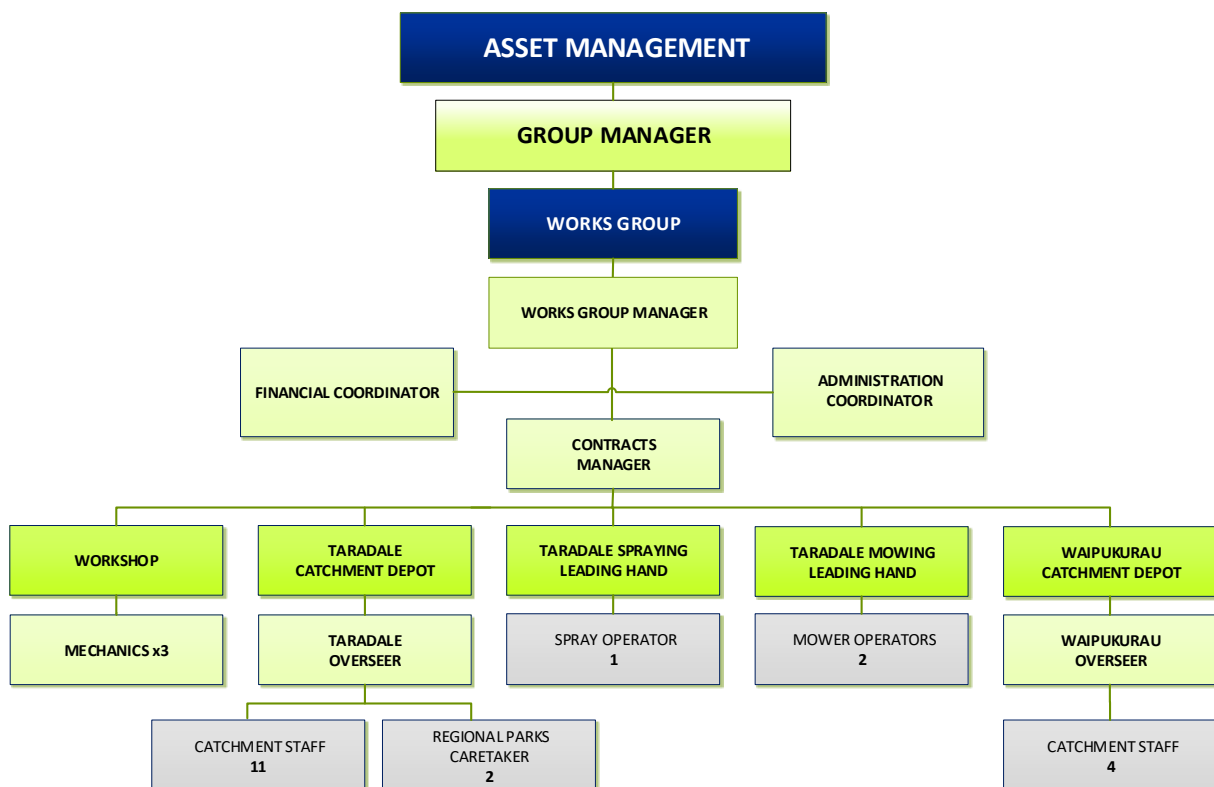
1. This item provides the Committee with an update on the overall performance of the Works Group for the 2019-20 financial year.

Background

2. Hamish Fraser (Works Group Manager) will attend the meeting to provide a presentation of an overview of Works Group structure, focusing on financial performance for the year ended 30 June 2020, along with an update on Health & Safety, environmental management, and a snap shot of projects completed throughout the year.

Overview

3. The Works Group sits in the organisational structure under the Asset Management Group of Activities. There is a total of 31 staff, based out of both Taradale and Waipukurau depots, as follows.



4. Works Group is a business unit of Council, with its own accounts and balance sheet. The majority of work (approximately 80%) is performed for Council, and that remainder of work is a combination of work performed for other Councils and tendered work.
5. Works Group has a strong emphasis on specialised plant, with staff who are highly skilled and trained in their relevant fields.
6. Works Group holds a TQS1 standard in Quality and also holds a strong Health & Safety standard, being SiteWise accredited to 100%.

7. The presentation at today's meeting will display the financial performance of the group, will look at Health & Safety, quality, and environmental performance, and will focus on some key projects that Works Group has completed throughout the year.

Decision Making Process

8. Staff have assessed the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002 in relation to this item and have concluded that, as this report is for information only, the decision making provisions do not apply.

Recommendation

That the Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee receives and notes the "*Works Group Annual Report*" staff report.

Authored by:

Hamish Fraser
WORKS GROUP MANAGER

Approved by:

Chris Dolley
GROUP MANAGER ASSET MANAGEMENT

Attachment/s

 1 2019-20 Works Group Update Presentation Under Separate Cover

HAWKE'S BAY REGIONAL COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT AND INTEGRATED CATCHMENTS COMMITTEE

Wednesday 16 September 2020

Subject: ENVIROSCHOOLS UPDATE

Reason for Report

1. This agenda item provides an update on Enviroschools in Hawke's Bay and introduces a new video to showcase our Enviroschools programme.

Executive Summary

2. The kaupapa of Enviroschools provides our tamariki with real life natural experiences and plays a pivotal role in the delivery of environmental education.
3. The guiding principals include Learning for Sustainability, Māori Perspectives, Empowered Students, Sustainable Communities and Respect for the Diversity of People and Culture.
4. The different components of the Enviroschools process are not linear. They overlap, are revisited, modified and further developed. This supports schools and centres to develop their own holistic approach that deepens over time. It is a journey through which schools and ECE centres travel at their own pace.
5. Today we have 66 Hawke's Bay Enviroschools, having welcomed our newest Enviroschool earlier this month, Kōwhai School in Hastings.
6. The programme includes kindergartens and schools between Te Mahia in the north and Sherwood School in Central Hawke's Bay.
7. We have three part-time Environmental Education school facilitators across our region. The two Kindergarten Associations, Napier and Heretaunga, also have their own trained teacher/ facilitators.

Strategic Fit

8. Hawke's Bay Regional Council has been a long-time supporter of Enviroschools.
9. Enviroschools is specifically designed to meet Local Government outcomes including improving biodiversity, restoring waterway health, reducing waste at school and home, water conservation, energy efficiency, and resilient and connected communities.
10. The facilitation team is well placed to work with schools and their wider communities to deliver on Regional Council initiatives and campaigns, such as Climate Change.
11. Enviroschools programmes support the Regional Council's focus areas for Water quality, safety and climate-resilient security; Climate-smart and sustainable land use, Healthy, functioning and climate-resilient biodiversity, and Sustainable and climate-resilient services and infrastructure.
12. Across our region schools are involved in restoration projects. These include recent planting at the Wairoa River, at Te Huka Waiohinganga at Eskdale and the ongoing restoration of an endangered Kahikatea stand at Omakere. These three examples link in with whānau and wider community.
13. This year we started a new collaboration with Te Mata Park Trust. The park is beginning a journey to create educational resources, in conjunction with mana whenua, for schools and early childhood centres. We are pleased to support this initiative with our local Enviroschools expertise.
14. A climate action camp for Enviroschools students is approaching in October at Guthrie Smith Arboretum. This camp will be an opportunity to engage with our tamariki to look at the impacts and issues of climate change on Tūtira Lake.

- 14.1. Students will be guided through Enviroschools activities. They will understand how their decisions and actions affect the environment, how to build knowledge and skills necessary to address complex environmental issues, as well as ways we can take action to keep our environment healthy and sustainable for the future.
- 14.2. Over the two days, students will first focus on Tūtira Lake then follow on with looking at their own school environment.

Opportunities for Growth

15. This Enviroschools community-facing programme would not exist in Hawke's Bay without the Regional Council's support. The Council is not legislatively required to fund or facilitate this programme, but it is highly-regarded by schools and enables more holistic and inter-generational behaviour change to occur, including career-path consideration.
16. Additional funding would enable more regular contact and support of teachers, more in-class and outdoor delivery time, and stronger associations with the Council's environmental work programmes.
17. The first Hawke's Bay Enviroschools promotional video will be released this month (and premiered at today's EICC meeting).
 - 17.1. The purpose is to grow our Enviroschools profile, raise awareness of the Regional Council and our other funders' support for Environmental Education, and reinforce to teachers, parents, whānau and community what the Enviroschools approach delivers.
18. We have the potential to expand our presence in the Environmental Education sector here in Hawke's Bay. This can be achieved by adding a part-time Environmental Education Advisor role to the team, supporting the Community Engagement Coordinator to:
 - 18.1. Increase the number of Enviroschools in Hawke's Bay.
 - 18.2. Continued relationship with 'Cape to City' Educators through the Connected to Nature teacher workshop series. This is scheduled to begin in Wairoa during 2020.
 - 18.3. Respond to our youth on Climate Change impacts in Hawke's Bay.
 - 18.4. Scope out new initiatives, such as a Native Tree Nursery programme in schools
 - 18.5. Enable the development of local environmentally focused curriculum that is about 'our place'.

Summary & Next Steps

19. The Enviroschools programme is highly-regarded, however it wouldn't exist in this region without Council support.
20. The challenges around our changing climate will be a focus for Hawke's Bay Regional Council and all our region going forward. Our local Enviroschools are well placed to meet this challenge head on. Enviroschools plays an essential role in creating a sustainable future and with continued support we can all contribute to a positive change in our communities.
21. As mentioned in the Enviroschools Highlights 2019-20 update (9 July 2020) we would like to extend an invitation to our Councillor's to join us at the Enviroschools Tūtira Camp on Thursday 15 October 2020.

Decision Making Process

22. Staff have assessed the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002 in relation to this item and have concluded that, as this report is for information only, the decision-making provisions do not apply.

Recommendation

That the Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee receives and notes the “*Enviroschools Update*” staff report.

Authored by:

Sally Chandler
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
COORDINATOR (SCHOOLS)

Approved by:

Drew Broadley
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND
COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

Jessica Ellerm
GROUP MANAGER CORPORATE SERVICES

Attachment/s

There are no attachments for this report.

HAWKE'S BAY REGIONAL COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT AND INTEGRATED CATCHMENTS COMMITTEE

Wednesday 16 September 2020

**Subject: HAWKE'S BAY BIOSECURITY & BIODIVERSITY SECTION 17A
EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY REVIEW**

Item 10

Reason for Report

1. This item sets out the findings of an independent review of Council's biosecurity functions, and outlines proposals that respond to the reviewer's recommendations for change, which will be put to Council for later consideration in the Long Term Plan (LTP) development process.

Executive Summary

2. The recommendations from the Review for the overall biosecurity programme, responding to the reviewer's comments, are shown in italics following.
 - 2.1. HBRC should be spending more on biosecurity. How much more and on which programmes requires a business case analysis through the LTP process to examine staffing and budget needs based on the finding in this report.
 - 2.1.1. *Staff have reviewed budgets and in line with minimising operational cost increases for the LTP will be seeking a small increase in overall budgets. Significant work is occurring to reorganise and realign resources to improve outcomes. Further advice will come to council on this as part of the LTP development.*
 - 2.2. Review the efficiency and financial sustainability of the subsidy programmes for plant and animal pests.
 - 2.2.1. *The work for plant pest will commence later this financial year and will form a proposal for change in an annual plan in the 2021-2031 LTP. It requires a greater level of analysis and more time than our LTP process allows. A further, more detailed review is currently underway for our possum control activities. Further advice will come to council on this matter as part of the LTP development.*
 - 2.3. Follow up and address the management related and operational suggestions made in the staff, contractor and community surveys. *Underway now.*
 - 2.4. Restructuring budgets to align with pest programmes (or at least ability to report at this level) would improve transparency and the ability to benchmark against other councils. *Underway now.*
 - 2.5. Be clear on how the resources dedicated to the Predator Free Hawke's Bay programme relate to delivery of larger RPMP biosecurity objectives. The PFHB resources are significant and can alter the perception of HBRC's biosecurity budget depending on how they are presented.
 - 2.5.1. *This will be clarified and budgets are currently being separated out for financial management in year one of the LTP.*
 - 2.6. Promote a standardised biosecurity budget structure among regional councils.
 - 2.6.1. *This will be taken through the regional sector BioManagers' group for advancement.*

Background/Discussion

The review

3. This review meets the requirements of S17a of the Local Government Act 2002 that requires, that a local authority must review the cost-effectiveness of current arrangements for meeting the needs of communities within its district or region for good-quality local infrastructure, local public services, and performance of regulatory functions.

The reviewer

4. An independent reviewer was engaged by the Group Manager, Integrated Catchment Management to assess and make recommendations on the efficiency and effectiveness of council's biosecurity and biodiversity functions.
5. The reviewer is Kevin Collins from the Waikato. Kevin has a Master of Environmental Science and Policy degree from Johns Hopkins University in the United States. Prior to his consulting career, Kevin managed biosecurity and biodiversity programmes for Waikato Regional Council.
6. His skills and experience have been shaped by more than 30 years of practical experience. Kevin has worked on a number of pest management issues and was part of the regional council steering group that developed the "Future of Pest Management" proposals with the Crown.
7. As chair of the Regional Council Biodiversity Working Group, Kevin was instrumental in launching the "Strategic Roadmap for Biosecurity and Biodiversity Research." He currently chairs the joint MfE/regional council Environmental Monitoring and Reporting Group developing biodiversity and biosecurity indicators for regional councils.
8. Kevin also is a knowledge broker for the NZ Biological Heritage National Science Challenge. The Challenge's mission is to reverse the decline of New Zealand's biological heritage, through a national partnership to deliver a step-change in research innovation, globally leading technologies and community and sector action.

The scope

9. Kevin was asked to undertake the following activities.
 - 9.1. A review of the allocation of resources through HBRC's LTP to the service level statements with comment on the adequacy of resourcing and the spread of resourcing across the projects and programmes. Comment on the adequacy of resourcing to achieve the LTP service level statements.
 - 9.2. Review the overall Catchment Services budget and comment on the allocation of resources across areas that are 'core' to HBRC's functions and statutory responsibilities and those that are discretionary.
 - 9.3. Comment on the design, structure and planned nature of delivery of the range of programmes and projects with specific reference to their fitness for purpose when compared to modern biosecurity practice, with a particular focus on rabbits, possums and Chilean Needle Grass. Identify areas for improvement and areas of high quality.
 - 9.4. Review the maintenance control costs for the regions Possum Control Area programme and comment on the cost effectiveness of contract delivery of this work compared to in house delivery.
 - 9.5. Comment on the activities delivered by the Catchment Services team and if better alignment of these is possible, to drive greater impact for biodiversity outcomes.
 - 9.6. Review the cost recovery arrangements for the projects and programmes and compare this to national best practice.
 - 9.7. Comment on the need for Pathways Management Plans for the region.

- 9.8. Comment on the management of stakeholder and partner relationships.
10. The attached report provides the detail of the findings and Kevin will be present at the meeting to provide additional explanations as requested.

Review findings at a high level

11. While the Biosecurity Act gives councils wide ranging powers to carry out pest management activities, it does not require any particular level of pest control or that any pest control occur at all. The Act stipulates what must be included in a regional pest management plan if a council chooses to have one, but it does not stipulate outcomes or performance levels.
12. In line with the point noted above, acceptable levels of “efficiency and effectiveness” in pest management are left to the discretion of councils. Councils themselves decide what constitutes “efficient and effective” pest management in the context of their region and their community expectations. In practice, this means that the approach taken by councils often differs widely.
13. The sector does not currently have any form of benchmarking. This review required that we develop our own. Across all sectors, the benchmarking surveys show clear agreement that in many cases HBRC’s biosecurity and biodiversity programmes are not considered to be operating as efficiently and effectively as possible.
14. A lack of resources – both staff time and money – is limiting the effective delivery of biosecurity programmes. This is particularly true for possum control, Chilean Needle grass, rabbits and for the biodiversity programme as a whole. Analysis done for this report shows that while HBRC’s budgets have grown, so have community expectations of how much work will be done. The starting point of HBRC’s biosecurity budgets was relatively small and budgets remain smaller than similar councils.
15. Compared to other regional councils, HBRC generally spends less on biosecurity – both in absolute terms and proportionally.
16. A useful comparative measure is to look at councils of similar rating base and total budget. Hawke’s Bay Regional Council does not compare well when benchmarked against councils that have similar operating budgets. The average spend on biosecurity for the four comparative councils is 10.7%, whereas HBRC is 6.3%.
17. HBRC also spends less on biosecurity in absolute terms than its North Island neighbours. We are tied for second to last in relation to total operating expenditure, and it is last based on land area.
18. The conclusion from all three surveys and the council benchmarking is that HBRC is not doing enough to effectively protect and restore biodiversity in the region. The feedback is that that this is largely due to inadequate resourcing.
19. Specific detail and feedback is provided in the report on our Possum Control Area programme, our rabbit control, our Chilean Needle Grass programme and surveillance and monitoring.
20. Well-designed and adequately resourced surveillance and monitoring programmes are critical to effective biosecurity and biodiversity management. All groups surveyed called for more surveillance designed to measure progress toward outcomes. The possum programme was singled out as needing more resources for surveillance. Surveillance for pest plants appears generally inadequate.

Specific recommendations on key programmes

21. Detail on specific areas identified in the review are set out following, including the staff response in italics.

Possum control programme

22. A full review of the possum control programme is warranted. The working assumption is that the total area needing possum control will continue to grow as areas come off TB control and as the public's biodiversity expectations grow. An analysis is needed to fully understand the implications of that trend.
 - 22.1. *A review is currently underway and advice will come back to council as part of the LTP development.*
23. The pros and cons of a contractor-based model should be examined. This will require considerable community engagement, particularly with directly affected landowners. The results of this review, however, suggest that the community is open to having this discussion.
 - 23.1. *This forms part of the review currently underway and will come back to council for advice as part of the LTP development.*

Rabbit control programme

24. A full review of the rabbit control programme is warranted. HBRC is not significantly out of step with other councils. However, there is a clear sense in the region that the rabbit population is growing and that the current programme is not equipped to respond effectively. This is another area where a robust monitoring programme is critical to support decision making.
 - 24.1. *Rabbit control and monitoring is an ongoing issue across many regions in both the North and South islands. Anecdotally rabbit numbers have increased across most of the country in recent months. Options for enhanced rabbit control are going to be raised and discussed through the regional sectors BioManagers group.*

Chilean Needle Grass programme

25. More staff are needed, at least during the busy summer season, if the Chilean needle grass programme is to deliver on the RPMP objectives.
 - 25.1. *Additional resourcing is being brought in for this summer's control activities.*
26. A more complete business case analysis is needed to examine whether the programme could be delivered more effectively in other ways, including control through contractors rather than landowners.
 - 26.1. *This work will take some time to develop and will be brought back to council as part of an Annual Plan process in the 2021-2031 LTP.*
27. The Chilean needle grass surveillance programme should be reviewed to determine if it can confidently determine the current level of infestation and reliably detect spread.
 - 27.1. *This work will take some time to develop and will be brought back to council as part of an Annual Plan process in the 2021-2031 LTP.*

Biodiversity programme

28. HBRC should be spending more on biodiversity. How much more and where requires a business case analysis through the LTP process to examine staffing and budget needs based on the finding in this report.
 - 28.1. *Noted, increases to the biodiversity programme will be brought forward as part of the LTP development.*
29. Follow up and address the management related and operational suggestions made in the staff, contractor and community surveys. *Underway.*
30. Address the findings in the 2020 Lambourne report, particularly how to deliver the community's desire for more work to enhance biodiversity.
 - 30.1. *Noted, increases to the biodiversity programme will be brought forward as part of the LTP development.*

31. Work with regional councils and central government to implement nationally-consistent biodiversity monitoring programmes targeted at documenting regional state and trend (Tier 1) and measuring management effectiveness at sites (Tier 2).
 - 31.1. *To be raised and promoted through the regional sector BioManagers' group.*
32. Consider operational changes to deliver biodiversity improvement more effectively. For example, Greater Wellington Regional Council said it has "found it very beneficial to have both biodiversity policy/planning and operational skills and capacity in one department."
 - 32.1. *Noted, this will be explored into the future through discussions with regions like GWRC and through the regional sector BioManagers' group.*
33. Treat biodiversity as a separate budget line in annual planning and reporting documents. *Underway.*

Surveillance and monitoring

34. Develop an Envirolink grant application, coordinated with other regional councils, to create an effective, affordable and statistically valid regional pest plant surveillance methodology.
 - 34.1. *To be raised through the regional sector BioManagers' group.*
35. Collaborate with the Biological Heritage National Science Challenge, which is developing a research theme on managing multiple pest plants at landscape scales.
 - 35.1. *Engagement with the National Science Challenges has been variable for the sector. Our ability to collaborate is limited by the capacity of staff. We will continue to explore the options and opportunities.*
36. Evaluate the effectiveness of surveillance practices of other councils and agencies on a programme-by-programme basis. For example, Marlborough District does twice annual intensive in-water surveillance for marine pests, while HBRC monitors inner Ahuriri Harbour using divers every two to three years if finances allow.
 - 36.1. *Ongoing benchmarking will occur through the regional sector BioManagers' group.*

Other Considerations

37. The proposals in this paper have potential impacts on the current LTP development. Staff are preparing advice specifically on changes to the Possum Control Area programme and our approach to our animal pest subsidy programme. This advice will come to Council subsequently through the development of the LTP. Ultimately there may be matters associated with the proposals that need to be specifically consulted on through the LTP process.

Decision Making Process

making provisions do not apply.

Recommendations

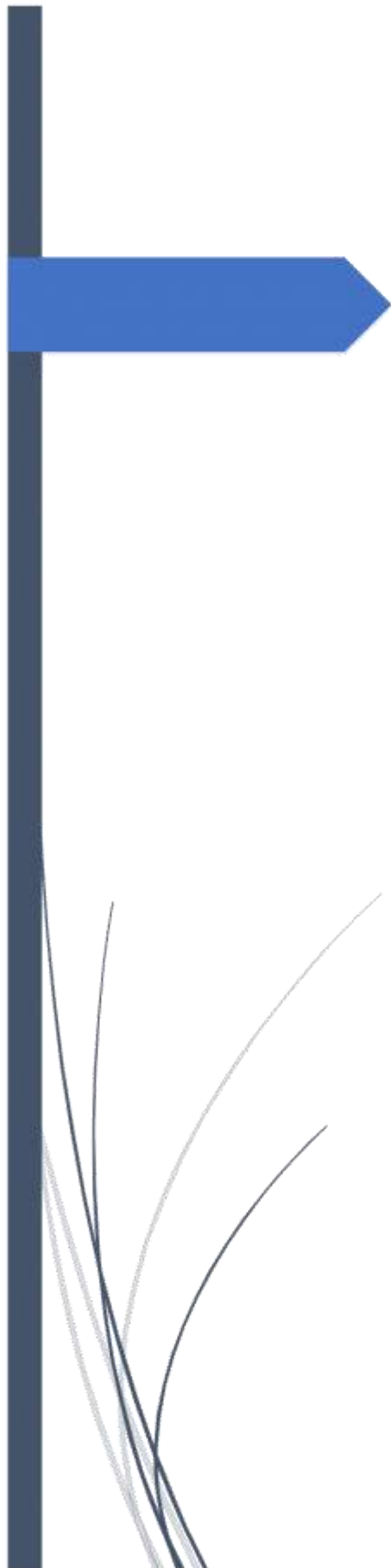
That the Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee receives and notes the "Hawke's Bay Biosecurity & Biodiversity Section 17a Effectiveness and Efficiency Review" staff report.

Authored & Approved by:

Iain Maxwell
GROUP MANAGER INTEGRATED
CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT

Attachment/s

[!\[\]\(21199eb166cc97331a0c54c649195dcc_img.jpg\) 1](#) Hawke's Bay Biosecurity and Biodiversity Review report



Hawke's Bay Biosecurity and Biodiversity Review

An Assessment of Efficiency and
Effectiveness

Collins Consulting
AUGUST 2020

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Executive Summary

While the Biosecurity Act gives regional councils wide ranging powers to carry out pest management activities, it does not require any particular level of pest control or that any pest control occur at all. The Act stipulates what must be included in a regional pest management plan if a council chooses to have one, but it does not stipulate outcomes or performance levels.

Acceptable levels of "efficiency and effectiveness" in pest management are left to the discretion of councils. Councils themselves decide what constitutes "efficient and effective" pest management in the context of their region and their community expectations. In practice, this means that the approach taken by councils often differs widely. The conclusions reached in this report should be read in this context.

That said, biosecurity is an activity designed to help achieve a desired outcome, it is not an outcome in and of itself. For regional councils, the desired outcome is usually improved economic or environmental wellbeing. The decisions made by councils about what is "efficient and effective" should be supported by robust, well-designed monitoring programmes that measure changes in those outcomes and relate them, as much as possible, to the resources spent on biosecurity operations. The systematic collection and analysis of the right data is critical to measuring those changes.

HBRC, through Predator Free Hawke's Bay (PFHB), has done a commendable job supporting research into maximising pest control effectiveness and monitoring biodiversity outcomes. That work should continue and be extended to benefit other council biosecurity programmes.

Biosecurity programmes at HBRC

Across all sectors, the surveys showed clear agreement that in many cases Hawke's Bay Regional Council's biosecurity and biodiversity programmes are not considered to be operating as efficiently and effectively as possible.

There is a clear concern among staff that a lack of resources – both staff time and money – is limiting the effective delivery of biosecurity programmes. This is particularly true for possum control, Chilean needle grass, rabbits and for the biodiversity programme as a whole. Analysis done for this report shows that while HBRC's budgets have grown, so have community expectations of how much work will be done. The starting point of HBRC's biosecurity budgets was relatively small and budgets remain smaller than similar councils.¹

Only four of 17 staff said unequivocally that their team had enough resources to deliver on its goals. Similarly, an overwhelming majority of staff felt their team did not have enough people to deliver its work programmes.

The standout theme in the comments was that effectiveness was undermined by inadequate budgets and overstretched staff: *"Have done well for a long time with limited staff - but as programmes have gotten bigger - and no increase in resources - gaps are starting to appear..."*

On a more positive note, half of the community respondents said the RPMP "always" or "usually" meets the needs of their organisation. Another four answered "sometimes." Only two said the RPMP "rarely" meets their needs. Although the sample size was small, the results are encouraging.

¹ As will be noted elsewhere in the report, comparison of regional council biosecurity budgets is complicated by very different approaches to accounting and reporting.

In the community and stakeholder survey, there was a strong theme of wanting improvements to the possum control programme. One respondent said: “[exTb] areas are being handed back to landowners with very little and normally no knowledge of the situation and importance of possum control. It is naturally going to deteriorate over time. ... Not necessarily by intent but by complacency and the swiftness in which possum numbers bounce back.”

Compared to other regional councils, HBRC generally spends less on biosecurity – both in absolute terms and proportionally.

Across the wide range of regional councils and unitary authorities, biosecurity budgets average about 6% of total operating expenditure. That average, however, includes examples of unusually high and low expenditure.

A more useful comparative measure is to look at councils of similar rating base and total budget. Hawke's Bay Regional Council does not compare well when benchmarked against councils that have similar operating budgets. The average for the four comparative councils in the table below is 10.7%, whereas HBRC is 6.3%

Council	Total operating expenditure (\$ in thousands)	Biosecurity as % of total council operating expenditure
Environment Southland	\$36,195	10.4%
Northland	\$49,454	14.8%
Hawke's Bay	\$56,509	6.3%
Horizons	\$62,572	10%
Otago	\$64,590	7.8%

HBRC also spends less on biosecurity in absolute terms than its North Island neighbours. The table below shows that it is tied for second to last in relation to total operating expenditure, and it is last based on land area.

HBRC overall comparison with selected North Island councils

Council	Total Biosecurity Budget (\$ in thousands)	Total operating expenditure (\$ in thousands)	Biosecurity as % of total council operating expenditure	Council land area in square km	Biosecurity budget per square km
Bay of Plenty	\$5,700	\$134,051	4.2%	12,071	\$472
Hawke's Bay	\$3,615	\$56,509	6.3%	14,137	\$255
Horizons	\$6,294	\$62,572	10%	22,220	\$283
Northland	\$7,356	\$49,454	14.8%	12,498	\$588

Taranaki	\$4,108	\$34,359	11.9%	7,254	\$566
Waikato	\$8,813	\$141,512	6.2%	23,902	\$369

Pest Animal Programmes

HBRC's pest animals programme has seen a 29% increase in actual expenditure from FY 15/16 to 19/20.² This figure is total external expenditure and is useful to look at trends in funding without the complication of internal time, overheads, depreciation, etc.

HBRC has a total pest animal budget (including Predator Free Hawke's Bay) of \$2.5 million. However, excluding PFHB reduces the budget figure to \$1.5 million, which is lower than the survey average of \$1.9 million across eight responses.³

In its survey response, HBRC reported three staff FTE in its pest animal programme; the average from the council survey was seven staff. However, HBRC has six staff in the Predator Free Hawke's Bay team. If those are included in the total, there are nine staff working on pest animal control.

In its 2018 Long Term Plan, HBRC committed to \$200,000 per year for 10 years for the Predator Free Hawke's Bay project to add feral cats, stoats and ferrets to the Possum Control Area (PCA) programme (assuming matched external funding). This is a commendable initiative but it does raise the question of how the resources dedicated to PFHB relate to larger RPMP objectives and to areas outside the PCAs. As shown above, those resources are significant and can alter the perception of HBRC's biosecurity budget depending on how they are presented.

Pest Plant Programmes

HBRC's pest plant programme has seen a 43% increase in actual external expenditure from FY 15/16 to 19/20.⁴

This is a significant percentage increase, however the current total pest plant budget of \$950,000 remains well below the average of \$1.6 million across eight survey responses from other councils.

Similarly, HBRC has 4.5 staff FTEs in its pest plant programme; the average from the council survey was eight FTE.

Marine pest programmes

Regional council marine biosecurity is in its infancy and there continues to be disagreement among councils over the degree to which they should even be involved. However, HBRC's budget and staffing are low compared to the councils that responded to the survey.

Possum control programme

Staff and contractors both scored the possum control programme as relatively efficient. The average staff score was 64 out of 100, while contractors scored it an average of 60 out of 100.⁵

² \$1.32 million to \$1.714 million

³ The survey did not ask councils if their budgets include projects similar to Predator Free Hawke's Bay. However, the author is not aware of similar arrangements. As with other biosecurity budget issues, this makes it difficult to compare fairly across councils.

⁴ \$202,000 to \$289,000

⁵ 1 being "not at all efficient" to 100 "very efficient"

At the same time, there were strong reservations expressed by both groups about how the programme is delivered, including the reliance on control by land owners.

The community respondents had the lowest opinion of the possum control programme. Most respondents thought the possum programme is not very efficient, with an average score of 49 out of 100 from 14 respondents⁶. Comments favouring an approach that made greater use of possum control contractors appeared in a variety of forms.

Of the regional councils that responded to the survey, the average total possum control budget was \$2 million. HBRC's programme is half that amount, even though the budget increased 22% in the past five years.⁷ The budget for HBRC's possum programme also is less than all but one of its immediate North Island neighbours that provided data.

Comparisons of possum control budgets are complex. For example, councils for which possums are a landowner responsibility would nominally consider their entire region to be "under control" every year. In contrast, councils that use staff or contractors will see their budgets fluctuate, possibly significantly, from year to year depending on the size and type of area that needs control.

Taking these considerations into account and based on the limited data available, HBRC's programme is not out of step with other councils or OSPRI in terms of cost per hectare.

However, the HBRC programme has potential weakness in three areas.

First, the council's ability to monitor actual possum numbers in its control areas has diminished as the total programme has become larger in area. Staff report that currently only about 10% of the area is monitored every year. There is no universal "best practice" in this area because the recovery in possum numbers after control is affected by many variables. For example, possum numbers are affected by whether an area has significant barriers (roads, rivers, etc.) that reduce reinvasion. Numbers also are affected by how effective the initial control was. Nevertheless, a 10% monitoring rate suggests a high level of uncertainty that creates risk. For contrast, Horizons Regional Council reported that all possum control operations are monitored every four years; Greater Wellington reported that it monitors about 40% annually.

Second, the land occupier responsibility model is intrinsically harder to monitor than having work done by contractors or staff. This is partly because there are numerically more landowners doing control on their own properties than the number of contractors it would take to control a similar sized area. Moreover, contractors or staff will be more singularly focused on meeting their performance targets. This is in contrast to landowners for whom possum control will be one of the many jobs to be done on the property; even with the best of intentions, possum control might be done haphazardly or even missed completely.

The third weakness is that HBRC does not have a robust region-wide biodiversity monitoring programme to help understand the effect of its management programmes, including possum control.

Rabbit control programme

No group thinks that the rabbit control programme is very efficient or effective. Community respondents scored the programme the lowest of the three groups, at 20 out of 100. The staff

⁶ Respondents were instructed to skip questions that were not relevant to their organisation

⁷ Job code 660002

average was 35 out of 100, with contractors giving it 39 out of 100. The low scores from each group reflect concern voiced throughout the survey about a growing rabbit population.

Otago, Canterbury and Wellington regional councils all have rabbit control programmes that warrant in-depth comparisons. The community responses did not suggest a particular model; they just wanted help. *"I don't have a solid answer but it needs attention. The landowners of HB need help with this, of which I am one. Rabbits are a significant and increasing problem..."*

Chilean needle grass control programme

Chilean needle grass is a pest that affects far fewer landowners than more common pests such as possums and rabbits. This is reflected in the relatively few comments made about it by contractors and the community. Nevertheless, the average community "efficiency" score for the Chilean needle grass programme was quite low. (Respondents were told to skip this question if it was not relevant to them, which suggests that the reason for the low score should be investigated more deeply.)

HBRC staff have much stronger views on the Chilean needle grass programme. Management of Chilean needle grass was seen as "going backwards" in one staff comment. The general view was that the intrinsic difficulties identifying and controlling Chilean needle grass made the programme very hard to deliver with current resources. "If our manpower stays the same, and the trend [of finding new properties every year] continues, we simply won't be able to do our best with that programme ... the last two seasons have been difficult enough."

This trend is concerning in terms of financial sustainability because the programme has already had a 159% increase⁸ in spending over the past four years -- \$27,000 to \$70,000. Although the dollar amount involved is relatively small, it is unlikely that this rate of increase will be financially sustainable over time. According to staff, the increase was a result of moving land occupiers away from self-control and toward using a contractor, which involves a 50% Council subsidy, as well as new infestations being found. The efficiency of the subsidy model should be evaluated in light of this trend.

HBRC biodiversity programme

The conclusion from all three surveys and the council benchmarking is that HBRC is not doing enough to effectively protect and restore biodiversity in the region. The comments were clear that that this is largely due to inadequate resourcing.

Hawke's Bay Regional Council's biodiversity budget is \$718,000, which is well below many other councils. The average for councils as percentage of total operating expenditure is 2.45%; HBRC is 1.2%.

In their comments, community respondents said they were pleased to see an increased emphasis on biodiversity, but wanted more. One community comment said, *"Having seen the evolution of the 'Biodiversity Division' of HBRC, from the outside looking it seems to be a little ad hoc... a mish mash of partially apportioned staff and tasks. ... it seems it could do with (dare a say it) a review or some sort, and appropriate funding."* In a similar vein, another commented, *"A newly evolved underfunded 'division' has little chance of achieving [biodiversity goals]."*

Biodiversity staff numbers were not available for all councils, partly because councils often have biodiversity responsibilities embedded in multiple roles rather than having separate "biodiversity"

⁸ Job code 650007 – expenditure excluding internal time, overhead allocations, depreciation etc.

teams.⁹ HBRC reported a total of 1.5 FTE for biodiversity,¹⁰ which is well below the average 5 FTE reported other councils responding to the survey.

Regional councils have extensive biodiversity legislative responsibilities and ambitious community-driven expectations. Councils are well aware of the pressure that is building from both of those forces.

Central Government is developing a National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity, due to be released next year. Similarly, a new NZ Biodiversity Strategy was announced on August 10 and an Action Plan is to follow. Both of these initiatives will require regional councils to do more to protect and restore native biodiversity. HBRC does not appear to be well positioned to respond to these increased expectations.

A need for better surveillance and monitoring

Well-designed and adequately resourced surveillance and monitoring programmes are critical to effective biosecurity and biodiversity management. All three groups surveyed called for more surveillance designed to measure progress toward outcomes. The possum programme was singled out as needing more resources for surveillance.

Surveillance for pest plants appears generally inadequate: *"This is where I believe we could be doing much more. Active surveillance was undertaken in the past but this ceased a long time ago. Is invaluable for snuffing out low incidence plants,"* one staff member said.

Community respondents were almost completely unaware of HBRC surveillance for pest plants. Of 16 responses, 11 did not know enough to answer the question. Given that 10 of the survey respondents represented farming interests, this suggests that HBRC's surveillance efforts have very little profile in the rural community.

Context and Introduction

This report was commissioned by the Hawke's Bay Regional Council (HBRC) group manager for Integrated Catchment Management. It is part of a larger effort to review the efficiency and effectiveness of HBRC's biosecurity and biodiversity programmes.

The Biosecurity Act (BA) 1993 requires that HBRC provide leadership regionally *"in activities that prevent, reduce, or eliminate adverse effects from harmful organisms..."* It has done this in part by adopting a Regional Pest Management Plan (RPMP) that became operative in February 2019. However, the larger context of HBRC's biosecurity programmes has not been formally reviewed for over a decade.

Biosecurity is an important council function that supports the regional economy and protects the natural environment. The council budgets approximately \$3.6 million annually for biosecurity (including resources dedicated to Predator Free Hawke's Bay) and it is critical to get the best possible value for that spending.¹¹

In addition, S17A of the Local Government Act (LGA) 2002 requires that, a *"local authority must review the cost-effectiveness of current arrangements for meeting the needs of communities within*

⁹ For example, Bay of Plenty reported zero biodiversity staff, although the council has a robust biodiversity programme.

¹⁰ Pers. comm. Mark Mitchell

¹¹ Hawke's Bay is one of the councils that does not include biosecurity as a separate budget line in its Annual Plan. This figure comes from discussions with staff.

its district or region for good-quality local infrastructure, local public services, and performance of regulatory functions."

This report, and associated material, are part of the council's effort to review these functions to ensure that its delivery of biosecurity programmes is cost effective and able to achieve the outcomes the council has committed to in its Long-Term Plan.

Methodology and Report Structure

SurveyMonkey was used to gather the views of HBRC staff, contractors and stakeholders/community representatives on the efficiency and effectiveness of the council's biosecurity and biodiversity programmes. The questions were kept as similar as possible among the groups in order to compare and contrast responses.

A similar survey was sent to regional councils and unitary authorities using the BioManagers¹² membership list. The purpose of this survey was to benchmark HBRC's programmes against other councils. It is important to note that councils structure their biosecurity programmes (and associated budgeting) very differently. Every effort has been made to rationalise the data to compare "apples to apples," however that has not always been possible. In the benchmarking sections of this report, Hawke's Bay is compared to regional councils generally and to a subset of councils with common characteristics. For example, HBRC is compared with councils of similar geographic area or similar total council budgets.

Note that the council benchmarking survey asked for budgets, not expenditure, from the 2019/20 financial year. It was felt that because of the COVID-19 situation, actual expenditure might be a less reliable indicator of biosecurity effort by councils.

Report structure

The "Biosecurity Efficiency and Effectiveness Review" is actually a series of separate reports and associated material. This material encompasses:

- HBRC staff views (18 responses)
- Pest control contractor views (7 responses)
- Community and sector group views (16 responses)
- Information on the biosecurity and biodiversity programmes of other councils (14 responses)
- A consolidated report of key findings and recommendations (this document)

Although key findings are presented in this consolidated document, each report contains insights into the views held by the different groups. These reports should be read separately to get full value from the survey responses.

Notes on the Biosecurity Act

This review does not extend to an analysis of the Biosecurity Act of 1993. The Act is currently under review and subsequent changes may affect Hawke's Bay Regional Council's responsibilities in this area. The Government has said that known issues in scope for this review include¹³:

¹² The council Special Interest Group (SIG) made up of Tier 2 managers responsible for biosecurity and biodiversity.

¹³ Overhaul of the Biosecurity Act 1993, Terms of Reference, July 2019

1. Changes to the primary legislation that are required to clarify or develop:

- A purpose statement and principles to guide decision-making under the Act;
- The relationship between Te Ao Māori and the biosecurity regulatory framework and;
- Roles and responsibilities across the biosecurity system.

2. Changes to the primary legislation that are required to support:

- Funding for the biosecurity system;
- The setting of import requirements;
- Compliance, enforcement and incentives; and
- Alignment and streamlining of the Act (including alignment with other legislation and technical amendments).

3. Changes to the Act to incorporate lessons learned and continuous improvement.

It is important to note, however, that while the current Act gives regional councils wide ranging powers to carry out pest management activities, it does not require any particular level of pest control or that any pest control occur at all.

The Act stipulates what must be included in a regional pest management plan if a council chooses to have one, but it does not stipulate outcomes or performance levels.

The purpose of the section of the Act that deals specifically with pest management is:

“the development of effective and efficient instruments and measures that prevent, reduce, or eliminate the adverse effects of harmful organisms on economic wellbeing, the environment, human health, enjoyment of the natural environment, and the relationship between Māori, their culture, and their traditions and their ancestral lands, waters, sites, wāhi tapu, and taonga...”

However, acceptable levels of “efficiency and effectiveness” in pest management are left to the discretion of councils. This is in contrast to the approach taken with some other environmental management issues. For example, the national objectives framework guides regional decision-making in the setting of freshwater quality objectives and limits. Councils can choose at what level they manage water to, as long as they do not go past a national bottom line.

Councils themselves decide what constitutes “efficient and effective” pest management in the context of their region and their community expectations, through development of a Regional Pest Management Plan and other community consultation. In practice, this means that the approach taken by councils often differs widely. The conclusions reached in this report should be read in this context.

Equally, the concept of “best practice” in pest management is applied largely to the technical aspects of control operations. For example, Bionet¹⁴ has a long list of guides to best practice on topics such as possum monitoring and managing the risks from toxins.¹⁵ There is no similar guidance on whether possum control by landowners or by contractors is more efficient and effective. Councils must decide what works best in their own regional contexts.

¹⁴ Bionet is a collaborative partnership between Biosecurity New Zealand, the Department of Conservation, Land Information New Zealand and Regional Councils. The Bionet website was funded to provide best practice biosecurity information for all New Zealanders.

¹⁵ <https://www.bionet.nz/library/>

Findings

Overall biosecurity programmes

Although each group phrased their responses differently, the surveys showed clear agreement that in many cases Hawke's Bay Regional Council's biosecurity and biodiversity programmes are not considered to be operating as efficiently and effectively as possible.

There is a clear view among staff that a lack of resources – both staff time and money – is limiting the effective delivery of biosecurity programmes. This is particularly true for possum control, Chilean needle grass, rabbits and for the biodiversity programme as a whole.

It is telling that only four of 17 staff said unequivocally that their team had enough resources to deliver on its goals. Similarly, an overwhelming majority of staff (13 of 17 responses) felt their team did not have enough people to deliver its work programmes.

Nevertheless, staff generally believed that HBRC's biosecurity programme is effective; 44% said it was "extremely" or "very" effective and 56% said it was "somewhat" effective. No staff said it was ineffective. The standout theme in the comments was that effectiveness was undermined by inadequate budgets and overstretched staff: *"Have done well for a long time with limited staff - but as programmes have gotten bigger - and no increase in resources - gaps are starting to appear..."*

In the community and stakeholder survey, there was a strong theme of wanting improvements to the possum control programme. One respondent said: *"[exTb] areas are being handed back to landowners with very little and normally no knowledge of the situation and importance of possum control. It is naturally going to deteriorate over time. ... Not necessarily by intent but by complacency and the swiftness in which possum numbers bounce back."*

Unsurprisingly, many community respondents said they were not familiar enough with HBRC's budgets to know which programmes might be underfunded. However, respondents were clear that they would like more work in some areas. Goats, deer, possums, rabbits, cats and Chilean needle grass were all mentioned.

"We do not feel the council should do less of anything," one respondent said.

Half of the community respondents (seven) said the RPMP "always" or "usually" met the needs of their organisation. Another four answered "sometimes." Only two said the RPMP "rarely" met their needs.

I suspect that these answers reflect a sense among community respondents that while they would like more work done (or done differently) for some pests, the RPMP overall generally reflects the issues they want addressed.

The contractors surveyed generally had views that were more focused on the pests they were professionally involved with. They would like better communication with HBRC staff, particularly in areas where they feel they have considerable operational expertise. Unsurprisingly, contractors also would like more opportunities to do pest control for the council, which they believe would be more efficient than landowner control in many instances.

Rabbit control is one area where contractors think the current RPMP goals are unreasonable, given the resources that the council provides. Implementation and delivery of programmes was criticised in one comment as *"fractured and ... plagued with personal agendas."* Changing delivery of the possum control programme was raised in a variety of ways, as was a desire for more efficient

contracting procedures: *"Ditch the farmer self-help programme, which is achieving fairly patchy results, and move to a programme more like that run by Waikato RC..."*

HBRC staff do not believe the RPMP goals themselves are unreasonable, but they do believe that under-resourcing makes those goals difficult to achieve. One staff member said: *"The issue is not the RPMP goals, the issue is staff ability, staff numbers and management that stifled the ability to work effectively."* Another commented: *"Goals are reasonable, [but] resources do not align to goals, especially rabbits."*

Similar thoughts were expressed in another comment: *"Comprehensive possum monitoring within a reasonable timeframe. Incorporating predator control into current parallel PCAs is not tenable. We are losing the battle against rabbit population growth. The rook programme may succeed if it's funding isn't throttled/limited to a further degree."*

The staff also believe that operational changes could make for more efficient programmes. For example:

- *Work more as a team instead of individuals within team*
- *Sometimes the pest plant and pest animal team operate as two very distinct teams. This is a missed opportunity*
- *More staff and slight role changes with field staff*
- *Clarification on who we report to directly*
- *I would like to see a procurement person or dept that handles tenders and assignment of contracts so that it is non personal and those who assign the contracts aren't also the ones with relationships with the contractors. These lines are blurred in some areas of our area.*
- *Flexibility to integrate with the biodiversity team*
- *Better contracting system - particularly an impartial tender and procurement system that removes influence of any existing relationships with contractors.*

Encouragingly, more than 80% of staff said the larger Catchment Services Group "usually" or "sometimes" does enough to support biosecurity objectives. Only two staff said this "rarely" was the case. Some comments suggested that staff feel there are silos or not enough connection between the teams. However, this was not an overwhelming theme in the responses.

The staff made nearly 40 suggestions for how to deliver the council's biosecurity programmes more efficiently. Some were more technical (e.g., *"Databases need to be accurate and easy to access"*) and some were quite practical (e.g., *"Rural visits done in block days not half days to reduce travelling back and forth over multiple shorter days"*).

Two notable themes were having more resources and taking a different approach to key pests like possums and rabbits. Overall, however, a key message was the need for more staff: *"Greater manpower to cover the requirements of target pests across the whole region."*

Pests that need more attention and effort

Staff and contractors agree that HBRC should do more to control feral cats and rabbits. The community view was less clear. Goats, deer, possums, rabbits and cats were all mentioned, however there was no single standout answer.

For plants, staff would like to see more control of Old man's beard and Chilean needle grass. Community responses also cited Chilean needle grass, as well as variegated thistle. There were only two responses from contractors: Old man's beard and blackberry.

HBRC Benchmarking – overall biosecurity programmes

HBRC generally spends less on biosecurity – both in absolute terms and proportionally – compared to most other regional councils. See Table 1 below.

Across regional councils and unitary authorities, biosecurity budgets average about 6% of total operating expenditure, similar to HBRC. That average, however, includes examples of unusually high and low expenditure. It also reflects the varying challenges, capacities and community expectations faced by different councils.

Table 1 – Biosecurity budgets – comparison by total council budget

Council	Total Biosecurity Budget (\$ in thousands)	Total operating expenditure (\$ in thousands)	Biosecurity as % of total council operating expenditure
Bay of Plenty	\$5,700 ¹⁶	\$134,051 ¹⁷	4.2%
Environment Canterbury	\$6,018 ¹⁸	\$189,207 ¹⁹	3.1%
Environment Southland	\$3,788 ²⁰	\$36,195 ²¹	10.4%
Greater Wellington	\$6,405 ²²	\$381,606 ²³	1.6%
Hawke's Bay	\$3,615 ²⁴	\$56,509 ²⁵	6.3%
Horizons	\$6,294 ²⁶	\$62,572 ²⁷	10%
Marlborough	\$1,660 ²⁸	\$118,812 ²⁹	1.3%
Nelson City ³⁰	\$250 ³¹	\$112,867 ³²	0.22%
Northland	\$7,356 ³³	\$49,454 ³⁴	14.8%

¹⁶ Pers. comm. Greg Corbett

¹⁷ Annual Plan 2020/21

¹⁸ Annual Plan 2019/20, pg. 24

¹⁹ Annual Plan 2019/20

²⁰ Annual Plan 2019/20, pg. 30

²¹ Annual Plan 2019/20, pg. 30

²² Annual Plan 2019/20, pg. 51

²³ Annual Plan 2019/20, pg. 70

²⁴ Pers. comm. Amy Allan

²⁵ Annual Plan 2019/20, pg. 20

²⁶ Annual Plan 2019/20, pg. 58

²⁷ Annual Plan 2019/20, pg. 102

²⁸ Annual Plan 2019/20, pg. 63

²⁹ Annual Plan 2019/20, pg. 84

³⁰ NCC engages Tasman District Council as the Management Agency under the joint Tasman-Nelson Regional Pest Management Plan for both councils.

³¹ Calculated from survey responses.

³² Annual Plan 2019/20, pg. 65

³³ Pers. comm., Don McKenzie

³⁴ Annual Plan 2019/20, pg. 47

Otago	\$5,083 ³⁵³⁶	\$64,590 ³⁷	7.8%
Taranaki	\$4,108 ³⁸	\$34,359 ³⁹	11.9%
Tasman	\$590 ⁴⁰	\$120,609 ⁴¹	0.48
Waikato	\$8,813 ⁴²	\$141,512 ⁴³	6.2%

Of course, councils vary greatly in rating base and budgets. A more useful comparative measure is to look at councils with similar total budgets. Hawke's Bay Regional Council does not compare well when benchmarked against those councils. The average for the four comparative councils in Table 2 below is 10.7%, whereas HBRC is 6.3%

Table 2 -- HBRC relevant comparisons by total operating expenditure

Council	Total operating expenditure (\$ in thousands)	Biosecurity as % of total council operating expenditure
Environment Southland	\$36,195	10.4%
Northland	\$49,454	14.8%
Hawke's Bay	\$56,509	6.3%
Horizons	\$62,572	10%
Otago	\$64,590	7.8%

Biosecurity spending also can be analysed in relation to a region's total land area. The average for the four comparative councils in Table 3 below is \$428 per square kilometre, compared to HBRC's \$255.

³⁵ Annual Plan 2019/20, pg. 16. Biosecurity and biodiversity combined.

³⁶ Figure includes budget of \$626k for "for research and development for improving water quality, water management, climate change adaption, flood protection and lakes monitoring equipment," \$338k for biodiversity implementation and \$2.8 million for National Wilding Conifer Control, pers. comm. Richard Lord

³⁷ Annual Plan 2019/20, pg. 40

³⁸ Annual Plan 2019/20, pg. 26

³⁹ 2019/2020 Annual Plan

⁴⁰ Pers. comm, Rob Smith

⁴¹ Long Term Plan 2018/28, pg. 29

⁴² 2019/20 Annual Plan, pg. 26

⁴³ Ibid, pg. 63

Table 3 -- HBRC relevant comparisons by area

Council	Council land area in square km ⁴⁴	Biosecurity budget per square km
Bay of Plenty	12,071	\$472
Northland	12,498	\$588
Hawke's Bay	14,137	\$255
Horizons	22,220	\$283
Waikato	23,902	\$369

Finally, we can compare HBRC with selected North Island neighbours. See Table 4 below. HBRC spends less on biosecurity in absolute terms than its neighbours. It is tied for second to last in relation to total operating expenditure, and it is last based on land area.

Table 4 -- HBRC overall comparison with selected North Island councils

Council	Total Biosecurity Budget (\$ in thousands)	Total operating expenditure (\$ in thousands)	Biosecurity as % of total council operating expenditure	Council land area in square km	Biosecurity budget per square km
Bay of Plenty	\$5,700	\$134,051	4.2%	12,071	\$472
Hawke's Bay	\$3,615	\$56,509	6.3%	14,137	\$255
Horizons	\$6,294	\$62,572	10%	22,220	\$283
Northland	\$7,356	\$49,454	14.8%	12,498	\$588
Taranaki	\$4,108	\$34,359	11.9%	7,254	\$566
Waikato	\$8,813	\$141,512	6.2%	23,902	\$369

Subsidy programmes

Land occupiers are responsible for the management of many of the pests in the Hawke's Bay RPMP. However, the council has subsidy schemes to assist with the cost. For example, there is a 50% subsidy that land occupiers are eligible for if they use a contractor to manage an occupier responsibility pest plant, including Chilean needle grass. Staff reported that at the start of the season the pest plant team get as many land occupiers as possible to agree to use contractors. This confirms other comments that staff consider contractors a more reliable and effective way to control Chilean needle grass.

⁴⁴ http://www.localcouncils.govt.nz/lcip.nsf/wpg_URL/Profiles-Councils-by-Type-Index

The efficiency of the subsidy arrangement is worth reviewing. This applies to both underlying concept itself and to the plants to which it applies. One staff member said the subsidy budget is no longer large enough for all the occupiers who want it. Another staff member questioned the value of having a subsidy for saffron thistle control.

In the benchmarking survey, only three of nine councils said they subsidise biosecurity action by land occupiers. None of the comments reflected a cost-sharing programme like HBRC, however this is not a definitive answer.

Pest Animal Programmes

HBRC has a pest animal budget (including Predator Free Hawke's Bay) of \$2.5 million. However, excluding PFHB reduces the budget figure to \$1.5 million, which is lower than the survey average of \$1.9 million across eight responses.⁴⁵

HBRC has only three staff FTE in its pest animal programme; the average from the council survey was seven staff. As with the total budget figure, the assessment of staff numbers is complicated by the arrangement with PFHB, which has six staff assigned to it, for a total of nine staff working on pest animal control.

Table 5 – HBRC pest animal programmes comparison with selected North Island councils

Council	Budgets	Staff FTE	Contractor budget
Bay of Plenty	\$910,000	3	
Hawke's Bay	\$2.5 million	9 ⁴⁶	\$1.3 million
Horizons	\$4.2 million	16	\$1.9 million
Northland ⁴⁷	-	9	-
Taranaki	-	9 ⁴⁸	
Waikato	\$5.3 million	6	\$4 million

Pest Plant Programmes

HBRC has a pest plant budget of \$950,000. The average from the council survey was \$1.6 million across eight responses.

HBRC has 4.5 staff FTEs in its pest plant programme; the average from the council survey was eight FTE.

⁴⁵ The survey did not ask councils if their budgets include projects similar to Predator Free Hawke's Bay. However, the author is not aware of similar arrangements. As with other biosecurity budget issues, this makes it difficult to compare fairly across councils.

⁴⁶ Six of these staff are dedicated to PFHB.

⁴⁷ NRC does not have specific possum or rabbit led projects, rather they have large amounts of funding directed toward stoat and wider predator control for kiwi restoration and forest health. Approximately 30 staff in the team overall. Pers. comm. Don McKenzie

⁴⁸ All biosecurity staff (9) do both plants and animals and also work in the biodiversity programme. I estimate they spend 60% of time on possums the rest on plants (Pers. comm. Steve Ellis)

Table 6 – HBRC pest plant programmes comparison with selected North Island councils

Council	Budgets	Staff FTE	Contractor budget
Bay of Plenty	\$1.4 million	4	
Hawke's Bay	\$950,000	4.5	\$287,000
Horizons	\$1.9 million	7	\$791,000
Northland	\$965,000	9	
Taranaki	-	9	-
Waikato	\$3.3 million	9	\$2.1 million

Marine pest programmes

Regional council marine biosecurity is in its infancy and there continues to be dispute among councils over the degree to which they should even be involved. Some councils see this as largely a central government responsibility that should be managed by MPI, others have formed regional collectives to address the issue.⁴⁹

This review was not designed to be an in-depth examination of HBRC's marine biosecurity programme. However, the council's budget and staffing are low compared to the councils that responded to the survey. See Table 7 below.

Table 7 – Marine Biosecurity

Council	Total Marine Biosecurity Budget (\$ in thousands)	Marine Biosecurity Staff FTE	Surveillance budget (\$ in thousands)	Contractor budget (\$ in thousands)
Bay of Plenty	\$560	3	-	\$290
Environment Southland	\$210 ⁵⁰	1	Covered by staff time	\$90
Hawke's Bay	\$87	0.5	-	\$20
Marlborough	\$135	Biosecurity staff not split among pests ⁵¹	\$110	\$110
Nelson City	\$96	-	\$35	\$36
Northland	\$591	4	-	-
Waikato	\$200	0.3	\$80	\$100

⁴⁹ E.g., the Top of the South Marine Biosecurity Partnership includes representation from Tasman District Council, Nelson City Council, Marlborough District Council, Ministry for Primary Industries, Department of Conservation, the aquaculture industry, port companies, tangata whenua and other stakeholders.

⁵⁰ Of which \$90,000 is ES contribution; the rest comes from partnership with DOC & BNZ.

⁵¹ MDC has 6 FTE biosecurity staff in total with no splits or specific programme allocations

Recommendations – overall biosecurity programmes

- HBRC should be spending more on biosecurity. How much more and on which programmes requires a business case analysis through the LTP process to examine staffing and budget needs based on the finding in this report. For example, marine biosecurity is underfunded compared to other councils, but those needs will have to be balanced against funding shortfalls in other programmes.
- Review the efficiency and financial sustainability of the subsidy programmes for plant and animal pests.
- Follow up and address the management related and operational suggestions made in the staff, contractor and community surveys.
- Restructuring budgets to align with pest programmes (or at least ability to report at this level) would improve transparency and the ability to benchmark against other councils.
- Be clear on how the resources dedicated to the Predator Free Hawke's Bay programme relate to delivery of larger RPMP biosecurity objectives. The PFHB resources are significant and can alter the perception of HBRC's biosecurity budget depending on how they are presented.
- Promote a standardised biosecurity budget structure among regional councils.

Possums, rabbits and Chilean needle grass control programmes

The scope of this review included a closer examination of three key HBRC pest control programmes: possums, rabbits and Chilean needle grass. For each pest, respondents were asked to score how efficient they considered HBRC's programme.

Possum control programme

Staff and contractors both scored the possum control programme as relatively efficient. The average staff score was 64 out of 100, while contractors scored it an average of 60 out of 100⁵². This is an interesting result given the reservations expressed by both groups about how the programme is delivered, including the reliance on control by land owners.

For example, one staff member said, *"Possums are well resourced but monitoring budget is not large enough to be effective; essentially properties only being monitored every 10 years, needs to be closer to three."*

Among contractors there is a clear sense that the possum programme has become less effective in recent years. *"HBRC were leading the country in PCA possum management at one stage. [It's] more what other councils could learn from us, if the correct policies are put in place,"* one said. Another contractor expressed similar sentiments: *"...The numbers of 'pockets' of high possum numbers throughout the region is also indicative of some poor management decisions over the past eight years."*

Among staff, there was only one direct suggestion that possum maintenance should be done by contractors over large areas, as opposed to the current landowner control. However, there was a clear theme that the delivery of the possum programme and its resourcing needed to be reviewed given the growth in the programme. One contractor was less ambiguous and said, *"Farmers who do their own maintenance work are mostly not doing it at the right time or way."*

⁵² 1 being "not at all efficient" to 100 "very efficient"

It is the community respondents who have the lowest opinion of the possum control programme. Most respondents thought the possum programme is not very efficient, with an average score of 49 out of 100 from 14 respondents⁵³. Comments favouring an approach that made greater use of possum control contractors were not universal, but did appear in a variety of forms. One comment said, "[Investigate] a possum control rate which is then used to manage the possum control operations across HB with a regional view. ... With plenty of monitoring." Another comment supported an "HB wide full-time possum cull by professional trappers."

HBRC Benchmarking -- possum control programme

Of the councils that responded to the survey, the average total possum control budget was \$2 million. HBRC's programme is half that amount. The budget for HBRC's possum programme also is less than all but one of its immediate North Island neighbours that provided data. See Table 8 below,

Table 8 – HBRC possum control programme comparison with other councils (from survey responses)

Council	Possum control budget (2019/20)	Staff FTE	Contractor budget	HA controlled in budget year	One-year cost per HA	Total HA in the council's possum control programme
Bay of Plenty	0 ⁵⁴	0				
Environment Canterbury	\$595,000	.1	\$558,000	33,000	\$18	100,000
Environment Southland	\$872,000	3	\$245,000	tbc		355,000
Greater Wellington	\$1.6 million	15.5 ⁵⁵	\$72,000	90,000	\$18	181,000
Hawke's Bay	\$1.1 million	2	\$523,000			700,000
Horizons	\$3.9 million	16	\$1.8 million			1.5 million
Marlborough ⁵⁶	-					
Northland	-					
Otago ⁵⁷	-					
Taranaki	-					240,000
Tasman	-					

⁵³ Respondents were instructed to skip questions that were not relevant to their organisation

⁵⁴ Possums are not a pest in the RPMP

⁵⁵ Separate from pest animals FTE. Council staff do all control.

⁵⁶ Exclusion only to maintain islands currently known to be possum-free in the Marlborough Sounds

⁵⁷ Site led only.

Waikato	\$3.9 million	2 ⁵⁸	\$3 million	103,000	\$38	486,000
OSPRI					\$20 ⁵⁹	

Evaluating the “efficiency and effectiveness” of possum control involves a number of considerations, some of which are beyond the scope of this review (for example, the frequency with which operational performance targets are achieved or the level of community satisfaction, a subjective concept in itself).

Comparisons of possum control budgets are complex. For example, councils for which possums are a landowner responsibility would nominally consider their entire region to be “under control” every year. In contrast, councils that use staff or contractors will have performance targets for areas that have been determined to need control in a given year. Their possum control budgets fluctuate from year to year depending on the size and type of area that needs control.

These complications are reflected in the limited data available for Table 8 above. Based on those figures, HBRC’s programme is not out of step with other councils or OSPRI in terms of cost.

However, the HBRC programme has three features that impact efficiency.

First, the council’s ability to monitor actual possum numbers in its control areas has diminished as the total programme has become larger. Staff report that currently only about 10% of the area is monitored every year. Possum population trends can be estimated to some degree, but this relatively high level of uncertainty does create risk. For contrast, Horizons Regional Council reported that all possum control operations are monitored every four years; Greater Wellington reported that it monitors about 40% annually.

Second, the land occupier responsibility model is intrinsically harder to monitor than possum control done by contractors or staff. Moreover, contractors or staff will be more singularly focused on meeting performance targets, compared to landowners for whom possum control will be one of the many things to be done on the property.

The third weakness relates to the fact that improved biodiversity is the outcome driving most HBRC possum control. However, HBRC does not have a robust region-wide biodiversity monitoring programme to help understand the effect of its management programmes, including possum control.

⁵⁸ Plus several part FTEs

⁵⁹ Ground control operations average in the Hawke’s Bay, pers. comm. Kaye Seymour

Recommendations - possum control programme

- A full review of the possum control programme is warranted. The working assumption is that the total area needing possum control will continue to grow as areas come off Tb control and as the public's biodiversity expectations grow. An analysis is needed to fully understand the implications of that trend.
- The pros and cons of a contractor-based model should be examined. This will require considerable community engagement, particularly with directly affected landowners. The results of this review, however, suggest that the community is open to having this discussion.

Rabbit control programme

No group thinks that the rabbit control programme is very efficient or effective. Community respondents scored the programme the lowest of the three groups, at 20 out of 100. The staff average was 35 out of 100, with contractors giving it 39 out of 100.

Moreover, the community scores were clustered at the lower end of the scale, with only two above 50. The low scores from each group reflect concern voiced throughout the survey about a growing rabbit population.

Some staff suggested looking at the rabbit control programmes in Otago, Canterbury and Wellington regional councils as more effective models. The community responses did not suggest a particular model; they just wanted help. *"I don't have a solid answer but it needs attention. The landowners of HB need help with this, of which I am one. Rabbits are a significant and increasing problem in the Heretaunga plains as well as the hinterland."*

Contractors similarly see the growth in rabbits as a major problem and one that makes the RPMP objective to control rabbits to below Level 4 on the Modified McLean Scale potentially unworkable, especially given the effects of climate change on rabbit populations.

HBRC Benchmarking - rabbit control programme

Most councils in the survey treat rabbits as a landowner responsibility; however, the survey showed that council budgets can still vary greatly. Several are small or zero, while ECAN reported a total budget of \$340,000 and Otago budgeted \$217,000. At HBRC, the rabbit control spending has fluctuated over past five years from \$54,000 in 2015/16 to \$87,000 in 2017/18 and \$21,000 this past year.⁶⁰ Rabbit control operations naturally vary from year to year. In addition, HBRC has switched rabbit night counts and RHD sampling from being carried out annually to biennially.

In a follow up to the survey, Otago Regional Council staff said they are revamping their whole rabbit control programme, which had become ineffective. Previously, landowners had to submit a rabbit management plan. But there was little monitoring and even when those plans failed it was hard for the council to take action.⁶¹

Under the new approach, ORC will do more monitoring systematically across all properties in a management area, and will issue notices of direction if rabbit levels are too high. Ultimately, ORC would like to have three to four FTE dedicated to the rural rabbit programme, as well as one urban rabbit control specialist. The council finds that urban and peri-urban areas are where most of the

⁶⁰ Actual spending excluding internal time, overhead allocations, depreciation etc.

⁶¹ Pers. comm., Richard Lord, Team Leader Biosecurity and Biodiversity

public pressure is coming from because large rural properties often still have their own rabbit control programmes.

Recommendations - rabbit control programme

- **A full review of the rabbit control programme is warranted. HBRC is not significantly out of step with other councils. However, there is a clear sense in the region that the rabbit population is growing and that the current programme is not equipped to respond effectively. This is another area where a robust monitoring programme is critical to support decision making.**

Chilean needle grass control programme

Chilean needle grass did not feature highly in the contractor survey and was mentioned only a few times in comments by community respondents.

The average score from contractors was 61 out of 100. There were only four responses, but all were above 50. The average community score was 32 out of 100; three of seven scores were very low, below 10.

HBRC staff have much stronger views on the Chilean needle grass programme. Management of Chilean needle grass was seen as “going backwards” in one staff comment.

Another comment noted how the intrinsic difficulties identifying and controlling Chilean needle grass made the programme very hard to deliver with current resources. “If our manpower stays the same, and the trend [of finding new properties every year] continues, we simply won’t be able to do our best with that programme ... the last two seasons have been difficult enough.”

As with many pest plants, the CNG programme is extremely busy from spring through summer and that is when additional staff are needed most. Contracting or secondments from HBRC staff were suggested as possible solutions for that busy period. “We have a large ‘work bubble’ from November to March when a lot of our larger work programmes need to be done, such as Chilean needle grass, Saffron thistle, Old man’s beard, Privet, Cotton thistle. We don’t have enough staff at this time of the year to complete a lot of these programmes to the best standard needed,” one staff comment said.

Staff also noted that Chilean needle grass is difficult for landowners to control effectively, which increases the need for effective surveillance: “With the present amount of staff, we struggle to implement an effective surveillance programme around current infestations.”

The average staff score for Chilean needle grass was 47 out of 100. The range of scores here was considerable; the lowest score was 6 and the highest was 75.

HBRC Benchmarking - Chilean needle grass control programme

The survey results for Chilean needle grass are difficult to analyse, partly because councils appear to have interpreted the survey question differently. Environment Canterbury reported labour of \$682,000, contractor budget of \$138,000, surveillance of \$150,000 and \$65,000 for monitoring, but \$0 under total budget, presumably because it is a land occupier responsibility. ECAN also said total hectares controlled was unknown.

In contrast, Marlborough District Council reported 51 hectares⁶² controlled for a budget of \$205,000 for external contractors.⁶³

HBRC reported a total budget of \$100,000 and Otago Regional Council \$34,000. Actual spending by HBRC on Chilean needle grass⁶⁴ increased from \$27,000 in FY 2015/16 to \$70,000 this year; an increase of 159% over five years.

Recommendations - Chilean needle grass control programme

- **More staff are needed, at least during the busy summer season, if the Chilean needle grass programme is to deliver on the RPMP objectives.**
- **A more complete business case analysis is needed to examine whether the programme could be delivered more effectively in other ways, including control through contractors rather than landowners.**
- **The Chilean needle grass surveillance programme should be reviewed to determine if it can confidently determine the current level of infestation and reliably detect spread.**

HBRC biodiversity programme

The conclusion from all three surveys is that HBRC is not effectively protecting and restoring biodiversity in the region.

Half of the staff surveyed believe that the biosecurity programmes are only “somewhat” effective at delivering biodiversity goals. Three staff thought they are not effective and another three thought “very” effective. One staff member noted that they could not respond because “*there is no monitoring which is designed to answer that.*”

Even without monitoring data, however, there is an overwhelming belief from staff (80% of responses) that the council is not doing enough to protect and restore biodiversity. The comments were clear that this is largely due to inadequate resourcing. For example, “*The biodiversity team could achieve significantly more, and in particular in the ecosystem priority sites programme. This will require additional resourcing...*” Another comment said, “*The ecosystem priority programme needs additional resources if it is going to make a difference. This is both in terms of staff and on ground delivery budget for works.*”

Contractors are emphatically unanimous that a different approach should be taken to protecting biodiversity. One said: “*Some great work being done, but the need is very high and HBRC could be a leading agency in this area.*” Another commented, “*This appears to be under resourced. ... the rate at which KNEs are being tackled seems fairly glacial. If more money was available, and more work was contracted out, more could be achieved.*”

Community respondents’ views on biodiversity were somewhat contradictory. Most respondents (eight of 10) said they would not take a different approach to biodiversity. At the same time, there was a strong belief (nine of 15 responses) that the council is not doing enough to protect and restore biodiversity. Comments on biodiversity throughout the survey reflected that the community recognises this is a new area for HBRC. One comment said, “*Having seen the evolution of the “Biodiversity Division” of HBRC, from the outside looking it seems to be a little ad hoc... a mish mash of partially apportioned staff and tasks. ... it seems it could do with (dare a say it) a review or some*

⁶² “Council-initiated control in 19/20”

⁶³ Marlborough District has the largest CNG infestation, 2,000 – 3,000 ha. HBRC has approximately 600 ha, followed by ECAN with about 300 ha.

⁶⁴ Excluding internal time, overhead allocations, depreciation etc.

sort, and appropriate funding." In a similar vein, another commented, "A newly evolved underfunded 'division' has little chance of achieving [biodiversity goals]."

Other community comments suggested that respondents were pleased to see an increased emphasis on biodiversity. "Biodiversity work has increased pleasingly over the past decade," one said. Another said, "This is a new concept to us as landowners, but HBRC have been helpful with advice and support. Well done!"

HBRC Benchmarking - HBRC biodiversity programme

While regional councils do not have a mandatory function requiring them to control pests, the 2012 amendment to the Biosecurity Act strengthened the expectation that regional councils will provide leadership to prevent, reduce, or eliminate adverse effects from harmful organisms. "Biological diversity" is specifically mentioned in Section 71(d) of the Act.

Regional council biodiversity requirements are more explicit under the Resource Management Act. Since 2003, regional councils have had an express function under the RMA not just to manage for biodiversity but to exercise other core functions (e.g., biosecurity) to maintain biodiversity.⁶⁵

In 2013/14, regional councils were estimated to collectively spend nearly \$34 million on programmes intended to directly benefit biodiversity.⁶⁶ This figure was challenging to calculate because biodiversity activity typically crosses multiple cost centres and councils present their financial reporting in different ways.

As with the 2014 Willis report, the benchmarking survey done for this report found that councils calculate and present their biodiversity spending very differently. HBRC, for example, is one of the councils that does not report biodiversity budgets separately in its annual plan. The data that was able to be collected for this review is presented in Table 9 below.

Hawke's Bay Regional Council's biodiversity budget is \$718,000, which is well below many other councils. The average for councils as percentage of total operating expenditure is 2.45%; HBRC is 1.2%.

Biodiversity staff numbers were not available for all councils, partly because councils often have biodiversity responsibilities embedded in multiple roles rather than having separate "biodiversity" teams.⁶⁷ HBRC reported a total of 1.5 FTE for biodiversity,⁶⁸ which is well below the average 5 FTE reported other councils responding to the survey. See Table 9 below.

⁶⁵ The biodiversity roles and functions of regional councils was comprehensively reviewed in two reports by Gerard Willis at Enfocus Ltd.

⁶⁶ Willis, "Biodiversity: Roles and Functions" – November 2014

⁶⁷ For example, Bay of Plenty reported zero biodiversity staff, although the council has a robust biodiversity programme.

⁶⁸ Pers. comm. Mark Mitchell

Table 9 -- Biodiversity budgets – comparison by total council budget

Council	Total Biodiversity Budget (\$ in thousands) ⁶⁹	Total operating expenditure (\$ in thousands)	Biodiversity as % of total council operating expenditure	Biodiversity staff ⁷⁰
Bay of Plenty	\$2,100 ⁷¹	\$134,051	1.5%	0
Environment Canterbury	\$4,529 ⁷²	\$189,207	2.3%	12.5
Environment Southland	\$510 ⁷³	\$36,195	1.4%	1
Greater Wellington	\$4,836 ⁷⁴	\$381,606	1.2%	16
Hawke's Bay	\$718 ⁷⁵	\$56,509	1.2%	1.5
Horizons	\$2,073 ⁷⁶	\$62,572	3.3%	5.5
Marlborough	\$435 ⁷⁷	\$118,812	0.36	1
Nelson City ⁷⁸	n/a ⁷⁹	\$112,867		-
Northland	n/a ⁸⁰	\$49,454		-
Otago	n/a ⁸¹	\$64,590		0
Taranaki	\$3,078 ⁸²	\$34,359	8.9%	-
Tasman	n/a ⁸³	\$120,609		-
Waikato	\$2,826 ⁸⁴	\$141,512	1.9%	9

⁶⁹ Excluding biosecurity budgets where possible⁷⁰ Reported in survey⁷¹ Pers. comm. Greg Corbett⁷² Annual Plan 2019/20, pg. 24⁷³ Survey response⁷⁴ Annual Plan 2019/20, pg. 51⁷⁵ Pers. comm. Amy Allan⁷⁶ Annual Plan 2019/20, pg. 58⁷⁷ Survey response⁷⁸ NCC engages Tasman District Council as the Management Agency under the joint Tasman-Nelson Regional Pest Management Plan for both councils.⁷⁹ Survey response⁸⁰ Survey response⁸¹ Survey response⁸² Annual Plan 2019/20, pg. 26⁸³ Survey response⁸⁴ Annual Plan 2019/20, pg. 26

Overall, as Table 9 shows, the range of effort committed to biodiversity by regional councils varies greatly and is not simple to analyse. The 2014 Willis report, for example, treated spending that had direct or indirect benefits to biodiversity as separate categories.

The key point, however, is that regional councils have extensive biodiversity legislative responsibilities and ambitious community-driven expectations. Both of those forces are likely to increase in the short term.

Central Government is developing a National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity, due to be released next year. Similarly, a new NZ Biodiversity Strategy was announced on August 10 and an Action Plan is to follow. Both of these initiatives will require regional councils to do more to protect and restore native biodiversity. HBRC does not appear to be well positioned to respond to these increased expectations.

HBRC's biosecurity programme began increasing its emphasis on biodiversity protection in the early 2000s. In 2001, the planned regional rollout of possum suppression began with the first Possum Control Area (PCA) formed. In 2009, the Urban Possum Control programme started on Napier Hill. Poutiri Ao ō Tāne – the first landscape scale collaborative restoration project in Hawke's Bay – began in 2011.⁸⁵

The Hawke's Bay Biodiversity Strategy was launched in March 2016 and an action plan shortly thereafter. These are all commendable initiatives that will certainly have had biodiversity benefits.

Nevertheless, analysis of HBRC budgets shows that there was no significant investment in a specific biodiversity programme until the 2018 LTP.

The current LTP includes:⁸⁶

- \$200,000 for the Biodiversity Hawke's Bay endowment fund (for four years)
- One FTE for a project manager at Biodiversity Hawke's Bay
- \$200,000 for the ecosystem prioritisation programme PA (\$100,000 opex, \$100,000 community capital). No staff resourcing came with this programme
- \$42,000 for terrestrial biodiversity monitoring.

The limitations of this funding level were recognised in the surveys of staff, contractors and community that were done for this review. This same view was shared by 13 external partners involved in biodiversity in Hawkes Bay who were interviewed in May 2020.⁸⁷ Key themes were identified from these interviews included:

- There is a general keenness by external partners to increase the amount of biodiversity work being done across Hawkes Bay.
- There is a lack of capacity at Hawkes Bay Regional Council to provide biodiversity technical expertise to match the demand from such external partners. Many partners are looking to HBRC and Biodiversity HB to provide technical expertise, training and advice in this area. This was particularly evident with Local Authorities.

⁸⁵ <https://www.pfhb.nz/about-us/>

⁸⁶ Pers. comm. Mark Mitchell

⁸⁷ "Biodiversity HBRC: An overview of external organisation initiatives, opportunities and relationship with HBRC," June 2020 V2 Final, Anna Lambourne

- Organisations are looking to Biodiversity HB to lead and provide strategic and practical guidance. There is a level of confusion and uncertainty currently about what their role is, what they are doing and what external organisations should expect from them.
- There is a perception that, when you deal with HBRC, the organisation comes across as having silos, each with their own objectives and measures resulting in a lack of integration, poor inter-departmental communication. There is a desire that HBRC operates as one team with shared objectives.
- Many partners look to HBRC as a provider of funds for biodiversity work.
- Many external partners recognise that the Biodiversity Team within HBRC is operating extremely well and doing an excellent job. In reality, to maintain this recognition has been challenging for the Biodiversity Team due to limited budgets and FTE, coupled with the high expectations placed on them.
- Most external partners have extremely positive relationships with HBRC and the Biodiversity team. Comments should be viewed as small opportunities for improvement, rather than major concerns.

Recommendations - HBRC biodiversity programme

- **HBRC should be spending more on biodiversity. How much more and where requires a business case analysis through the LTP process to examine staffing and budget needs based on the finding in this report.**
- **Follow up and address the management related and operational suggestions made in the staff, contractor and community surveys.**
- **Address the findings in the 2020 Lambourne report, particularly how to deliver the community's desire for more work to enhance biodiversity.**
- **Work with regional councils and central government to implement nationally-consistent biodiversity monitoring programmes targeted at documenting regional state and trend (Tier 1) and measuring management effectiveness at sites (Tier 2).⁸⁸**
- **Consider operational changes to deliver biodiversity improvement more effectively. For example, Greater Wellington Regional Council said it has "found it very beneficial to have both biodiversity policy/planning and operational skills and capacity in one department."**
- **Treat biodiversity as a separate budget line in annual planning and reporting documents.**

An overall need for better surveillance and monitoring

Well-designed and adequately resourced surveillance and monitoring programmes are critical to effective biosecurity and biodiversity management. All three groups surveyed called for more surveillance designed to measure progress toward outcomes.

Each group that was surveyed believes HBRC should do more surveillance. Only one staff member said surveillance for pest animals in sustained control programmes is adequate. Most staff feel the adequacy of surveillance programmes varies, but the comments overall suggest that surveillance is inadequate. The possum programme was singled out as needing more resources for surveillance.

Staff also thought surveillance was generally inadequate for pest plants: *"This is where I believe we could be doing much more. Active surveillance was undertaken in the past but this ceased a long time ago. Is invaluable for snuffing out low incidence plants,"* one said.

⁸⁸ See the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment's 2019 report "Focusing Aotearoa New Zealand's environmental reporting system"

The community respondents also believe that surveillance programmes need to be improved. Eight of nine respondents said surveillance for "sustained control" pest animals is inadequate. Again, there was an emphasis on possums: "All PCA's should be monitored yearly" and "{Possums} seem to have got away in this neck of the woods."

Community respondents were unaware of HBRC surveillance for pest plants. Of 16 responses, 11 did not know enough to answer the question. Since 10 of the survey respondents represented farming interests, this suggests that HBRC's surveillance efforts have little profile in the rural community.

HBRC Benchmarking – surveillance and monitoring

Hawke's Bay Regional Council is not alone in having extremely limited surveillance programmes. As a rule, councils will do some surveillance for their low incidence, high threat pests (like alligator weed in the Waikato), using a combination of public awareness campaigns and some targeted effort on vectors (or pathways) and around known hotspot properties. Councils often find new properties every year based on this approach, but they do not know how many they are not finding. This is a classic case of "known unknowns." HBRC staff confirmed this is the case for Chilean needle grass.

Similarly, most councils have pest plants in "progressive containment" programmes, where the goal is to have fewer infested sites (or lower densities) over 10 years (the life of an RPMP). HBRC has 11 pest plants in this category, some across the entire region and some in specified zones.

Unfortunately, councils do not have regional monitoring programmes that can give them a baseline to measure progress against.

Environment Southland trialled GIS and software R to design a statistically valid assessment of the amount of land in the region covered by introduced weeds.⁸⁹ This work was done in 2009 and the potential long-term usefulness of this or similar systems should be explored further.

Regional councils are not alone in having very limited surveillance for pest plants established in New Zealand. For example, there no national surveillance programme within National Wilding Conifer Control Programme. As with councils, effort is focused on delimiting known hotspots / sources with the aim of informing management options. The absence of a surveillance programme is concerning, particularly since the Government announced an additional \$100 million of operating funding to tackle wilding pines as part of Budget 2020.

Recommendations – surveillance and monitoring

- **Develop an Envirolink grant application, coordinated with other regional councils, to create an effective, affordable and statistically valid regional pest plant surveillance methodology⁹⁰**
- **Collaborate with the Biological Heritage National Science Challenge, which is developing a research theme on managing multiple pest plants at landscape scales**
- **Evaluate the effectiveness of surveillance practices of other councils and agencies on a programme-by-programme basis. For example, Marlborough District does twice annual intensive in-water surveillance for marine pests, while HBRC monitors inner Ahuriri Harbour using divers every two to three years if finances allow.**

--END--

⁸⁹ https://mathsreach.org/Sampling_Southern_Weed_Pests

⁹⁰ The Envirolink scheme funds research organisations to provide regional councils with advice and support for research on identified environmental topics and projects.

HAWKE'S BAY REGIONAL COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT AND INTEGRATED CATCHMENTS COMMITTEE

Wednesday 16 September 2020

Subject: TE KARAMU

Item 11

Reason for Report

1. This item provides the Committee with an update on the progress of enhancement works undertaken as part of the Te Karamū Enhancement Review & Management Strategy 2016-25, 'the Enhancement Strategy'.

Executive Summary

2. Progress has been made in the priority planting across the 7 zones and this work is well underway. Of the 9.4ha of priority planting that was identified in the Enhancement Strategy to be undertaken between 2016-2025, 77% of that has been delivered (7.29 ha), with 100% of the priority planting identified for the Havelock and Irongate zones having been completed.
3. The challenge is now keeping pace with the demand and expectations from the community. This has meant the last 12 months has seen focus on coordinating, supporting, and enabling the community, partners, and corporate sponsors involvement.
4. The implementation plan was approved by Council in 2016 is being updated to reflect increase in demand and propose to reset priorities so as to keep pace and align with the expectations of this highly valued community initiative and but also be aware of the original expectations and drivers set in the original document.
5. The program is funded from targeted rates collected from Karamū ratepayers each year for this project of \$234,000.

Strategic Fit

6. The Enhancement Strategy shares the HBRC vision for a region with a 'vibrant community, a prosperous economy, a clean and healthy environment', now and for future generations, with an overarching purpose 'to improve habitat and ecosystem health whilst providing flood and erosion protection'.
7. The Enhancement Strategy provides a toolbox to enable the Karamū Stream and its tributaries to be maintained as a highly valued asset to Hawke's Bay, providing a vision for:
 - 7.1 A balancing of values where grazing, native vegetation, and recreational areas support a rich and abundant ecosystem that is accessible and easily managed.
 - 7.2 A network of clean healthy waterways, connecting and unifying the residents of the Heretaunga Plains.
 - 7.3 An asset and resource that supports the cultural, commercial, social and recreational needs of the community.
8. This enhancement programme also directly aligns to the values outlined in the Hawke's Bay Regional Parks Network Plan for the management of open space, and contributes to the Hawke's Bay Biodiversity Strategy 2015-2050.

Background

9. The 'Te Karamū Catchment Review and options for Enhancement (2004)' report provides thorough analysis and detailed recommendations for the management of The Karamū catchment. Part of the information formally approved in 2004 included a

“Rough Order Cost Estimation” and it was recommended that staff would develop further detailed proposed work program.

10. In 2007 a draft Karamū Revegetation Strategy and Concept Plan was developed and site-specific earthwork and planting plans. Community support, engagement and awareness has grown with the maturing of the initial enhancement project and the 2016 strategy assists to further progress and direct the management of this valuable assets by the HBRC on behalf of residents of Hawke’s Bay.
11. Te Karamū Stream and its tributaries are a highly valued asset and resource that supports the cultural, commercial, social and recreational needs of the community in the Hawke’s Bay.
12. The Enhancement Strategy divided waterways into a series of zones. These zones are listed in [Table 1 below](#).

Table 1 - Karamū Enhancement Zone

Zone	Water body	Description
Zone 1 - Whakatū	Karamū-Clive, Muddy Creek	Clive bridge to Karamū/Raupare confluence.
Zone 2 - Ruahāpia	Karamū, Ruahāpia	Floodgates to SH2 bridge
Zone 3 – Twyford	<i>(Excluding the Twyford targeted rate area)</i>	U/s of Karamū/Raupare confluence
Zone 4 - Waipatu	Karamū, Awahou/Windsor/ Riverslea, Mangateretere, Karitūwhenua	SH2 bridge to Crosses Rd bridge
Zone 5 - Havelock	Karamū, Herehere, Louisa	Crosses Rd bridge to Awanui/ Irongate/Karamū Stream confluence
Zone 6 - Irongate	Irongate, Southland	K5 Irongate-Southland
Zone 7 - Awanui, Kārewarewa, Paritua	Awanui, Kārewarewa, Paritua, Poukawa	K3 Awanui, K2 Paritua-Kārewarewa, K1 Poukawa

13. This report provides an opportunity to update Council on the progress of the enhancement work programme.
14. The Enhancement Strategy used a prioritisation criteria to identify priority enhancement areas for planting between 2016-2025. These areas make up 8.68% of the total area or 9.4464ha and an annual planting programme has been undertaken since then to achieve this objective. The table below outlines the progress of that planting programme between 2016 and 2020.

Table 2 – Priority Planting Progress

Zone	Identified priority planting 2016-25 (Ha)	Actual Planting 2016-20 (Ha)	Percentage of Priority Planting delivered	Remaining Planting 2020-2025 (Ha)
Zone 1 - Whakatū	1.3266	0.397	30%	0.9296
Zone 2 - Ruahāpia	4.9250	4.2908	87%	0.6342
Zone 3 – Twyford	0.00	0.0115	0%	-0.0115
Zone 4 - Waipatu	1.1062	0.7427	67%	0.3635
Zone 5 - Havelock	0.2480	0.2480	100%	0
Zone 6 - Irongate	0.6734	0.6734	100%	0
Zone 7 - Awanui, Kārewarewa, Paritua	1.1672	0.8464	73%	0.3208
Total	9.4464	7.2908	77%	2.2366

15. On an annual breakdown, there has been a reduction in the area of priority planting over the last two years, as the initiative has transitioned from the more accessible planting zones into more focused areas, and as community engagement and involvement has increased, which requires more planning and coordination. The

2019/20 autumn planting period was also impacted by Covid-19 which meant less planting was achieved however staff expect to be able to make that up in 2020/21.

Table 3 – Annual Planting Area

Zone	Total Area* (approx. Ha)	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Total
Zone 1 - Whakatū	18.6559	0.3830	0.0000	0.0000	0.0140	0.3970
Zone 2 - Ruahāpia	21.1462	0.7976	2.3006	0.6081	0.5845	4.2908
Zone 3 – Twyford	0.0493	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0115	0.0115
Zone 4 - Waipatu	23.0398	0.2735	0.1147	0.1070	0.2475	0.7427
Zone 5 - Havelock	39.0163	0.2480				0.2480
Zone 6 - Irongate	22.8742	0.2205	0.4529	0.0000	0.0000	0.6734
Zone 7 - Awanui, Kārewarewa, Paritua	17.7489	0.5476	0.2797	0.0000	0.0191	0.8464
Total		2.4702	3.1479	0.7151	0.8766	7.2098

Next Steps

16. To define future and priorities within the allocated budget.
17. Staff are in the process of updating implementation plan to create focus on what is still required to be achieved and to consider options to match timeframes with community involvement, which may include speeding up or slowing down some areas. Staff are proposing to present this plan and possible scenarios to Council later this year.

Decision Making Process

making provisions do not apply.

Recommendation

That the Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee receives and notes the “Te Karamu” staff report.

Authored by:

Martina Groves
ACTING REGIONAL ASSET MANAGER

Approved by:

Chris Dolley
GROUP MANAGER ASSET MANAGEMENT

Attachment/s

There are no attachments for this report.

HAWKE'S BAY REGIONAL COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT AND INTEGRATED CATCHMENTS COMMITTEE

Wednesday 16 September 2020

**Subject: KARAMU ENHANCEMENT GROUP DEPUTATION - MANAGEMENT
PLAN FOR PARKS REACH**

Item 12

Reason for Report

1. This item introduces the deputation from the Karamu Enhancement Group on a Management Plan for Parks Reach.

Decision Making Process

2. Staff have assessed the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002 in relation to this item and have concluded that, as this report is for information only, the decision making provisions do not apply.

Recommendation

That the Environment and Integration Catchments Committee receives and notes the "Karamu Enhancement Group Deputation - Management Plan for Parks Reach" presented by John Gould.

Authored by:

Annelie Roets
GOVERNANCE ADMINISTRATION
ASSISTANT

Approved by:

James Palmer
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Attachment/s

[1](#) Karamu Enhancement Group Deputation

Deputation to Environment and Integrated Catchment Committee HBRC re Park's Reach

Item 12

Attachment 1

Background

1. Park's Reach is that section of Te Karamu stream between the Havelock Road Bridge and the Crosses Rd Bridge. Recent residential development means that the true right bank is bordered for the whole length by Mary Doyle Villas and other private housing. Behind its embankment the left bank is bordered by a commercial shop, open space and a private residence.
2. In the years 1997-2000 the true right bank between the two bridges was cleared, graded and grassed by the Hawke's Bay Regional Council (HBRC). The adjacent embankment was planted in native trees and shrubs by the St Columba's Havelock North Environmental Group (SCHNEG). This work created an attractive walking area and bird sanctuary which became very popular with Havelock North residents.
3. In 2012 a similar development of the true left bank, by HBRC, included the construction of a limestone walking and cycling track.
4. Following the original development its maintenance has been the responsibility of HBRC, originally with assistance from the Karamu Enhancement Group (KEG) which looked after the young trees and shrubs for several years, after which it went into recess. KEG restarted in 2018 with the aim of getting the maintenance improved. However the lack of a planned approach, with clear objectives, has resulted in protracted discussion between KEG and HBRC with issues being dealt with on an ad hoc basis.

Recent History

The area itself.

5. On the right embankment, while much of the original native planting has thrived, and significantly increased the bird population of the area, there has also been significant deterioration due to:
 - 5.1 Originally, shading by large walnut trees compounding early losses
 - 5.2 Competition by weeds including blackberry, hemlock and convolvulus
 - 5.3 The removal of most of the walnut trees in 2016 leaving a number of open spaces which have reverted to long grass and weeds
 - 5.4 Insufficient maintenance e.g. on occasions grass on the right bank was allowed to grow to such a height that it made for difficult, and dangerous, walking both before and after cutting. (Recent advice is that the number of cuts will be increased by 2 per year)
 - 5.5 Similarly long grass and weeds have been allowed to obscure various seats which were donated at the time of planting
 - 5.6 Dead trees and shrubs have been allowed to remain for extended periods of time.
6. After heavy rain or flooding ponding has remained, for extended periods in certain areas on the grassed area between the native planting on the right embankment and the stream itself. The inability of water to re-enter the stream appears to be the result of inappropriate grade and planting along the edge of the stream this ponding restricts the maintenance and hence walking on the right bank. An unrelated incident resulting from water leaking from the Mary Doyle reticulation system has since been rectified.
7. Very recently a number of trees have been removed from a section of the planting on the right embankment providing an enhanced view of the stream itself, for a number of Mary Doyle properties. However, if this area is to look attractive and be fire safe the extent of this "opening up" will require mowing or other means of grass and weed control.

Attachment 1

8. Notwithstanding the above, the interest and co-operation of HBRC staff responsible for and working in the area is acknowledged with appreciation. Recent advice of an increase in resource allocation is also welcome.
9. The recent residential development mentioned above has created increased use of the area and awareness of the above deficiencies. A number of residents have spent considerable time maintaining areas of the planting.

Other

10. It is recognised that Park's Reach is of small significance within the wider activities of the HBRC however, it is significant to the people of Havelock North who pay dedicated rates of approximately \$140,000pa towards its maintenance and enhancement. This significance is particularly so for those who walk the area regularly and those who live right next door.
11. In this context the opening section of Council's Mission Statement is particularly relevant "Enhancing our environment together".
12. The following submission which, if adopted, would make for a clearer understanding between all parties, is made on behalf KEG, the Mary Doyle Retirement Complex, SCHNEG and local residents.

Submission

13. It is respectfully submitted that the HBRC, in consultation with the above submitters, places greater emphasis on the ongoing maintenance and future development of Park's Reach.
14. It is suggested that such emphasis would be best achieved by the development of a management plan for the area together with appropriate budget provision.

Item 12

John Gould

September 2020

HAWKE'S BAY REGIONAL COUNCIL**ENVIRONMENT AND INTEGRATED CATCHMENTS COMMITTEE****Wednesday 16 September 2020****Subject: HAUMOANA ECOLOGY GROUP DEPUTATION - WORKING WITH
HBRC TO ENHANCE CAPE COAST WETLANDS ECOLOGY****Reason for Report**

1. This item introduces the deputation from the Cape Coast Conservation Group on working with HBRC to Enhance the Cape Coast Wetlands Ecology.

Decision Making Process

2. Staff have assessed the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002 in relation to this item and have concluded that, as this report is for information only, the decision making provisions do not apply.

Recommendation

That the Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee receives and notes the deputation from the "Haumoana Ecology Group" presented by Liz Remmerswaal.

Authored by:

Annelie Roets
GOVERNANCE ADMINISTRATION ASSISTANT

Approved by:

James Palmer
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Attachment/s

- [!\[\]\(a43b62a38b6e2844e794f4301a08d3ba_img.jpg\) 1](#) Deputation from the Haumoana Ecology Group

Haumoana Ecology Group Submission to Hawkes Bay Regional Council (HBRC) Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee, 16 September 2020

*“Tuia te rangi e tu nei, Unite with the skies,
 Tuia te papa e hora nei, Unite with the earth,
 Tuia te hanga tangata ki tipu whenua,
 Unite people with their ancestral lands,
 Tuia te tangata te iwi, Unite individuals with their people,
 Tihei Mauri Ora! Let life be lived
 ‘Culture, however we define it, is central to everything we do and think.
 It is what we do and the reason we do it,
 What we wish and why we imagine it,
 What we perceive and how we express it.
 It is the element in which we live.”*

(This mihi is gifted to our group by local kaumatua and group member Jacob Scott, from the Te Aranga Design Principles, Flaxmere 2008, and contains our aspirations and spirit.)

BACKGROUND:

Haumoana Ecology Group (HEG) was created in June this year after concerns were raised about the ecology and habitat of our local coastal lagoons and wetlands, the need for predator control, a desire to support local council planting projects and the need for education about bird life and other ecological issues.

We have had eight meetings since then and have over 100 followers on our Facebook page.

Firstly, we acknowledge the importance of getting it right with respect to ‘kaitiakitanga’ and as a priority will seek a meeting with the trustees of Matahiwi Marae who, as mana whenua, can advise us on kaitiakitanga relevant to the Haumoana area. We have also sought advice from local kaumatua Jacob Scott and others.

We have also been working collaboratively with other groups in our locality. These include HBRC, Hastings District Council (HDC), Department of Conservation (DOC), Te Awanga Downs, Maraetotara Tree Trust, Biodiversity HB, Predator Free HB, Environment Centre,

Moo Scotting, Cape Coast Community Group, Haumoana School, and WOW, all of whom have met with our group.

INTENTION:

Our intention in coming to this committee is to signal our desire to work more closely in fulfilling HBRC's goals of protecting and enhancing biodiversity and restoring and developing wetlands.

To achieve this we are asking that HBRC support us with some staff time and materials to promote our aims.

PURPOSE:

Our group's purpose is to bring together people to work locally and voluntarily for the protection, restoration, sustainable use of biodiversity, especially indigenous biodiversity, in nature (e.g. flora, fauna, lagoons, wetlands and estuaries). We are working in the place of significance to us i.e. Haumoana on the Cape Coast, while liaising with other groups on the coast.

Our key elements include embracing history, kaitiakitanga (guardianship and protection as recognized by mana whenua), building expertise, sharing resources, advocating for wildlife and habitat, educating and building community, networking, goal setting, and observing and reporting on our area. (See our terms of reference below.)

We are all volunteers with busy lives and heaps of enthusiasm-learning as we go!

CURRENT GROUP INITIATIVES:

1. PLANTING: On 23 August we had our first planting day which attracted over 20 people planting 200 plants on a coastal wetland area at the end of Haumoana Rd, with plants provided by HDC.

The group is happy to assist in looking after trees that HBRC have recently planted on both sides of the Tukituki River, and also to assist HBRC with planting next year.

2. WETLANDS: Members of our group have been in consultation with HBRC regarding the poor condition of the lagoons, south and north, and the small wetland closer to the Tukituki estuary. Dr Andy Hicks (HBRC) has written an interim report, and we look forward to his final report expected soon. As a group we are happy to work alongside the HBRC, HDC and DOC, as well as Cape Coast Community Group who have also taken up this issue.

HEG is aware that the condition of Haumoana's lagoons is directly impacted by both the sea, particularly sea level rise, septic tanks in the local area and the quality of water flowing into lagoons from canals, drains and streams. A major factor is the passage of sediment and unwelcome substances/chemicals via waterways to the coast. This creates an increasing burden on the health of the said lagoons and wetlands.

HEG supports collaborative, holistic solutions and will support initiatives by councils to improve this situation e.g. liaison with landowners, establishment of 'detention dams', creation of wetland filters and native plantings along waterways. We appreciate this is a process that takes time to implement.

As part of this submission we attach the memo from HBRC's Andy Hicks on the state of the lagoon and next steps below.

3. PREDATOR CONTROL:

We strongly support predator control initiatives in our area, both rural and urban, including trapping work done by Moo Scotting and Beau Fahnle (HBRC). A number of traps have already been set in our area and members of our group have indicated their readiness to help look after these.

4. SIGNAGE RE VEHICLES AND LITTER:

a) Shingle bank crest protection.

One of the risks for inundation is coastal erosion related to sea level rise. We would hope over a period of time to educate drivers, especially those of heavy 4 wheel drive vehicles, that vehicles can cause damage to the crest, contribute to further erosion, and that becoming stuck is a common occurrence!

Having accessed the beach some drivers avoid the crest and travel on the beach seaward of the crest. If travelling on the beach this is to be encouraged.

b) Littering is a threat to local ecosystems and we would support the use of signage and simple graphic messages to discourage littering.

Thanks so much for listening to our concerns. We look forward to continuing to work with you.

Nga mihi,

Mike Harris, Marilyn van Asch and Liz Remmerswaal,

on behalf of Haumoana Ecology Group.

We would like to show some photographs on the day.

ADENDA ONE:

Terms of reference for the Haumoana Ecology Group.

Purpose: A group of people working voluntarily for the protection or restoration of the natural environment (flora, fauna, lagoons, wetlands and estuaries), in a place of significance to them i.e. Haumoana on the Cape Coast.

Location: from Black Bridge to the Tukituki River estuary and south along the coast to the Haumoana and Te Awanga boundary.

Group activities aim to identify, create, restore, protect, enhance, log, monitor, sustain, share, revise, study, report.

Key elements for the group include embracing history, kaitiakitanga (guardianship and protection as recognized by mana whenua), expertise, resources, being wildlife and habitat

advocates, giving guidance and educating, affiliations, networking, goals, observations and eyewitness accounts

Structure:

Committee structure including the roles of leader, chairperson, secretary, treasurer, spokesperson, minute taker, promotions/education and committee member.

General membership from the Haumoana Cape Coast community

Consultants and advisors from the local Cape Coast and wider Hawkes Bay communities

Project leaders for e.g.

- Wetlands/lagoons/waterways and estuaries
- Reserve Management Plan (RMP) support
- Planting projects – sites other than RMP
- Predator control support
- Litter
- Communications and education

Resource, financial and quality plans (i.e. how we will achieve our objectives).

Project breakdown structure and schedules i.e. clear goals, effective leadership and volunteer capacity, realistic timeframes and achievable outcomes.

Including : success factors, risks and constraints

ADENDA TWO:

Memo from Dr Andy Hicks re Haumoana Lagoons, (HBRC Team Leader Fresh Water and Ecology), February 2020.

Memo from Dr Andy Hicks re Haumoana Lagoons, (HBRC Team Leader Fresh Water and Ecology), September 2020, based on his visit in February 2020.

“The Haumoana ponds complex is interesting system. Dave Paku, (HBRC), and I paddled around around all three ponds and measured depth, temperature, oxygen and salinity. All of the ponds are very salty - no doubt receiving a lot of seawater ingress through the barrier bars. There was also a very thin film of freshwater sitting at the surface across much of the surface area of the ponds when we were there, which was interesting because there was no obvious inflow from any of the tributaries.

All ponds are shallow. But the southern pond is the deepest with its deeper parts having over 1m of clear water. Northern ponds less than 1 metre. There is a thick layer of soft sediment at the bottom of all three ponds. And although the southern pond was deeper, there was nothing that stood out about the salinity profiles, sludge depths or surrounding catchment area that would explain why the northern pond would be so much worse than the other two- in terms of foul smells.

There was a thick layer of floating algal mat covering the northern end of the northern pond when we were paddling. The bad smell was strongest when we were sitting over the mats. As

it happens, during my first visit the wind had been blowing the other way and the floating mats and bad smell was at the southern/walkway end of the northern pond.

Oxygen readings under these mats were extremely low. The low oxygen seemed to follow those mats around. i.e. oxygen was ok at the southern end when the mats were blown to the north. And vice versa.

Microbial activity in aerobic conditions consumes oxygen as those microbes breakdown organic matter (and they release carbon dioxide as a byproduct, like us). When the oxygen levels get too low for those aerobic microbes, different anaerobic microbes take over, and when they consume organic material the different species produce hydrogen sulphide or methane as a byproduct. Hydrogen sulphide is the rotting egg smell that I think will be the cause of most of the odour complaints. Those floating algal mats contain a lot of organic material for microbes to consume and based on our oxygen readings, I think they are promoting sulfate-reducing bacteria to thrive and making some especially bad smells in the process.

When Dave and I were there we noticed the floating algal mats were getting caught on a bridge support in the outflow channel. This was preventing the mats getting swept downstream to the pumping station where they would otherwise get caught on the pump screen and be removed by our operations team. I understand Dave has had that problematic bridge support removed. Dave has also been experimenting with the pumping operations so that there is a greater water range fluctuation within the ponds to encourage pond flushing and the downstream drift of algal mats so they can be regularly removed. I think this is a good idea and should help reduce the worst of the smells, if those mats can be continually removed. My understanding is that the pond has been looking better since this alternative pumping approach has been adopted.

But time will tell, and this spring will be the critical test, so please keep your noses peeled and let us know if things seem to be improving or not,

Also worth noting that the water level going up and down should help get a better flushing from the ponds. The ponds may look nicer when completely full of water, because the sludge around edges gets covered, but I think the rising and falling water level will be better for the system. It will behave more like an estuary with low tide and high tide. It may smell slightly worse on the 'low tide' when the water is not covering the gunk in 'intertidal' areas - but the increased flushing should help reduce the risk of the ponds getting extremely stinky. ie a slight odour on low tides throughout the season will prevent terrible odours most of the time later in the season.

Our results indicate the system is extremely eutrophic, and HBRC and HDC are currently investigating potential sources of nutrients to see what other mitigation options may be available."

ENDS

HAWKE'S BAY REGIONAL COUNCIL**ENVIRONMENT AND INTEGRATED CATCHMENTS COMMITTEE****Wednesday 16 September 2020****Subject: FOREST & BIRD NAPIER BRANCH DEPUTATION - LITTLE BUSH RESERVE****Reason for Report**

1. This item introduces the deputation from the Napier branch of Forest & Bird on the Little Bush Reserve.

Decision Making Process

2. Staff have assessed the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002 in relation to this item and have concluded that, as this report is for information only, the decision making provisions do not apply.

Recommendation

That the Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee receives and notes the "Forest & Bird Napier Branch Deputation - Little Bush Reserve" presented by David Belcher.

Authored by:

Annelie Roets
GOVERNANCE ADMINISTRATION
ASSISTANT

Approved by:

James Palmer
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Attachment/s

- [1](#) Forest and Bird letter re Little Bush Fencing
- [2](#) Forest and Bird Little Bush Presentation

David S. Belcher
22 Fulford Place
Havelock North.4130.

davidbelcher@xtra.co.nz

27th July, 2020.

To : The Chief Executive Officer of Hawke's Bay Regional Council
and
The Chairman of the Hawke's Bay Regional Council Board.

Dear Sirs,

I wish to write on behalf of the Napier Branch of the Royal Forest & Bird Protection Society of NZ expressing our sincere thanks and appreciation for the support and co-operation from the Biosecurity/Biodiversity division of HBRC in having Little Bush Reserve now completely protected with deer fencing.

Secondly, and most importantly, our grateful thanks to your Board for granting the financial support towards the completion of both Stage 1 and Stage 2 of this project. The fencing contractor has done a marvelous job with a high standard of workmanship particularly with Stage 2 that presented massive obstructions which had to be cleared prior to the fencing commencement.

Now that Little Bush Reserve is completely fenced to exclude deer intrusion and devastation this enables our Branch volunteers to better concentrate on other predator control which again is extremely well supported by your Biosecurity/Biodiversity Department.

We would happily welcome and accompany an inspection visit by your Board and staff members if so desired.

Again, our sincere thanks in fully supporting this worthy project for the preservation and restoration of biodiversity within Little Bush Reserve.

Sincerely,
David S. Belcher.
Chairman of the Napier Branch of Forest & Bird.





Large Hinau tree at the front entry to Little Bush Reserve



Item 14

Attachment 2



Large Ti Kouka, [Cabbage tree]



Examples of pest control catches



Damaged fence line prior to work commencement.



Stage 2 Deer Fencing project





Stage 2 Deer Fencing project





Work in progress



Item 14

Attachment 2



Pedestrian Accessway



HBRC Inspection

HAWKE'S BAY REGIONAL COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT AND INTEGRATED CATCHMENTS COMMITTEE
Wednesday 16 September 2020

Subject: DISCUSSION OF MINOR MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Item 15

Reason for Report

1. This document has been prepared to assist Committee members note the Minor Items to be discussed as determined earlier in Agenda Item 5.

Topic	Raised by

HAWKE'S BAY REGIONAL COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT AND INTEGRATED CATCHMENTS COMMITTEE

Wednesday 16 September 2020

**SUBJECT: CONFIRMATION OF PUBLIC EXCLUDED MINUTES OF THE
 ENVIRONMENT AND INTEGRATED CATCHMENTS COMMITTEE MEETING
 HELD ON 1 JULY 2020**

That Hawke's Bay Regional Council excludes the public from this section of the meeting being Confirmation of Public Excluded Minutes Agenda Item 16 with the general subject of the item to be considered while the public is excluded; the reasons for passing the resolution and the specific grounds under Section 48 (1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this resolution being:

GENERAL SUBJECT OF THE ITEM TO BE CONSIDERED	REASON FOR PASSING THIS RESOLUTION	FOUNDATIONS UNDER SECTION 48(1) FOR THE PASSING OF THE RESOLUTION
Whittle Reserve	s7(2)(i) That the public conduct of this agenda item would be likely to result in the disclosure of information where the withholding of the information is necessary to enable the local authority holding the information to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations)	The Council is specified, in the First Schedule to this Act, as a body to which the Act applies.
Waipatiki Reserve	s7(2)(i) That the public conduct of this agenda item would be likely to result in the disclosure of information where the withholding of the information is necessary to enable the local authority holding the information to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations)	The Council is specified, in the First Schedule to this Act, as a body to which the Act applies.

Authored by:

Leeanne Hooper
GOVERNANCE LEAD

Approved by:

James Palmer
CHIEF EXECUTIVE