



Unconfirmed

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND INTEGRATED CATCHMENTS COMMITTEE

Date: Wednesday 3 February 2021

Time: 9.00am

Venue: Council Chamber
Hawke's Bay Regional Council
159 Dalton Street
NAPIER

Present: Cr H Ormsby – Chair
Cr R Barker
Cr W Foley
Cr C Foss
Cr R Graham
R Maaka
P Paku
Cr J van Beek
Cr M Williams

In Attendance: J Palmer – Chief Executive
K Brunton – Group Manager Policy and Regulation
C Dolley – Group Manager Asset Management
I Maxwell – Group Manager Integrated Catchment Management
P Munro – Te Pou Whakarae Māori Partnerships
A Allan – Management Accountant
N Caviale, N Hadfield, P McCarthy, P O'Brien – Whangawehi Catchment Management Group representatives
B Douglas – Forest Management Advisor
D Evans – Integrated Catchment Management
J Hill – ProjectHaus
A Langley – ProjectHaus
A McNatty – Team Leader Pest Plants and Marine Biosecurity
M Mitchell – Acting Manager, Catchment Services
B Powell – Manager Catchments Policy Implementation
K Proctor – Senior Regulatory Advisor
A Rewcastle – Team Leader Schemes
D Roughton – Catchment Advisor
T Skerman – Regional Water Security Programme Director
A Roets – Governance Advisor

1. Welcome/ Karakia/Apologies/Notices

The Chair, Cr Hinewai Ormsby welcomed everyone to the meeting and Councillor Will Foley led the group in offering a karakia.

Resolution

EICC53/21 That the apologies for absence from councillors Charles Lambert and Neil Kirton be accepted.

**Barker/Foley
CARRIED**

2. Conflict of Interest Declarations

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

3. Confirmation of Minutes of the Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee Meeting Held on 4 November 2020

EICC54/21 Resolution

Minutes of the Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee meeting held on Wednesday, 4 November 2020, a copy having been circulated prior to the meeting, were taken as read and confirmed as a true and correct record.

**Ormsby/Foley
CARRIED**

4. Follow-ups from Previous Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee Meetings

The item was taken as read.

EICC55/21 Resolution

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

**Barker/van Beek
CARRIED**

5. Call for Minor Items not on the Agenda

There were no minor items raised.

6. Nic Caviale Presentation – Freshwater Improvement Fund Co-funding Opportunities for Community Led Projects as Demonstrated by the Waipuka Whenua Restoration Project

Nic Caviale, Pat O'Brien, Chair of the Whangawehi Catchment Management Group, Nuku Hadfield, Chair of the Guardians of the Ruakituri River Catchment group and Peter McCarthy provided a presentation and a short video on the Waipuka whenua restoration project. Discussions traversed:

- Whangawehi Catchment (3600ha of commercial forestry, native forest and farmland) Management Group and restoration of the catchment from the July 2011 MoU signing by tangata whenua, HBRC and WDC and development of the Catchment Management Plan through to the current Jobs for Nature funded activities under way
- The project includes riparian planting and fencing, pest control, community engagement, indigenous water and fish monitoring, research, education, eco tourism walkway, soil conservation, and information sharing to actively address issues in the catchment
- Looking to retire 414ha of land comprised of wetlands (52ha), sand dunes

(75ha), native bush (73ha), class 7e/8e erodible land (178ha), 36ha of riparian margins, 40km of stream protection over 5 years at a cost of \$5.8m

- Seeking Council's support with co-funding of \$1M over 5 years.

EICC56/21 **Resolution**

That the Environment & Integrated Catchments Committee receives and notes the verbal "Freshwater Improvement Fund Co-funding Opportunities for Community-led Projects as Demonstrated by the Waipuka Whenua Restoration Project" report and presentation from Nic Caviale and representatives of the Whangawehi Catchment Management Group.

**Barker/van Beek
CARRIED**

7. Tūtira Regional Park Pine Forest Replanting Plan

Chris Dolley introduced the item and Ben Douglas, Forest Advisor, who outlined the replanting options. Discussions traversed:

- principle objective is soil conservation to maintain and improve the water quality in Lake Tūtira and Waikopiro
- Significant interest from Maungaharuru Tangitu and the Tūtira Community in the replanting plan and a working group comprised of HBRC staff, tangata whenua and Tūtira community representatives established
- Significant investments made over many years in water quality improvement initiatives
- Recommended that any retirement to native forest needs to proceed in a staged and manageable approach to mitigate risks
- Commercial native forest was ruled out as a planting option due to the significant cost of establishment and maintenance and poor financial returns
- In depth analysis been undertaken by an external forestry company around the options and costs
- Need to balance commercial returns with the primary purpose of the land for soil conservation
- Request that staff provide details of financial impacts of the options on Council's balance sheet to inform Council's decision.

EICC57/21 **Resolutions**

1. That the Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee receives and considers the "*Tūtira Regional Park Pine Forest Replanting Plan*" 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. Approves the Replanting Plan for the Tūtira Forest as proposed and presented as Option 2, consisting of approximately 57 hectares of radiata pine and 51 hectares of native regeneration.

**Barker/Graham
Abstained: Foss
CARRIED**

8. Funding the Erosion Control Scheme

Iain Maxwell introduced the item and noted that the Erosion Control Scheme funding was discussed at a Council workshop at the end of 2020. Further

discussions and overview from Dean Evans highlighted:

- Success engaging landowners in the Erosion Control Scheme and waterway and ecosystem restoration activities has resulted in funding now exceeding available budget for this financial year
- Requesting that funding be brought forward from 2027-28 into the current financial year to maintain interest in the programme, and meet budget requirements for committed projects
- ECS grant policy review is underway with an option to reduce the grant rate from 75% to 50% of total project costs for new applications to make Council funding go further and mitigate supply/demand for funding the scheme
- Demand is creating some financial challenges, exacerbated further by the late addition of the MfE Public Waterways & Ecosystem Restoration Fund projects (Jobs for Nature) and the need to match the Central Government funding
- Much of the work is riparian fencing and protection for plantings.

EICC58/21

Resolutions

1. That the Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee receives and considers the “Funding for Erosion Control Scheme” 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. Approves the bringing forward of \$2.45M loan funding for the Erosion Control Scheme, budget code 379-001, from the 2027-28 financial year to the 2020-21 financial year, for a total expenditure for ECS and *Jobs for Nature* projects in 2020-21 year of \$4.7M; and undertakes analysis of future funding requirements through to 2031 through the Long Term Plan process currently under way.

**Barker/van Beek
CARRIED**

9. Integrated Catchment Management - Catchment Delivery Section Update

Iain Maxwell introduced the item, with an update from Dean Evans on the activities and achievements of the Catchment Management team covering:

- A dashboard is being developed to provide visibility of the broad spectrum of activities being undertaken
- GIS heat maps demonstrate the Team’s activities in Erosion Control, Protection and Enhancement projects and riparian fencing spreading across the region
- Good buy-in from landowners seeing others’ success
- Dean Roughton provided the findings of the Waipuka Catchment case study, showing the benefits of the riparian fencing and planting works undertaken with 7 landowners in the catchment which flows into the Ocean Beach lagoon. Work with landowners around the entire picture including preparation for planting by clearing willows & blackberry, sourcing native plants suitable for the area and conditions, plant protection and maintenance and pest management.

EICC59/21

Resolution

That the Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee receives and notes the “*Integrated Catchment Management - Catchment Delivery Section Update*” staff report.

**Ormsby/Williams
CARRIED**

The committee adjourned at 10.55am and reconvened at 11.10am.

10. Chilean Needle Grass Update

Iain Maxwell introduced Alice McNatty, Antony Rewcastle and Mark Mitchell who provided an update, covering:

- Chilean needle grass (CNG) is an invasive weed of national significance causing serious animal welfare issues in Hawke's Bay, Marlborough and Canterbury
- It is spread by stock, hay/silage, feed, machinery, soil, gravel and silt
- No current tools to eradicate this plant as spraying only kills growing grass and not the seed – must be controlled before seed is set
- Has been in Hawke's Bay since 1930s, inhabits approximately 600ha on 200+ properties in Tukituki and Waipawa catchments
- HBRC has taken precautionary steps by putting additional consent conditions on gravel extractors, e.g. end use, and held several education workshops with extractors
- In Dec 2020 there was a temporary ban on all gravel extractions/stockpile removal from the Tukituki catchment due to non-compliance with a Notice of Direction and working with contractors (7 operators) to source gravel from outside the infected catchments
- Extractors can apply for an exemption under the Biosecurity Act, to use stockpiled gravel
- HBRC working alongside the Communications teams to help highlight this issue and Facebook video had 21,000+ views
- Work to manage and mitigate risks under way with the aim of allowing gravel extraction to continue
- Overview of gravel extraction activities, where it's being extracted and quantities
- Extending survey work to determine the extent of incursion and continue researching new methods of control.

EICC60/21 Resolution

That the Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee receives and notes the verbal "Chilean Needle Grass Update" report.

**Williams/van Beek
CARRIED**

11. Pest Management - Possum Control Update

Iain Maxwell introduced Mark Mitchell who gave an update on reviewing activities in response to the 2020 Biosecurity and Biodiversity Section 17a review. Discussions covered:

- Climate conditions perfect for population explosion of rabbits and mustelids across the country
- Key findings from the s17a review identified five programmes to be reviewed: possum control area (PCA) programme, rabbit control, pest plant management, investment in Biodiversity, and Surveillance and monitoring – requires a staged approach to reviews
- Full review of the Possum Control Area (PCA) activity under way, including role of Forestry, and options for change will be presented to the May EICC meeting
- Changes likely to require a Council decision, followed by a public consultation, amendments to the Regional Pest Management Plan and Budget amendments through the Annual Plan process
- Rabbit control is a national issue and being discussed nationally with regional sector BioManager's group
- Pest plant management review begins in March and findings will be presented to the September EICC meeting
- Increased investment in Biodiversity included in the proposed 2021-31 LTP
- Exploring surveillance and monitoring options for effective, affordable and

- statistically valid regional pest plant surveillance methodology
- Focus on PCA and Plant Pest programme changes with aim for those to become operative in July 2022.

EICC61/21 **Resolution**

That the Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee receives and notes the verbal “Pest Management – Possum Control Update” report.

**Barker/van Beek
CARRIED**

13. Regional Water Security Programme - 2021 Engagement

Tom Skerman, Amanda Langley and Jonathan Hill gave an update on progress made with the Regional Water Security programme and associated Treaty partner and stakeholder engagements. Discussions traversed:

- Work on the set of “regional water accounts” is expected by the end of February
- Work on Stage 2 (Projections) and Stage 3 (Potential interventions for analysis) is now underway
- Next steps are work with HBRC’s Maori Partnership Team to commission a “Cultural Case”, seek feedback/input from key stakeholders into the Interim report during development and present the Interim results to Council in April/May 2021
- Heretaunga Water storage landowner engagement focussed on three potential sites for small-medium scale storage, with non-binding agreements entered into for two of the three sites
- Technical prefeasibility for two sites due to be completed in June/Jul 2021
- Council decision points for feasibility planned for August with release of the Regional Water Storage Assessment.
- CHB Managed Aquifer Recharge preferred pilot site identified and initial discussions with landowner are advancing
- Site specific feasibility investigations for resource consent applications has commenced, with ambitious target to lodge resource consent for MAR Pilot by mid 2021 to enable site to be established and running by Oct/Nov 2021 to capture end of winter rains
- Aerial survey for 3D Aquifer mapping using SkyTEM technology completed in April 2020 – now working on first dataset for Poukawa/Otane basin, initial modelling and interpretation due for completion by end of March
- Drilling programme intended to reduce uncertainties and improve interpretation is due to commence June/July
- Work will continue over next 2 years to complete the analysis and model development for larger Ruataniwha and Heretaunga Plains areas
- Communications strategy is to progressively share findings/information with the public and provide some access to data.
- 2021 will require significant public and stakeholder engagement across the entire programme of work
- Key project milestones and areas of detailed stakeholder engagement
- Regional Water Assessment to be released publicly in August, along with names of preferred water storage sites and kick off sustained period of deep public engagement following which Council decisions on next steps will be sought
- It was queried whether it would be possible to create a spreadsheet of topics discussed during workshops and meetings each month, linking topics to previous discussions and signalling future decision points
- A request was made for authors to include an overview of what related papers have gone before and references to future decisions to come in agenda items
- An update was requested, on the PDU’s response to the letter sent in April 2020 at the direction of Council
- In relation to a query about whether the water storage programme could be

expedited, it was noted that any Government policy changes may necessitate adjustments to the programme.

EICC62/21 Resolution

That the Environment and Integrated Catchments Committee receives and notes the “*Regional Water Security Programme - 2021 Engagement*” staff report.

**Graham/Foss
CARRIED**

12. Farm Environmental Management Plans Update

Brendan Powell and Kate Proctor gave an update and progress made on the Farm Environmental Management Plans in the Tukituki catchment with discussions highlighting:

- FEMPs were first due 3 years ago and due for first review in Feb 2021 (200) and the rest (870) in May 2021
- Landowners duly informed of deadlines and requirements, but unlikely that some will meet those deadlines
- HBRC will continue communicating to landowners leading up to the deadlines
- Farm Plans will be required nationally and further details relating to national farm planning systems and an implementation strategy will be further developed later this year.

EICC63/21 Resolution

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

**Williams/Foley
CARRIED**

14. Discussion of Minor Matters not on the Agenda

There were no minor matters raised.

Cr Hinewai Ormsby led the meeting in offering a karakia to close.

Closure:

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 12.50pm on 3 February 2021.

Signed as a true and correct record.

DATE:

CHAIRMAN: