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Committee Environmental Wellbeing Committee
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Wairarapa Rivers – Scheme Reviews to Floodplain Management Plans (FMPs)

1. Purpose

To seek endorsement to change the current reviews of the River Schemes in the upper Wairarapa valley into Floodplain Management Plans (FMPs).

This strategic change will broaden the buy-in (holistic) of the whole community and key-stake holders on the future river management, flood risk management, ecological and recreational enhancements.

2. The decision-making process and significance

Officers recognise that the matters referenced in this report may have a high degree of importance to affected or interested parties.

The matter requiring decision in this report has been considered by officers against the requirements of Part 6 of the Local Government Act 2002 (the Act). Part 6 sets out the obligations of local authorities in relation to the making of decisions.

2.1 Significance of the decision

Part 6 requires Greater Wellington to consider the significance of the decision. The term ‘significance’ has a statutory definition set out in the Act.

Officers have considered the significance of the matter, taking the Council's significance policy and decision-making guidelines into account. Officers recommend that the matter be considered to have low significance.

Officers do not consider that a formal record outlining consideration of the decision-making process is required in this instance.

3. Background

Floodplain Management Plans (FMP) are in place for the Waikanae (1997), Otaki (1998) and the Hutt (2001) Rivers providing frameworks for a long term programme of activities and planned expenditure.

Our commitment to this strategic approach is highlighted in our vision statement and the LTP:

Flood Protection Vision

“A prosperous community safe from the consequences of flooding and rivers and streams in a natural state providing ecological diversity and recreational opportunities.”

Long Term Plan (LTP) 2012-22

“Greater Wellington works with the communities to manage flood risk from the region’s rivers and streams. We develop floodplain management plans, provide a free advice and consultation service, maintain and build flood protection works, work with the community to improve the environment and recreational opportunities and provide flood warnings”

It is intended that this decision will enable officers to;

1. Focus our resources on flood risk management for the community through a holistic approach.
2. Engage with the community and other key-stakeholders on the preferred options/approaches through Floodplain Management Committees.
3. Report back to the Environmental Wellbeing Committee on the phased progress of the FMPs at an overall level.

3.1 Change to FMPs

Why is a change necessary?

- To achieve consistency in managing our rivers and flood plains across the region.
- The Schemes, over their life spans, have worked well under the original intention and objectives that were set-up and agreed to. However, it is recognised that the existing objectives and outcomes do not fully address the current integrated catchment approach expected from the wider community, as well as the Council’s vision and policies.
- The core elements of flood and erosion protection are generally well considered already, but with the development of the FMP we will have a keener focus on:
 - Environmental and recreational objectives
 - Achieving buffer zones in the river corridor
 - Affordability and sustainability
 - Funding.
 - Consenting

- Supports the Flood Protection application (renewal) of the Global Consent for operating and maintaining the Upper Ruamahanga, Waipoua, Waingawa, Kopuaranga and Waiohine Rivers, which are scheduled to be lodged in 2015.

3.2 How does this affect the Schemes?

The proposed change will affect the River Schemes from the confluence of the Waiohine and Ruamahanga Rivers upstream. This includes the Waingawa, Waipoua and the Upper Ruamahanga River Schemes.

The Floodplain Management Committee, already established for the Waiohine River, will continue its work as currently programmed.

The Lower Wairarapa Development Scheme Advisory Committee will also continue as it currently does, as it has only recently completed a review, and consents for that part of the river are not due for renewal until 2019.

3.3 Consultation and Communication

There is a need for a broader representation in decision making, than currently exists, on the preferred options and ultimate agreement on the FMP.

For the purpose of development and agreement of the FMP, it is recommended that an Upper Valley Floodplain Management Subcommittee be formed. Current Advisory Committees will remain and members, other key stakeholders and interested parties (including Councillors), will be invited to participate in the establishment of a broader Upper Valley FMP Subcommittee.

The Upper Valley FMP Subcommittee will make their recommendations via reports back to the Council's Environmental Wellbeing Committee. If Zone or Catchment Committees are established in the future, then the FMP Committee may report to that Committee before going to Council.

The structure proposed is shown in Figure 1 below.

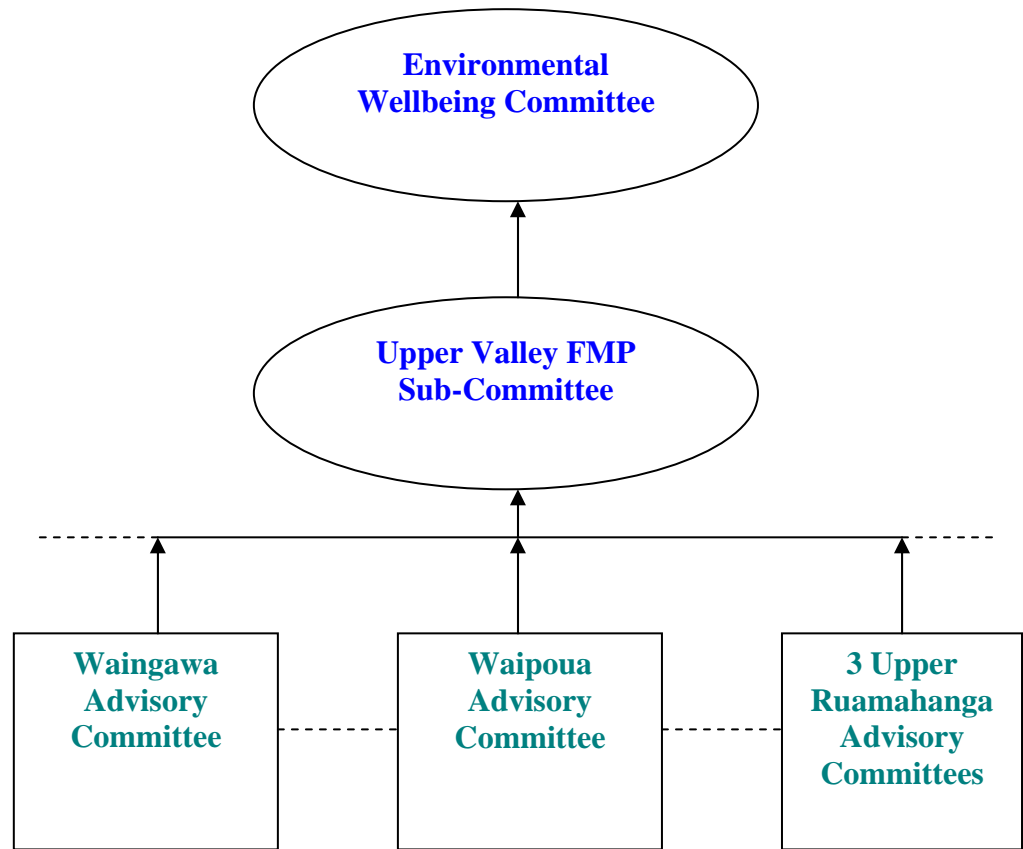


Figure 1: Proposed FMP Committee structure

4. Current FMP Activities in the Wairarapa Waiohine River Floodplain Management Plan

The Phase 1 report has been signed off by the Waiohine FMP Committee, and has been distributed to all concerned parties.

Combinations of options have been developed and were presented to the Waiohine FMP Committee. The Committee used the Multi Criteria Analysis process developed, and explained during the previous Committee meetings, to establish their preferred combination of options.

The preferred options (two were identified) are going through a sensitivity process before being finalised to be presented at a wider community consultation process.

Following the wider community consultation process, the preferred option(s) will be taken to the Council, and then taken forward into Phase 3 (detailed assessment).

Waingawa River Floodplain Management Plan

The Scoping Report, after an initial Scheme review, has been completed following internal and external consultation. The findings of the report will be reported back to the Advisory Committee, which will include the next stage of work required to lift the scheme review to a FMP and the anticipated timeframe.

Waipoua and Upper Ruamahanga River Floodplain Management Plan

A scoping document on the development of a FMP has been prepared. The draft Scoping Report (completed at the end of August 2012) will be distributed for consultation to all internal and external parties during September 2012.

5. Budget and Programme

The proposed work to develop FMPs for the Upper Wairarapa Valley will need to be substantially completed by June 2015. To meet this timeline, considerable external resources will need to be engaged. It is proposed to fund these works as a capital project from within the existing capital works budgets allowed in the 2012-22 LTP. Budgets for this work will be developed and reported back to the Committee in November 2012. This is the same funding approach that was used for the development of the Waiohine, Otaki and Hutt FMPs.

6. Communication

Communication is central to the FMP concept and process. The community staff will be engaging with has taken a keen interest in the progress of the FMP work to date. The Corporate Communications team based in the Wairarapa will be used to assist this element of the project.

A key role of the communication process is to manage the expectations of the community with regard to possible physical works. The community is likely to be enthusiastic about progressing physical works as soon as possible. However, staff will emphasise patience to ensure the process is carried out comprehensively and follows best practice.

Staff will make it clear to the community that the FMP is a process to give the community a strategy to cope with the flood risk from the rivers. It is not solely about constructing physical flood protection along the banks of the river.

7. Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. ***Receives the report.***
2. ***Notes the contents of the report.***
3. ***Endorses the proposed process for developing Floodplain Management Plans in the Upper Wairarapa Valley.***
4. ***Endorses the work to develop an Upper Wairarapa Valley Floodplain Management Subcommittee.***

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