

Report 14.289
Date 26 May 2014
File E/12/02/04

Committee Strategy and Policy Committee
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General Managers' report to the Strategy and Policy Committee 17 June 2014

1. Purpose

To inform the Committee of Greater Wellington Regional Council's (GWRC's) activities relating to the Committee's areas of responsibility.

2. Catchment Management

2.1 Flood Protection

- An Environment Court appeal has been lodged against the decision to grant approval for the Whakawhiriwhiri Stream Project, Lower Wairarapa Valley Development Scheme.
- Hutt River - City Centre Upgrade Project - the Integrated Concept Design options were presented to the HVFMS, GWRC Councillors and HCC Councillors. A range of options are being considered. Community consultation is currently programmed to commence in late July/August. A communications plan is being developed.
- Jim Cooke Park stopbank Upgrade - Option development is progressing. Surveys have been completed and the extent of the stopbank confirmed. Staff are working with KCDC on land matters.
- Further consultation with the Pinehaven community over the proposed floodplain management options will occur during the June – July period.

- The Te Kauru (Upper Ruamahanga) FMP Phase 1 projects have been completed and reported to the Subcommittee. Work has now commenced on Phase 2 projects.

2.2 Biodiversity

- Key Native Ecosystem planning is progressing well with five plans now signed off by stakeholder managers (Parangarahu Lakes Area, Baring Head/Ōrua pouanui, Whitireia Coast, East Harbour Northern Forest and Queen Elizabeth Park). Stakeholder feedback has been received on two other plans (Belmont-Dry Creek and Belmont-Speedys), while the consultation period is now open for a further two plans (Hutt Water Collection Area and Kaitoke Regional Park).
- Resource consent has been obtained and notification is about to begin for the Kaitoke/Hutt River Catchment aerial 1080 operation. This will be undertaken to reduce the populations of possums and other pest mammals and support the native species of the area. An informal meeting was held with Tenths Trust kaumātua about the Hutt Catchment 1080 operation. Useful discussions occurred around the science and methods being used and opportunities for more iwi involvement in future planning.
- Wairarapa Moana - A poster has been published to publicise community planting events around Wairarapa Moana. Staff have been coordinating activities for upcoming planting events at Onoke Spit, Lake Domain, Wairio Wetlands, Onoke Lagoon and Whangaimoana Dunes.

2.3 Biosecurity

- Project Aorangi (South Wairarapa) Aerial 1080 Operation (30,000 ha) - all consent and approval applications have been submitted. All prefeed and poison baits have been purchased. The operation is likely to start late June, early July.
- Regional Possum Predator Control Programme - Kapiti – 11,500 ha: approximately 50% completed and will be finished in late June. Porirua – 7,700 ha control completed. Moonshine – 1,600 ha of initial control started in April and will be completed early to mid-June. North Wairarapa – 16,500 ha control completed. Initial indications are possum numbers are low and little further work is likely to be required.
- Regional Pest Management Strategy Review – recent advice from the Ministry of Primary Industries has clarified whether GWRC needs to review the current RPMS. A recent amendment to the Biosecurity Act 1993 has pushed review dates out from 5 to 10 years. As our RPMS was reviewed in 2009 and does not expire until 2022, we are under no

obligation to review now. Furthermore, as there is no National Policy Direction in place, as was originally intended by MPI, we are not inconsistent with any Crown objectives.

2.4 Land Management

- Senior representatives of the company that has recently purchased the cutting rights to the Metro and Wairarapa forests have spent two days in the region looking across the forest assets, and having discussions with a number of pan sector groups and companies. These groups and companies have included NZ Forest Owners Association, forest research institutes and CentrePort.
- There has been a sharp drop in log prices over the last month resulting from decreased demand out of China. Prices for premium logs have dropped from \$135/tonne to \$115/tonne, while logs of lesser value have also dropped by \$20/tonne. This has caused a 30% drop in net returns per tonne (\$46/tonne for April, down to \$32/tonne for May).
- There has been very strong demand for poplar and willow poles and these have begun to be distributed to many of the Farm Plan clients. 60,000 native plants have been ordered for a range of programmes, including riparian planting, Wairarapa Moana biodiversity projects, community projects and sales to the general public. 30,000 plants have been allocated to date.
- Discussions are soon to take place with management of the Supply Fonterra initiative on the development of a strategic partnership to achieve the industries environmental outcomes by implementing riparian management programmes across the region. While this will have application across all dairy farms that supply Fonterra, it is anticipated that the initial focus will be on Wairarapa Moana.

3. Strategy and community Engagement

3.1 Regional Land Transport Plan 2015

The development of a draft Regional Land Transport Plan (RLTP) is progressing, with the Regional Transport Committee's adoption of two important policies – the Significance Policy and the Prioritisation Policy.

The Significance Policy provides a framework to determine:

- The significance of variations to GWRC's Regional Land Transport Plan as required by the Land Transport Management Act, the form of consultation required and how any such variations are approved.

- Which activities are considered to be “significant” and which then require prioritisation as required by the Land Transport Management Act.

This Prioritisation Policy provides a framework to:

- Prioritise significant activities (generally the large new improvement projects with a total construction cost of more than \$5million, using the criteria of Strategic Fit, Regional Effectiveness and Economic efficiency.
- The Regional Effectiveness criteria is measured by the extent to which the package or project contributes to the broad policy objectives set out in the RLTP and the effectiveness of the project or package to deliver against the outcomes sought by the RLTP.

The Regional Transport Committee (RTC) is also developing new targets to measure progress towards the RLTP outcomes. These will be developed over the coming months. A draft policy framework for the RLTP will be considered by the RTC in August.

A draft RLTP is due to be the subject of public consultation in January 2015, and would be formally considered by the Council in April 2015.

3.2 Parks Network Plan updates

The process for developing a management plan and bylaws for Whiteria Park has been commenced with the Whiteria Park Board. In May, officers undertook a workshop with the Park Board focused on determining the vision for the Park. A second workshop is planned for July to discuss the content and development of the management plan.

The Draft Parangarahu Lakes Area co-Management Plan and amendment to the Parks Network Plan has just completed the first part of the public consultation process, with 12 submissions having been received. Hearings commence on 27 June.

The Baring Head Heritage Plan has been completed. Further work will identify a framework for the staged implementation of the Heritage Plan.

4. Public Transport

4.1 Further Wellington city bus network consultation

Following public consultation on the Draft Regional Public Transport Plan Churton Park and Khandallah communities expressed the wish to discuss further the route design for their local bus services.

Officers attended a public meeting in Churton Park on 6 May 2014 and presented the strategic network design. Attendees were reassured that no material decisions to change the local bus routes would be taken without further consultation with community representatives. It was agreed that

workshops would be held in August/September where community representatives would work on potential route options with officers.

Officers have held an initial meeting with a group of community representatives from Khandallah, Broadmeadows and Ngaio. It was agreed by the group that a public meeting would be held on 2 July at the Khandallah Town Hall. As in Churton Park GWRC officers would explain the background, and strategic nature of the draft Regional Public Transport Plan. Then there would be a call for nominations for Khandallah, Broadmeadows and Ngaio bus user representatives, who can speak for geographic areas and for different age groups, to participate in workshops with GWRC officers where possible local route options would be developed.

Following the workshops officers will consider the options to establish the potential for a targeted consultation with all households in the respective communities asking them to choose between options derived from the workshops.

5. Water Supply

5.1 Kaitoke land purchase

Negotiations for the purchase of Ag Research land at Kaitoke were completed and Council approved the purchase on 21st May.

5.2 New source and resilience strategy

A presentation to councillors in May gave an update on future source and resilience planning in preparation for the Long Term Plan (LTP). Further work is being done on comparing the costs and benefits of 3 emergency water supply options; a cross harbour pipeline, storage ponds in the East of Wellington city and a storage lake to the North of Wellington city. A second presentation and workshop with councillors is planned for August.

5.3 Water integration

Planning for the proposed merge of GWRC Water Supply Group with the Capacity CCO has gone as far as practicable at this stage. A project plan has been developed and estimates of cost and other resources required to carry out the merge have been completed. There is ongoing preparatory work being carried out including investigating the option of GWRC ICT team providing computer services to the combined CCO.

The management teams of both organisations have been meeting to start building relationships and to discuss opportunities for efficiency/productivity/cost benefits of the merged entity.

A group of asset managers from GWRC Water Supply, Capacity and each of the four city councils has been formed to look at developing a regional perspective on infrastructure strategy for the 3 waters (water supply, waste water and storm water). The aim is to agree on a strategy that will inform or feed in to the LTP's of each council.

5.4 Treatment plant open day

We held our third open day on 17th May at the Te Marua treatment plant. 238 people booked for a tour and 201 turned up. The visitors were split across 12 90 minute tours led by 4 water supply staff. As with our previous tours we received lots of great feedback. We aim to have another open day at the Wainui treatment plant in the spring time.

5.5 Lake quality

In early May it was decided to drain and then refill one of the storage lakes at Te Marua due to very high levels of a taste and odour causing compound called Geosmin. Geosmin has no health concerns but leads to complaints from consumers. Emptying the lake is taking longer than expected because water beneath the newly installed liner is draining at a slower pace than the main body of water. There is no operational impact at the moment and we still expect to have the lake refilled before summer.

6. The decision-making process and significance

No decision is being sought in this report.

7. Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. *Receives the report.*
2. *Notes the content of the report.*

Report approved by:

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