

Report 15.478
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Committee Council
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Report on the Environment Committee meeting 22 September 2015

1. Purpose

To inform Council of the Environment Committee meeting of 22 September 2015.

2. Reports

2.1 National Pest Pet Biosecurity Accord

The Committee recommended that Greater Wellington Regional Council join the National Pest Pet Biosecurity Accord. It was noted that many of the activities proposed in the accord are already undertaken when meeting the requirements of the National Pest Plants Accord and therefore the costs of participating in the accord can be covered by current resourcing.

2.2 Regional Pest Management Strategy 2002-2022: Operational Plan 2015/16

The Committee noted that the adoption of the operational plan will be followed by a formal review of the Regional Pest Management Strategy which will commence in late 2015/16. The Committee noted the success of pest management in the region and that a significant reduction in pest levels in some areas has been achieved. Because of this, in the upcoming strategy review, Council may decide to aim for the eradication of certain pest species.

The Committee noted that the Council has 'memorandum of understanding' with the territorial authorities around the region, which is a formal agreement that set out the roles of each Council in terms of pest management.

The Committee discussed issues relating to the use of controlled chemicals used for pest management. Some of these chemicals used by GWRC require resource consent or have been approved for use by the Environmental

Protection Agency (EPA). The Committee specifically discussed glyphosate and noted that concerns about its use have been raised by the World Health Organisation (WHO). This topic will be covered in a Council workshop before any change in position is made.

The Committee noted that a change in position on managing 'old man's beard' may need to be considered during the next strategy review. Furthermore, public awareness around ways of controlling 'old man's beard' and similar pest plants should be increased.

2.3 Waiohine Floodplain Management Plan- Preferred Option

The Committee endorsed officers proceeding with developing a draft Flood Management Plan (FMP) for the Waiohine Floodplain. The preferred option involves the construction of a new stopbank on the True Right bank of the river as was originally planned in 2007. Officers have recommended that 1 in 100 year protection be provided to the bulk of the Greytown Township. The existing stopbank on the true left bank of the river is currently poorly constructed, in poor condition and is located too close to the river. A possible solution is to include in the FMP a set of criteria that will trigger the decision to rebuild this stopbank.

It was noted that Carterton District Council (CDC) have indicated that they wish to remain neutral and have not supported the current option at this stage. However, it is still considered that officers should develop and consult on a draft FMP and that the consultation process will give CDC ample opportunity to raise concerns about the effect of what is being considered.

2.4 General Managers Report to the Environment Committee meeting 22 September

The Committee was updated on activities relating to environment management and catchment management.

It was noted that an internal review of the management of volunteers will commence shortly. This will include the health and safety obligations of Council when using volunteers. A final report will be presented to the Executive Leadership Team in 2016.

The Committee was updated on flood protection activities. The Committee commended the efforts of Flood Protection officers during the Hutt River City Centre Upgrade Project consultation.

The Committee was updated on Harbours management activities.

2.5 Waste Forum Update

The Committee was informed about the Waste Forum- Wellington region, held on 14 August at Upper Hutt City Council, which Councillor Paul Bruce had attended.

The Committee noted the presentation that had been given by Councillor David Lee (WCC) on eco-smart closed loop composters and requested that he be invited to present on this to GWRC Councillors.

3. Communication

No external communication is required.

4. The decision-making process and significance

No decision is being sought in this report.

4.1 Engagement

Engagement on this matter is unnecessary.

5. Recommendations

That the Committee:

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

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