

**Waikato Regional Council**  
**West Coast Catchments Committee**  
**OPEN MINUTES**

**Date:** **Wednesday, 28 August 2019, 10:00 am**

**Location:** **Council Chamber**  
**Waikato Regional Council**  
**401 Grey Street, Hamilton East**

**Members Present:** W Maag Chair (Maniapoto Maori Trust Board)  
Cr F Lichtwark (Waikato Regional Council)  
D Pilkington (Otorohanga District Council)  
Cr S Smith (Waitomo District Council)  
C Holland (Local Community Representative)  
T Mandeno (Local Community Representative)  
J Reeves (Local Community Representative)  
S Reid (Local Community Representative)  
R Takerei (Maniapoto Maori Trust Board)  
M Moana-Tuwhangai (Waikato-Tainui)  
Cr S Kneebone (Joint Chair Integrated Catchment Management  
Committee South)  
A Livingston Ex officio (Waikato Regional Council)

**Staff Present:** V Payne - Chief Executive Officer (Waikato Regional Council)  
B Toohey - Integrated Catchment Management (Waikato Regional  
Council)  
J Francis - Zone Manager West Coast Catchments (Waikato Regional  
Council)  
M Poole - Democracy Advisor

**Opening Karakia - Cr S Kneebone**

**1. Apologies**

Apologies were received from M Moss and K van Houte (local community representatives) and Cr L Thomson (Waikato District Council).

**WCC19/22**

**Moved by:** Cr F Lichtwark

**Seconded by:** T Mandeno

**RESOLVED (Section A)**

**That the apologies received from M Moss and K Van Houte (local community representatives) and Cr L Thomson (Waikato District Council) for absence be accepted.**

**The motion was put and carried**

**2. Confirmation of Agenda**

**WCC19/23**

**Moved by:** M Moana-Tuwhangai

**Seconded by:** Cr D Pilkington

**RESOLVED (Section A)**

**That the agenda for the meeting of the West Coast Catchments Committee of 28 August 2019, as circulated be amended by:**

- a change of order to take Item 9 - Waikato Stormwater Guidelines Update immediately after Item 6 - Chairperson's Report; and
- the addition of a General Business item relating to King Country River Care as the last item of business;

**and with those two amendments be confirmed as the business for the meeting.**

**The motion was put and carried**

**3. Disclosures of Interest**

W Maag declared that he has been appointed as a Hearing Commissioner to the Hearing Committee for the Waikato District Council District Plan Review.

**4. Confirmation of Minutes**

**4.1 West Coast Catchments Committee Minutes**

The minutes from the meeting of the West Coast Catchments Committee dated 23 May 2019 were taken as read, noting that the Kawhia Harbour and Coast Care Collective has been renamed - now Te Taio o Kawhia Moana.

**Matters arising:**

Item 10 - Kawhia Biodiversity Projects (*pages 11 and 12 Doc #14372581*)

With respect to vehicles being driven on beaches, it is a complex issue with both the Regional Council and the relevant District Councils having jurisdiction and

responsibilities and Planning document policies/rules depending on whether it is above or below mean high water springs (MHWS).

J Francis advised that she recently circulated briefing notes on responsibilities for vehicles on beaches and whitebait management and can re-send these to members. Cr D Pilkington advised that there is a report available (prepared as part of a District Plan review) that includes commentary on vehicles on beaches. This may provide useful information for members - agreed that Cr Pilkington would forward the report to J Francis for circulation to members.

**WCC19/24**

**Moved by:** Cr F Lichtwark

**Seconded by:** Cr D Pilkington

**RESOLVED (Section A)**

**That the Minutes of the 23 May 2019 West Coast Catchments Committee Meeting be received and approved as a true and correct record, and that the matters arising (vehicles on beaches jurisdiction and rules) actions to circulate relevant reports/information be noted.**

**The motion was put and carried**

## **5. Issues and Actions from the Previous Meeting**

Zone Manager West Coast Catchments (J Francis) presented the Issues and Actions Update Report and with respect to Whitebait Management it was noted that:

- the DoC representative on the Committee (N Hayward) has now moved to a different role within DoC. Staff waiting to hear who the new DoC representative will be, and in interim will endeavour to get a progress report/update on the Whitebait Management Discussion Document and consultation process via other DoC avenues.
- DoC is a significant stakeholder for a range of harbour and coastal activities. The frequency of staff changes and non-availability to attend meetings and provide information/respond to enquiries is an ongoing concern.

Advised that Fish & Game will be invited to attend the March 2020 Committee meeting to outline how their activities enhance and/or adversely impact on the biodiversity of native freshwater fish species.

**WCC19/25**

**Moved by:** Cr S Kneebone

**Seconded by:** R Takerei

**RESOLVED (Section A)**

**That the report Issues and Actions Report August 2019 (dated 2 August 2019) be received for information.**

**The motion was put and carried**

## **6. Chairperson's Report**

The Chairperson (W Maag) noted that the Committee's 23 May 2019 recommendations to the Integrated Catchment Management Committee with respect to:

- whitebait management (*refer minutes page 8*); that this was endorsed by Council at its 27 June 2019 meeting; and
- the Red Eared Slider Turtle (*refer minutes page 7*); this was amended to read that "*Council advocate to the Minister of Biosecurity that the National Pest Pet Trade Accord is progressed as a matter of urgency and that the Red Eared Slider Turtle be included as a priority for risk assessment and subsequent ban from sale*" and was endorsed by Council at its 27 June 2019 meeting.

The Chair also noted that this was the last West Coast Catchments Committee meeting before the October 2019 local government elections and Council Chair Alan Livingston's retirement. Weo Maag acknowledged Alan's chairmanship, his leadership, intellect, calm manner and collaborative/working in partnerships approach to achieve the best outcomes for the region.

**WCC19/26**

**Moved by:** Cr F Lichtwark

**Seconded by:** M Moana-Tuwhangai

### **RESOLVED (Section A)**

**That the Chairperson's Report and verbal update for the 28 August 2019 West Coast Catchments Committee meeting be received for information.**

**The motion was put and carried**

Item 9 Waikato Stormwater Guideline Update was brought forward on the agenda for discussion.

## **9. Waikato Stormwater Guideline Update**

Senior Resource Officer, Resource Use (B Richmond) presented an overview of the two Waikato Regional Council Stormwater Guidelines on urban stormwater management released in July 2018, being the "Waikato Stormwater Management Guideline" and the Waikato Stormwater Run-off Modelling Guideline", with a focus on the Management Guideline. He noted that:

- the drivers to develop stormwater guidelines that are 'customised' for and relevant to the Waikato Regional Council include the National Policy Statement on Freshwater, the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River, Council's Regional Policy Statement and the Healthy Rivers Proposed Plan Change 1.
- the key changes from the previously used guideline include:
  - o stormwater management is based on the receiving environment;
  - o a focus on low impact designs;
  - o new volume control criteria;
  - o new water quality treatment criteria;
  - o revegetation is included as a stormwater management practice;

- soil conditioning is included to mitigate soil compaction;
- new sections to cover industrial sites, drainage areas and rural residential developments.
- Council administers some 92 drainage districts within the region and territorial authorities also administer drainage areas. Rural drainage systems are not designed for urban flows and the stormwater impacts of urban expansion have to be appropriately managed.
- the BPO (best practicable option) approach is emphasised through the stormwater guidelines, which while they are not a statutory document, are the recommended approach. The provisions in the Regional Plan are the 'minimum requirements.
- the Stormwater Runoff Modelling Guideline has a technical focus and assesses the site hydrology; the peak flows and runoff volumes pre and post development.

Arising out of questions, responses and discussion, the following points were noted:

- 'volume control' looks at the receiving environment. What are the issues - flooding, stream bank/bed erosion, water quality, etc that stormwater flows could cause.
- 'engagement' has included workshops with territorial authorities and a presentation at a recent National Stormwater Conference in Auckland.
- concern expressed that Guidelines are not statutory enforceable documents. While there may be good voluntary 'uptake' by some developers the 'bottom line' is the rules in the Waikato Regional Plan. While the Healthy Rivers Proposed Plan Change 1 covers the rural sector, view expressed that the impacts of urban stormwater on harbours are serious and not currently being adequately addressed as the Regional Plan Review is still several years away (circa 2021-2023).
- view expressed that while there are controlled activity rules on stormwater discharges in the current Regional Plan, they are not being adequately enforced 'on the ground' particularly in sensitive coastal environments. Cr Lichtwark to discuss specific issues with staff following the meeting.
- while the new Guidelines address 'green field' situations, they do not address 'brown fill' (urban infilling) situations. Given the pressures to address housing shortages in urban areas via intensification of land use and associated loss of 'green' spaces how will the increased stormwater run-off issues be addressed? There are a range of options including rooftop 'gardens', installing water tanks, permeable pavement areas, etc.
- when urban infilling takes place who is responsible for ensuring that existing stormwater services/infrastructure can cope with the increased run-off and are upgraded if necessary?
- liaison between the Regional Council and territorial authorities will be required to determine how best to implement the Guidelines and align stormwater rules. Opportunities for collaboration, providing education and training to parties involved in urban developments including consultants need to be provided.
- the Guidelines apply to any development where there is a change from a rural to a more intensive land use.
- the stormwater run-off management options in the Guidelines will financially impact on anyone building a house. Need to provide a cost/benefit analysis to demonstrate the additional 'up-front' outlay will result in potential savings eg. a rainwater tank plumbed

in for non-potable household use will result in lower demand from the municipal water supply and reduced water meter charges.

- both Guidelines are available on Council's website.

**WCC19/27**

**Moved by:** Cr D Pilkington

**Seconded by:** T Mandeno

**RESOLVED (Section A)**

**That the report Waikato Stormwater Guidelines Update – July 2019 (dated 31 July 2019) be received for information.**

**The motion was put and carried**

Item 7 West Coast Status Report was then considered.

**7. West Coast Zone Status Report**

The Manager West Coast Zone (J Francis) presented the report to provide an update on catchment financials, activities and work programmes covering the financial performance and work outputs for the full 2018/19 financial year; an overview of work undertaken on a selection of key projects; and an overview of the 2019/20 priorities, budgets and external funding; and highlighted the following points:

- the 2018/19 operating budget was \$1,846,000 and the end of financial year position was 100 percent expenditure of the budget.
- the ongoing key works/projects focus in the following areas:
  - o Northern, in the priority harbor catchments of Aotea, Kawhia and Whaingaroa.
  - o Southern, via the Hill Country Erosion Fund comprising raising awareness with landowners and implementation of soil conservation, water quality and biodiversity projects within the Awakino, Lower Mokau and Mangaotaki priority catchments.
- ongoing 'business as usual' work within the Zone.
- continued collaboration with key stakeholders and co-funding partners.

Arising out of questions, responses and discussions it was noted that:

- the Committee requested that the pie diagrams used in the .ppt presentation be included in future written Status Reports as they provide a good visual 'picture' of the financial performance position.
- the Committee requested that work programme statistics, trend data and other information be presented/reported in a consistent format/manner across all Zone Catchment Committees to enable valid comparisons and Zone specific distinctions to be more easily identified and the reasons understood.
- the Ruapuke area watercourses flow directly to the coast, rather than into either the Raglan or Aotea harbour, and therefore is not part of the Northern priority harbor catchments work programme.
- projects/works in non-priority areas are generally initiated by landowners contacting Council staff and ensuing discussions/exchange of information.
- the three (3) drainage areas within the West Coast Zone are managed as part of the Franklin/Waikato Drainage Committee; and Council has recently adopted a region-wide

Land Drainage Management Plan. Cr Lichtwark to talk to staff following the meeting to get an overview of the local drainage activities/issues.

Staff provided a 2018/19 end of financial year overview of key projects for the Zone, supported by a .ppt presentation including project before/after photos and arising out of questions, responses and discussion, the following points were noted:

- 38 projects were completed in the Northern Zone, focused in the three priority harbor catchments of Aotea, Kawhia and Whaingaroa.
- the coastal enhancement budget (\$35,000) is being used for community restoration projects including Kawhia, Te Maika and Kawhia buffer restoration. Waikato-Tainui has expressed an interest in supporting Council and becoming involved in West Coast restoration projects/works. There is also potential to apply to other funders to support individual coastal enhancement projects.
- discussions between the parties are ongoing with respect to the Te Kopua Marae project. A draft Plan has been developed but final agreement has yet to be reached. Previous works were not successful, and the discussion now is around 'soft' solutions. Staff to provide Cr Lichtwark with a copy of the draft Plan. Useful to provide information about proposed projects/planned works via newsletters and/or relevant web pages.
- concern raised that beach sand berm protection plantings are often being washed away by wave and tidal action, resulting in greater cost for little/no gain. Advised that the use of plastic plant protectors is not appropriate in the coastal environment as they are ending up in the ocean.
- the bush and wetland protection works being undertaken on Pukerewa Station in the Waikaretu Valley are positive, with Nga Whenua Rahui potentially providing funding support for areas of coastal fencing.
- noted that the harsh coastal conditions do impact on/shorten the 'life' of fences and that landowners need to have ongoing maintenance and repair programmes in place.
- fencing of bush areas containing Kauri trees is ongoing on Limestone Downs. There are still some water access/reticulation and boundary fencing issues to resolve.
- where weed issues are identified, Zone staff can liaise with the Biosecurity staff and get advice on the weed pest status in the Regional Pest Management Plan and the actions/options available for control and/or eradication.
- pole planting works are being undertaken in the Upper Waimai Valley in response to land slumping/movement and watercourse sedimentation.
- 32 mainly Hill Country Erosion Fund projects were completed in the Southern Zone, focused in the three priority areas of Awakino, Mangaotaki and Lower Mokau.
- 40 river management projects were completed in a range of locations including Waitetuna, Marakopa, Mokau, Mangaotaki and Awakino.
- seven (7) well attended Risk and Mitigation workshops have been held.
- view expressed that Japanese Walnut is a 'pest plant' in that it creates abundant rat fodder. What, if anything, is planned to try and get rid of this tree species?
- view expressed that the benefits of removing trees/debris to reduce blockages and manage erosion needs to be carefully assessed at each site as over-zealous removal can result in negative losses of stream shading and habitat outcomes.
- a decision is currently awaited on Council's funding application to the One Billion Trees Fund (applied for \$163,000 over two years).
- a Sediment Loss Mitigation and Pole Planting Field Day is being held on 24 October. Members were provided with a promotional poster for this event.

With respect to the West Coast Zone Harbour Catchment Planning project, Harbour Catchment Management Advisor (T Dean-Speirs) presented a first draft 'mock-up' of the

Kawhia harbour story map tool and provided an overview of the layout, content to date and next steps.

Arising out of questions, feedback and discussion the following points were noted:

- queried if it was possible to include data about and have images at key bridge locations of water quality that show, over time, the changes being achieved from catchment management works? Is drone 'footage' of key sites before and after works an option and/or useful to visually show people what is happening in upstream locations that are probably not publicly accessible or widely known about?
- it will be possible to add information and image updates over time to show changes as plantings grow/mature and as more properties along a watercourse have works undertaken/completed.
- this is the first Zone to undertake this type of planning project in this way. A smaller scale exercise has been carried out as part of the Healthy Rivers project.
- for the mana whenua 'tab' suggested that Kawhia Museum may be a valuable source of local information.
- observed that this is a significant piece of work with a wide range of future uses and will enable the community to have better information/knowledge about what is happening and to create opportunities to be involved/provide input.
- staff are intending to source and/or provide links to relevant information gathered/held by other organisations, for example coastal monitoring data NIWA.
- the proposed timeline is to have a story map tool drafted for all three harbours by November 2019 and to then seek wider feedback on the drafts. Staff are currently thinking about how best to undertake this engagement and in the process of developing a Communications and Engagement plan.
- input and feedback is welcomed from Committee members.

**WCC19/28**

**Moved by:** M Moana-Tuwhangai

**Seconded by:** R Takerei

**RESOLVED (Section A)**

**That the report West Coast Zone Status Report August 2019 (dated 1 August 2019) be received for information.**

**The motion was put and carried**

12.46 pm Cr F Lichtwark and S Reid left the meeting.

**8. Management of the West Coast Operating Reserve**

Zone Manager West Coast Catchments (J Francis) presented the report that addresses the matters requested by the Integrated Catchment Management Committee and seeks the Committee's approval on the proposed management of the West Coast Operational Reserve. In summary it was noted that:

- over the period 2014-2018 the Operational Reserve was reduced from \$450,000 to \$72,000 primarily due to funding of the Hill Country Erosion Programme, and approving a transfer of \$135,000 to the Zone Disaster Reserve, as outlined in the report.

- the Zone Disaster Reserve currently has a balance of \$176,133 and has not been drawn down in recent years.
- the purpose/description of the various reserves are as outlined in Table 1 (*page 33*), and the potential demands on the Zone Operational Reserve are as outlined in Table 2 (*page 35*).

12.50 pm Cr F Lichtwark and S Reid re-entered the meeting.

Arising out of questions, responses and discussion, the following points were noted:

- there has been/is an increasing demand for new catchment and river management works in response to staff efforts to develop that programme. If the zone wanted to meet this demand then an increase rates would be required and would need to be considered through the next Long Term Plan process.
- queried whether there should be a percentage of operating budget figure and associated maximum/minimum dollar value assigned to the Operational Reserve. Suggested that five percent of the Operating Budget (\$1.4M for 2019/20) with a range of \$70,000 to \$100,000 could be considered.
- the current Operational Reserve balance is “modest”, “in the black” (positive) and could be expected to be maintained around this level. Given that any proposal to use/draw down the Operational Reserve balance would come back to the Committee for consideration, the setting of parameters was not considered to be an ‘essential’ requirement.
- the West Coast Zone does not have any flood protection infrastructure and therefore does not have to manage the financing of significant year to year maintenance demand fluctuations via its reserve, unlike some other Zones.

12.58 pm M Moana-Tuwhangai left the meeting.

- the Zone is currently delivering its full/approved and funded works programme. Increasing the amount of “new” works would need to be supported by additional funding from rates, not from the Operational Reserve.
- increasing the amount of work undertaken also impacts on the staff resources required to deliver more projects on the ground. Current resourcing is at capacity.
- the Operational Reserve is only likely to increase if an approved project was either completed well under budget or was cancelled in one financial year and the funds were not able to be approved for reallocation to another project before the end of that financial year. This is a different scenario from a “carry over” of funds for a project where funds are committed, but unable to be expended in full in one financial year.

**WCC19/29**

**Moved by:** Cr D Pilkington

**Seconded by:** Cr S Kneebone

**RESOLVED (Section A)**

**That the report ‘Management of the West Coast Zone Operating Reserve August 2019’ (*dated 5 August 2019*) be received; and**

**RECOMMENDED (Section B)**

**a) That any draw down of the West Coast Operating Reserve prioritises funding of specific**

activities that occur periodically i.e. Harbour Catchment Planning project.

- b) That the West Coast Operating Reserve can be used to balance year to year expenditure timing fluctuations across the whole range of operational work undertaken.
- c) That further work is undertaken leading into the next Annual Plan and subsequent Long Term Planning processes to assess the potential for additional rate funded work (including increasing the operating reserve balance, staffing and other resourcing requirements).

The motion was put and carried

WCC19/30

Moved by: Cr S Kneebone

Seconded by: Cr D Pilkington

**RESOLVED (Section A)**

That in accordance with Standing Order 4.2 - Meeting duration the Committee extend the continuous sitting time beyond three hours to complete the remaining business on the confirmed agenda.

The motion was put and carried

**10. National Kauri Dieback Programme Update**

Biosecurity Officer (K Parker) presented the report to provide an update on the National Kauri dieback programme, noting that:

- Kauri dieback is caused by a soil-borne organism (*Phytophthora agathidicida*) that is species specific. The key to 'saving' Kauri is to stop the spread of the organism.
- the West Coast Zone (Waikaretu area) is 'home' to the southernmost Kauri in New Zealand. Council has been a partner to the National Programme since its inception in 2009 when *Phytophthora agathidicida* was declared an unwanted organism.
- management and mitigation efforts are key, and staff have been working with landowners in the Waikaretu area to fence off/minimise opportunities for contaminated soil to enter/exit areas where Kauri are growing.
- Biosecurity NZ/the Ministry for Primary Industries is the Programme lead. Community demand for improved action at a national level resulted in an announcement that a National Pest Management Plan (NPMP) and National Pest Management Agency would be developed. Three 'rounds' of national public consultation on the Plan and Agency proposals were undertaken in 2018/19. The NPMP and Agency proposals were approved in May 2019 pending funding.
- the 2019 Government budget did not allocate any additional funds for the management of Kauri dieback; and DoC funding has not increased to undertake additional kauri protection activities on public conservation land.

**WCC19/31**

**Moved by:** R Takerei

**Seconded by:** C Holland

**RESOLVED (Section A)**

**That the report 'National kauri dieback programme update, National Pest Management Plan' (dated 30 July 2019) be received; and**

**RECOMMENDED (Section B)**

**THAT the Committee endorses the following recommendations from the 30 July 2019 Strategy and Policy Committee:**

- a) **That a watching brief is maintained of central government funding of the National Kauri Dieback Programme and National Pest Management Plan and Management Agency.**
- b) **That Council, in response to the news of an absence of previously indicated funding from government in regard to an integrated Kauri dieback response, supports an active public advocacy campaign that focusses on securing government funding to recognize kauri as a regional and national taonga. That this campaign shall include engaging and inviting support from:**
  - **Auckland Council, Northland Regional Council, and relevant Territorial Authorities**
  - **Iwi**
  - **Hauraki Gulf Forum; and**
  - **other strategic stakeholders**
- c) **That Council is kept updated on the development and implementation of the public advocacy programme.**

**The motion was put and carried**

**11. General Matters:**

**Funding Application/Grant Shortfall - King Country River Care Group**

J Reeves abstained from discussion and voting

The Council Chair (A Livingston) outlined the background and scope of the issue noting that:

- Council's Environmental Initiatives Fund (EIF) provides funding grants of up to \$40,000 within a set of criteria, generally to volunteer groups throughout the Region.
- the King Country River Care Group (KCRC) has taken an innovative approach to supporting catchment management works that creates some exciting opportunities for the way that Council and landowners/the community can work together in partnership to improve water quality.
- with the pending release of the Government's National Policy Statement on Fresh Water the KCRC approach/model may have wider application in other regions.
- KCRC applied through the EIF for \$40,000 towards the cost of their Operations Manager, who brings considerable expertise to that role.
- staff assessed the KCRC application based on the EIF criteria and it achieved a very high ranking and was reported to the Finance Committee for consideration. The decision, by a majority was to grant \$30,000, a funding shortfall of \$10,000. As a separate decision the CEO was asked to investigate other sources/avenues that the funding shortfall could be provided from to ensure that the work being undertaken by KCRC could continue.

The Council CEO (V Payne) endorsed the Council Chair's comments and advised that:

- it is important that Council support the KCRC initiative as the workload and need/demand for catchment management works with a water quality focus requires greater resources than Council can provide on its own. Working in partnership with landowners is essential to achieve the outcomes required, and KCRC can provide that local partnership/link to individual landowners, giving a much greater likelihood of success.
- in response to the instruction that he investigate other funding options for the \$10,000 shortfall, he is proposing to recommend to full Council that it be funded through the 2018/19 end of financial year budget surplus. He noted that he did evaluate the option of drawing down on the West Coast Catchment Committee Operating budget.

Arising out of questions, responses and discussion the following points were noted:

- acknowledged that KCRC is a 'value proposition' within the West Coast Zone. Also acknowledged that it is an initiative that can be seen as a 'pilot' for much wider application, not only within the Waikato region, but potentially in other regions. On that basis support for the KCRC initiative by Council as a whole is endorsed.
- concern that the proposed approach for this specific case may be seen as a precedent for future initiatives. Council may need to clarify that a case by case approach will apply.
- the EIF fund has a set of criteria to assess all applications received; and the next LTP process may wish to consider how Council works with and can 'best' support partnership initiatives that add value/contribute towards positive environmental 'gains'.

**WCC19/32**

**Moved by:** W Maag

**Seconded by:** T Mandeno

**RECOMMENDED (Section B)**

**That the West Coast Catchments Committee support the proposal outlined by the Chief Executive Officer (V Payne) that the \$10,000 funding shortfall (arising from the decision to grant \$30,000 from Council's Environmental Initiatives Fund in respect of the application by the King Country River Care Group for \$40,000) be funded from Council's 2018/19 end of financial year budget surplus.**

**The motion was put and carried**

The Manager B Toohey provided his thanks to the staff for the work they had done.

Cr D Pilkington advised that as she is not standing for re-election this will be her last West Coast Catchments Committee meeting. She has been a member of the Committee from the time it was established and acknowledged the efforts of staff and members in achieving a huge amount of progress in that time.

Cr S Kneebone closed the meeting with a karakia.

1.52 pm – Meeting closed