Report to Finance Committee August 2017 – To be received

File No: 08 15 08
Date: 2 August 2017
To: Chief Executive
From: Chief Financial Officer
Subject: Review request for rates remission for farmers in the Waihou/Piako catchment
Section A (Committee has delegated authority to receive the Report).

1. Purpose

To provide the Committee with information for consideration of the application for remission of rates to farmers affected by the flooding over recent months in the Waihou/Piako river catchment area.

Recommendation:
That the report “Rates Information for the financial rating year 2016/2017 as at 30 June 2017” (Doc #10865566 dated 2 August 2017) be received for information.

2. Background

2.1 Federated Farmers have written to the council to request remission for ratepayers who have been significantly affected by recent flood events. Please find a copy of the letter attached.

2.2 The council currently does not have a policy in place for hardship. In the past we have worked with individual ratepayers with repayment programmes.

2.3 As represented in the budget process through the 2017/18 Annual Plan, due to asset revaluation and increased depreciation costs rural ratepayers in the Hauraki district are facing an increase in their rates. Staff are planning to write to the affected ratepayers with increases greater than $100 prior to the 2017/18 rates invoices being sent out.

2.4 Staff are currently assessing the potential financial impact of this remission request and will report back at the Finance Committee meeting.

Mike Garrett
Chief Financial Officer

Linda Bond
Team Leader, Rates

Attachment
Request for Rates Remission for Farmers in the Waihou Piako Catchment (doc #10837462)
27 July 2017

Vaughan Payne
CEO
Waikato Regional Council
Private Bag 3038
Waikato Mail Centre
Hamilton, 3240

Dear Vaughan

Because of the recent adverse events with the weather in our region; such as Tasman Tempest, Cyclone Debbie and Cyclone Cook as well as the ongoing wet conditions, I would like your Council to consider a rates remission for the 2nd half of this year so that those affected can have a chance to recover.

The farmers in the Waihou Piako River Catchments have had to deal with saturated ground conditions and some may have to defer clean-up work until spring because of the extent of the damage to property.

Prior to the most recent wet weather, there were apparently 33 dairy farms affected, 5 hit badly, and an estimated 2000ha of pasture damaged. Businesses like the Waikato Rural Support Trust (funded by MPI) and supported by DairyNZ, Fonterra, PGG, and Rural Woman and Federated Farmers have been working to provide assistance where possible, as well as initiated community events to help keep people’s spirits up during this difficult time.

I am contacting the Regional Council and the 3 District Councils with this request, and would be most appreciative if you would give this serious consideration.

Yours faithfully

Andrew McGiven
Waikato Provincial President
Federated Farmers