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## West Coast Catchments Committee OPEN MINUTES

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Minutes of a meeting of the West Coast Catchments Committee held at Waikato Regional Council on 22 August 2017 at 10:00am

**Present:**

<b>Waikato Regional Council</b>		
<b>Waikato District Council</b>		
<b>Otorohanga District Council</b>	Cr Deborah Pilkington	
<b>Waitomo District Council</b>	Cr Sue Smith	
<b>Department of Conservation</b>	Natasha Hayward	
<b>Local Community Representatives</b>	Andrea Hanna	Mark Smyth (Deputy Chair)
	Tom Mandeno	Kristel van Houte
	Mike Moss	

<b>Te Tokanganui-a-noho</b>	Weo Maag (Chair)
<b>Maniapoto Maori Trust Board</b>	
<b>Waikato-Tainui</b>	Maxine Moana-Tuwhangai
<b>Co-Chairman Integrated Catchment Management Committee</b>	Cr Stu Kneebone
<b>Chairman of Council, <u>or</u> Deputy Chairman of Council</b>	Cr Alan Livingston

<b>WRC Staff present :</b>	Jolene Francis (West Zone Manager)
	Callum Bourke (Senior Catchment Management Officer)
	Adrian Jepson (Senior Catchment Management Officer)
	Lyndon Stokes (River Management Officer)
	Greg Ryan (Principal Advisor)
	Brett Bailey (Team Leader Biosecurity - Pest Animals)
	Darion Embling (Team Leader Biosecurity – Pest Plants)
	Mark Gasquoine (Sustainable Agriculture Advisor)
	Andrea Julian (Senior Biodiversity Officer)

### **Apologies**

Apologies were received from:

Cr Fred Lichtwark – Waikato Regional Council  
Cr Lisa Thomson – Waikato District Council  
Ray Wii – Maniapoto Maori Trust Board Representative

Accepted

### **Confirmation of Agenda**

(Agenda Item 2)

A Hanna moved/M Moana-Tuwhangai seconded.

WCCC17/22

**THAT the agenda of the meeting of the West Coast Catchments Committee of 22 August 2017, as circulated, be confirmed as the business for the meeting.**

**The motion was put and carried (WCCC17/22)**

### **Disclosures of Interest**

(Agenda Item 3)

- Member Mike Moss declared an interest as receiver of Clean Streams funding.
- Member Mark Smyth declared in interest as a receiver of Hill Country Erosion Funding.
- Member Kristel van-Houte declared an interest in that the Karioi project that she was involved with receives funding from the Waikato Regional Council.

The definition of 'conflict of interest' was discussed. The Committee agreed if a member received a financial gain pertaining to the discussion topic, this was a clear conflict of interest. However it was recognised that any recommendations/motions made by the committee would still need to be ratified by council.

It was suggested that a document be prepared and available at each meeting that outlines the differing interests of members so that only new interests need to be declared at each meeting.

## **SECTION A: (UNDER DELEGATION FOR THE INFORMATION OF INTEGRATED CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE)**

### **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

File: 03 02 38 (Agenda Item #4.0) Doc #10916254 and 10571377

This item provided the Committee with the minutes of the previous West Coast Catchment Committee meeting of 6 June 2017, and the resulting discussion from the Integrated Catchment Management meeting of 27 July 2017.

During discussion, the following points were noted:

- Staff advised that they were working with Councils (and their contractors) to ensure that information and consents were directed to the correct people.
- Regarding an item for next meeting: Harbour Catchment Management Plans and their equitability with West Coast. Staff advised this related to a question raised by a Councillor regarding equitability in budget allocated to harbour catchment planning in other zones i.e. Coromandel and that allocated to the West Coast. The

small budget allocated to West Coast catchment planning was for the initial review/scoping phase in the planning process with more resourcing likely required in the future, and has been included in the current LTP process.

Cr D Pilkington moved/Cr S Smith seconded.

WCCC17/23

**THAT the Minutes of the West Coast Catchments Committee meeting of 6 June 2017, and the extract from the Integrated Catchment Management meeting of 27 July 2017 be received and approved as a true and correct record.**

**The motion was put and carried (WCCC17/23)**

**Matters Arising – Issues and Actions from previous West Coast Catchments Committee meetings.**

File: 03 02 38 (Agenda Item #5) Doc #10910621

This item reports back to the Committee on actions and issues discussed at previous West Coast Catchments Committee meetings.

There was no further discussion on this item.

Cr D Pilkington moved/Cr S Smith seconded.

WCCC17/24

**RESOLVED**

**THAT the report “Matters Arising – Issues and Actions from previous West Coast Catchments Committee meetings” (Doc #10910621, dated 10 August 2017) be received.**

**The motion was put and carried (WCCC17/24)**

**Chairman’s Report August 2017**

File: 03 02 38 (Agenda Item #6) Doc #10902797

Presented by West Coast Catchments Committee Chair (Weo Maag) this item provided an update from the West Coast Catchments Committee Chair that summarised any issues of significance or matters of relevance to the West Coast Zone.

Since the last West Coast Catchments Committee meeting, there had been two Integrated Catchment Committee meetings. These meetings had focused on:

- The issue of Myrtle Rust in New Zealand and the threat to our region.
- Biodiversity and the effects of climate change, and how this is being managed.
- There were concerns expressed about potential rate increases for environmental issues. The Committee had suggested that getting community involved before a rate increase might be a better way forward.

Further points noted by the Chair were:

- Amendments to the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management had been gazetted after a meeting of Central Government in August.
- The Chair requested that focus be given to the implementation of the West Coast Zone Plan, while being aware of funding plans and the amendments to the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management for the next plan review.

Cr S Smith moved/M Smyth seconded.

WCCC17/25

**RESOLVED**

**THAT the verbal report named “Chairman’s Report August 2017”** (Doc#10902797, dated 9 August 2017) **be received.**

**The motion was put and carried (wccc17/25)**

**West Coast Zone Status Report to 30 June 2017**

File: 03 02 38 (Agenda Item #7) Doc #10881368

Presented by West Coast Zone Manager (Jolene Francis) the report outlined the status for the West Coast Zone activities and work programmes, covering the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017.

Items covered were:

- Financial Performance (River, Catchment and Zone Management) up to 30 June 2017
- Key Project updates
- Non-financial status up to 30 June 2017:
  - Long Term Plan measures
  - Zone based measures

During questions, answers and related discussion the following points were noted:

- Retired land did not necessarily mean the land was no longer in use. Generally it meant the land was retired from use by livestock.
- Poplars were planted to encourage land stability. They grew with extensive root systems of up to 18 metres, and may take 20 years to be fully grown. One of the main reasons for using poplars is that farmers can maintain grazing.
- Staff advised that an afforestation feasibility study was being undertaken in the Waipa catchment and information would be available on this in the next few months. The project would look at alternative forestry option that could be considered and options to be shown with a series of maps.
- A member queried if forestry planting for commercial activity was able to be recorded anywhere for future consideration. Staff advised that farm plans with council input of more than \$35,000 allowed a link to the property by way of an encumbrance on the title. There was also forestry rights that could be registered under the Forestry Rights Registration Act. The information could be recorded in farm plans but that did not guarantee a right of harvest, only provide a record of information. There was no way to pre-empt legislative changes when considering this.
- Harbour Catchment Planning was commencing this financial year. The project is split into two phases with the initial phase involving a full review of held data/information, identify knowledge gaps and to determine current state (as data permits). This project will include the recent review completed for the Kawhia Harbour Catchment by the Ministry for the Environment to ensure all connections are considered. Work in this space would not be done in isolation, consideration would be given to Iwi, community groups and stakeholders.
- Members noted that the volume and quality of work being undertaken in the West Coast Zone was humbling. Finances outlined value for money, modest expenditure with major achievements in the Catchment.

M Moana-Tuwhangai moved/T Mandeno seconded.

WCCC17/26

**RESOLVED**

**THAT the report “West Coast Zone Status Report to 30 June 2017”** (Doc# 10881368, dated 8 August 2017) **be received.**

**The motion was put and carried (wccc17/26)**

**Waikato Regional Council Long Term Plan update**

File: 03 02 38 (Agenda Item #8) Doc #10890280

Presented by Principal Advisor, Integrated Catchment Management (Greg Ryan) the report provided the Committee with an update on the development of the Waikato Regional Council 2018-2028 Long Term Plan, including the level of service review, review of the Regional Infrastructure Strategy and development of the Regional Asset Management Plan.

During questions, answers and related discussion the following points were noted:

- Additional funding was being sought via the Long Term Plan to continue the beachcare project.
- Concern was raised by the Committee about how they would feed into the Long Term Plan. Staff advised that, while they wanted to have a business case for consideration for this meeting, this would not be available now until September/October. Staff advised that if the next West Coast Catchment Committee meeting didn't align with timeframes for considering the Long Term Plan, the Committee would have the option to input on the business case during the consultation phase. The intention was to have the Long Term Plan ready for release early 2018.

Cr D Pilkington moved/N Hayward seconded.

WCCC17/27

**RESOLVED**

**THAT the report “Waikato Regional Council Long Term Plan update”** (Doc#10890280 dated 1 August 2017) **be received for information.**

**The motion was put and carried (wccc17/27)**

**Catchment Committee effectiveness review update**

File: 03 04 08, 03 02 38 (Agenda Item #9) Doc #10898811 and 10815062

Presented by Principal Advisor, Integrated Catchment Management (Greg Ryan) the report provided the Committee with an update on the review of the effectiveness of Catchment Committees, including an overview of the results from the recently completed survey of Committee Members and staff.

During questions, answers and related discussion the following points were noted:

- The Committee was advised that the review was conducted to consider the effectiveness of Catchment Committees. Catchment Committees were expensive to run, however it was clear that these were a good opportunity for Regional Council to interface with the public. The Councillor advised that Council valued the input that was coming from these Committees.
- A member noted that the timetabling of the Catchment Committee meetings did not always coincide with the ability to input into Council plans or policies. Staff advised that the Committee has the ability to communicate by email, and make submissions to plans as they arise also.

M Moana-Tuwhangai moved/M Moss seconded.

WCCC17/28

**RESOLVED**

**THAT the report “Catchment Committee effectiveness review update”** (Doc# 10898811 dated 1 August 2017) **be received for information.**

**The motion was put and carried (WCCC17/28)**

**Whareorino Aerial Operation update**

File: 03 02 98 (Agenda Item #10) Doc #10900624

Presented by Team Leader Biosecurity - Pest Animals (Brett Bailey) and Department of Conservation representative (Natasha Hayward), this report provided the Committee with an update on the recent Whareorino Aerial Operation for the control of rodents, mustelids and possums.

The Committee was advised that there had been an incident in the second day of the operation where the helicopter was forced to release the bait bucket. The bucket was retrieved along with 1200kgs of bait. Authorities including the Environmental Protection Agency, District Health Board and Marae Committees were notified of the incident in a timely fashion.

During questions, answers and related discussion the following points were noted:

- The helicopter operator experienced vibration and made the decision to drop the bucket for health and safety reasons.
- There was no risk to the public, as the bucket dropped into the operational area.
- A member queried if there was a way to ensure that a bucket wouldn't be damaged discharging bait into a small area should it happen again. The Committee was advised that this was a very rare occurrence and to ensure that a 1.2 tonne bucket didn't break when dropped would require extensive research and development which would potentially outweigh any benefits.

The Committee commended the Department of Conservation on responding quickly and providing timely information to relevant parties within an appropriate timeframe.

M Moss moved/A Hanna seconded.

WCCC17/29

**RESOLVED**

**THAT the report named “Whareorino Aerial Operation update”** (Doc#10900624, dated 9 August 2017) **be received for information.**

**The motion was put and carried (WCCC17/29)**

**Biosecurity Plant Pest Update**

File: 03 02 38 (Agenda Item #11) Doc #10902818

Presented by Team Leader Biosecurity – Pest Plants (Darion Embling) the report provided the Committee with an update on alligator weed and Chilean Needle Grass within the West Coast Zone.

Alligator Weed:

Is an aquatic plant, that could grow almost anywhere that is difficult to control and competes with pasture and is toxic to stock. It is established in the Lower Waikato River catchment however it has recently been found in Kawhia Harbour. While staff have controlled the small infestation, the issue of alligator weed floating down from Waikato Heads was new and serious. Part of the Long Term Plan (LTP) biosecurity business case is to fund a robust surveillance plan for the West Coast. Control was maintained with the use of 2 herbicides. On pastures, there were better tools available however, in water containment is more difficult due to lack of competition/environmental factors.

During discussion, the following points were noted:

- In Kawhia, Alligator Weed would look out of place as it is sprawling and forms a broad groundcover. The Committee was advised that if they suspected anything, to inform the Regional Council or the Department of Conservation.

Chilean Needle Grass:

This pest plant was not currently present in the Waikato however it reach the Waikato via hay, machinery and stock from the Hawkes Bay.

During discussion the following points were noted:

- The Committee queried if there were processes in place to limit transport from Hawkes Bay to the Waikato. Staff advised that there are best practice guidelines requiring animals to be stood down for 24 hours before leaving farms, however these are guidelines only. Staff advised they will be meeting with Hawkes Bay Council to get information on what precautions are being undertaken to prevent the spread of this pest plant.
- Chilean Needle Grass has been in New Zealand since the 1920's, however this was mainly in the South Island.
- Currently, communication of the threat posed by Chilean Needle grass is mostly via word of mouth, although there was information available.

M Moana-Tuwhangai moved/T Mandeno seconded.

WCCC17/30

**RESOLVED**

**THAT the report named "Biosecurity Plant Pest update" (Doc# 10902818, dated 9 August 2017) be received for information.**

**The motion was put and carried (wccc17/30)**

**Healthy Rivers Plan Change 1 - update**

File: 03 02 38 (Agenda Item #12) Doc #10902523

Presented by Sustainable Agriculture Advisor (Mark Gasquoine) the report provided the Committee with an update on the Healthy Rivers Plan Change 1 process.

During questions, answers and related discussion the following points were noted:

- Once the plan change was notified and submissions received, the policy team reviewed and collated the submissions and detailed the main findings/key themes. For those who needed support with the submission process, there were workshops that provided templates for submitters to use. Submissions were available online in raw form to allow for those with cross submissions to align. Initiative had been taken by certain industries to collaborate on mutual topics of submission.
- Five individual Commissioners (not yet selected) will consider pros and cons of the submissions and undertake the hearings of those who wish to be heard on their submission. This will allow for questioning of the submitter also. The commissioners would make the decision following the submissions. The decision could be appealed to the Environment Court.
- A member advised that the process for the plan change included a unique working collaboration with Iwi and Stakeholders at the front end of the process to formulate the plan. The plan change would affect the West Coast in 2018-2020 so there was time for improvement before implementation in the West Coast Catchment. The next catchment where plan changes were to be promulgated was Waihou-Piako.

A Hanna moved/M Moss seconded.

WCCC17/31

**RESOLVED**

**THAT the report named “Healthy Rivers Plan Change 1 – update”** (Doc# 10902523, dated 9 August 2017) **be received for information.**

**The motion was put and carried (WCCC17/31)**

**Biodiversity and the role of Regional Councils.**

File: 03 02 38 (Agenda Item #13) Doc #10893446 and 10801110

Senior Biodiversity Officer (Andrea Julian) presented the Willis Report on Biodiversity and regional councils – specifically the implications for Waikato Regional Council.

During questions, answers and related discussion the following points were noted:

- The Committee was advised that the Integrated Catchment Management Committee, and the Strategy and Policy Committee had endorsed this report for recommendation to Council.
- The Regional Council would make a contribution through the Long Term Plan process but the intention was to build on what is already being done in this space and what has already been established. Staff advised there are opportunities that could be realised in the short term, without additional resourcing required.

Cr S Kneebone moved/M Smyth seconded.

WCCC17/32

**RESOLVED**

**THAT the report “Biodiversity and the role of Regional Councils”** (Doc# 10893446 dated 25 July 2017) **be received for information.**

**The motion was put and carried (WCCC17/32)**

Doc # 10955451