

Report No.	19-138
<b>Decision Required</b>	

## NATURAL RESOURCES & PARTNERSHIPS OPERATIONAL PLAN

### 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. This item presents the 2019-20 Operational Plan for the Natural Resources & Partnerships group of Horizons that is tasked with delivery of the non-regulatory programmes for land, water, biosecurity and biodiversity and delivery Horizons' core science programme. The group also administers regulatory functions for biosecurity and works closely with the other groups within Horizons and a range of external partners.

### 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1. The Natural Resources & Partnerships group's activity is driven by the decisions of Council through the Annual Plan that sets the targets and budgets for the year. Additional activity is achieved through partnerships with others, including additional funding and effort from central government, other agencies, landowners, iwi/hapū and community groups. This Operational Plan provides additional detail to the Annual Plan document for the group's activity over the 2019-20 year, including the targets and budgets, how these link with legislative requirements and organisational goals, as well as how the outputs of the programme link to outcomes in the region. This single Operational Plan replaces eight operational plans produced in 2018-19 and is part of the commitment to ensure Council and our community have visibility of our programmes, and to support Council to have effective oversight of the \$24.5 million allocated to the NRP work programme over the year through the Annual Plan and other funding sources.
- 2.2. The work programme of the group has gone through significant review and change over recent years, including through the Long-term Plan process, preparing a regional pest management plan, securing external funding and a drive to better align and link activity with desired outcomes. These changes to the programme have drawn on the recent State of Environment report and other science reporting that has identified the scale of, and progress on, natural resource management issues and how the current level of activity feeds into this.
- 2.3. The 2019-20 year is the second year of the Long-term Plan, with some increased investment of rate-payer funds and a range of additional funding and targets through the external funding that has been secured to accelerate the programme's delivery of outcomes. The additional operational workload assists with meeting the increasing demand for work with communities and landowners. This increased workload also influences the delivery and focus of the programme and will require changes to some programmes. The external funding also increases reporting and auditing requirements and information management projects to support this and other reporting are planned.
- 2.4. The context for the year also includes a changing policy environment, including changes to Central government policies such as the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPS-FM) and signalled changes to a range of policies across freshwater, biodiversity, biosecurity, drinking water and climate change. Similarly, the regional policy context is changing with Horizons progressing freshwater plan changes and the development of a Climate Change Strategy.
- 2.5. Emerging issues are a further driver of change for the programme. In recent years, responding to biosecurity incursions, findings of contamination from firefighting foams and

other items that have arisen during the year have required an agile approach to delivery over the year.

- 2.6. In summary, the programme has an additional workload for the year, and our operating environment requires us to respond to both external and organisational drivers. The response to this is a continued drive to deliver organisational efficiencies, develop and maintain effective partnerships and lead integrated approaches in the way we work.
- 2.7. The key themes for the work programme for the 2018-19 year are:
  1. Integrated Catchment Management – further enabling alignment within the group and organisation as well as with externals to deliver on the goals within catchments.
  2. Responding to and informing policy change – assessing and implementing responses to new policy and organising and gathering information to inform policy and strategy processes.
  3. Operational Delivery – ensuring the Annual Plan and external funding targets are met.
  4. Information Management – improving information management systems and practices.
  5. Communication and reporting – woven into the above, this theme is to ensure the work is transparently presented to Council and the community.
- 2.8. A copy of the Operational Plan is attached for Council's consideration.

### **3. RECOMMENDATION**

That the Committee recommends that Council:

- a. receives the information contained in Report No. 19-138 and Annex.
- b. formally adopts, approves and releases the 2019-20 Natural Resources and Partnerships Operational Plan annexed to this item.

### **4. FINANCIAL IMPACT**

- 4.1. This report updates Councillors on a number of items related to financial management of the programme.
- 4.2. This Operational Plan overviews the budgets for the Natural Resources and Partnerships programmes including additional funding sourced via various funding mechanisms. The budget for the year also includes funding approved by Council for use of reserve funding and may include carry forwards where they are approved by the Chief Executive.

### **5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

- 5.1. The work of Horizons' Natural Resources and Partnerships group is reported on publicly to the Environment Committee and Catchment Operations regularly throughout the year and also communicated via various forums and methods.

### **6. SIGNIFICANT BUSINESS RISK IMPACT**

- 6.1. There is no significant business risk associated with this report.

### **7. SIGNIFICANCE**

- 7.1. This is not a significant decision according to the Council's Policy on Significance and Engagement.

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Logan Brown

**FRESHWATER & PARTNERSHIPS MANAGER**

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**GROUP MANAGER NATURAL RESOURCES & PARTNERSHIPS**

**ANNEXES**

A Natural Resources & Partnerships 2019-20 Operational Plan