

I hereby give notice that a meeting of the Strategy and Policy Committee will be held on:

Date: Tuesday, 11 August 2020
Time: 10.00am
Venue: Tararua Room,
Horizons Regional Council
11-15 Victoria Avenue, Palmerston North

STRATEGY AND POLICY COMMITTEE

AGENDA

MEMBERSHIP

Chair	Cr RJ Keedwell
Deputy Chair	Cr JM Naylor
Councillors	Cr AL Benbow
	Cr EM Clarke
	Cr DB Cotton
	Cr SD Ferguson
	Cr EB Gordon
	Cr FJT Gordon
	Cr WM Kirton
	Cr NJ Patrick
	Cr WK Te Awe Awe
	Cr GJ Turkington

Michael McCartney
Chief Executive

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for further information regarding this agenda, please contact:
Julie Kennedy, 06 9522 800

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REGIONAL HOUSES	Palmerston North 11-15 Victoria Avenue	Whanganui 181 Guyton Street		
DEPOTS	Levin 120-122 Hokio Beach Rd	Taihape 243 Wairanu Rd		
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AGENDA

1 Welcome / Karakia

2 Apologies and Leave of Absence

At the close of the Agenda no apologies had been received.

3 **Public Forums:** Are designed to enable members of the public to bring matters, not on that meeting's agenda, to the attention of the local authority.

Deputations: Are designed to enable a person, group or organisation to speak to an item on the agenda of a particular meeting.

Requests for Public Forums / Deputations must be made to the meeting secretary by 12 noon on the working day before the meeting. The person applying for a Public Forum or a Deputation must provide a clear explanation for the request which is subsequently approved by the Chairperson.

Petitions: Can be presented to the local authority or any of its committees, so long as the subject matter falls within the terms of reference of the council or committee meeting being presented to.

Written notice to the Chief Executive is required at least 5 working days before the date of the meeting. Petitions must contain at least 20 signatures and consist of fewer than 150 words (not including signatories).

Further information is available by phoning 0508 800 800.

4 Supplementary Items

To consider, and if thought fit, to pass a resolution to permit the Committee/Council to consider any further items relating to items following below which do not appear on the Order Paper of this meeting and/or the meeting to be held with the public excluded.

Such resolution is required to be made pursuant to Section 46A(7) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (as amended), and the Chairperson must advise:

- (i) The reason why the item was not on the Order Paper, and
- (ii) The reason why the discussion of this item cannot be delayed until a subsequent meeting.

5 Members' Conflict of Interest

Members are reminded of their obligation to declare any conflicts of interest they might have in respect of the items on this Agenda.

Minutes of the fourth meeting of the eleventh triennium of the Strategy and Policy Committee (Live streamed) held at 10.00am on Tuesday 10 March 2020, in the Tararua Room, Horizons Regional Council, 11-15 Victoria Avenue, Palmerston North.

PRESENT Crs RJ Keedwell (Chair), AL Benbow, EM Clarke, DB Cotton (via audio visual link), SD Ferguson, FJT Gordon (from 10am-1pm and 1.09pm – 1.55pm), WM Kirton, JM Naylor (via audio visual link), NJ Patrick, WK Te Awe Awe (from 10am-1pm and 1.09pm – 1.55pm), and GJ Turkington.

IN ATTENDANCE

Chief Executive	Mr MJ McCartney
Group Manager	
Corporate and Governance	Mr C Grant
Committee Secretary	Mrs KA Tong

ALSO PRESENT At various times during the meeting:

Dr N Peet (Group Manager Strategy & Regulation), Dr J Roygard (Group Manager Natural Resources & Partnerships), Mr G Shirley (Group Manager Regional Services & Information), Mr D Neal (Business Services Manager), Mr T Bowen (Principal Advisor), Mrs R Tayler (Manager Policy & Strategy), Mr R Smillie (Biodiversity, Biosecurity & Partnerships Manager), Mr C Davey (Pest Plant Coordinator), Ms C Moll (Policy Analyst – Climate Change), Ms C Morrison (Media & Communications Manager), members of the public, Dr J Procter, Ms A Hunt, Mr C Rudd, and a member of the press.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited Cr Te Awe Awe to say a Karakia.

APOLOGIES

SP 20-16 **Moved** **Turkington/Te Awe Awe**

That an apology be received from Cr B Gordon.

CARRIED

PUBLIC FORUMS / DEPUTATIONS / PETITIONS

The Chair approved Deputations for Item 7 on Lake Horowhenua from Dr Jonathon Procter, Ms Anne Hunt and Mr Charles Rudd.

Dr Procter introduced himself, noted his role as Trustee Elect and Advisory Trustee of Lake Horowhenua, and gave his views in support of the weed harvester operating on Lake Horowhenua.

Ms Hunt presented her concerns and urged Council to cease pursuing weed harvesting as a mechanism for water quality improvement in Lake Horowhenua.

Mr Rudd outlined concerns about the possibility of Council recommending the commencement of the weed harvesting of Lake Horowhenua and distributed supporting information to highlight his concerns.

SUPPLEMENTARY ITEMS

There were no supplementary items to be considered.

MEMBERS' CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Cr Turkington declared a possible conflict of interest in regard to his association with forestry work for Hokio Trust.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

SP 20-17 **Moved** **Ferguson/Patrick**

That the Committee:

confirms the minutes of the Strategy and Policy Committee meeting held on 11 February 2020 as a correct record, and notes that the recommendations were adopted by the Council on 25 February 2020.

CARRIED

LAKE HOROWHENUA UPDATE

Report No 20-30

This item updated Council on progress in regard to the Lake Horowhenua Accord to restore Lake Horowhenua. The item focused primarily on the establishment and operation of a weed harvesting operation on Lake Horowhenua and sought the new Councils' decision on the pathway forward. Dr Roygard (Group Manager Natural Resources & Partnership) and Mr Brown (Freshwater and Partnerships Manager) gave a presentation to Members which included an overview on the history of restoration of Lake Horowhenua, the results of two lake restoration options reports from NIWA (2011 and 2012), and Horizons' requirements to maintain and improve water quality via National Legislation (RMA and NPS-FM). They also gave an overview of fish population in the Lake, the issue of sediment in the lake, and the current in-lake weeds and those that are located nearby.

This item was suspended to enable the Committee to put a recommendation to temporarily suspend Standing Order 4.2.

TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER 4.2

SP 20-18 **Moved** **Keedwell/Ferguson**

That the Committee suspends Standing Order 4.2 in order that the meeting can continue to sit beyond the two hour limit, without a ten minute break

CARRIED

LAKE HOROWHENUA UPDATE (Continued)

Report No 20-30

In expressing his views on the likelihood of Horizons being able to use the weed harvester on Lake Horowhenua in 2021, Cr Cotton said he would personally donate \$5000 to the Lake Accord if the harvester was in operation in 2021 on Lake Horowhenua. Following discussions with Members on a pathway forward for the restoration of Lake Horowhenua, the Chair mentioned that recommendation b.i. would no longer be an option due to no tenders being received for the building of a boat ramp to enable lake weed harvesting at Lake Horowhenua. Members provided their views on the recommendations and ultimately agreed on b.ii. as a way forward. Therefore, b.i and b.iii were deleted. A division was called for recommendation b.ii.

SP 20-19 **Moved** **Patrick/Clarke**

That the Committee recommends that Council:

- a. *receives the information contained in Report No. 20-30 and Annexes.*
- b. *directs the Chief Executive to:*
 - ii. *delay weed harvesting until spring 2021 and complete the construction of the associated infrastructure in 2020 or 2021, including approving the associated additional capex expenditure for the project and any action necessary to maintain permissions relating to the works, and include the capital costs in the Annual Plan as appropriate*
- c. *directs the Chief Executive to notify the Lake Accord Partners, the Ministry for the Environment and the community of this decision.*

For b.ii.

Crs Benbow, Clarke, Ferguson, F Gordon, Naylor, Kirton, Patrick, Te Awe Awe, Keedwell

Against b.ii.

Crs Cotton, Turkington

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 12.19pm.

The meeting reconvened at 1.00pm.

QUARTERLY UPDATE: CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY PROGRAMME

Report No 20-31

This report provided Council with an overview of activities being undertaken on Climate Change across Government. This quarter the focus was largely on the implications for Council of the promulgation of the Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Act 2019 (the Zero Carbon Act). Ms Moll (Policy Analyst – Climate Change) presented the item and together with Ms Tayler (Manager Policy & Strategy) and Mr Bowen (Principal Advisor), answered Members' questions.

Cr F Gordon and Te Awe Awe rejoined the meeting at 1.09pm.

SP 20-20 **Moved** **Patrick/Turkington**

That the Committee recommends that Council:

- a. *receives the information contained in Report No. 20-31.*
- b. *notes that Horizons staff will continue to seek clarity from the Ministry for the Environment on the role of regional councils under the Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Act 2019.*

CARRIED

OLD MAN'S BEARD MANAGEMENT IN THE HORIZONS REGION

Report No 20-32

This report was introduced by Mr Davey (Pest Plant Coordinator) and it reviewed the current programme on Old Man's Beard (OMB), control, provided an assessment of options for its future management within Horizons' region and sought Councillors guidance on next steps for this programme. Mr Davey gave a presentation which highlighted the extent of OMB in the region's habitat, its impact on biodiversity, forestry and farm land, and OMB's management zones and Biosecurity plant control site distribution. Following questions and discussion with Members, Cr Ferguson suggested a new recommendation c.

SP 20-21 **Moved** **Ferguson/Clarke**

That the Committee recommends that Council:

- a. *receives the information contained in Report No. 20-32.*
- b. *notes the projected outcomes from the current control programme in relation to regional pest management plan and biodiversity protection.*
- c. *directs the Chief Executive to prepare a high level approach and budget estimate for the eradication and continued exclusion of Old Man's Beard from the Horizons region, for consideration during the 2021-2031 Long-term Plan process.*

CARRIED

The meeting closed at 1.55pm.

Confirmed

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

CHAIR

Report No.	20-100
Decision Required	

BIODIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS PROJECTS

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. This item introduces Horizons' current approach to biodiversity management with a focus on the non-regulatory biodiversity activities. The paper seeks Council's decision on proposed changes to Horizons' Biodiversity Partnerships Programme, which includes the range of collaborative projects with other agencies and community groups to enhance biodiversity within the Region. The item asks for Council's decision on funding allocation for Biodiversity Partnerships projects for the 2020-21 year.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1. Horizons' One Plan provides the guiding strategy for management of biodiversity by Horizons within the Region. The One Plan identified biodiversity as one of the Region's 'Big 4' key resource management issues.
- 2.2. The One Plan outlined both rules and non-regulatory methods to achieve the strategy and Horizons' current non-regulatory programme has broadly been built around the non-regulatory methods in the biodiversity chapter. It contains the following programmes:
 1. The priority biodiversity site programme, a site-led programme working with landowners to maintain and enhance priority sites on private land;
 2. The Biodiversity Partnerships Programme, where projects extend beyond the boundary of a single landowner and/or involve community groups or external agencies; and
 3. Management of the Regional Park – Tōtara Reserve.
- 2.3. Over the past two years the Non-regulatory Biodiversity Programme has been undergoing review with the aim of improving processes and biodiversity outcomes Region-wide while bringing Horizons closer to meeting requirements under the proposed **National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity (NPS-IB)**. As part of the Biodiversity Partnerships review a paper and associated workshop outlining the non-regulatory biodiversity work and seeking the newly elected Council's guidance around the biodiversity partnerships programme was presented to the Strategy and Policy Committee in February 2020.
- 2.4. As a result of the review, paper, and council workshop, changes were made through the Annual Plan budget to increase staff capacity to further support community engagement and mobilise community members around biodiversity. The Committee also discussed changes to the funding structure to enable the biodiversity partnerships programme to provide a more contestable approach to funding community projects supported by clear assessment criteria. There was additional consideration and discussion about the potential to leverage available funding to actively seek external funding opportunities to assist with biodiversity enhancement projects including collaborative projects with other agencies and the community.
- 2.5. The programme structure outlined below incorporates the Committee's views and feedback on the earlier February 2020 paper and workshop with further discussion and thinking. Proposed changes include: the adoption of a strategic goal for the programme, changes to the funding structure of the programme including increasing the contestable fund component, adoption of criteria to assess projects for the contestable fund, apportioning

part of the budget for community engagement, and a provision allowing for leveraging external funding at times. The paper also discusses changes made to the programme through the 2020-21 Annual Plan process.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee recommends that Council:

- a. receives the information contained in Report No. 20-100.
- b. approves the goal of the Biodiversity Partnerships programme as “Empowering communities to engage with biodiversity”.
- c. approves the revisited structure for the Biodiversity Partnerships programme to include community engagement, biodiversity collaboration projects (“icon” and targeted rates projects), and the contestable biodiversity grants fund;
- d. approves allocation of \$50,000 excluding GST to biodiversity community engagement activities.
- e. approves allocations of Horizons funding to biodiversity collaboration projects for the 2020-21 financial year as follows:

Project	2020-21 FY (excluding GST)
Te Āpiti	\$244,856
Kia Wharite	\$150,000
Pūkaha	\$37,292
Bushy Park	\$20,000
Total	\$452,148

- f. approves allocations of Horizons funding to the “Biodiversity Grants fund” allocation for the 2020-2021 financial year as follows:

Project	2020-21 FY (excluding GST)
Cape Turnagain	\$10,000
Manawatū Estuary	\$25,000
Te Pōtae o Awarua	\$15,000
Turitea Reserve	\$20,000
Awahuri Forest- Kitchener	\$8,000
Ahimate Reserve	\$5,000
Tawata	\$15,000
Kahutarawa Stream	\$8,000
Massey Hill	\$3,500
Total	\$109,500

- g. approves allocation of Horizons funding to the Weedbusters programme of \$22,996 excluding GST.
- h. approves the framework for a contestable fund to be run as a contestable process from the 2021-22 financial year.
- i. approves Councillor [x] as the chair for the decision-making committee for the contestable fund and Councillor/s [x] as the other committee member/s.

4. FINANCIAL IMPACT

- 4.1. There are no financial impacts to Horizons as a part of this item.
- 4.2. The paper does enable Councillor oversight of the expenditure of the biodiversity partnerships budget, including identifying the strategic goals for this work and providing for a process by which projects are selected for ratepayer funding. In 2020-21 the Biodiversity Partnerships Programme has a total budget of \$1,189,538.29, including \$143,000 from external sources. As drafted, the resolutions provide for budget allocations within the budget for 2020-21 for this activity.
- 4.3. All financial amounts in this paper are exclusive of GST.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 5.1. A primary focus of the Biodiversity Partnerships Programme is enabling communities and community groups to undertake work to enhance biodiversity. The current format of the programme provides for Horizons selecting a range of projects, working with community groups and/or other agencies. However, it does not have a component whereby a wider range of community engagement around biodiversity is included. Through the Annual Plan process additional staff capacity was approved to deliver increased community engagement in biodiversity enhancement by methods other than directly engaging community groups.

6. SIGNIFICANT BUSINESS RISK IMPACT

- 6.1. This item is not considered a significant business risk impact.

7. BACKGROUND

Horizons Biodiversity Strategy

- 7.1. Horizons' current biodiversity management programmes are primarily driven from the strategy within the One Plan. The One Plan identified indigenous biodiversity as one of our four keystone issues. The One Plan employs both regulatory processes (rules) and non-regulatory measures (incentives) to protect, maintain or enhance our Region's biodiversity. The objectives, policies and methods for managing indigenous biodiversity, including the non-regulatory approach, are set out in Chapter 6 and Chapter 13 of the One Plan. This is consistent with the current obligations of regional councils under the **Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA)**.
- 7.2. The guiding strategy for biodiversity implementation to date has been the One Plan, with resourcing for the biodiversity strategy largely determined through Long-term Plan and Annual Plan processes. A further consideration for the next steps of the non-regulatory work programme is the signalled requirements of the proposed National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity which is currently going through a legislative process and is signalled to be finalised around April 2021.
- 7.3. Central to Horizons' biodiversity work across the Region is the **Natural Resources and Partnerships (NRP)** group's Biodiversity Programme. This programme delivers work across three components:
 1. The priority biodiversity sites programme – a site-led programme working with landowners to maintain and enhance priority sites on private land;
 2. The Biodiversity Partnerships Programme, where projects extend beyond the boundary of a simple landowner and/or involve community groups or external agencies; and
 3. Management of the Regional Park – Tōtara Reserve.

Biodiversity Partnerships Fund

- Item 7
- 7.4. This item focuses on the Biodiversity Partnerships Programme, where biodiversity-related projects extend beyond the property boundary of a single landowner and/or involve community groups or external agencies. This programme has evolved through time and although there is no strategic overarching goal, the current suite of projects includes target sites or areas with environmental, social and cultural values. The accessibility or recreational potential of a site is generally a factor in investment. Projects have been added to this programme over time through a range of mechanisms including Long-term Plan and Annual Plan processes.
- 7.5. The Biodiversity Partnerships budget accounts for more than half (53%) of the total rate funding for the non-regulatory biodiversity programme. The programme is divided into two sections: biodiversity collaborations (\$547,048) and community biodiversity grants (\$157,236). Funding types are a mix of targeted and general rates. In addition to the specific projects, an amount is set aside (community biodiversity management: \$342,159), primarily for internal labour (staff costs) and vehicle costs to support these projects. While the programme has delivered biodiversity and community outcomes, a carefully developed strategic approach would likely deliver even greater benefits to biodiversity and communities in the Region.
- 7.6. A paper and associated workshop outlining the non-regulatory biodiversity work and seeking the new Councils guidance around the biodiversity partnerships programme was presented to the Strategy and Policy Committee in February 2020. As a result of the review, paper, and council workshop, changes were made through the Annual Plan budget to increase staff capacity to further support community engagement and mobilise community members around biodiversity. The Committee also provisionally agreed to support changes to the funding structure to enable the Biodiversity Partnerships Programme to provide a more contestable approach to the funding of community projects supported by clear assessment criteria. Further consideration and discussion focused on the potential to leverage available funding to actively seek external funding opportunities to assist with biodiversity enhancement projects, including collaborative projects with other agencies and the community.
- 7.7. The programme structure outlined below incorporates the Committee's views and feedback on the earlier February 2020 paper and workshop.

Goal/Vision

- 7.8. This programme has evolved through time and although there has been no strategic overarching goal or vision for the programme the current suite of projects includes sites or areas with environmental, social and cultural values. Projects have varying community, and biodiversity outcomes.
- 7.9. The following goal was refined after feedback the Committee in February:
"Empowering communities to engage with indigenous biodiversity".
- 7.10. This sets out the Council's vision for the Biodiversity Partnerships Programme and represents a community opportunity to develop leadership focused on the protection, restoration or enhancement of biodiversity across the Manawatū- Whanganui Region and capture the social and economic benefits of such leadership. It aligns with the current drafting of Long-term Plan community outcomes, and links with One Plan objectives and policies.

Programme Structure

- 7.11. To date the Biodiversity Partnerships Programme has included projects divided into two sections – Biodiversity Collaborations (\$547,048) and Community Biodiversity (\$157,236). Currently two of the Biodiversity Collaborations projects are funded through targeted rate, i.e. **Rangitikei Environment Group (REG)** and Waiterere Beach Community Project, with

the remaining projects funded through general rates. In addition to the specific projects, an amount is set aside (Community Biodiversity Management: \$342,159), primarily for internal labour (staff) and vehicle costs, to support these projects.

- 7.12. The current structure of the community biodiversity programme is based on working with a limited number of other agencies, iwi/hapu and community groups. Last year contestable funding accounted for just over 3% of total available funding. Opening a greater proportion of the budget to contestable funding may attract funding applications from a more diverse range of groups throughout the Region and potentially provide greater opportunities for new groups to access funding. If a contestable process is to be run it is important to have clear eligibility and assessment criteria to provide a fair and transparent process. This is discussed in more detail below.

Annual Plan Changes

- 7.13. Changes made through the Annual Plan process include additional expenditure on biodiversity, partially offset by reduced expenditure on biosecurity. This includes new income plus operational and capital expenditure for biodiversity enhancement at Te Āpiti - Manawatū Gorge, through increased rate funding and revenue from Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency. Additional changes were made to the Biodiversity Partnerships budget to support broader community engagement around biodiversity. This included an additional staff position for community engagement activity related to biodiversity
- 7.14. It is proposed that the Biodiversity Partnerships funding is split into three areas:
- community engagement
 - biodiversity collaborations including “icon” projects and projects funded through targeted rates, and
 - a contestable biodiversity grants fund.
- 7.15. This would allow for a small number of “iconic” or highly collaborative projects to be funded on a longer-term basis at Council’s discretion, but would open up a greater portion of the fund to a contestable process supporting the development and inclusion of new projects in the programme. Projects included as “icon” projects or those funded through targeted rates would be reviewed by Councillors through the Long-term Plan process, with the remainder of the funding contributing to a contestable fund overseen by Councillors. More information on these three parts of the biodiversity partnership programme including process and selection criteria for the contestable fund are outlined in the sections below and in Table 1.

Community Engagement

- 7.16. Additional community engagement activity has been enabled via the Annual Plan process with the increase in staff capacity. This aims to provide opportunities to engage and mobilise community members at an individual or household level through a calendar of community events and activities, e.g. [BioBlitz](#), planting days, trapping workshops etc. The new community biodiversity position and proposed associated operational budget (\$50,000) were partially offset by a reduction in the amount of grant money for community biodiversity, which included a decrease in the funding available to some projects.

Biodiversity Collaborations

- 7.17. The biodiversity collaborations projects are proposed to be made up of potential “icon” projects and projects that are target rate funded
- 7.18. The proposed icon projects are Te Āpiti, Kia Wharite, Bushy Park, Pūkaha. Selection criteria were modified from contestable fund criteria (outlined in section below) and can be broadly categorised as: level of partnership, value to biodiversity, educational value and recreational or public engagement, and duration of investment.
- 7.19. Rangitīkei Environment Group and Waitarere Beach Community Project are both included in the Biodiversity Collaborations projects due to their targeted rate status.

- 7.20. The Te Āpiti Manawatū Gorge project has additional external funding this year for operational and capital expenditure for biodiversity enhancement at Te Āpiti - Manawatū Gorge, through increased rate funding and additional funding from Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency. Horizons contribution of \$244,856 of operational funding is in addition to the external funding paid to Horizons for activity at this location of \$143,000 from a range of partners including Palmerston North City Council, Department of Conservation, Tararua District Council, Manawatu District Council, Kiwirail and Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency. It is noted that other agencies are also contributing to work at this location separate to the funding that is administered through Horizons budgets.
- 7.21. The Kia Wharite project receives \$150,000 per annum. This is to complement significant investment by the Department of Conservation at the location. Horizons contribution is managed by Horizons separate to the Department of Conservation Funding. The Department of Conservation are currently undertaking a review of their activity at this location and should they decide to reduce funding of their effort at the site, Horizons would also review the level of funding at this location.
- 7.22. Funding for Pūkaha is proposed to be increased (Table 1) by \$10,531 from last year, for pest plant control in the buffer zone (which includes some privately owned native forest). This previously was funded through the priority sites programme but will now be funded through the community partnerships budget. This takes the total funding for this project to \$37,292.
- 7.23. Funding for Weedbusters was adjusted through the Annual Plan process. From the 2020-21 financial year the Weedbusters programme and associated funding (\$22,996) will be managed by the Biosecurity Plants team (where previously this has been managed by the Biodiversity Team).

Table 1: Expenditure in the Biodiversity Partnerships Programme

BIODIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS	NOTES	HORIZONS FUNDING	OPERATIONAL
TOTAL RATEABLE REVENUE			\$1,046,538
COMMUNITY BIODIVERSITY MANAGEMENT	<i>Internal labour and associated costs</i>		\$342,159
TARGETED RATE-FUNDED PROJECTS			\$102,000
RANGITĪKEI ENVIRONMENT GROUP (REG)			\$95,004
WAITARERE BEACH COMMUNITY PROJECT			\$6,996
“ICON” PROJECTS			\$452,148
TE ĀPITI			\$244,856
KIA WHARITE			\$150,000
BUSHY PARK			\$20,000
PŪKAHA			\$37,292
OTHER			
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT BUDGET			\$50,000
WEEDBUSTERS			\$22,996
REMAINING FUNDING	Contestable fund		\$77,235

Contestable Biodiversity Grants Fund

- 7.24. The contestable funding approach recommended is based on the processes used in the freshwater programme. Development of a set of criteria to support the prioritisation and assessment of projects provides a useful mechanism to consider the relative benefits of projects while supporting a transparent, robust, repeatable ranking process. A framework

for assessing projects was outlined in the February paper and workshop and provided a useful mechanism to assess projects. The Committee supported the four main criteria but requested changes and more detail. Feedback has been considered and given the time required for a contestable process it has been determined, in consultation with the Chair of Horizons that in the 2020-21 year staff would apply the criteria and seek Council's direction on projects. A contestable process will be run in 2021 for the 2021-22 year projects.

- 7.25. Applications are assessed by Horizons' staff according to how well they meet the following four criteria:

Place – how unique or special is the project and how does the project contribute to restoring and/or maintaining the full range of indigenous ecosystems within the Region? Projects that benefit threatened ecosystems will be prioritised. Place may also include how the project involves iwi Māori, including their cultural values, interests and associations, the relationship of Māori and their culture and traditions with land, water, sites, waahi tapu and other taonga including fauna and flora.

Biodiversity Outcomes – is there a clear benefit and what is the size of that benefit in relation to the size of investment. These criteria represent a clear need for the project and how the project will directly promote, enhance or protect biodiversity within Horizons Region. This includes the likelihood of success, and the applicant's capability to deliver the outcomes of the project. Desirable attributes include a robust project plan and a clear link between the action to be undertaken and biodiversity outcomes including a method for monitoring the success of the project that is appropriate to the size of the grant.

Community Outcomes – participation and awareness; how the project involves the wider community including iwi and increases public awareness of the importance and issues surrounding biodiversity. This considers the ongoing accessibility of the site to the community, the educational value, and the number of people involved.

Collaboration and Partnership – whether the applicants have explored and developed opportunities for collaboration and partnership with others resulting in contributory funding from other parties. This includes applicant contribution, i.e. whether the applicant is actively involved in the project and making a contribution in the form of material, labour, advisory role, education or financial contribution. Desirable attributes include a project budget providing visibility of all funding sources for the project.

- 7.26. The Community Biodiversity Grant Programme is forecast to have an available budget of \$77,235; however, this year (2020-21) a projected shortfall in staff costs has been reallocated to increase available grant funding to \$109,500. In future years the Community Biodiversity Grant Programme would operate as a contestable process, supporting both one-off and multi-year project grants. For one-off project grants, grant recipients would have 12 months to complete project work and grant accountability requirements. A limited number of multi-year project grants are recommended to be available, allowing applicants to apply once to receive funding annually for up to three years.
- 7.27. A further component of the Biodiversity Partnerships Programme could be actively seeking external funding opportunities to assist with biodiversity enhancement projects, including collaborative projects with other agencies and the community. These types of funding programmes often require a funding share. It is proposed that funding for this type of initiative is made available from the contestable fund amount if an appropriate opportunity is presented/available.

Funding Projects for this year

- 7.28. In addition to the "icon" projects and targeted rates projects outlined above, a number of projects have funding committed for this year, so a fully contestable process outlined in the section above will not be possible until the 2021-22 financial year.

- 7.29. The funding committed for the 2020-21 year through “icon” projects, targeted rates projects and Weedbusters is \$577,144. A further \$134,240 is available to fund remaining projects this year. This is higher than the budgeted amount of \$77,235 as projected savings in staff time this year have been reallocated to grant funding, resulting in a larger budget this year than expected in future years.
- 7.30. Nine remaining projects have been assessed by a panel of four Horizons Regional Council staff according to how well they meet the criteria outlined above and are prioritised for funding. A further four were not assessed as there is no activity expected in the coming financial year for these projects (Foxton River Loop, Gate Pā, Ōhau Beach, Moawhango River Willow Clearance). A summary, including proposed funding for this year is prioritised in descending order in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Community Projects in prioritised order, showing funding allocated last year (2019-20) and the proposed funding for the 2020-21 financial year. Total funding for the 2020-21 financial year is greater than budgeted (\$77,235) because a projected shortfall in staff costs has been reallocated to increase available grant funding.

Project	2019-20 FY	Proposed 2020-21 FY
Cape Turnagain	\$5,000	\$10,000
Manawatū Estuary	\$8,000	\$25,000
Te Pōtae o Awarua	\$15,000	\$15,000
Turitea Reserve	\$23,000	\$20,000
Awahuri Forest- Kitchener	\$8,000	\$8,000
Ahimate Reserve	\$7,000	\$5,000
Tawata	\$50,005	\$15,000
Kahutarawa Stream	\$11,000	\$8,000
Massey Hill	\$5,000	\$3,500
Moawhango River Willow Clearing	\$5,000	\$-
Foxton River Loop	\$1,000	\$-
Gate Pā	\$1,000	\$-
Ōhau Beach	\$1,000	\$-
Total	\$135,005	\$109,500

- 7.31. The suggested funding structure for several projects differs from previous years and where this is considered significant, reasons are outlined below:

Cape Turnagain

- 7.32. The 2020-21 financial year is the final year of a three-year collaborative project to restore the coastal vegetation at this ecologically important site. The project has a total budget of \$144,000 with Horizons committing to \$30,000, split \$15,000 in year one, \$5,000 in year two and \$10,000 in year three.

Manawatū Estuary

- 7.33. Manawatū Estuary is the largest estuary in the lower North Island of New Zealand. Much of the site remains in a highly natural state and it is one of the largest remaining natural areas in the Region. The site is nationally important for migratory shorebirds with at least 95 species recorded. The budget at this site has in the past provided advice and funding assistance to the Manawatū Estuary Management Team for pest animal control, weed control and environmental initiatives. This year a significant amount of additional funding (\$17,000) has been allocated to fund a further pest management action plan and further pest management. This is additional to the \$8,000 already allocated for pest control at the Estuary.

Tawata

- 7.34. This project's goal is to restore the health of approximately 100 ha of forest on land administered by the Tawata Whanau Trust and Taiaoroa I.T. Farm (formerly Titi Tihu Putere Farm). With Horizons support the forest is now completely fenced from stock. After a year of no work being carried out due to changing personnel at Tawata Whanau Trust, work has resumed in the sanctuary area with bait stations filled for possum and rat control, and goat control undertaken to allow the continued regeneration of the forest. The Trust are very keen to progress this project and are reviewing and updating their operational plans to move forward successfully. The decrease in funding reflects the decreased activity at this site.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1. The proposed changes the Biodiversity Partnerships Programme may be of considerable interest to the various parties that receive this funding and also to those that would seek funding should there be an opportunity for new projects to be funded.

9. TIMELINE / NEXT STEPS

- 9.1. It is proposed:
- Council accept the proposed structure outlined above for this financial year with a fully contestable process to begin in the 2021-22 financial year.
 - Any changes to the "icon" and targeted rates projects to be made through the Long-term Plan process.
 - Council elect a committee to approve contestable grant funding under recommendation for the 2021-22 financial year.
- Alternatively Council may prefer a different approach.
- 9.2. If Council approves the the proposed structure outlined above for this financial year, with a fully contestable process to begin in the 2021-22 financial year, staff will work with stakeholders to deliver projects for this year, and develop a timeline and process for contestable funding for the 2021-22 financial year.

10. SIGNIFICANCE

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

Dr Lizzie Daly
SENIOR SCIENTIST – ECOLOGY

Dr Jon Roygard
GROUP MANAGER NATURAL RESOURCES AND PARTNERSHIPS

ANNEXES

There are no attachments for this report.

Report No.	20-101
Decision Required	

CONFIRMATION OF COUNCIL APPOINTED TRUSTEE TO THE MANAWATŪ-WHANGANUI REGIONAL DISASTER RELIEF FUND TRUST (DRFT)

PURPOSE

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to confirm Horizons Regional Council's representative to the **Manawatū-Whanganui Regional Disaster Relief Fund Trust (DRFT)**.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee recommends that Council:

- a. receives the information contained in Report No. 20-101.
- b. confirms Cr Rachel Keedwell as the Horizons representative on the Manawatū-Whanganui Regional Disaster Relief Fund Trust board.
- c. acknowledges and thanks Cr Bruce Gordon for his contribution during his time on the board.

3. FINANCIAL IMPACT

- 3.1. There is no financial impact as this report is for your information.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 4.1. There is no requirement for community engagement with this decision.

5. SIGNIFICANT BUSINESS RISK IMPACT

- 5.1. There is no significant risk.

6. BACKGROUND

- 6.1. The DRFT was first set up in March 2004 as a response to the February 2004 flood event. The purpose of the DRFT is as follows:

- To provide financial and any other relief or assistance to meet the welfare and other needs of people who have suffered any damage or loss following a significant natural or man-made disaster in the Manawatū-Whanganui Region or elsewhere in New Zealand.
- To seek public donations and raise funds.

- 6.2. The DRFT has the ability to form a critical function attracting donations and assistance in the event of a disaster and it would be beneficial to have the Mayors/Chair represented on the DRFT in the event of a major disaster.

6.3. It was formally resolved that the Mayors/Chair, or their elected representative be appointed as Trustees to the DRFT board.

7. SIGNIFICANCE

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

Adrian Smith
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

Craig Grant
**GROUP MANAGER CORPORATE &
GOVERNANCE**

ANNEXES

There are no attachments to this report.

Report No.	20-102
Decision Required	

FOXTON EAST DRAINAGE SCHEME LIAISON GROUP

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. This item seeks approval to establish a liaison group for the Foxton East Drainage Scheme and confirm Horizons governance representation for Foxton Futures.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1. The **Horowhenua District Council (HDC)** and Horizons have been working collaboratively on a number of initiatives relating to the town of Foxton. With the announcements around Provincial Growth Fund investment in restoring sections of the Foxton Loop, HDC are looking to establish a governance structure for Foxton Futures.
- 2.2. Similarly as the modifications to the Foxton East Drainage Scheme begin to gear up there is a need for Horizons to confirm a Liaison Group structure for the Scheme. Convention with Horizons River Management Schemes is to take nominations from the ratepayer base, a process that generally works well for rural schemes.
- 2.3. It is proposed to develop a different model for the Foxton Scheme, with the group comprising Iwi, Horizons and HDC Councillors and **Foxton Community Board (FCB)** representation.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee recommends that Council:

- a. receives the information contained in Report No. 20-102.
- b. approves the establishment of the Foxton East Drainage Scheme Liaison Group as outlined in Report No. 20-102.

4. FINANCIAL IMPACT

- 4.1. The financial impacts associated with the item are minimal; staff time associated with preparing for and attending meetings is not significant.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 5.1. Engagement in the form of a newsletter update to targeted ratepayers on the mitigation plan for the town is in draft form waiting on detailed announcements from Central Government around funding of shovel ready flood protection projects.

6. SIGNIFICANT BUSINESS RISK IMPACT

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

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1. A core component of river management activity and a significant component of Horizons community engagement is through scheme ratepayer liaison committees. The structure

and level of activity of each committee is a function of both the size of the scheme and the degree of engagement each committee has, particularly the chair. Smaller schemes do not have a Liaison Committee as such – those are mostly rural in nature with relatively informal communication channels (the task of bringing together a small group of farmers who typically know each other well is relatively easy).

- 7.2. As a small scheme the Foxton East Drainage Scheme has not had a Liaison Committee. Currently the **Long Term Plan (LTP)** contains capital expenditure plans for the scheme that considerably increase the scale of the scheme, requiring a more structured approach to ratepayer engagement, particularly to enable engagement around the form of the works.

8. DISCUSSION

- 8.1. Report 15-260 presented to the December 2015 Strategy and Policy Committee meeting sought and obtained endorsement for scheme meetings to be broadened to Catchment Community meetings, seeking to widen both the content present and the audience that attends. Liaison Committees have largely remained as they were from Catchment Board days - an informal process where the Committee is made up of those with an interest in the scheme's affairs with a new Chair elected as / when necessary.
- 8.2. The December 2019 workshop outlined the Catchment Board background to Liaison Committees, amongst other things intended to prompt discussion around whether the current approach is still relevant. There are a range of drivers to examining whether the current structure is still fit for purpose particularly with changes in technology and the advent of social media.
- 8.3. That workshop also noted three matters in particular; use of the term committee and the connotations that has, whether the current structure is fit for purpose particularly in regard to Iwi representation and the limitations the current format has for urban community representation.
- 8.4. Current terms of reference notes that "Committees shall be established on an informal basis and have no authority to make decisions or formal recommendations to Council. However, issues or recommendations arising from Liaison Committee meetings will either be addressed at Scheme Manager level or referred to the Horizons Catchment Operations Committee through Officers' reports."
- 8.5. The presentation noted that "*in practise Chairs have been encouraged to make Annual Plan / LTP submissions where a particular view is evident at a meeting.*" That comment in part reflects the confusion that use of the term generates – the occasional reference at a meeting to a 'motion' being put to the meeting. The intent with these changes (and progressively across all schemes) is to use the term Scheme Liaison Group rather than Committee to avoid confusion around roles and responsibilities.

9. PROPOSED LIAISON GROUP STRUCTURE

- 9.1. What's proposed for the Foxton East Scheme is a more structured approach to the composition of the Liaison Group, using elected members to represent the views of the ratepayer base. The following is proposed:
- From Horizons the Chair of the Catchment Operations Committee and the two Horowhenua Constituency Councillors;
 - From HDC the two Foxton Constituency Councillors;
 - Two Iwi representatives from Ngāti Raukawa and Muaūpoko;
 - A representative from the Foxton Community Board (FCB).

- 9.2. It's intended to write to both the FCB and Iwi and seek nominations for representation. The model proposed would be at minimum an annual meeting of the group to coincide with Annual Plan / LTP consultation. It's intended for the group to meet at more frequent intervals / as required with the development phase for the scheme.

10. FOXTON FUTURES

- 10.1. Running largely in parallel with the flood protection initiatives for the town has been the HDC led Foxton Futures initiative - essentially an economic development blueprint for the town. Regional Economic Development Minister Shane Jones made an announcement in Foxton on 2 July 2020 around Provincial Growth Fund investment in the first stage of Foxton Futures – the enhancement of a section of the Foxton Loop.
- 10.2. That announcement has given added impetus to Foxton Futures and consequently HDC are looking to establish a governance group to advance the other elements of the plan. They include both aspirations around River/ Loop connectivity and making the Manawatu River mouth and estuary RAMSAR (avoiding the full and lengthy definition essentially wetlands of international importance) site – the only RAMSAR site in the lower North Island - more accessible to the public.
- 10.3. Horizons representation is intended to be Horowhenua Constituency Councillors Ferguson and Clarke with the Group Manager River Management as staff representation. Other representatives on the group include HDC elected members and staff, Iwi and **Save Our Rivers Trust (SORT)** – the group ostensibly established to reconnect the loop to the Manawatu River.

11. TIMELINE / NEXT STEPS

- 11.1. Should the Committee agree to the proposal the process of forming the group and confirming representation will start with the intent of an inaugural meeting in September / October.

12. SIGNIFICANCE

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

Ramon Strong
GROUP MANAGER RIVER MANAGEMENT

ANNEXES

There are no attachments for this report.