



Report of the thirteenth meeting, seventh triennium, of the Environment Committee of Horizons Regional Council held in the Tararua Room, Regional House, 11-15 Victoria Avenue, Palmerston North, at 10.01 am on Monday, 8 March 2010.

## **PRESENT**

Crs AK Main (Chair), L Bailey, LR Burnell, VJF Chettleburgh QSM ED, MW Plowman (from 10.07am), JJ White, and GP Murfitt (ex officio).

## **IN ATTENDANCE**

Crs EB Gordon, MC Guy and PW Rieger QSO.

Chief Executive	Mr M McCartney
Group Manager Regional Planning & Regulatory	Mr G Carlyon
Group Manager Environmental Management	Mr C Mitchell
Committee Secretary	Ms K Booth

## **ALSO PRESENT**

Ms F Maseyk (Senior Scientist – Ecology, to 2.02pm), Ms A Russell (Manager Environmental Protection, from 10.48am, to 1.19pm), Mr L Bowler (Rural Advisor, from 10.11am to 10.35am), Dr J Roygard (Manager Research, from 10.58am to 11.18am), Mr R Munneke (Policy and Consents Manager, from 11.27am to 1.19pm), Mr A Innes and Mr M Hall (Animal Health Board from 1.05pm to 1.45pm) and four members of the public (including Mr and Mrs Paton, and Mr E Constantine).

## **APOLOGIES**

An apology from Cr Meads was noted.

## **PUBLIC SPEAKING RIGHTS**

There were no formal requests for public speaking rights, however the Chair advised the meeting that Mr Constantine had made a verbal request to her to speak to the meeting about matters of air quality. She said that Mr Constantine was not aware of the requirement to put in an application to speak by 4pm of the working day prior to the day of the meeting.

Mr Constantine spoke to the Members of his concerns about air quality in Palmerston North, and that the Council's data might be out of date, and asked whether Council was intending to sell one of its air monitoring sets. The Chief Executive clarified the Council had no intention of selling its equipment. There was one set in Taihape and one in Taumarunui and they were rotated around the Region. In due course one set would come back to Palmerston North. The Chair offered to provide Mr Constantine with information following the meeting.

## **LATE ITEMS**

There were no late items.

## **MEMBERS' CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

There were no conflicts of interest noted by Members.

## **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

**ENV 10-88**

**Moved**

**Chettleburgh/Murfitt**

*that the minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on 9 December 2009, as circulated, be received and confirmed as a correct record.*

**CARRIED**

Cr White expressed disappointment that she had been unable to attend the previous Environment Committee meeting because of her commitment with the One Plan meeting on the same day.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRESS REPORT**

*Report No: 10-34*

The purpose of this item was to inform the Environment Committee of progress made towards outputs listed in the following activity areas of the 2009-19 Long-term Council Community Plan. The Group Manager Environmental Management (GMEM) introduced the report and highlighted the good news it contained. He noted that some projects were successfully gaining momentum, some had been completed, and there was resolution of some issues. He advised the Green RIG, which had been re-themed, was available for Members to visit during the lunchbreak.

### **Catchment Management Activity**

The GMEM said he would provide information to the Chair about the new priority catchment. There was comment on the construction materials used for the debris dam (photo). The Chair referred to the Ballance Farm Environmental Awards award ceremony on 19 March 2010.

### **Water Quantity and Quality Management Activity**

Members commented on the Water Enhancement and Protection activity and asked for clarification on work on dairy farms and assistance given to dairy farmers. The Group Manager Regional Planning and Regulatory (GMRPR) advised that the dairy Warrants of Fitness programme was being refined. Mr Bowler (Rural Advisor) updated on progress with the Best Practice Manual and said it was a high priority for DairyNZ. He clarified that Horizons would have opportunities for input into the Manual.

At the Chair's request for information on the Dairy Forum held on 25 February 2010 in Palmerston North, Cr Guy (who chaired the Forum) provided an update for Members. He noted a preference for any issues/complaints to be addressed at a separate time to the Forum, rather than at the Forum, and for the Forum to focus on going forward. Members asked the GMRPR to advise them when each Dairy Forum was being held. The Chair of Council asked that verbal reports of future Dairy Forums be presented to the relevant Environment Committee meeting.

The GMEM clarified that applications for environmental grants had to be received by 30 June 2010. Dr Roygard (Manager Research) advised that assessments carried out on upstream habitat before fish barriers were allowed. The GMEM said Horizons had made a commitment to go through the same process each year in regard to purple loosestrife control, and that a member of the Trust was invited to work alongside the spraying contractor to ensure there was awareness of the cultural issues. Dr Roygard clarified Members' questions in regard to the Lake Horowhenua geological model, and he acknowledged the work undertaken by Hisham Zarour in regard to the Well log database.

### **Living Heritage Protection**

The GMEM clarified Members' questions in regard to assistance given to the Organic Festival, and Bushy Park. There was some discussion about the support given by Horizons to the Organic Festival by having the Green RIG on site. The GMEM referred to his invitation to the Councillors

to visit the Green RIG during their lunchbreak. Cr Chettleburgh congratulated the team on the re-theming of the Green RIG and said he, and many members of the public, had visited it when it was on display at the Esplanade Day.

The Chair asked Members to hold their questions on the biodiversity programme until the paper entitled 'Delivery Targets for the Biodiversity Programme' was discussed later in the meeting. She advised this paper had been inadvertently omitted from the Agenda, and was distributed to Members separately from the Agenda.

Ms Maseyk (Senior Environmental Scientist) advised that 'Table 11.1' (referred to at bottom of page 46) should read 'Table 2'. She provided Members with a short presentation, entitled 'Indigenous Vegetation Cover'.

### **Environmental Reporting and Education, and Biosecurity Activity**

Members asked questions of clarification in regard to the programmes that were successful in acquiring funding from the Ministry of Education LEOTC programme, and also on animal biosecurity, and control of alligator weed. Members were advised that work on the National Environmental Standard long term strategies for Taihape and Taumarunui was waiting until funding was available, that the setting up of Biosecurity Liaison committees was well advanced as previously agreed with Council and a formal update would be brought to a future Strategy and Policy Committee meeting, that magpie traps were fully utilised, and that a report to the next Environment Committee would include the new operational areas for the 2010-2011 possum control programme.

**ENV 10-89**

**Moved**

**Plowman/White**

*that the Committee recommends that Council **receives** the information contained in Report No. 10-34 and Annex.*

**CARRIED**

The GMEM reiterated his invitation to both Councillors and members of the public to visit the Green RIG over the lunchbreak.

### **REGULATORY MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY REPORTS**

*Report No. 10-30*

This report presented two items for the information of Members:

- a. Environmental Protection Team Report – 1 December 2009 to 28 February 2010
- b. Resource Consent Activities– December 2009, January and February 2010

Ms Russell (Environmental Protection Manager) introduced her report and updated Members on any progress since the report was written. She noted that staff had been working on hill country spraying matters until recently. She referred Members to the non-compliance by New Zealand Pharmaceuticals Ltd (NZP) and asked that the second bullet point read, "chromium levels in the **discharge** water...". Ms Russell clarified Members' questions in regard to the NZP non-compliance and Mr Munneke (Manager Consents) updated Members on matters relating to the NZP consent. He noted it was a complex matter, and advised that it had been notified and was now in a pre-hearing stage.

Members asked questions of clarification in regard to other non-compliances by Wanganui District Council and Manawatu District Council, which Ms Russell and the Group Manager Regional Planning and Regulatory (GMRPR) responded to.

Mr Munneke then introduced the Resource Consent activities report and drew Members' attention to the positive overall picture that showed good environmental change as a result of the consents being processed. The Chair congratulated the Consents team for their hard work

Mr Munneke responded to Members' questions in regard to the appeals, pre-hearings and hearings mentioned in the report,

***The meeting adjourned at 12.12pm.  
The meeting resumed at 1.05pm.***

## **REGULATORY MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY REPORTS cont.**

Cr Guy noted in a Palmerston North City Council Agenda that there was a seminar entitled "*Wind Energy in New Zealand and the New Wind Turbine Noise Standard Roadshow*" being held in Palmerston North on 29 March, and believed it could be of interest to councillors. He asked if Members could be notified about future events, such as this Seminar.

Mr Munneke clarified Members' further questions in regard to information in the report.

**ENV 10-90**                      **Moved**                                      **Chettleburgh/Burnell**

*that the Committee recommends that Council:*

- a. **receives** the information contained in Report No. 10-30 and Annexes.

**CARRIED**

## **ANIMAL HEALTH BOARD, VECTOR MANAGEMENT AND TB FREE COMMITTEE REPORT**

*Report No. 10-33*

This report informed the Environment Committee of the Vector Management, Animal Health Board (AHB), and Tb Free Committee activity for the Region, for the period December 2009 to February 2010. Mr Innes introduced Mr Matthew Hall, Operations Manager with AHB. Mr Innes drew Members' attention to the information on the areas which had infected herds, and also to the releases of feral pigs. He also noted the management highlights for the period, and progress on the operational programme. Mr Hall advised that the AHB was still operating under the current strategy, although this was under review. He then spoke about the AHB programme for next year and encouraged Horizons to continue with its AHB funding. He distributed a map of the Region, entitled 'draft Manawatu-Wanganui Control Operations for 2010-2011' showing proposed areas of work, subject to AHB approval and funding. The Chair advised that AHB funding had been part of Council's draft Annual Plan discussions. There was discussion and questions about collection of a levy by AHB, or on behalf of AHB, and Mr Hall explained how the collection worked in the Otago region. The Chair thanked Mr Innes and Mr Hall for attending the meeting.

## **DELIVERY TARGETS FOR THE BIODIVERSITY PROGRAMME**

*Report No. 10-25*

The purpose of this item was to present, for Council's consideration, a revised approach to the delivery targets of the biodiversity programme. Ms Maseyk (Senior Scientist – Ecology) explained the report was a follow on from the workshop and field trip held with Members in February. She drew Members' attention to paragraphs 5, 6 and 7 about the value of the work done to date, and

the research work going on behind the project. She also referred to a key point in paragraph 8 that all the high priority sites were deserving of protection works, however it was not possible to deliver on all those sites.

Ms Maseyk then referred to paragraph 10 with examples of why a dynamic approach would be preferable to the static list. Members were asked if they wished to change the wording relating to targets in the Community Plan and referred to recommendation 13(b). She noted there would continue to be regular biodiversity reports to the Environment Committee. Cr Plowman said he thought Council was placing priority in those areas where indigenous biodiversity was rarer and threatened, for example in lowland areas of the Region. Ms Maseyk clarified it was a regional programme which encompassed high value sites in both the lowland and the hill country areas of the Region.

Cr Plowman then referred to recommendation (c) and asked what stream restoration involved. Ms Maseyk clarified that recommendation (c) referred to any future programmes that might eventuate, not just stream restoration. Cr Plowman expressed concern around replanting of river banks as part of stream restoration and outlined the problems he saw with canopy growth causing ground cover (eg grasses) to die off and expose the bank to erosion. There was discussion about his comments and the GMEM offered to bring an explanatory paper to the next Catchment Operations Committee meeting in April, explaining the changes as a river gets back to its natural state.

Members referred to paragraph 12 and recommendation (b). The GMEM clarified there would be no change to targets or funding, but the wording change would allow staff to be more dynamic in their selection of remnants entering the programme. The Chair asked if there would be a staff submission to reflect the changed wording in the draft Annual Plan. Cr Guy commented that the changed wording still did not satisfy his concerns for more high priority sites in the Palmerston North area. The Chief Executive offered to bring another report to Council outlining the process used.

Cr Guy also noted concern that recommendation (c) was agreeing to an unknown programme, in the future, and would prefer (c) was removed. The Chair was in agreement with the deletion of recommendation (c) and asked Members for their thoughts. There was no dissension.

Cr Plowman moved an amendment to recommendation (b) but it failed to attract a seconder.

**ENV 10-91**

**Moved**

**Bailey/White**

*that the Committee recommends that Council:*

- a. **receives** Report No. 10-25;
- b. **agrees** to change the terrestrial biodiversity programme's delivery targets to read:
  - § "100 of the high priority wetland sites"; and
  - § "200 of the high priority bush remnant sites".

**CARRIED**

**Against: Cr Plowman**

## **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

Cr Rieger referred to page 111 of the Agenda, and asked about a water permit to take surface water "...via a riparian well within the bed of the Manawatu River". The Chief Executive advised it was not in the main channel of the river.

**ENV 10-92**

**Moved**

**Murfit/White**

*That the public is to be excluded from the Audit, Risk and Investment Committee meeting as disclosure would not be in the public interest because of the greater need to enable Council to carry on without prejudice or disadvantage commercial negotiations in accordance with section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.*

General subject of each matter to be considered	Reason for passing this resolution	Grounds under section 48 (1) for passing this resolution
PX1 Confirmation of Minutes of 9 December 2009	As disclosure would not be in the public interest because of the greater need to enable Council to carry on without prejudice or disadvantage commercial negotiations.	That the exclusion of the public from that part of the meeting is necessary to prevent the disclosure of information for which good reasons for withholding exist.

At the public excluded part of the Environment Committee meeting held on 8 March 2010, the Committee recommended that the Public Excluded minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on 9 December 2009, be moved to the public part of the meeting. These are detailed below:

**PX ENV 10-05**

**Moved**

**Murfit/Plowman**

*That the public excluded minutes of 9 December 2009 be moved to the public part of the meeting.*

**CARRIED**

**CONFIDENTIAL**



Minutes of that part of the Environment Committee meeting of Horizons Regional Council held on Wednesday, 9 December 2009, from 3.30pm until 4.09pm, in the Missoula Room, at the offices of Palmerston North City Council, 32 The Square, Palmerston North to which the public were excluded, pursuant to the provisions of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, the specific grounds under Section 48(1) LGOIMA are as follows:

General subject of each matter to be considered	Reason for passing this resolution	Grounds under section 48 (1) for passing this resolution
PX 1 Hill Country Spraying <i>Report No. 09-206</i>	As disclosure would not be in the public interest because of the greater need to enable Council to carry on without prejudice or disadvantage commercial negotiations.	That the exclusion of the public from that part of the meeting is necessary to prevent the disclosure of information for which good reasons for withholding exist.

**PRESENT**

Crs A K Main (Chair), L Bailey, LR Burnell, V J F Chettleburgh QSM ED, MW Plowman, and G P Murfitt (ex officio).

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Crs EB Gordon and MC Guy.  
Group Manager Regional Planning & Regulatory  
Policy and Consents Manager  
Environmental Protection Manager  
Committee Secretary

Mr G Carlyon  
Mr R Munneke  
Ms A Russell  
Ms K Booth

**APOLOGY**

**An apology was received in the public part of the meeting from Cr White (on other Council business).**

**HILL COUNTRY SPRAYING**

*Report No. 09-206*

The Group Manager Regional Planning and Regulatory (GMRPR), distributed the Report with annexed copies of flyers about hill country spraying, a map of the distribution area of the flyers, a copy of relevant Rules from the Regional Air Plan (1999) and the Land and Water Regional Plan (2003), and a copy of a letter to companies undertaking agricultural spraying within the Region. He wanted Members to be aware of the information should they be contacted by their constituents in the future; Mr Munneke added he was encouraging people to call Horizons – if in doubt - ask.

Ms Russell (Environmental Protection Manager) made a presentation to Members, which included aerial photographs of vegetation on hillsides that had been adversely affected by spray. ~~diff~~. Members asked questions about the photographs, and the annexed distribution map.

Mr Munneke played an excerpt of his interview with the Morning Rural News on 3 December 2009, where he explained about applying for and obtaining consents for spraying. He advised that consent fees would be waived for this season as the Council needed to move quickly on this matter, and would be calculated at a later date once costs were known. Mr Munneke answered further queries about the process.

The Chair of Council congratulated officers for their wonderful initiative.

**PX ENV 09-02**

***Moved***

***Chettleburgh/Murfitt***

*That the Committee receive Report No. 09-206 and annexes.*

**CARRIED**

**PX ENV 09-03**

***Moved***

***Main/Bailey***

*That the Committee moves out of Public Excluded.*

**CARRIED**

The Public Excluded section of the meeting concluded at 4.09pm.

Confirmed

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE

\_\_\_\_\_  
CHAIRMAN

The meeting moved into public excluded at 2.06pm and resumed at 2.09pm.

The meeting closed at 2.10pm.

Confirmed

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE

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CHAIRPERSON