



Minutes of the second meeting, eighth triennium, of the Environment Committee of Horizons Regional Council held at BNZ Partners, 203 Broadway Avenue, Palmerston North, at 10.00 am on Wednesday, 9 March 2011.

PRESENT

Crs JJ White (Chair), VJF Chettleburgh QSM ED, GL Cox (to 1.51pm), GM McKellar, MW Plowman, CI Sheldon, and EB Gordon (ex officio).

IN ATTENDANCE

Crs JJ Barrow, MC Guy, PW Rieger
Chief Executive
Committee Secretary

Mr M McCartney
Mrs JA Kennedy

ALSO PRESENT at various times during the meeting:

Mr R Munneke (Policy and Consents Manager), Mr C Mitchell (Group Manager Environmental Management), Mr G Carlyon (Group Manager Regional Planning and Regulatory), Mr C Grant (Group Manager Corporate and Governance), Mr A Beveridge (Manager – Biodiversity and Water Quality), Dr J Roygard (Manager Science), Ms L Blakelock (Finance), Mrs C Rowe (Media and Communications Manager), Mr B Martyn (Manager-Biosecurity), Ms F Maseyk (Senior Environmental Scientist), Mr P Taylor (Plan Implementation Coordinator), Mr R Munneke (Manager Policy), Mr P Hindrup (Senior Consents Planner), Mr G Bevin (Senior Investigator), Mr I McIvor (Plant and Food Research), and Mr B Judd (member of the public).

APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

PUBLIC SPEAKING RIGHTS

Mr Bert Judd had requested and been granted public speaking rights.

Poplar and Willow Breeding Programme

Mr Judd provided his views about the Poplar and Willow Breeding Programme and outlined what he believed would be suitable sites to establish nurseries.

Horowhenua Water Supplies

Mr Judd outlined his reasons as to why he believed the Horowhenua water supply was vulnerable and requested that Council investigate the source of artesian water supply. The Group Manager Regional Planning and Regulatory undertook to arrange for Mr Judd to meet with Mr Hisham Zarour, Ground Water Specialist to discuss the matter further.

LATE ITEMS

There were no Late Items notified.

MEMBERS' CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There were no conflicts of interest noted by Members.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

ENV 11-08

Moved

Sheldon/Cox

that the minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on 15 December 2010, as circulated, be received and confirmed as a correct record.

CARRIED

In regard to resolution 10-07 “requests the Chief Executive to report to the Environment Committee on the issue raised by Cr McKellar regarding increased stormwater runoff from Ohakea development work”, it was considered more appropriate to discuss at the next Catchment Operations Committee meeting.

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRESS REPORT

Report No: 11-37

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: Catchment management activity, Water quantity and quality management activity, Living heritage activity, Environmental reporting and education, Biosecurity activity. The report covered the period November 2010 to February 2011.

Catchment Management Activity

The Group Manager Environmental Management expanded on progress towards targets on Whole Farm Plans and said he would provide more detail in the Sustainable Land Use Initiative report which would be presented at the next Catchment Operations Committee meeting. The Chief Executive said an item would be presented at a future Strategy and Policy Committee meeting detailing events about the Tararua Fencing Campaign. During discussions about the Pond Size Calculator software, it was suggested that a demonstration on how it worked be provided at the next Environment Committee meeting. It was also suggested that an invitation be extended to Manawatu District Council Councillors to attend the demonstration.

Water Quantity and Quality Management Activity

Members commented on and discussed the role of the Rural Advisory Team and its relationship with the Consents Team. Mr Taylor clarified Members’ questions and said a good working relationship between the teams was being established. Mr Beveridge expanded on the benefits to be gained in regard to 50:50 cost share agreement between Horizons and the landowners for a fencing programme for the Mangaroa Stream. There was discussion and questions about responsibility of costs associated with water metering gauges, which Dr Roygard responded to.

Living Heritage Protection

Ms Masyk **Maseyk**, Senior Scientist – Ecology provided a powerpoint presentation entitled “What is a Wetland”. The presentation outlined what value wetland habitat provided, the current extent and condition of wetland habitat in the Region, and Horizons’ policy and management of wetland habitat. Members discussed and provided feedback on the presentation.

The Chief Executive provided updates about the future ownership of Kitchener Park, the management of Totara Reserve and Camp Rangī Woods, and progress on the Kia Wharite Project. Mr Beveridge responded to questions about Table 3: High priority wetlands under active management.

Cr Rieger left the meeting at 12.00 noon.

Mr Beveridge clarified questions about the level of funding for management of the Manawatu Estuary. He advised that negotiations with iwi were continuing in regard to the potential development of a mountain bike track along the northern side of the gorge.

Environmental Reporting and Education

Members asked questions of clarification on points of interest. Cr Barrow suggested that information contained in the Environmental Management Progress Report would reach a wider audience if targeted for inclusion in various farming magazines.

Biosecurity Activity

Mr Mitchell, Group Manager Environmental Management clarified Members' questions about activity around rook and possum control. There was discussion about the cost factor of Horizons involvement in possum control. The Chair asked that a report be presented at the next Environment Committee meeting outlining what action the government proposed in terms of its responsibility for pest control. The Chair acknowledged and congratulated Elaine Iddon and Craig Davey for their contribution to the launch of "Plant Me Instead" held at the Garden Club on Friday 4 March. She said it was extremely well received by the Garden Club members.

ENV 11-09

Moved

Sheldon/Chettleburgh

that the Committee:

- a. **receives** the information in Report No. 11-37 and annexes.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 12.27pm

The meeting reconvened at 1.00pm

Cr Rieger returned to the meeting at 1.00pm

THE POPLAR AND WILLOW RESEARCH PROJECT

What is our money doing?

Dr Roygard, Manager Science introduced Mr Ian McIvor, Plant and Food Research, who provided the presentation. Mr McIvor was available to answer questions of clarification during and after the presentation. The Chair thanked Mr McIvor for his time and said Councillors could channel any further questions through Dr Roygard, if they so wished.

ANIMAL HEALTH BOARD, VECTOR MANAGEMENT AND TB FREE COMMITTEE REPORT

Report No. 11-38

The purpose of this item was to inform the Environment Committee of the Vector Management, Animal Health Board (AHB), and Tb Free Committee activity for the Region, for the period January to February 2011.

The Chair welcomed Mr Terry Hynes and Ms Debbie Viner to present their report. An apology was noted from Mr Alan Innes.

Ms Viner referred to the Management Highlights and expanded on various points. It was noted that Mr Alan Innes had relinquished his role as Acting Programme Manager to the newly appointed Mr Brent Webster. Ms Viner said that Mr Innes would still be available to present to future Environment Committee meetings.

Mr Hynes gave an overview of infected herds both locally and nationally. Mr Hynes also referred to the National Pest Management Strategy review, and Submissions made by AHB on the review of the Biosecurity Law Reform Bill.

Members asked questions of clarification of both Ms Viner and Mr Hynes.

ENV 11-10 **Moved** **Plowman/Sheldon**

that the Committee:

- a. **receives** the information contained in Report No. 11-38 and Annexes.

CARRIED

REGULATORY MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY REPORTS

Report No. 11-36

This report presented two items for the information of Members:

- a. Environmental Protection Team Report – 1 December 2010 to 22 February 2011
- b. Resource Consent Activities for December 2010, January and February 2011

Resource Consent Activities

Mr Munneke (Policy and Consents Manager) said in addition to the discussions at the Strategy and Policy Committee meeting held on 8 March which covered resource consent progress, this report would cover non-Council consent activity. He referred to the assistance provided by consents staff to the Missing Persons Line for the Christchurch Earthquake which meant some applicants had been approached to seek agreement to extend consent processing timeframes under the Act. The Chair commented on a superb job carried out by those staff involved with the Missing Persons Line. Mr Munneke commented on the focus by staff to resolve old consents and said significant progress and improvements were being made. Mr Hindrup (Senior Consents Planner) provided a verbal update on the Waiouru consent which had been omitted from the report. Questions of clarification were asked about various applications.

Environmental Protection Team

Members considered the report and updates were provided on various points by Mr Carlyon and Mr Bevin.

Questions were asked about various non-compliances. Requests for more detail to be provided in future reports included: more explanation both on the nature of the breach and the extent to which the consent had been exceeded (for example, by quantity or by proportion in relation to the consent requirements); an explanation of why a non-compliance would attract a fee or not; and definitions of technical non-compliance, non-compliance, and significant non-compliance. Regular reports on consents that expired more than three years ago and still remained in operation were also requested.

Members asked that the presentation of Figure 4 and Figure 5 of the Summary of Environmental Incidents be made clearer for future reports.

Following full discussion, further recommendations were included. The Chair explained that the content of the recommendations followed on from discussions held at the Strategy and Policy Committee meeting on 8 March.

ENV 11-11

Moved

McKellar/White

that the Committee:

- a. **receives** the information contained in Report No. 11-36;
- b. **requests** the Chief Executive to add to the report of non-compliance more detail about the nature of the breach and an explanation as to why there is a fee or non-fee and each report to have a definition of technical non-compliance, non-compliance, and significant non-compliance;

CARRIED

ENV 11-12

Moved

McKellar/Sheldon

that the Committee:

- c. **requests** the Chief Executive to regularly report on consents that expired more than three years ago and remain in operation. To be reported in descending order of expired years and progress on resolution to date.

CARRIED

SUMMER SWIMMING SPOT PROGRAMME

Report No. 11-35

This report updated Members about Horizons' swimming spot data collection and health-risk reporting programme.

Dr Roygard added that approval had been given to receive an Envirolink grant, for finding the causes of what might be leading to the proliferation of cyanobacteria in rivers. Members asked questions of clarification on various sites, which Mr Carlyon and Dr Roygard responded to.

ENV 11-13

Moved

Chettleburgh/White

that the Committee:

- a. **receives** Report No. 11-35 on the swimming spot monitoring programme.

CARRIED

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

Members asked questions of clarification and provided comment on a number of issues.

There was discussion about the delivery timeframes of the Environment Committee agenda and Cr Plowman noted that his agenda was often not delivered in time for the meeting.

Cr White said she would be putting a Notice of Motion to the March Council meeting to possibly change the date of the July Environment Committee meeting. She asked Members to give the matter some thought and provide their thoughts at the March Council meeting.

The meeting closed at 3.20pm.

Confirmed

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

CHAIR