



## LATE ITEMS

There were no late items.

## MEMBERS' CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There were no conflicts of interest noted by Members.

## CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Cr Plowman requested, and the Group Manager Environmental Management (GMEM) undertook to provide a guide of the most appropriate plants to use when riparian land was retired.

It was suggested that Cr Plowman talk with the Group Manager Operations in regard to an explanatory diagram presented to an earlier Catchment Operations meeting about changes as a river gets back to its natural state.

Dr J Roygard clarified that the Mowhanau Catchment Study was still in the process of being finalised.

Cr Plowman referred to the Public Speaking Rights used by the Schroeder family. He asked for a correction; that Mr Schroeder had suggested Horizons purchase the "bush" and not the property. The Committee Secretary undertook to listen to the tape of that meeting to clarify. After listening to the tape, and after discussion with the Chair, the minutes (page 4, Public Speaking Rights, 4<sup>th</sup> sentence) were amended to read, "**Mr Schroeder offered to sell 300 acres of his property**".

The Chair confirmed that a meeting had taken place between the Schroeders and Horizons. The Group Manager Regional Planning and Regulatory (GMRPR) undertook to report back to Members on outcomes relating to this matter.

**ENV 10-102**

**Moved**

**White/Bailey**

*that the minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on 12 May 2010, as circulated, be received and confirmed as a correct record with the following amendments.*

§ *Page 4, Public Speaking Rights, 4<sup>th</sup> sentence to read, "**Mr Schroeder offered to sell 300 acres of his property**".*

§ *Page 8, resolution ENV 10-100 to move into Public Excluded, replace "Audit, Risk and Investment" with **Environment**.*

**CARRIED**

## ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRESS REPORT

*Report No: 10-107*

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**

The GMEM confirmed he had met with the Whanganui River Enhancement Trust (WRET) to discuss future reporting and funding. The Trust wanted to receive Horizons' report for the year and was expecting a claim. The GMEM commented that the media had become aware of the proposed reduction in the Afforestation Grant Scheme and it was hoped the government would review the decision. He outlined that all the applications made on behalf of rate-paying landowners, were approved, which was a great outcome. He clarified Members' further questions.

The Chair referred to the passing of Margaret Mathews, and said her husband, Tim Matthews had appreciated the attendance of Horizons' staff at her funeral.

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

Mr Beveridge (Manager – Biodiversity and Water Quality) advised the results shown in paragraph 5.3.4 were to the end of May. Results to the end of the financial year resulted in 62.5km of riparian fencing, a significant increase over the previous year. The majority was in the Manawatu Catchment, assisting dairy farms. The Chief Executive commented on the positive result this year. Mr Beveridge clarified that the newsletter referred to in paragraph 5.3.3 had not yet gone to landowners in the Mowhanau Stream catchment as results were still being worked through. He undertook to provide a copy of the newsletter to Members once it was available.

Dr Roygard then made a presentation on the Horowhenua Groundwater reports. He acknowledged the work of Hisham Zazour who had put the presentation together but was unavailable to present it to the meeting. Dr Roygard said there had been a noticeable increase in demand for larger than usual water takes in the Horowhenua GMZ, and more knowledge was needed about the groundwater system to help with environmental decisionmaking. He spoke about the existing groundwater issues, the need for science to improve understanding, and the studies that were commissioned. Dr Roygard talked about the Horowhenua geological model, the water balance and budget projects, the monthly monitoring, the water table map that was prepared from survey and historical data, and referred to other data, the overall water budget and the groundwater budget. In summary he said that the study provided information that could be used to enhance environmental management in the Horowhenua area, and that the study identified data gaps and recommended surveys and studies to bridge them. He said the team would be reviewing the entire groundwater programme over the next 12 months. Dr Roygard clarified that the report was not yet available on the website, and answered Members' questions.

### **Living Heritage Protection**

The GMEM said a highlight was the Kia Wharite project winning the 'working together for better services' category at the 2010 IPANZ awards, (Institute of Public Administration New Zealand). This was a collaboration between Horizons and the Department of Conservation (DoC).

Mr Beveridge mentioned paragraph 9.2 and said progress had been slower than desired. He referred Members to the explanations in the paragraphs that followed. In regard to Totara Reserve, he said the transfer of vesting process between Manawatu District Council and Horizons Regional Council was well underway. Questions were asked about the kiwi release at Mt Bruce and the possum control and predator trapping programmes undertaken there. Mr Beveridge identified ongoing concerns with rabbits at the Manawatu Estuary, and with unregistered motorcycles and dune buggies etc cutting up the dunes and disturbing birds. Discussions were planned with other organisations (police, Horowhenua District Council, DoC etc) to seek a resolution.

Mr Beveridge referred to the Manawatu Gorge project and advised that the proposed cycleway clip-on to the ~~Ballance~~ **Ashhurst** Bridge was not proceeding at the present time. He updated on several proposals, for instance, that investigations were underway for alternative cycleways/mountain bike tracks, and toilet facilities at either end of the Gorge Walk (and on the track) were being investigated.

In response to further questions, the GMEM updated on the new community projects in paragraph 10.2.11. He hoped to provide more information on the Maori land trust project in future environmental management reports, and advised it was about enhancing pest control to create a mainland island sanctuary for re-release of kiwi and in the longer term, release of kokako.

## **Environmental Reporting and Education**

Ms Maseyk (Senior Scientist – Ecology) clarified that although a legal review of the Old Man's Beard (OMB) strategy was not required for another two years, it was good practice to see how things were going. Landcare Research was undertaking the review.

The GMRPR responded to questions about air monitoring in Taumarunui, and how it was tracking this winter. He advised the readings were getting close to exceedence level and that a report would be taken to Ruapehu District Council on the matter. He added that it was important to continue the programme as scheduled, to obtain records over time. Surprise was expressed by a councillor about the readings, as there had been no exceedences in the previous year.

Mr Beveridge referred Members to the Environmental Education section of the report. He added that he had placed a box in the Councillors' Room containing feedback from schools, teachers and students about the Green RIG programmes.

## **Biosecurity Activity**

Questions were clarified about rabbit night counts, and possum control. The GMEM presented a larger map on screen to show the Possum Control Operation (PCO), Year 5. There was discussion on where the PCO was heading for the coming season. The GMEM advised the 'deferred operations' on the map were areas where possum numbers were very low and the Animal Health Board (AHB) had asked to go in there and complete a Proof of Freedom survey.

*Cr Rieger left the meeting at 11.50am.*

Councillors expressed appreciation for the photos in the Report.

**ENV 10-103**

**Moved**

**White/Burnell**

*that the Committee recommends that Council:*

- a. **receives** the information in Report No. 10-107 and annexes.

**CARRIED**

## **REGULATORY MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY REPORTS**

*Report No. 10-105*

This report presented two items for the information of Members:

- a. Environmental Protection Team Report – 1 May 2010 to 30 June 2010
- b. Resource Consent Activities for May and June 2010

## **Environmental Protection Team**

The GMRPR introduced the report and advised a review of the Environmental Protection team had been completed. He said he was meeting with the reviewers shortly, and would report back to the Chief Executive and Members with appropriate parts of the review. Ms Russell (Environmental Protection Manager) made a presentation to Members which included the pending enforcement activities, the Team activities, and a chart of dairy statistics over two seasons - July 2008 to June 2010: 1191 inspections had been undertaken on 956 resource consents. Members asked questions about the dairy statistics, and about the cases currently before the Courts. There was discussion about the two milk companies, Fonterra and Open Country, and their interaction with their suppliers.

Members further discussed the report and asked questions of clarification about the summary of environmental incidents, the follow up actions undertaken on Marypark Farm Ltd, the abatement notice issued on Split Rock Station and the offer made by the GMRPR to meet with the landowners on site to discuss the matter. He added that if Horizons had made an error, then it would apologise for that mistake.

*The meeting adjourned at 12.20pm.*

*The meeting resumed at 1.00pm.*

### **Resource Consent Activities**

Mr Munneke (Policy and Consents Manager) spoke to the report. He said that amendments to the Resource Management Act had enabled the Team to condense the consents' forms and therefore to communicate better with the smaller consent holders, generally the non-notified dairy consents. This encouraged face-to-face discussions. He introduced Alastair Cole and Sara Cook (Consent Planners) who had piloted dairy consents in the field, and they presented a short video they had made of the consents process including the 'in-the field' dairy consents. Mr Munneke noted that while it was difficult to undertake 'in-the-field' consents where a lot of evaluation was required, they could be used where it was possible to make instant decisions, for example non-notified, small scale consents. And this could be adapted, where possible, to include other Horizons' groups. He added it was important to manage expectations of applicants to realise that not all consent applications could be processed in this way. The Chief Executive commented that if staff were faced with situations they were not familiar with, they would report back to the office and ask an informed staff member to make contact.

Mr Munneke commented on the focus by staff to resolve old consent applications, and he clarified Members' questions around the old consents, around some of the non-notified consents granted, and also some of the change of consent conditions.

**ENV 10-104**

**Moved**

**White/Bailey**

*that the Committee recommends that Council:*

- a. **receives** the information contained in Report No. 10-105 and Annexes.

**CARRIED**

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

*Report No. 10-106*

The Chair advised the AHB representatives who usually presented to the Environment Committee meeting, were unable to attend this meeting, but would attend the next meeting in September 2010. In response to a question on page 127: 2009-10 approved vector control programme graph, the Chair said she would alert Mr Innes so he could answer at the next meeting.

**ENV 10-105**

**Moved**

**Main/White**

*that the Committee recommends that Council:*

- a. **receives** the information contained in Report No. 10-106 and Annexes.

**CARRIED**

## **TELEMETERED WATER METERING PROJECT**

*Report No. 10-104*

This report informed Members of the status and progress of the water metering project. Ms R Hurndell (Environmental Scientist – Water Quantity) made a presentation to Members on the telemetered water metering project. Her presentation included the background of why the project evolved, the programme objectives, and what was expected from the project. She identified the cumulative number of installations from 2003 to 2010, the focus for the 2009-2010 irrigation season, and installations for this season, and pending. She noted there were 44 sites that were not able to be reference checked due to pipe-work and accessibility issues, and the team was providing advice, assistance and encouragement to consent holders to address these issues. Ms Hurndell advised the key project was to have one software system for all the data – phase II of Watermatters.

*Cr Rieger joined the meeting at 1.45pm.*

Ms Hurndell clarified questions about mobile reception at sites for data logging. The GMRPR confirmed that extensive efforts over the years had been made to fully inform people about the criteria, including a brochure, and workshops had been held for both installers and for farmers. The Chief Executive said that from a national perspective, Horizons was well ahead with the metering processes and should be proud of itself.

**ENV 10-106**

***Moved***

***Plowman/White***

*that the Committee recommends that Council:*

- a. ***receives*** the information in Report No. 10-104 and the accompanying presentation.

***CARRIED***

## **PALMERSTON NORTH CITY COUNCIL DISCHARGE CONSENTS**

*Report No. 10-108*

This item reported on the current compliance status of the Palmerston North City Council (PNCC) discharge consents. Ms Russell gave a presentation to councillors about the PNCC wastewater treatment plant, the landfill, and also its composting operation. She referred to some of the non-compliances and included many explanatory photos, and advised Members of the enforcement actions that were proposed together with follow up inspections. Members asked questions about what was in the composted sludge and sewage sludge (ie chemicals, pathogenic organisms etc), the hot-rodging or digester waste processes undertaken by PNCC to treat the sludge, and the capping of the old landfill. Concern was expressed about possible human health issues. The GMRPR drew Members' attention to the review mentioned in paragraph 11.

The GMRPR then referred to the Kawau Stream issues mentioned in the report, including recent diesel discharges, and the cost of the clean ups. He clarified that stormwater discharges were not consented. The GMRPR said that Horizons was communicating to PNCC at all levels about these issues. Members discussed the report and asked questions of clarification.

The GMRPR then talked about the wastewater treatment plant and referred to Mrs Paton's comments made under her Public Speaking Rights' opportunity. He said that while some of her comments were similar to the views held by Horizons' staff, they did not hold the same views around compliance. He explained that while Horizons was generally happy with the way it was running, they were not happy with the outcome. He also explained that if Horizons chose to

review the consent, as was contemplated, it was limited in what it could review; it could not revoke the consent, or make it tougher, but could produce new conditions to make monitoring and compliance functions more straightforward, and he added it was important to make that clear.

The GMRPR also referred to comments made about other dischargers coming to the Palmerston North plant. Horizons saw that as a good opportunity for discharges to be brought to one place which would then receive the highest form of treatment in the region. The GMRPR then clarified that chemicals or other matter included in the discharges were at levels that did not pose human health or environmental hazards.

The Chief Executive asked members of the Committee to consider whether they wanted the Chairman, the Palmerston North representatives and other interested councillors to talk to the PNCC councillors about the issues mentioned. After full discussion about the need for improvement in urban stormwater systems in the region, not just Palmerston North, there was general support for the idea, and a new recommendation (d) was added.

**ENV 10-107**

**Moved**

**Bailey/Burnell**

*that the Committee recommends that Council:*

- a. **notes** *the information contained in Report No. 10-108 and annex;*
- b. **notes** *that further updates will be provided as information is available.*
- c. **asks** *the Chairman to write a letter to the Mayor of Palmerston North City Council requesting a political meeting to discuss Resource Management Act compliance issues in relation to city infrastructure with particular impacts on the Manawatu River catchment; and*
- d. *asks management to formally reply to Mrs Paton.*

**CARRIED**

Staff were thanked for bringing the Report forward, and also Mrs Paton for her comments.

## **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

There were no Members' questions.

The meeting closed at 2.56pm.

Confirmed

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE

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CHAIRPERSON

**Amendments and comments in regard to the endorsement and adoption of resolutions and recommendations of the Environment Committee meeting of 14 July 2010, at the Council meeting held on 20 July 2010:**

- Confirmation of Environment Committee meeting minutes of 12 May 2010 (Resolution ENV 10-102 in Environment Committee minutes of 14 July 2010). Delete bullet point one –
  - *Page 4 Public Speaking Rights, 4<sup>th</sup> sentence to read, **“Mr Schroeder offered to sell 300 acres of his property”**.*
- Report No. 10-108 – Discussion on Palmerston North Council Discharge Consent – additional sentence suggested to be inserted in the last paragraph of the report– “It was agreed that the Palmerston North representatives meet with the Palmerston North City Councillors to discuss various issues, eg. stormwater and various environmental issues”.
- During discussion of recommendation ENV 10-107 (c) the Chief Executive suggested that the identified letter asked the Mayor of Palmerston North City Council to invite the Chair of his Works and Infrastructure Committee and the Chair of his Planning and Environment Committee to also attend the meeting.