

PUBLIC SPEAKING RIGHTS

There were no requests for public speaking rights.

LATE ITEMS

The Chair advised there was a request for a Late Item by the Group Manager Corporate and Governance (GMCG) to brief Members about information being released to the public on the following day.

ENV 10-109

Moved

White/Murfitt

The Committee agreed to accept an informal briefing from the Group Manager Corporate and Governance about recent Official Information Requests.

CARRIED

The GMCG advised that Official Information Requests (OIRs) had been received from three sources pertaining to information on all current regional councillors and Horizons' candidates in the 2010 elections. The OIRs which were received on 25 and 30 of August 2010, asked for information relating to any consents held by councillors and/or candidates. They specifically requested information pertaining to infringements, abatements and prosecutions. He advised the information had been compiled in accordance with the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act and a letter was sent to all those affected by the OIRs at the beginning of the week. The information had been released the day before the meeting. In response to questions from Members, he advised the information collated filled a large folder, and that the OIRs had been received from the Green Party, Fish and Game, and two requests from the Dominion Post.

Concern was expressed by a Member at the nature of the request. He said many farming communities would have received an abatement or infringement notice given the strict stance taken by regional councils nationally, and the OIRs could reflect badly on some candidates. The Chair advised that the Regional Council had to respond to all OIRs; it had no choice. The GMCG clarified that some of the information requested was already on the website as it was included in reports to previous Environment Committee agendas.

MEMBERS' CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There were no conflicts of interest noted by Members.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Members asked questions of clarification on points of interest in the minutes. The Chairman undertook to write the letter referred to in resolution ENV 10-107.

The Chair referred Members to Item 5b which was a note of the amendment to the recommendations which were made at the Council meeting.

ENV 10-110

Moved

Main/Burnell

that the minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on 14 July 2010, as circulated, and the amendments noted in Item 5b, be received and confirmed as a correct record.

CARRIED

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRESS REPORT

Report No: 10-142

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 report covered the period June to July 2010. The Group Manager Environmental Management (GMEM) clarified that the heading in most sections which read “2009-10 Targets” referred to two financial periods: June 2009-10 and July 2010-11. He further clarified that the 2010-11 targets were the same or similar to those of 2009-10.

Catchment Management Activity

In response to a Member’s question of why he had not known about the Whanganui River Enhancement Trust (WRET) meeting, the Chair and Chairman of Council clarified that the WRET meeting had not been organised by Horizons and that Horizons’ staff had been invited to speak to the meeting about operational matters. It was the choice of the group organising the meeting whether or not they invited elected members.

Members acknowledged the positive work carried out through ‘consents in the field’ and asked questions of clarification about the process.

Mr Beveridge (Manager – Biodiversity and Water Quality) clarified why marram was being planted at Tangimoana. He said that once the large sand dune was stabilised, then native plantings, such as spinifex, could be undertaken.

The Chair asked for her congratulations to be passed onto Grant Cooper and Kevin Rooke for their years to service to Horizons.

Water Quantity and Quality Management Activity

Mr Taylor (Coordinator Plan Implementation) spoke to the Rural Advisory Team Report and clarified Members’ questions in regard to the Team’s workload, and future resourcing.

Members asked about the effect of the recent floods on recent riparian plantings. They were advised that while some areas showed little damage, other areas were affected and staff were checking on the damage level. There was discussion on activities in regard to the Lake Horowhenua Catchment.

Dr Roygard (Manager Science) commented on his reports and apologised for any ‘typos’. He provided clarification to Members on the fluvial monitoring and research project in the Lower Manawatu Scheme. He also commented on Envirolink funding and expressed hope that central government would continue to provide this funding. He updated Members on progress with the Pond Size Calculator (PSC), and said that a full peer review of the Model had been recently undertaken. He also explained the national version of the PSC was being funded through Envirolink funding and contributions from other regional councils. Dr Roygard advised a report on the Periphyton monitoring programme would be presented to the new Council at its December Environment Committee meeting.

Dr Roygard was asked to pass Members’ congratulations onto Maree Clark for completion of her Master of Science.

Living Heritage Protection

There was discussion about the Bush remnant project with a reminder from the Chair that the purpose of the Environment Committee was to receive information from staff, through their reports.

In discussion on Kitchener Park, it was viewed by some Members as a mini 'Totara Reserve with a suggestion there was a need for flood protection. Cr Meads updated Members on the effects of the recent flooding on Kitchener Park and his discussions with Manawatu District Council. The Chairman of Council asked Cr Meads for a further update during his Member's Report at the September Council meeting.

In regard to the Kia Wharite project, Cr Plowman updated Members on the impact of the huge slip in an area of Department of Conservation (DoC) land. He believed this would have an adverse effect on the blue duck breeding process, and on aquatic biodiversity. He said that he and other interested parties had met with DoC in the previous week to discuss if there were any options for stabilising the natural slip. The GMEM advised the land management team had been working with DoC on this issue and he was awaiting a formal report. Once it was received, he would circulate to Members.

Environmental Reporting and Education

The GMEM clarified Members' questions about funding for Old Man's Beard control in the Region, and about rook control. Dr Roygard answered questions relating to the installation of nutrient and sediment monitoring auto-samplers and explained why monitoring was mainly in the upper catchments. There was discussion about the possibility of installation of flow meters in the Taonui Basin. In regard to didymo monitoring, management advised there continued to be a monitoring brief for didymo and that Horizons was part of a didymo national monitoring group.

Members fully discussed the pest control programme at Pukaha/Mt Bruce and the recent impact on the kiwi population by ferrets as highlighted by a recent television programme. Mr Beveridge explained the control methods using baited traps, which were checked fortnightly. The Chairman of Council advised the Mt Bruce Board was very grateful to Horizons for the buffer zone predator control and said an independent report on pest control within Mt Bruce would soon be made public.

Mr Beveridge provided an update on the project by Ashhurst Lions to develop BBQ structures at Camp Rangī Woods. He also updated Members on the Linklater Block; that advice had been provided only on stage 1.

Prior to the adjournment of the meeting for lunch, the GMEM took the opportunity, on behalf of management, to thank Cr Main for her stewardship over the past three trienniums, and her leadership of the Environment Committee. He said his environmental team had thoroughly enjoyed working with her, and wished her good luck with her new endeavours. Cr Main was presented with a puriri tree and a bunch of flowers. Cr Main thanked everyone and said she had very much enjoyed working with the staff.

The meeting adjourned at 12.18pm.

The meeting resumed at 1.05pm.

The discussion on the Environmental Management Progress Report was adjourned to allow the Committee to receive the report on the Animal Health Board, Vector Management, and the Tb Free Committee.

ANIMAL HEALTH BOARD, VECTOR MANAGEMENT AND TB FREE COMMITTEE REPORT

Report No. 10-143

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 July to August 2010. Messrs Terry Hynes and Alan Innes spoke to the report.

Mr Hynes spoke to his report on infected herds (cattle and deer) and highlighted that the number of infected herds in New Zealand was down to 97 against a forecast for June 2010 of 106 herds. Mr Hynes also referred Members to the information on the National Pest Management Strategy review, the capture and recording of the history of Tb in New Zealand from the early 1970s, and news from around the world.

Mr Innes said it was early in the season with work in some areas not yet started, and referred to the management highlights in his report. He had worked with the GMEM and Mr Bill Martyn on an operational plan to be presented to the September Council meeting.

Members asked questions of both Mr Hynes and Mr Innes in regard to possum control in areas of the Tararuas and Ruahines, and whether the AHB was reviewing how the money was collected from regional councils. Mr Hynes said a review was underway. Members asked further questions of interest.

The Chair thanked them for their contributions to the Environment Committee over the triennium.

ENV 10-111

Moved

Plowman/Murfitt

that the Committee recommends that Council:

- a. **receives** the information contained in Report No. 10-143 and Annexes.

CARRIED

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRESS REPORT (cont)

Biosecurity Activity

The GMEM said that early in the new triennium, the Operational Plan for Plants and Animals would be presented for consideration, which would provide details of future planning. He advised that Horizons was working with Hawke's Bay Regional Council on a combined rook eradication programme, and clarified further questions in regard to pest plant management.

ENV 10-112

Moved

Chettleburgh/Plowman

that the Committee recommends that Council:

- a. **receives** the information in Report No. 10-142 and annexes.

CARRIED

REGULATORY MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY REPORTS

Report No.10-138

This report presented two items for the information of Members:

- a. Environmental Protection Team Report – 1 July 2010 to 31 August 2010
- b. Resource Consent Activities for July and August 2010

Environmental Protection Team

Ms Russell (Environmental Protection Manager) made a presentation to Members which included information on the activities of the Team, recent enforcement activities, and a Crown Update (prosecutions). Members thanked the compliance staff for all their work in regard to Court actions. Ms Russell clarified questions in response to her presentation.

Cr Rieger left the meeting at 2.15pm.

Members referred to the non-compliances by territorial authorities (TAs) and discussed whether there was government funding that could be accessed by the TAs to resolve these issues. Members asked if there was ongoing communication between Horizons and the Chief Executives and/or Mayors of the TAs in regard to these matters. The Acting Chief Executive advised there was regular dialogue between councils. Ms Russell and Mr Munneke (Manager Policy and Consents) clarified that where there was significant capital expenditure required, they worked with consent holders to agree on timelines for the issues to be rectified. There was general comment that all consent holders should be treated equally. Ms Russell explained that not all consent holders could be assessed equally due to the nature of the activity.

Resource Consent Activities

Members asked questions of clarification as they discussed the resource consent activities for July and August 2010. Because some Members sat as Hearing Commissioners on some of the Resource Consent Hearings, there was comment that recommendations from planners' reports should not be included in the Environment Committee Agenda. Mr Munneke noted their comments.

Mr Munneke elaborated on the application for gravel extraction from the Rangitikei River at the end of Makino Road, and said he had not yet received the decision. Mr Munneke also noted Members' comments around improved wording on other information in the progress reports.

Mr Munneke clarified Members' questions in regard to the City Reach application, and said he was awaiting the results of the evaluation before a decision was made on whether to publicly notify or not. Mr Munneke advised that projects such as this were brought to the attention of the public during the annual planning process. He clarified the process; that a resource consent was notified, not for public interest, but on the basis of effects of the application, and on potentially affected parties.

Members referred to the list of notified consents that required resolution. While they were aware that some of these consents were not being actively pursued by the applicants, other people reading the report might not know. They suggested a generic footnote be included in future reports.

Members commented positively about the information contained in the environmental protection, and resource consent reports, and thanked Ms Russell and Mr Munneke for their work in this regard.

Cr Plowman left the meeting at 3.05pm.

ENV 10-113

Moved

White/Bailey

that the Committee recommends that Council:

- a. **receives** the information contained in Report No. 10-138 and Annexes.

CARRIED

Cr White, as Deputy Chair, formally thanked Cr Main for her wonderful chairing of the Environment Committee. She appreciated her intelligent grasp of all the issues and her quiet authority. She said Cr Main dealt with great patience and 'steered the ship' extremely well, and she appreciated the opportunity to observe her as a Chair. She wished Cr Main well in her future. Cr Bailey endorsed Cr White's comments, and added that visitors to the Environment Committee were always appreciative of the respectful way that Cr Main treated them.

Cr Main thanked Members for their comments and looked forward to future interaction with Horizons.

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

There were no Members' questions.

The meeting closed at 3.12pm.

Confirmed

ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE

CHAIRMAN (REGIONAL COUNCIL)