



Minutes of the first meeting, eighth 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 Wednesday, 15 December 2010.

## **PRESENT**

Crs JJ White (Chair), VJF Chettleburgh QSM ED, GL Cox, GM McKellar, MW Plowman, CI Sheldon and MC Guy (ex officio).

## **IN ATTENDANCE**

Crs JJ Barrow, and EB Gordon  
Chief Executive  
Committee Secretary

Mr M McCartney  
Ms K Booth

## **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 A Beveridge (Manager – Biodiversity and Water Quality), Dr J Roygard (Manager Science), Ms C Nicholson (Environmental Scientist–Aquatic Biodiversity), Mrs C Rowe (Media and Communications Manager), Mr G Cooper, (Manager-Land), Mr B Martyn (Manager-Biosecurity), Ms F Masyk (Senior Environmental Scientist), Mr P Taylor (Plan Implementation Coordinator), Ms Kathy Craw (Rural Advisor), Mr P Hindrup (Senior Consents Planner), members of the Press, and Mr and Mrs Paton and several members of the public.

## **APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies.

## **PUBLIC SPEAKING RIGHTS**

There were no requests for public speaking rights.

## **LATE ITEMS**

There were no Late Items notified.

## **MEMBERS' CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Cr Barrow noted a possible conflict of interest which he said he would mention should it arise during discussion at the meeting.

During the meeting, Cr Gordon advised an interest in Duddings Lake.

The Chair advised that as this was the first meeting of the Environment Committee for the triennium and there were new Councillors on the Committee, she had asked for full explanations to be given to the Committee on the work reported on.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRESS REPORT**

*Report No: 10-204*

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 August to October 2010.

The Chair said that the Environment Committee was basically a committee of reports. She recognised there may be many questions at this meeting about the business of Council and would therefore address each report page by page, however at future meetings she would go through each report section by section. She added that where the Committee believed policy actions should be taken, it could make a recommendation to the Strategy and Policy Committee.

### **Catchment Management Activity**

The Group Manager Environmental Management (GMEM) introduced the activity and referred Members to the 2009-10 Annual Report to the Whanganui River Enhancement Trust (WRET) which was annexed at page 86 of the Agenda. Mr Cooper (Manager-Land), the Group Manager Regional Planning and Regulatory (GMRPR), and Dr Roygard (Manager Science) spoke to this activity. Mr Cooper elaborated on the work of WRET for the benefit of new Members. Members were provided with updates in regard to vegetation clearance consents, research on poplars, coastal foredune activity, and the impact of sand and gravel on river channel capacity.

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

The Chair welcomed Kathy Crow, newly appointed Rural Advisor, to the meeting. Mr Taylor (Coordinator Plan Implementation), Dr Roygard, and Mr Beveridge (Manager – Biodiversity and Water Quality) spoke to this activity. Members' questions were clarified and updates were provided in regard to the Pond Size Calculator, stream fencing campaign in the Tararua district, periphyton monitoring (including a presentation by Ms Nicholson (Environmental Scientist), monitoring of water takes, workshops on water metering and irrigation, and education to public about safe swimming spots.

Cr Gordon declared an interest in Duddings Lake (member of the Board), and asked about monitoring for algal bloom. The GMRPR advised the monitoring results were passed onto the District Health Board.

The Chair advised discussion on the remainder of the Report would be adjourned until after lunch.

*The meeting adjourned at 12 noon*

*The meeting resumed at 12.45pm.*

## **ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRESS REPORT continued**

*Report No: 10-204*

### **Living Heritage Protection**

Members' questions were clarified and updates were provided by Mr Beveridge and the Chief Executive in regard to the future protection of Kitchener Park, and funding for Totara Park. In response to questions about wetlands, the Chair asked for a presentation to a future meeting on wetlands. Dr Roygard responded to questions about the biomonitoring programme and the results that were shown in Table 8 (Macroinvertebrate Community Index results).

## **Environmental Reporting and Education**

Dr Roygard clarified Members' questions in regard to the environmental monitoring programmes and referred Members to paragraph 12.3.2 about the preparation of a State of Environment report. He explained the air monitoring equipment at the Taumarunui site was currently being recalibrated. He and the Chief Executive also clarified Members' questions about measuring dissolved oxygen, and the use of auto-samplers.

Mr Beveridge advised that Ms Helen Brown (Environmental Educator) who worked with the Green RIG and had been a great ambassador for the Region over that time, had resigned. In discussion about the Green RIG, the Chair drew Members' attention to the Green RIG feedback box which was available in the Councillors' Room for their perusal and Mr Beveridge advised the appraisal forms were left with schools after each Green RIG visit. Following Members' concerns about future funding for the Green RIG, the Chief Executive and Chair suggested Members raise the matter during the annual plan discussions the following week. Mr Beveridge updated Members on Green RIG visits outside the Region.

*Cr Chettleburgh left the meeting at 1.33pm.*

## **Biosecurity Activity**

Mr Martyn (Manager-Biosecurity) and the GMEM clarified Members' questions about progress towards possum control targets, and the contracting process undertaken by Horizons for possum control. There was discussion about the costs per hectare of an aerial 1080 drop (DOC, and normal national costs), with the GMEM to investigate. Mr Martyn clarified questions in regard to rook control. The GMEM advised about the work undertaken by pest plant management officers with contractors, Department of Conservation, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and other organisations in the control of boundary weeds.

**ENV 10-01**

**Moved**

**Guy/Cox**

*that the Committee:*

- a. **receives** the information in Report No. 10-204 and annexes.

**CARRIED**

## **REGULATORY MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY REPORTS**

*Report No. 10-199*

This report presented two items for the information of Members:

- a. Environmental Protection Team Report – 1 September 2010 to 30 November 2010
- b. Resource Consent Activities for October and November 2010

## **Environmental Protection Team**

The GMRPR introduced Mr Bevin who was Acting Environmental Protection Manager.

The GMRPR then made a presentation to Members on the timeline of events of the chemical spill at El Prado Drive on 3 November 2010. Members asked questions during and after the presentation about the timeline of the spill, whether it was initially a 20 litre spill or 180 litre spill, and the containment of the spill. Clarity was also sought on which agency was responsible for the longer term health and safety and/or personal safety. The GMRPR undertook to investigate.

Discussion ensued about non-compliances by dairy farmers following the flood events in September. The Communications Manager distributed copies of the Horizons' media release which had encouraged farmers who were worried about breaching their consents, to contact the Council or their field officer. Some Members advised the article in the local media stated there

would be no inspections, which was different to the Horizons' media release. The GMRPR assured Members that staff were very conscious of the conditions faced by dairy farmers over that period. The Chair suggested Members pass a resolution asking for a report to the Strategy and Policy Committee in the New Year, looking at the issues around compliance, if they wished.

*Cr Gordon left the meeting at 2.35pm.*

Members asked further questions of clarification in regard to the tables listing non-compliances, infringement notices and abatement notices.

### **Resource Consent Activities**

Mr Munneke (Manager Policy and Consents) provided Members with an introduction to the consents process. Members asked questions of clarification as they discussed the resource consent activities for October and November 2010. Questions were asked about some of the more complex and older applications including Territorial Authorities' sewage treatment plants, and about bush clearance applications, and public notification of applications.

Following discussion, the recommendation was amended.

**ENV 10-02**

**Moved**

**White/Sheldon**

*that the Committee:*

- a. **receives** the information contained in Report No. 10-199 and Annexes, and **recommends** that a policy paper be brought to the Strategy and Policy Committee on issues around the compliance procedures including in exceptional circumstances.

**CARRIED**

### **AIR QUALITY IN THE REGION**

*Report No. 10-198*

This item informed Members on the current state of air quality in the Region and commented on the findings of a recent Emissions Inventory Report. Mr Barnett (Environmental Scientist) made a presentation to Members on air quality in the Region, which covered the 2004 Regulations, results post-2001, impact on health, what the results were saying, and where the contamination was coming from. It also explained PM<sub>10</sub> monitoring and its relationship to human health. A report entitled 'Air Emissions Inventory – Taumarunui and Taihape 2010' by Emily Wilton was distributed to Members. Mr Barnett and Dr Roygard clarified Members' questions.

**ENV 10-03**

**Moved**

**Guy/Cox**

*that the Committee recommends that Council:*

- a. **receives** the information contained in Report No. 10-198; and
- b. **considers** the recommendations of the Emissions Inventory Report.

**CARRIED**

## **DISTRICT PLAN AND SUBDIVISION SUBMISSIONS**

*Report No. 10-205*

This report informed Members of the submissions that Horizons Regional Council had made as part of the District Liaison output over the period 1 June 2010 to 30 November 2010. The Group Manager Regional Services and Information (GMRSI) introduced Mr Ian Lowe (Coordinator District Liaison) to Members. Mr Lowe spoke to his report and drew Members' attention to the anticipated timelines for the remaining stages of the Manawatu District Council District Plan Review discussion document. He then commented on each of the submissions, providing updated information where relevant, and responded to Members' questions.

**ENV 10-04**                      **Moved**    **Sheldon/Guy**

*that the Committee:*

- a.        **receives** the information in Report No. 10-205 and Annexes.

**CARRIED**

*The Chairman and Cr Barrow left the meeting at 4.20pm.*

## **CHEMICAL SPILL AT HOOKER PACIFIC**

*Report No. 10-202*

The report advised Councillors on the incident at Hooker Pacific on 3 November 2010. The chemical spill had been discussed earlier in the meeting by Members.

**ENV 10-05**                      **Moved**    **McKellar/Sheldon**

*that the Committee recommends that Council:*

- a.        **receives** the information in Report No. 10-202; and
- b.        **receives** the presentation identifying the incident response and scope of impacts from the incident in question.
- c.        **recommends** a review of Council's emergency response policies in regard to toxic chemical spills to waterways, including recent events.

**CARRIED**

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

*Report No. 10-203*

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 November to December 2010. The Chair advised that representatives from the AHB would only appear before the Committee twice a year, however a report would be provided for each Environment Committee meeting.

In response to a question, the GMEM clarified that while AHB tendered jobs for Tb, Horizons' programme was about possums. The AHB used a RTC (residual trap catch) system; Horizons'

contracts were very prescriptive about the tasks required to be undertaken, and protected the investment of former AHB work.

**ENV 10-06**

**Moved**

**Plowman/Cox**

*that the Committee:*

- a. **receives** the information contained in Report No. 10-203 and Annexes.

**CARRIED**

## **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

Cr McKellar referred to a question from a ratepayer which he had already circulated to the two relevant Chairs. Following discussion, a recommendation was put to the meeting.

**ENV 10-07**

**Moved**

**McKellar/Plowman**

*that the Committee:*

- a. **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.

**CARRIED**

Cr Plowman asked who the lead agency was in regard to the Hikumutu Sewage application from Ruapehu District Council. It was agreed that an answer would be given at the Council meeting on 21 December 2010.

Cr Sheldon asked about the One Plan appeals. The Chair advised that the material would come to Councillors when it was available, probably at the end of January.

The Chair thanked those Members who were still present, and closed the meeting.

The meeting closed at 4.43pm.

Confirmed

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE

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CHAIR