



Minutes of the ninth meeting, eighth triennium of the Strategy and Policy Committee of Horizons Regional Council held in the Huia Room, Pukaha Mt Bruce, Wairarapa, at 10.00am on Tuesday, 8 November 2011.

PRESENT

Crs EB Gordon (Chairman), JJ Barrow, LR Burnell, VJF Chettleburgh QSM ED, GL Cox, MC Guy, GM McKellar, MW Plowman, PW Rieger QSO JP, CI Sheldon, RG Walker JP and JJ White.

IN ATTENDANCE

Chief Executive	Mr M McCartney
Acting Group Manager Corporate and Governance	Mrs S Craig
Committee Secretary	Ms K Booth

ALSO PRESENT at various times during the meeting

Mr C Mitchell (Group Manager Environmental Management), Mr C Grant, Acting Group Manager Regional Planning and Regulatory), Mrs C Rowe (Media and Communications Manager), Mr T Collé (Chief Financial Officer), Dr J Roygard (Manager Science), Mr E Duggan (Strategic Financial Planner), Mr G Shirley (Group Manager Regional Services and Information), and members of the Pukaha Mt Bruce Board, Mr B Francis (Chair), and Mr C Lester (also DoC Area Manager), and Mr B Vander Lee and Ms K Houkamau (Department of Conservation).

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting at Pukaha Mt Bruce. He thanked the Chairman of the Pukaha Mt Bruce Board, Mr Bob Francis, for the invitation to Horizons Regional Council to hold its meeting at Pukaha Mt Bruce, and introduced the Members of Council.

Mr Francis introduced members of the Department of Conservation (DoC): Chris Lester (Area Manager and Board Member), Bruce Vander Lee (Biosecurity Manager) and Kathy Houkamau (Visitor Centre Manager). He said they appreciated and respected the relationship with Horizons Regional Council, and valued its support. He spoke about the four components of the Pukaha Mt Bruce operation: the Visitor Centre, education programmes (including school groups), the restoration project, and the captive breeding programmes. Mr Francis also outlined the history of the Trust Board, its composition, and the current programmes. He thanked Councillors for holding their meeting at Mt Bruce.

APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

PUBLIC SPEAKING RIGHTS

There were no requests for Public Speaking Rights.

LATE ITEMS

The Chairman advised there were no Late Items, however an additional report on Rates Modelling had been distributed at the meeting by Mr Collé (Chief Financial Officer).

MEMBERS' CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There were no conflicts of interest noted.

Mr Chris Lester (DoC Area Manager and Member of Pukaha Mt Bruce Board) then addressed Members. He spoke about the special partnership Pukaha Mt Bruce had with Horizons Regional Council, and the working relationship between Mt Bruce and DoC, iwi, two District Councils and two Regional Councils. He introduced Mr Bruce Vander Lee from DoC who spoke about the restoration project, and Ms Kathy Houkamau who spoke about the captive breeding programmes and the visitor operation. They all responded to Members' questions of interest, and there were discussions around the future vision of Pukaha Mt Bruce and DoC.

The Chairman thanked Mr Lester, Mr Vander Lee and Ms Houkamau for addressing the meeting and informing the Councillors about the work carried out at Pukaha Mt Bruce, and the work of the Department of Conservation.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Members noted the following amendments to the minutes:

- Page 2, recommendation SP 11-47 reference to *Report No. 11-162* be amended to read *Report No. 11-182*;
- Page 3, Recommendation SP 11-47(c), amend "...*authority's governance teams...*" to read "*authorities' governance teams*";
- Page 4, '*Whanganui River Pathways Investigation SH4 Rail Over Bridge Wanganui to Upokongaro*', 8th line, '*Long Term Process*' be amended to read '*Long Term Plan*';
- Page 6, para about Mrs Paton's public speaking right to include "*Mrs Paton asked about the prosecutions advisory group*".

SP 11-55

Moved

Guy/Walker

That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2011, as circulated and with the following amendments, be confirmed as a correct record:

- Page 2, recommendation SP 11-47 reference to *Report No. 11-162* be amended to read *Report No. 11-182*;
- Page 3, Recommendation SP 11-47(c), amend "...*authority's governance teams...*" to read "*authorities' governance teams*";
- Page 4, '*Whanganui River Pathways Investigation SH4 Rail Over Bridge Wanganui to Upokongaro*', 8th line, '*Long Term Process*' be amended to read '*Long Term Plan*';
- Page 6, para about Mrs Paton's public speaking right to include "*Mrs Paton asked about the prosecutions advisory group*".

CARRIED

The Chairman advised that Mr Judd, who had also spoken to Members that day, had requested public speaking rights when there was an item to Council or Committee about leachate.

The Chairman asked if there was a staff member who was trained to perform CPR. The Chief Executive confirmed a Group Manager was trained.

THE OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT ON FRESHWATER QUALITY

Report No. 11-192

This report informed Members about the content of the Controller and Auditor-General's (OAG) report *Managing freshwater quality : Challenges for regional councils* as it relates to Horizons. The Chief Executive introduced the item and noted he had already distributed a copy of the OAG report to Members. He commented on incorrect and unfortunate comments made in the media around the nature of the report as it applied to Horizons. He referred Members to paragraphs

3 and 4 and 6 of the report, commented on its recommendations, and asked Members to consider what they wished to do, if anything, about the inaccuracies.

Dr Roygard (Manager Science) said that the research which had been undertaken with four regional councils resulted in the OAG report which provided recommendations for all regional councils in New Zealand. He said it was pleasing to see the report highlighted areas of Horizons' work as being best practice, and the Council as well as staff, should be proud of the results that had come through. He took Members through the process from the interviews held by the OAG, the provision of drafts for comment, and the feedback that had been provided. He commented on the recommendations from the OAG, explained why the OAG said Horizons had not met some of its requirements, and clarified Members' questions in regard to that. He also responded to Members' comments and questions about the scope of OAG investigation and the recommendations contained in its report.

Members commented on the overall positive nature of the audit and report. However some concern was expressed around reference to Horizons' councillors doing their own investigations, and that SLUI (Sustainable Land Use Initiative) was less effective because it was voluntary. The Chief Executive advised a letter noting Horizons' concerns could be sent to the Auditor-General.

There was reference to paragraph 28 of the item, with the comment that the Horizons' approach should include wording about the prosecutions advisory group which was used for information sharing and advice, as well as outlining the approaches of Waikato and Taranaki Regional Councils. The Chief Executive supported the current Horizons' approach, that Councillors were briefed about prosecutions and any possible impact on their constituencies, but noted it was Councillors' decision on the way forward. Various Members spoke in support of the prosecutions advisory group.

Following discussion about whether the OAG report should be sent to the councillors of the territorial authorities in the Region, this was included in the amended recommendations. There was the suggestion that more than two Horizons' Councillors should have been interviewed in the investigation process by OAG, and this could be applied to future investigations.

In regard to media articles on the OAG report, Members noted their concerns about inaccuracies and lack of balance in the media reporting, and there was discussion about whether there should be any form of response.

The recommendations were discussed. New recommendations (c) and (d) were proposed.

SP 11-56 **Moved** **White/Chettleburgh**

that the Committee recommends that Council:

- a. **receives** the information included in Report No. 11-192 and Annexes.

CARRIED

SP 11-57 **Moved** **White/Chettleburgh**

that the Committee recommends that Council:

- b. **directs** the Chief Executive to prepare a further press release to convey to the community a more balanced view of the Controller and Auditor-General's report.

LOST

SP 11-58

Moved

White/Chettleburgh

that the Committee recommends that Council:

- c. **directs** the Chief Executive to send a copy of this report item to councillors of the relevant territorial authorities with a covering letter about the Sustainable Land Use Initiative, and advising that a copy of the report from the Controller and Auditor-General "Managing freshwater quality : challenges for regional councils" is available online at www.oag.govt.nz/2011/freshwater.

Against: Cr Plowman
CARRIED

SP 11-59

Moved

Barrow/White

that the Committee recommends that Council:

- d. *in terms of recommendation (c) above, a letter to the Office of the Auditor General to include a desire for Horizons Regional Council to receive a response from the Ministry for the Environment regarding recommendation 6 in Annex B to Report No. 11-192 (page 21 of the Strategy & Policy Committee Agenda of 8 November 2011).*

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 12.20pm

The meeting reconvened at 1.30pm

PRESENTATION FROM CR SHELDON on her attendance at the International Riversymposium, Brisbane, 26-29 September 2011.

Cr Sheldon gave a presentation to Members on 'Lessons from the 14th International River Symposium : a sustainable future of integrated catchment management for Horizons'. She referred to river regulations in Germany, unexpected side effects, balancing restoration of rivers and construction of flood control structures, the 4 "As" for flood resilient communities, the paradigms of river engineering and river management, a river's economic value framework, resilience and holistic approach, and the A, B, C D steps. Members asked questions of clarification and it was suggested that Members further consider the ideas outlined in the presentation, at a future workshop.

RATE MODELLING CONFIRMATION

Report No. 11-198

This report asked Members to consider the remaining funding policies for the 2012-22 Long Term Plan (LTP), and provided Rates Scenarios for discussion. Mr Duggan (Strategic Financial Planner) spoke to the Report and referred Members to the extra scenarios 14 and 15 that were distributed at the meeting.

Following discussion, the item was adjourned until a Councillors' workshop had been held to fully discuss the scenarios. The Chairman asked Members to let Mr Duggan know, prior to the workshop, if they wanted anything specific to be discussed.

REMUNERATION REVIEW

Mrs Craig (Acting Group Manager Corporate and Governance) referred to the documentation that had been distributed to Members about the Remuneration Review, for their consideration. This included a draft memorandum to be sent to the Remuneration Authority, and copied to Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ). Members discussed and agreed with the content of the memorandum. They supported the continuation of a pool approach, rather than a salary approach. They commented on the large size of the Region and the difficulties that could pose for Members to adequately represent their constituencies, and asked for the land area to be considered in the formula for the pool payment.

SP 11-60

Moved

Walker/Plowman

That the Committee recommends that Council:

- a. **supports** the pool system and strongly advocates for a land size factor to be included in the Remuneration Authority's formula for the pool payment.

CARRIED

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

There were no Members' questions.

The meeting closed at 3.09pm.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

CHAIRMAN