



Report of the seventh meeting, seventh triennium, of the Environment Committee of Horizons Regional Council held in the Tararua Room, Regional House, 11-15 Victoria Avenue, Palmerston North, commencing at 10.00am on Wednesday 11 February 2009.

## **PRESENT**

Crs A K Main (Chair), J White (Deputy Chair), L Bailey, L Burnell, V J F Chettleburgh QSM ED (until 2.40pm), and M Plowman.

## **IN ATTENDANCE**

Crs E.B. Gordon (from 10.05am), M C Guy (to 3.05pm), and D.B. Meads,

Chief Executive	Mr M McCartney
Group Manager Regional Services	Mr G P Shirley (from 10.20am)
Group Manager Regional Planning & Regulatory	Mr G Carlyon
Group Manager Environmental Management	Mr C Mitchell (until 2.45pm)
Committee Secretary	Mrs L Carter

## **ALSO PRESENT**

Ms C Webb (Media & Publications Advisor), Mr G Cooper (Manager-Land), Mr R Munneke (Manager-Policy, from 1.25pm), Mr P Hindrup (Senior Consents Planner, from 1.25pm), Ms F Maseyk (Senior Environmental Scientist – Ecology from 10.00am to 12.20pm), Mr J Roygard (Manager – Science), Mr L Bowler (Senior Compliance Officer, from 1.00pm), Mr I Lowe (Coordinator District Advice, from 1.00pm to 3.15pm), Mr T Hynes (Animal Health Board from 1.00pm to 1.25pm), Mr A Innes (Animal Health Board from 1.00pm to 1.25pm), Mr B Dornbusch (Animal Health Board from 1.00pm to 1.25pm).

## **APOLOGIES**

An apology was received from Cr G P Murfitt.  
Crs L Burnell and E B Gordon registered apologies for lateness.

## **LATE ITEMS**

There were no late items to be considered.

*... Cr L Burnell entered the meeting ...*

## **MEMBERS' CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

There were no Members' conflict of interest issues.

## **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

**ENV 09-48**

**Moved**

**Chettleburgh/Bailey**

*that the minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on 12 November 2008, as circulated, be received and confirmed as a correct record.*

**CARRIED**

... Cr E B Gordon entered the meeting ...

## **ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRESS REPORT**

Report No: 09-08

The purpose of this item was to inform the Environment Committee of progress made towards outputs listed in the following activity areas of the 2006-16 Long-term Council Community Plan.

- Land Management Activity
- Water Quantity and Quality Management Activity
- Habitat Protection
- Strategic Management Activity
- Biosecurity

Members asked questions of clarification and staff provided additional background information where required.

- § Whanganui Catchment Strategy – the Manager-Land advised it was hoped to have a new catchment proposed for the start of the next financial year and the selection process for this was currently being worked through.
- § Regional Land Initiatives - The Group Manager Environmental Management (GMEM) advised that \$125,000 of environmental grant funding was applied in the land area using criteria set for environmental grants, which was generally \$10,000 or 30% funding. These grants were brokered between the land owner and the Environment Management Officer as a direct result of interaction staff have with landowners throughout the Region. Currently 82 farmers have applied and 29 have completed their works. Applications are processed as they come in and are approved if they meet the criteria. The primary focus of the grants was for soil erosion control.
- § Land Monitoring and Research – The Manager-Science clarified points relating to the dairy shed effluent pond size calculator, saying this was one tool available to assist farmers. It was noted that pond size was not a particular requirement as long as the pond complied with consent conditions.
- § A copy of the landslide hazard project would be made available in the Councillors lounge.
- § Water Quality Monitoring and Research – the Manager-Science gave an update on cyanobacteria growth on the beds of rivers in the Region. Radio advertising was being undertaken re this.
- § Congratulations to Horizons staff for the WaterMatters software and website that form part of the water use monitoring programme which won the Association of Local Government Information Management Innovation award.
- § Ground Water Monitoring and Research – clarification was provided around the complete water balance for Horowhenua area including Lake Horowhenua. This project was progressing well.
- § Water Quality and Habitat Improvement Activity – comment was made about erosion occurring after willow removal at pressure points. The Chief Executive noted that a big part of the river engineering programme was to identify 'at risk' points and Scheme Liaison committees played an active part in informing this organisation where these pressure points were. Affordability was an issue for Schemes.

- § The GMEM advised that in the Lake Horowhenua Catchment Strategy works regarding environmental planting were about 90% complete.
- § It was noted that schools involved in Kawau Stream restoration work could apply for Environmental Grant.
- § Habitat Protection Activity – it was noted that animal control in the Turitea Reserve was carried out outside the water catchment area.
- § Community Biodiversity – in relation to the Kia Wharite project, the GMEM advised that control work would include all predator animals deemed to be a threat to native species.
- § It was noted that rabbits were appearing again in areas where they had not been seen for some time. The GMEM expected the calici virus would reduce numbers when it appeared in autumn/winter. Blood testing was to be undertaken shortly to determine whether a release of the virus was warranted or appropriate.
- § Environmental Education - clarification was provided on lending/hiring the Green RIG to other regions. The GMEM advised that with the exception of major funding partners (eg. Genesis), any other use outside the Region was on a cost recovery basis.
- § Environmental Research and Monitoring – there was discussion on whether the Teachers College monitoring site was still appropriately named or whether this name was confusing. Differing views were put forward on this.
- § Possum Control Operations - the GMEM advised contracts had been let for Possum Control Operations in Sandon A and B, and Makuri A and B.
- § The Chief Executive felt it could be useful to produce a brochure for landowners explaining the role of this organisation in relation to possum control and how it fits with the role of the Animal Health Board. In view of upcoming changes over the next few years it would be helpful to provide an outline about Horizons programmes and what is intended to be achieved.
- § Cr Gordon mentioned concerns of a private contractor with a large operation harvesting possum fur and teeth in an area where Horizons will have a PCO. It was noted that Council had widely advertised for expressions of interest for this particular contract and it was disappointing that these concerns had come to light at this stage. The GMEM said if landowners in this particular area requested Horizons not to carry on with the operation then this option would be considered and the funding utilised for operations elsewhere.
- § Rooks – The GMEM noted that the next Strategy and Policy Committee would receive a final Animal Monitoring Report which would go into detail about results of the programme.
- § A member mentioned an increase in plant pests on roadsides which appeared to be spread by gravel used for road works. The GMEM said there was an awareness on the part of river gangs when using gravel from one catchment to another but there were no particular requirements in place at the present time although consent conditions were imposed regarding machine hygiene. Provisions around working within catchments were in place if didymo appeared in the North Island.
- § Particular mention was made of Nasella Tussock, Old Man's Beard and Purple Loosestrife during discussion on the table provided showing progress on zero density and containment species. It was noted that some rationalisation had taken place in regard to where plant pest eradication efforts were made and this was driven by budget constraints.

**ENV 09-49**

**Moved**

**Chettleburgh/White**

*that the Committee recommends that Council:*

- a. **receives** the information contained in Report No. 09-08 and Annexes.

**CARRIED**

*... A DVD made by Kaitieke School entitled 'Protect Blue Ducks' was screened ...*

**The Committee recognised that the DVD had won a Conservation award**

*... The meeting adjourned at 12.20pm...*

*... The meeting resumed at 1.00pm ...*

**VECTOR MANAGEMENT, ANIMAL HEALTH BOARD, AND TB FREE COMMITTEE REPORT**  
*Report No. 09-06*

The purpose of this item was to inform the Environment Committee of the Vector Management, Animal Health Board, and TB Free Committee activity for the region, for the period November – December 2008.

Animal Health Board staff provided verbal updates where appropriate. Members asked questions of clarification.

**ENV 09-50**

**Moved**

**Chettleburgh/Main**

*that the Committee recommends that Council:*

- a. **receives** the information contained in Report No. 09-06 and Annex.

**CARRIED**

**REGULATORY MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY REPORTS**

*Report No. 09-13*

This report presented two items for the information of Members:

- a. Compliance Team Report – 1 November 2008 to 31 January 2009.
- b. Consents Granted – November and December 2008 and January 2009.

*... A PowerPoint presentation was provided to the Committee on key issues for the Compliance Team at the present time ...*

Members asked questions of clarification on matters reported in Report 09-13.

There was comment on relationships between Horizons and the territorial authorities, and the need for discussion at various levels, including the political level, around the differing

perspectives taken by the authorities. The Chief Executive was requested to report to members on the results of his upcoming meeting with the Chief Executive of Manawatu District Council.

**ENV 09-51**                      **Moved**                                      **Burnell/Bailey**

*that the Committee:*

- a        **requests** the Chief Executive to prepare a paper on Territorial Authority / Regional Council relationships in terms of regulatory matters on a region-wide basis for presentation to a future Strategy and Policy Committee.

**CARRIED**

... Cr Chettleburgh left the meeting at 2.40pm ...

... Cr Guy left the meeting at 3.05pm ...

**ENV 09-52**                      **Moved**                                      **White/Bailey**

*that the Committee recommends that Council:*

- a.        **receives** the information contained in Report No. 09-13 and Annexes.

**CARRIED**

## **PLAN CHANGE AND SUBDIVISION SUBMISSIONS**

*Report No. 09-07*

The purpose of this item was to inform Members of the submission(s) that Horizons Regional Council (Horizons) has made as part of the District Advice output over the period 1 November 2008 - 31 January 2009.

Members asked questions of clarification.

**ENV 09-53**                      **Moved**                                      **Bailey/ White**

*that the Committee recommends that Council:*

- a.        **receives** the information in Report No. 09-07.

**CARRIED**

## **CONSENTS SURVEY RESULTS**

*Report No. 09-11*

This report was to advise Councillors of the outcomes of the recently completed satisfaction survey of a sample of consent holders.

The meeting agreed that this item would be carried forward to a future Strategy and Policy Committee meeting.

**MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

There were no Members' questions.

The meeting closed at 3.20pm.

Confirmed

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**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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**CHAIRPERSON**