



Minutes of the sixth meeting, seventh triennium, of the Catchment Operations Committee of Horizons Regional Council held in the Tararua Room, Horizons Regional Council 11-15 Victoria Avenue, Palmerston North at 10.05am on Wednesday 15 October 2008.

PRESENT Crs D B Meads (Chairman), E B Gordon (from 10.13am until 12.20pm, from 12.56pm), M C Guy, P W Rieger QSO, R G Walker JP, and G P Murfitt (ex officio).

IN ATTENDANCE Crs Bailey, Main and White
Chief Executive Mr M McCartney (until 10.20am, from 11.08am)
Group Manager Operations Mr A D Cook
Committee Secretary Ms K Booth

ALSO PRESENT Mr M Jebson (Director, Natural Resources Group, MAF, from 10.42am until 12.20pm), Mr C Mitchell (Group Manager Environmental Management), Mr G Doull (Senior Design Engineer, from 11.27am to 1.35pm), Mr J Foxall (Area Engineer Southern, from 12.52pm), Ms K Standish (Personal Assistant, to 12 noon, from 1.00pm), Ms C Webb (Media Liaison Officer (from 10.12am to 12 noon; from 12.52pm), a member of the Press and a member of the public.

APOLOGIES

Apologies were noted from Crs Plowman and Burnell.

LATE ITEMS

There were no Late Items.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There were no conflicts of interest noted.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RD 08-47 **Moved** **Meads/Guy**

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Catchment Operations Committee meeting held on Wednesday, 13 August 2008, be confirmed as a correct record.

CARRIED

RIVER AND DRAINAGE ENGINEERING REPORT

Report No. 08-179

The purpose of this item was to report on progress with river and drainage activities for the two month period 1 August to 30 September 2008.

The Group Manager Operations (GMO) introduced his report and elaborated on items of interest, and answered Members' questions of clarification on the alternative works being prepared to provide fallback options if major works were unavoidably delayed.

Cr Gordon joined the meeting at 10.13am.

The GMO further clarified:

- § Major works might be deferred if they had resource consent issues, which could therefore result in lower priority works being undertaken during the delay.
- § That the comments in paragraph 8 referred to all Schemes, and not a particular Scheme.
- § The date in paragraph 14 should be amended to 21 October 2008 (not 22 October).
- § Any requests from Wanganui District Council for presentations on the proposed Lower Whanganui River Scheme would be welcomed.
- § Issues with late delivery of Lower Manawatu Scheme Rating Review newsletters resulted in an extra advertised public meeting scheduled for Friday 17 October.
- § A submission had been received from Rangitikei District Council (RDC) advising they no longer supported the incorporation of the Rakautaua drainage area in a new Haunui-Rakautaua Drainage Scheme. As no submissions had been received from people in the present Haunui rating area, consideration was being given to the need to hold a Hearing. The Chair and the GMO provided the background to the review and re-classification.
- § The recent damage caused by flood events on the Rangitikei River Control Scheme.
- § The extent of the flood damage on the various schemes in regard to paragraph 125.
- § The date in paragraph 157 should be 2008-09 and not 2007-08.

RD 08-48

Moved

Meads/Guy

that the Committee recommends that Council:

- a. **receives** and acknowledges the information contained in Report No. 08-179;
- b. **acknowledges** that a Schedule of Works Completed is available for inspection.

CARRIED

SUSTAINABLE LAND USE INITIATIVE (SLUI)

Report No. 08-176

This report updated Members on progress for the implementation of the Sustainable Land Use Initiative (SLUI). The Group Manager Environmental Management (GMEM) distributed a map showing progress with SLUI, and spoke to the report. Members asked if he could include the 500 worst areas in orange on future maps. The GMEM also distributed a draft of a Forestry Rights Agreement with Horizons Regional Council, and mentioned that two interest groups had recently been hosted to view the SLUI hill country. The first group included national senior officials from Federated Farmers, and the second group was the MAF Hill Country Erosion team that was responsible for the \$10million of government funding for hill country erosion. The GMEM commented on the usefulness of these two visits where visitors could see what was happening in the field.

The GMEM also distributed a copy of MAF's 'Guide to Forestry in the Emissions Trading Scheme' that had recently published, and which explained how the Emissions Trading Scheme applied to forestry.

The Chair introduced Mr Mike Jebson, Director of the Natural Resources Group, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF).

Mr Jebson advised that within the MAF Policy Group he was responsible for areas that included all sustainable issues affecting both agriculture and forestry. He looked at the issues from an environmental focus and ensured that sectors were economic but addressed the environmental issues of concern.

Mr Jebson mentioned the two issues of forestry - the creation of the new "sinks" (covered by emissions trading), and deforestation and the emissions liabilities. He described the government's approach to those issues, and mentioned there would be consultation next year around an allocation plan of land units to landowners of pre-1990 forest land. Mr Jebson explained about the government's financial support of forestry and its recognition of the carbon value in forestry. He commented on MAF's interest in the Horizons' SLUI project, from a carbon issue perspective, where government funding was targeted directly at joint ventures or tree planting.

Mr Jebson explained the difference between the Emissions Trading System (ETS) and the Afforestation Grant Scheme (AGS). With the ETS, the participant paid a fee to join, did not receive money up-front, was responsible for all the costs, but received all the benefits. With the AGS, the government assumed a carbon value would eventuate, put the money up-front based on the carbon value, took all the risks, and kept the carbon credits. AGS participants were presently unable to change to the ETS.

Members put questions to Mr Jebson in regard to the value of carbon, the possibility of shifting the liability of carbon from one piece of land to another, the liability (and exemptions) for pre-1990 foresters who change their land use, issues around 'double dipping', incentives for landowners to change their land use, and funding options for agricultural levies. Mr Jebson mentioned that progress on some projects was likely to be delayed until after the general election.

In response to a question from Cr Murfitt, the GMEM explained that both Memoranda of Understanding and Memoranda of Encumbrances were used between Horizons and the landowners, depending on the level of investment and potential risk to Horizons.

Cr Main did not believe the wording of the second sentence in paragraph 9 **of the Sustainable Land Use Initiative Report No. 08-176** reflected the reality, and suggested alternative wording. **"Paragraph 9 was amended to read: A SLUI Advisory Group meeting was held on 23 September. The group reaffirmed its wish to continue and to be seen as an advisory group providing advice to Council."**

The Chair thanked Mr Jebson for attending the meeting.

RD 08-49

Moved

Meads/Murfitt

that the Committee recommends that Council:

a. **receives** the information in Report No. 08-176.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 12.20pm.

The meeting resumed at 12.52pm.

LOWER MANAWATU SCHEME – CITY REACH PROJECT RIVER DIVERSION AT ANZAC PARK CLIFFS

Report No. 08-183

This report was to update the Committee and Council about technical difficulties and projected cost increases for the proposed major realignment of the Manawatu River at Anzac Cliffs, and to set out alternative courses of action for consideration. The GMO spoke to the report and asked the Committee to consider the options that were put forward, noting that funding provision would need to be included in the Long-term Council Community Plan. He distributed a map showing proposed realignment options A and B, for Members to consider.

Cr Gordon joined the meeting at 12.56pm.

The GMO outlined that Option A (\$3.2million Council contribution) would have significant long-term advantages. Option B (\$2.3million Council contribution) would comprise the minimum level of realignment/erosion protection work that could be undertaken to achieve an acceptable level of structural integrity and construction safety. Mr Doull (Senior Design Engineer) said he believed both options were equally robust. Members fully discussed the issues of safety for both recreational users of the area, and for the contractors undertaking the work. They sought clarification from the GMO and Mr Doull about the advantages offered by each option, the urgency of the work on the cliff face, the length of time before the cliff was likely to stabilise itself, the angle at which the slope became stable, and the effects of a flood on Option B.

Members discussed the building line defined by the Palmerston North City Council District Plan on the setback at the top of the cliff and the anticipated future concern of homeowners about the cliff retreat. The GMO commented on the support from PNCC for Horizons undertaking some work to address safety issues, and also the financial contribution by the developer if the work was given high priority. Cr Main asked whether the work would attract a 20% subsidy from the rest of the Region, and if so, what would be the regional benefit. Members agreed this project should be discussed further at a Council funding policy workshop and added recommendation (e) to that effect. They also added recommendation (d) for the options to be considered further by the Lower Manawatu Scheme City Reach Working Party.

RD 08-50

Moved

Murfitt/Guy

that the Committee recommends that Council:

- a. **receives** and notes the contents of Report No. 08-183;
- b. **notes** that, whichever option is chosen, substantial additional hitherto unbudgeted expenditure will be required if the river alignment adjacent to Anzac Park Cliffs is to be stabilised; and
- c. **agrees** that funding provision for the option ultimately proposed be included in the draft 2009-19 Long-term Council Community Plan.
- d. **notes** that the options are to be further considered by the LMS City Reach Working Party following discussions at project team level;
- e. **agrees** to consider general rate implications of the project at a future Funding Policy workshop.

CARRIED

MAKERUA DRAINAGE SCHEME: SPIERS – KINGSTON CAPITAL WORKS

Report No. 08-180

The purpose of this item was to update the Committee on issues relating to proposed capital expenditure within the Makerua Drainage Scheme and associated rating concerns raised by ratepayers. The GMO outlined the background of these issues. Cr Bailey commented positively on the fact that Horizons had recognised the rating/benefit inequity and thanked officers for their prompt attention. She noted her concern that Horizons had failed to consult at the appropriate time with the appropriate people, but acknowledged the steps taken to remedy that situation.

Cr White requested that maps showing the area and affected pieces of land, be provided when reports similar to this were brought to a meeting.

RD 08-51

Moved

Rieger/Walker

that the Committee recommends that Council:

- a. **receives** the information in Report No. 08-180;
- b. **supports** the culvert upgrade work proceeding in the current year;
- c. **approves** the increase of the loan term in respect of the upgrade costs from eight to 20 years; and
- d. **approves** the repayment of loan interest only for the 2008-09 year and the refund of rates as a consequence.

CARRIED

MAKERUA DRAINAGE SCHEME: MANGAORE PUMPSTATION

Report No. 08-181

This item sought the Committee's and ultimately Council's approval for the purchase of a new flood pump for the Mangaore pump station in the Makerua Drainage Scheme. The support by the affected ratepayers for the purchase of a new pump, was noted. There was discussion about the purpose of refurbishing the existing pump, rather than storing without refurbishment, and it was again noted this was at the suggestion of the ratepayers.

RD 08-52

Moved

Rieger/Walker

that the Committee recommends that Council:

- a. **receives** the information contained in Report No. 08-181;
- b. **approves** the purchase of a new pump for the Mangaore pump station;
- c. **approves** a loan of \$60,000 to be repaid over a term of 20 years; and
- d. **agrees** that loan repayments be deferred until 2009-10.

CARRIED

KING'S CANAL OVERFLOWS IN FOXTON

Report No. 08-182

This report was to inform Members about an investigation carried out on recent overflows from "King's Canal" in Foxton. The GMO spoke to the report that recommended that Horizons should increase its monitoring and maintenance activity levels. Cr Bailey suggested that those responsible for the overflows should be reminded of their obligations, and action taken when there were future failures. She also asked that Horizons write to both the Horowhenua District Council and the Foxton Community Board enclosing a copy of the report, as there had been local criticism about a perceived lack of action by Horizons to resolve the issues. A new recommendation (d) was therefore included. The GMO assured Members that processes would be put in place in line with the recommended actions.

RD 08-53

Moved

Meads/Guy

that the Committee recommends that Council:

- a. **receives and notes** the information in Report No. 08-182;
- b. **notes** the actions to be taken in ensuring a higher standard of maintenance for King's Canal;
 - Top up the 100 m of low banking downstream of Cook Street with drain cleanings to raise the level 150-300 mm (to be confirmed by detailed survey and design).
 - Remove or trim the existing trees growing along the edge of King's Canal between Avenue Road and Nye Street, especially the willows along the boundary fence at 82 Cook Street.
 - Regularly clean out sand buildup in the bed of the channel in the vicinity of Cook Street (where there is a change of gradient and cross section).
 - Promptly remove and repair any slumping to maintain channel capacity and alignment.
 - Place scour protection at culvert outlets where required to fill scour holes and minimise material being carried to slower flowing reaches downstream (particularly to address existing problems at Avenue Road and Union Street).
 - More frequent inspections of King's Canal to check for obstructions, and more regular machine cleaning and weed control (full inspections to be undertaken monthly).
 - Liaise with the owners of the chicken factory in Purcell Street to ensure that appropriate measures are taken to prevent polystyrene blocking the drain.
 - Report on flood events in a more accurate and comprehensive manner to allow more informed analysis and decision-making. Record water levels at key sites (eg. Spring Street, Avenue Road, Cook Street, Union Street, Purcell Street); carry out channel inspections during and immediately after the event to identify obstructions and remedial works.
- c. **notes** that any associated increase in Scheme costs would be met by the Foxton East Drainage Scheme ratepayers in Foxton (U1 rates);
- d. **requests** that the Group Manager Operations write to Horowhenua District Council and the Foxton Community Board advising the outcomes of the investigation.

CARRIED

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

There were no Members' questions.

The Chair introduced and welcomed Ms Kelly Standish, the new Personal Assistant to the Group Manager Operations.

The GMO advised that over the next few days he would be hosting his river management colleagues from other regions throughout New Zealand, and they would be taking field trips around the Region

The meeting closed at 1.58pm.

Confirmed

GROUP MANAGER OPERATIONS

CHAIRMAN