

# Notes of the Waioeka-Otara Rivers Scheme Advisory Group meeting held at Ōpōtiki District Council Chambers, Ōpōtiki, on Wednesday, 3 April 2019 commencing at 10 am

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- Chair:** Councillor Bill Clark
- Advisory Group:** Dean Petersen, Dave Wilson, Tania Te Whenua, Barry Hennessy, Robbie Petersen, Councillor Ken Young (Ōpōtiki District Council)
- BOPRC Staff:** Kirsty Brown (Acting Rivers and Drainage Assets Manager), Jo Heath (Asset Management Coordinator), Bruce Crabbe (Rivers and Drainage Operations Manager), Geoff Stone (Area Engineer), Tony Dunlop (Flood Repair Project Engineer), Paula Chapman (Flood Repair Project Manager), Debbie Hyland (Finance and Corporate Planning Manager), Loris Hastie (Management Accountant), Mark Townsend (Engineering Manager), Chris Ingle (General Manager, Integrated Catchments), Kay Boreham (Marketing and Communications Advisor), Tim Senior (Land Management Officer), Ryan Standen (Regulatory Compliance Team Leader)
- Public:** Ian Connor, Tracey Hillier (Ngāi Tamahaua), Tim Herewini (Ngāi Tamahaua)
- Apologies:** Jessica Wiseman, Andy Dixon, Chairman Leeder, Councillor Norm Bruning, Councillor Tiipene Marr
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## 1 **Welcome**

Councillor Clark welcomed everyone to the meeting and acknowledged the members of public in attendance.

## 2 **Apologies**

Apologies received as noted above.

## 3 **Notes of previous meeting held 26 September 2018**

### **Resolved**

**That the Waioeka-Otara Rivers Scheme Advisory Group:**

- 1 **Confirm the notes of the meeting held 26 September 2018 as a true and correct record.**

**Clark/Wilson  
CARRIED**

## 4 Matters arising from previous meeting

Kirsty Brown ran through actions from the previous meeting:

- Ryan Standen from the Compliance Team will be presenting on forestry debris mobilisation refer agenda item 5.
- Legal opinion on 'Waioeka Floodway' to be covered in Operations update, agenda item 7.

## 5 Forestry debris mobilisation

Ryan Standen delivered a presentation on the National Environmental Standards for Plantation Forestry and the problems experienced on the East Coast.

### Key points included:

- Planning mechanisms for forestry are the Resource Management Act 1991, National Environmental Standard for Plantation Forestry, and regional plans and policies.
- The National Environmental Standard for Plantation Forestry provides a nationally consistent set of standards to manage the environmental effects of plantation forestry activities under the Resource Management Act 1991.
- Bay of Plenty region has the potential for an East Coast forestry event – similar erodible soils, high intensity rain events, long steep hills and debris.
- The main difference between the East Coast and Bay of Plenty regions is that the Bay of Plenty Regional Council has a compliance focus in the forestry sector with best practice stormwater processes in place and an emphasis on education and providing guidelines.
- Council's website has good information on exotic forestry, including guidelines and information about the National Environmental Standard for Plantation Forestry <https://www.boprc.govt.nz/forestry>.

### Discussion:

- Responsibility for clean-up was discussed. Ryan explained that if the source of the debris can be identified, the cost of clean-up can be recovered from the accountable forestry company but this can be very difficult to determine and prove.
- Protection of sites of cultural significance was discussed. Through the consent process Council can consider impacts on cultural sites but Heritage New Zealand is the agency with regulatory responsibility for this. Consents and Compliance staff work closely with Heritage New Zealand as well as iwi and hapū and are committed to working together and sharing knowledge.

**Attendance:** Ryan Standen left the meeting at 10:32 am.

## 6 Finance report

Debbie Hyland spoke to the finance report provided in the agenda pack and gave an overview of the scheme's revenue and expenditure to 31 January 2019.

### Key points included:

- Capital expenditure is higher than budgeted. This is due to the April 2017 Flood Repair Project completing more of the repair sites than planned. Rock supply has been available in the area (compared to some of the other catchments) and additional work has been undertaken and rock stockpiled in preparation of future work.

- Depreciation costs are higher due to the annual July 2018 valuation of scheme assets. Scheme assets are valued at \$44,792,000.
- The Waioeka-Otara works reserve is in deficit.
- The scheme has outstanding loans of \$5,849,000.

**Discussion:**

- Questioned whether the April 2017 floods would have implications regarding access to insurance and increase in premiums. Council do not have insurance information beyond the next financial year however premium increases are occurring across New Zealand following multiple natural disasters. In addition, following flood repair work completion, the scheme will have additional assets to insure.
- Debt projections were discussed. Advised that debt is reflective of capital works expenditure and is estimated on a ten year timeframe for the Long Term Plan. For future flood events, budget is added to the Flood Damage Reserve annually with a larger allocation every five years. This fund can only be used when a flood event reaches a set threshold.
- Prioritising and budgeting of work was discussed, specifically in comparison with other rivers schemes. The group were advised that the Rivers and Drainage Asset Management Plan (AMP) is the strategic document that schedules what maintenance and capital works need to be done within a scheme and when. The plan covers a 50-year timeframe (current AMP covers 2018-2068) and is reviewed every three years in parallel with the Long Term Plan. River scheme budgets are generated from the AMP and scheme work is funded 80% from targeted rates (from ratepayers within the catchment that receive benefit from the flood protection assets) and 20% from general rates. When there is a flood event, damaged sites are prioritised within each scheme and budget allocated accordingly.
- Members have been provided with the AMP Executive Summary and Waioeka-Otara information can be found in Section 12.4 on pages 22-24. The full document is available on Council's website <https://www.boprc.govt.nz/your-council/plans-and-policies/plans/asset-management/>.
- Noted that Council also has the Rivers Scheme Sustainability Project which is setting direction for sustainable management of the five major Rivers and Drainage Schemes for the next 100 years. The goal is to reduce long-term flood hazards while encouraging environmentally and economically sustainable land-use practices, raising awareness, and changing attitudes and behaviours in our communities.

**ACTION: Provide advisory group members with 10-year financial projections for all river schemes.**

## 7 River Scheme Governance/Continuous Improvement

Chris Ingle spoke to the River Scheme Governance and Continuous Improvement item of the agenda. At the September 2018 advisory group meeting Nic Newman (Principal Advisor) sought feedback from members on how the advisory group was working, with a report presented to Council on 13 December 2018 with the findings and recommendations. The Council report was circulated to Advisory Group members on 12 February 2019 with feedback on the recommendations now being sought.

**Attendance:** Debbie Hyland and Loris Hastie left the meeting at 11:00 am.

**Discussion:**

- Members sought clarity on the purpose of the advisory group. The group were referred to the advisory group's Terms of Reference as, 'Rivers Scheme Advisory Groups are informal groups to enable effective communication and liaison between Scheme ratepayers and Bay of Plenty Regional Council.' The group can make recommendations to council but has no authority to make decisions on Council matters.
- Members felt they receive a lot of information from Council but are not often asked for feedback or to provide advice.
- It was advised that the mechanism for questioning the direction of the Waioeka-Otara Rivers Scheme is the Asset Management Plan which is reviewed every three years and open for public submissions.

**8 Operations report**

Bruce Crabbe spoke to the maintenance works programme for 2018/2019 provided in the agenda pack, and Tony Dunlop delivered a presentation of annual maintenance work.

**Key points included:**

- Waioeka-Otara Rivers Scheme was hit by two significant flood events early last year (5 January and 12 February 2018). As a result there are flood repairs to do on top of general maintenance tasks. The group was advised that the annual flood damage budget of \$160,000 will not be sufficient to cover the repair works. Where possible, staff are planning to reduce expenditure in the maintenance programme and utilise the works reserve to fund the repairs.
- A legal opinion on the 'Waioeka Floodway' has been obtained and will be shared with Ian Connor after the meeting.
- Guidance was requested from the Advisory Group regarding an annual flood repair site on Pakihi Road, Otara River. River bank erosion is impacting on the road (an Ōpōtiki District Council asset) which also acts as a stopbank. Regional Council has suggested sharing the cost of repair with Ōpōtiki District Council. There are however issues with NZTA funding and Ōpōtiki District Council have advised they are unable to contribute. Regional Council's Rivers and Drainage Operations team have prioritised the site as high risk, and are uncomfortable leaving it unrepaired, so are recommending proceeding with the work.

**Discussion:**

- Concern expressed about the amount of rock being used and how it is affecting the natural character of the river. It was explained that rock work is only used when required from an engineering perspective. For example when other erosion protection measures have failed in the past or if there are conditions requiring hard engineering measures (e.g. site is subjected to high flood velocities or added pressures due to river channel alignment). Willows are used a lot and are the preferred species for erosion protection and river edge stabilisation. Native plantings are not useful for quick stabilisation of riverbanks but can be planted behind erosion protection plantings. River engineers do not like straight lines and during the repair works do try to maintain meanders and give the river room to move.
- Riverbed ripping to mobilise gravel was explained. The Waioeka and Otara rivers both have issues with high gravel beds building up in some areas and holes forming in the riverbed in other areas. Where there are gravel build-ups, the river gets pushed sideways and erodes the opposite bank. Beach ripping helps mobilise the gravel and gets it moving down through the system filling any holes along the way.

## 9 Flood Repair Project report

Paula Chapman and Tony Dunlop delivered a presentation providing an overview of the flood repair project including a summary of flood repair works completed to-date and work planned to the end of the financial year.

### Key points included:

- At the start of the project all the schemes were inspected to ascertain flood damage. Repair sites were documented, repair method recommended and a priority assigned based on the risk of the damage becoming worse, the consequence of that occurring, any impact to community assets, and the practical ability to complete the work required. Sections of river are re-inspected prior to work commencing to develop a detailed scope of works for each site and at this time some sites get reprioritised.
- This financial year the budget for the project is forecasted to be underspent due to rock supply constraints delaying programmed work in the Whakatāne-Tauranga and Rangitāiki-Tarawera schemes.
- As at 31 March 2019 repair works had been completed on 228 of the 520 flood damaged sites across the region.
- Progress in the Waioeka-Otara Rivers Scheme has been accelerated due to the secure rock supply from Matawai and is ahead of schedule with 47 sites completed, two more to be completed by the end of June and six no longer needing repair. The remaining 12 sites are to be completed in 2019-2020. Eighty percent of the Waioeka-Otara high priority sites have been completed.
- Currently reviewing lower priority sites to identify any changes. Some sites need to be reprioritised and others no longer needing repair can be removed from the programme.

### Discussion:

- Concern expressed regarding unrepaired sites getting worse. It was suggested that small jobs should get priority so they do not get worse requiring a bigger, more costly repair. Reassurance given that the sites are being monitored and reprioritised as necessary and that Operations staff are also working on annual flood damaged sites.
- The level of confidence Council has in their assessment of risk was questioned, considering the frequency of natural events like the April 2017 flood and the recent South Island West Coast floods. Flood protection assets provide a set level of service and there is methodology in place to assess and maintain that level of service. It was highlighted that the region is prone to natural hazard events and the risk of the unknown or unexpected happening is high.

## 10 Engineering update

Mark Townsend delivered a presentation covering the following topics:

### 10.1 Duke Street Pump Station upgrade

It was advised that the purpose of the Duke Street Pump Station is to prevent rural floodwater overflowing into the urban area. Assessment is currently underway to determine whether the pump station is meeting level of service, and if the current stopbank configuration is having an adverse effect on the urban area.

WSP Opus has undertaken the survey and developed a model. A workshop in February produced an options list for both urban and rural needs. The options will now be run

through the model. Construction is scheduled for 2019/2020 with a budget of \$1.5m. The rural options are:

- Raise/create Duke Street stopbanks
- Increase Duke Street pump station capacity
- Create more storage adjacent to Duke Street pump station

## 10.2 Waioeka-Otara Capacity review

It was advised that river scheme capacity reviews are carried out on a ten year cycle. They are a review of the capacity of the rivers infrastructure to determine whether the accepted level of service is being achieved. As a result of a capacity review upgrade work may be required.

The Waioeka and Otara rivers are currently being reviewed with the following timeframe and budget:

- 2018-2019 – Surveying and hydrology - \$200,000
- 2019-2020 – Modelling - \$100,000
- 2020-2021 – Modelling - \$100,000
- 2021-2022 – Design - \$100,000
- 2022-2023 - Physical works - \$1,620,000

The surveying is complete however are currently behind schedule with the hydrological assessments. These will not be completed this financial year but are scheduled to be undertaken during 2019.

## 10.3 Stopbank geotechnical investigations

Geotechnical assessments of stopbanks across the region are being undertaken to assess bank condition and foundations, and level of service provided. Engineering processes were different when the banks were originally built, with the standard methodology being to 'dredge and dump' from the river to create a bank. Geotechnical investigations fill gaps in knowledge and test what the stopbanks are constructed of and the ground structure beneath the banks.

Geotechnical assessment is programmed for the Otara River in 2019-2020 (including looking at concrete floodwalls) and the Waioeka River in 2020-2021.

## 10.4 Gravel build-up Waioeka Bridge

River cross-section survey information was shown for three sites (at the Waioeka Bridge, upstream of bridge and downstream of bridge). The surveys show that at the bridge there is aggradation on the true left (the obvious build-up that people comment about) and degradation on the true right. At the other two sites there is the expected cycles of aggradation followed by degradation when there is a flood event. It was advised that the survey results show that the gravel build up is currently not affecting the capacity of the river.

**Attendance:** *Tim Senior left the meeting at 12:14 pm.*

## 11 General business

### 11.1 Gravel management

Mark Townsend provided an updated gravel management.

#### Key points included:

- In the past gravel management within Council was spread across the Rivers and Drainage and Engineering teams. With recent staff changes this has been re-assessed and gravel management is now an Engineering team responsibility.
- In November 2018, a halt was placed on all commercial extraction from the Waioeka and Otara rivers (and also the Whakatāne and Tauranga rivers) until the relevant technical analysis was available through the NERMN report (Natural Environmental Regional Monitoring Network – river and stream channel monitoring). This report was in the process of being completed when the April 2017 floods occurred. The floods dramatically changed the rivers making a lot of the information in the draft report invalid and requiring cross-section surveys to be repeated.
- Cross-section surveys of the river beds are carried out every 2-3 years and analysis of this information is presented in the NERMN report. The NERMN report makes comment on the river reaches, highlights where there is aggradation (build-up) and degradation (loss), and provides recommendations for where gravel can be extracted and at what volume.
- It has been identified that the cross-section surveys do not show the full picture as they are just a point along the river so looking at using drone technology to fill the gaps.
- Recent surveys show that the amount of gravel available in the Waioeka River is generally less than previously available. In the Otara River there is no clear pattern, some areas have gravel aggradation and other areas are degrading.

### 11.2 Bylaw and policy reviews

Chris Ingle briefly spoke to the report provided in the agenda pack giving members notice that the Floodway and Drainage Bylaw 2008 is being reviewed and that Council is scoping and prioritising schemes for a rating review.

### 11.3 Communications update

Kay Boreham updated the group on communications activities across the Eastern Bay. Members were advised that the Council website had been upgraded and were encouraged to register for Project Page updates. The group was also advised that an action from the Rivers Scheme Governance report (covered in item 7) was to increase communication with advisory groups between meetings and the concept of a six-monthly electronic newsletter is being worked on.

**Meeting ended:** 12:30 pm.