

# Notes of the Whakatāne-Tauranga Rivers Scheme Advisory Group meeting held at Bay of Plenty Regional Council's Whakatane office, on Wednesday 18 March 2020, commencing at 10 am

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**Chair:** Councillor Bill Clark

**Advisory Group:** Geoff Mercer, Boots McNaught, Bernie Clark, Brian Power, Fraser McGougan, Scottie McLeod

**BOPRC Councillors:** Councillor Toi Kai Rakau Iti

**BOPRC Staff:** Kirsty Brown (Rivers and Drainage Assets Manager), Bruce Crabbe (Rivers and Drainage Operations Manager), Chris Ingle (General Manager Integrated Catchments), Geoff Stone (Area Engineer), Cleo Hanlon (Rivers and Drainage Operations Coordinator), Paula Chapman (Project Manager Flood Recovery), Tony Dunlop (Flood Restoration Project Engineer), Hemi Barsdell (Asset Management Specialist), Mark Townsend (Engineering Manager), Charles Harley (Team Leader Eastern Catchments)

**Public:** Glen Cooper (Whakatāne District Council)

**Apologies:** Tom Pyatt, Jim Finlay, Jo Heath (Rivers and Drainage Asset Management Coordinator)

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## 1 **Welcome**

Councillor Iti opened the meeting with a karakia.

Councillor Clark introduced Councillor Iti who is the new councillor for the Kōhī Constituency replacing Tiipene Marr. Kirsty Brown introduced Hemi Barsdell and explained his role as Asset Management Specialist with the Rivers and Drainage Assets team.

## 2 **Apologies**

Apologies received as recorded above.

## 3 **Notes of previous meeting held 18 September 2019**

**Resolved**

**That the Whakatāne-Tauranga Rivers Scheme Advisory Group:**

- 1 **Confirm the notes of the meeting held 18 September 2019 as a true and correct record.**

Clark/McLeod  
CARRIED

#### 4 **Matters arising from previous meeting**

Kirsty Brown confirmed that Gary William's PowerPoint presentation and report from the September 2019 meeting had been circulated to advisory group members.

#### 5 **Performance assessment of critical assets**

Kirsty Brown advised that Roger Waugh (RiverSpace Ltd) had been contracted to undertake a performance assessment of Regional Council's critical flood protection assets.

##### **Key points included:**

- The asset performance framework only applies to the scheme's critical assets which are typically within urban areas.
- The performance assessment process has three stages – risk identification, risk management and risk communication. The risk identification stage is complete and now staff are working through the risk management and risk communication stages.
- A full outline of the risk profile will be presented to advisory groups at the September meetings.

##### **Discussion:**

- Question raised whether the proposed Whakatāne River marina development has been in consultation with Regional Council and whether Council is satisfied with the proposal. Mark Townsend advised there has been some initial discussions however the project is in the concept phase and there is still a lot of planning and design work to be undertaken and there will be input from Regional Council. The marina is a joint Whakatāne District Council/Ngāti Awa project and maintenance of the channel from the proposed marina to the river will be the responsibility of Whakatāne District Council and at no cost to the scheme.
- Members questioned the need for the freeboard differential between rural and urban stopbanks, some felt it was excessive. It was explained that freeboard allowances vary by location - in urban areas the freeboard is between 500 and 800 mm and in rural areas it ranges between zero and 450 mm. Where the river flows between an urban and rural area a differential freeboard is applied, with lower freeboard on the rural side. This ensures that during an 'overdesign' flood event the less densely populated rural areas are flooded before urban areas.
- Landowner encroachment onto stopbanks (fencing, gardens, trees), and how this will be covered under the new bylaw, was discussed. Kirsty Brown advised that this issue was identified during the performance assessment inspections and that a number of plantings and structures have been identified for further investigation and possible removal.

#### 6 **River scheme planning (Asset Management Plan, Long Term Plan)**

Hemi Barsdell delivered a presentation on river scheme planning, and spoke to the report provided in the agenda pack.

Feedback from the group members was sought on the preferred level of engagement for river scheme planning. The group agreed a workshop with input from all members is preferred.

**Discussion:**

- Rock supply is an ongoing issue, and Council have initiated a rock procurement strategy project looking at different supply options. Investigations have also taken place identifying the quality of rock throughout the region. A recent Request for Information process has resulted in interviews with local quarry operators and a number of options have been suggested for consideration.
- Queried whether the Kopeopeo West extension remediation is part of the Long Term Plan. Members were advised that an upcoming ministerial visit will help progress this conversation. Members were reminded that the Kopeopeo Canal Remediation Project was funded jointly from Ministry for the Environment and general rates. It was not funded from scheme targeted rates.

## 7 Operations update

The operations update provided in the agenda pack was taken as read.

**Key points included:**

- The annual meeting of the Rangitāiki Drainage Scheme representatives was held in early March. This group is made up of representatives from both the Rangitāiki-Tarawera Advisory Group and the Whakatāne-Tauranga Advisory Group and provides advice on Rangitāiki Drainage Scheme operations and maintenance.
- The operational work programme is on track, despite rock shortages leading to delays in work and under expenditure. Pump re-conditioning is underway and routine operational works (spraying/tree maintenance) is on track.
- Council has approved \$679,000 for the high priority flood damaged sites resulting from the July 2019 rainfall event. Some medium and low priority sites will need to be completed under the existing budget. Quarried rock material shortage is impacting these works.

## 8 April 2017 Flood Repair Project update

Paula Chapman and Tony Dunlop delivered a presentation on the April 2017 Flood Repair programme, and spoke to the report provided in the agenda pack.

**Key points included:**

- The April 2017 Flood Repair Project is now two and a half years into the estimated four year programme and 64% of repairs have been completed across the region. It is now considered likely that the physical work programme will exceed the four years.
- Sixty percent of the Whakatāne-Tauranga Scheme repairs have been completed to date.
- Across the region 148 sites were targeted to be completed in 2019/20, however lack of access to rock material has resulted in the programme falling behind schedule and it is likely only 115 sites will be finished this financial year.

- The budget for the year is \$11.5m, and \$4m has been spent as at the end of February. Forecast expenditure to June 2020 is \$8.5m.
- Initial site assessments identified high, medium and low priority sites. The low priority sites are being re-evaluated to determine if they are self-healed, still require repairs, or can be monitored to the end of the programme.
- Central Government has funded \$1.3m of the Whakatāne-Tauranga flood repairs to date. There has also been insurance progress payments across the entire project of \$3m.
- Landowners were acknowledged and thanked for their cooperation and collaboration while the works have been undertaken.

## 9 Engineering update

Mark Townsend delivered a presentation and spoke to the report provided in the agenda pack.

### Key points included:

- An agreement with NIWA on the Whakatāne River capacity review has been reached, and modelling is scheduled by the end of 2020.
- The estimated costs for Te Rahu Pump Station pipe replacement have increased from \$260,000 to \$430,000. A request for additional funding will be presented to Council.
- Whakatāne District Council are planning to relocate the Barry Avenue pump station and are working closely with Regional Council on options. The existing pump station is damaged and there are a number of other issues, the extent of which became obvious after the 2017 flood event. Seepage can be heard at high tide and pipe integrity is a concern.
- Seepage, in the form of upwelling of discoloured water, has been observed in Awatapu Lagoon off Cleary Avenue. Geotechnical investigations have been undertaken and a ground model is being produced. The issues are possibly a result of the stopbank cutting across the old river channel. Solution options are being worked on in conjunction with Whakatāne District Council.
- The Eastern Bay of Plenty has received a large amount of funding from the Provincial Growth Fund, however no flood protection projects received funding. Members suggested that Regional Council need to ask central government why the community isn't getting adequate funding for flood protection.

## 10 Finance report

Kirsty Brown spoke to the report provided in the agenda pack.

### Key points included:

- Report is for the six months ending 31 December 2019.
- There is a total deficit of \$8,000 at this stage.
- Flood damage repairs for this scheme are expected to be \$3m at year end.

- \$1.2m is available in the reserves.
- Internal loans are \$6.6m.
- Asset valuation has increased to \$78.6m due to higher construction costs, new assets being created under the April 2017 Flood Repair project, and the inclusion of missing assets onto the asset register.

**Action:**

*Provide Advisory Groups with information on how recent interest rate decreases will affect internal loans, and whether there will be any significant benefits.*

## 11 General business

### 11.1 Gravel management update

The gravel management update provided in the agenda pack was taken as read.

Mark Townsend explained how gravel surveys were undertaken, and acknowledged that material between each cross-section is not defined and there could be build-ups. Observations from staff are relied on in these situations. Drone technology, with the potential to provide more accurate data, is being considered nationally through the River Managers Group.

### 11.2 Review of the Floodway and Drainage Bylaws 2008

Kirsty Brown updated members on the Floodway and Drainage Bylaw Review.

**Key points included:**

- Currently seeking approval from Council to commence the formal consultation phase of the review.
- Consultation and submission process will be an online due to Covid-19. All affected landowners will receive a letter providing website links, supporting information, and details on how to make a submission.
- The review has proposed an increase in Bylaw Applicable Area 3 which applies to a set distance from the landward toe of a stopbank, or any other defence against water (e.g. floodwall, pump station, floodgate). The proposed increase for the Whakatāne and Tauranga rivers is from 20 metres to 40 metres.

### 11.3 Infrastructure insurance

In 2009 Council moved into the BOPLASS Insurance Programme and a steady increase in premiums has been observed over the ensuing years. It is predicted that this pattern of increasing premiums will raise affordability issues.

The Whakatāne-Tauranga schemes infrastructure premium for this year was \$125,000.

A review is proposed to look at alternative insurance options and determine the best way forward. Results from the review will be presented to Advisory Groups at the September meetings.

#### 11.4 **Advisory group membership September 2020 to September 2023**

The advisory group membership report provided in the agenda pack was taken as read. Group members were advised that an email will be circulated seeking whether members wish to continue for another term or not. Members suggested that diversity among membership should be considered.

**Meeting ended:** 11:44am