

Notes of the Kaituna Catchment Control Scheme Advisory Group meeting held at Bay of Plenty Regional Council's Rotorua office, on Wednesday, 4 March 2020, commencing at 10am

Chair: Councillor Norm Bruning

Advisory Group: Barry Roderick, Dave Hurst, Graham Thompson, Councillor John Scrimgeour (Western Bay of Plenty District Council), Nick Chater, Richard Weld, Roger Hintz

BOPRC Councillors: Councillor Matemoana McDonald

BOPRC Staff: Kirsty Brown (Rivers and Drainage Assets Manager), Jo Heath (Asset Management Coordinator), Bruce Crabbe (Rivers and Drainage Operations Manager), Kerry Smith (Area Engineer), Chris Ingle (General Manager Integrated Catchments), Mark Townsend (Engineering Manager), Hemi Barsdell (Asset Management Specialist)

Public: Kelvin O'Hara, Luther Siemelink, Kelsey Bell

Apologies: Peter Dine (Rotorua Lakes Council)

1 **Welcome**

Councillor Bruning welcomed everyone to the meeting and Hemi Barsdell opened the meeting with a karakia.

Councillor Bruning introduced Matemoana McDonald, councillor for the Mauao constituency. With a new Council elected in October 2019, Councillor Bruning and Councillor McDonald are the Regional Council representatives on the advisory group.

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 4 September 2019**

Resolved

That the Kaituna Catchment Control Scheme Advisory Group:

- 1 **Confirm the notes of the meeting held 4 September 2019 as a true and correct record.**

**Bruning/Thompson
CARRIED**

4 Matters arising from previous meeting

Kirsty Brown provided an update on actions from the previous meeting as follows:

- The Kaituna Catchment Control Scheme 2019-2020 maintenance work programme was circulated to members after the September meeting.
- Bell Road catchment modelling findings will be presented during the Engineering update in Agenda Item 9. Design options and costs are still to be determined.
- The Finance team investigated the reserve balances provided in the end of year financial report presented at the September meeting and found that interest accruals on reserve balances had not been included. This has been fixed and on investment maturity the interest will be compounded on to the reserve balance and re-invested.

The amount of rock being used for flood repair work was questioned and whether the use of rock has resulted in habitat loss and impacts on things like whitebait spawning. Bruce Crabbe reassured members that rock is not used where it is not needed. Rock is in short supply, and is expensive, so is only used at critical sites that require a high level of erosion protection to safeguard flood protection assets. Once the repairs are completed they quickly revegetate and staff are working to speed up this process by hydro-seeding with native grass species.

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:

- As part of Council's asset management improvement focus a risk-based framework developed by the New Zealand Rivers Managers Group has been implemented to assess the performance of critical flood protection assets.
- Critical assets are those that have a high consequence, but not necessarily high probability of failure e.g. stopbank networks through urban areas. For the Kaituna Scheme the framework has been used to assess scheme assets on urban streams in Rotorua.
- 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.
- The main issues identified for the Rotorua streams include geothermal vents, landowner encroachment onto stopbanks, and trees on stopbanks and in waterways.
- A full outline of the risk profile will be presented to advisory groups at the September meetings.

6 River scheme planning

Hemi Barsdell delivered a presentation on river scheme planning, and spoke to the report provided in the agenda pack. Feedback from group members was sought on the preferred level of engagement in river scheme planning (e.g Asset Management Plan review and Long Term Plan).

ACTION:

A planning workshop, involving a sub-committee of Richard Weld, Barry Roderick, Graham Thompson and Dave Hurst, to be scheduled for April/May 2020.

7 Operations update

Bruce Crabbe took the report on the Kaituna scheme's 2019-2020 maintenance works programme provided in the agenda pack as read.

Kerry Smith explained that the Rivers and Drainage Operations team has six staff working in the Kaituna catchment and this year have had 300 civil projects on the go. Kerry delivered a presentation showing a range of scheme capital, operational and maintenance works.

Key points included:

- Drain maintenance is ongoing to ensure the drainage network is operational and providing the agreed level of service. This work includes desilting, de-weeding and weed spraying to maintain a good drain cross-section and good flow.
- Rabbit holes in stopbanks have been an issue across the region and looking to landowners to notify staff if they notice any rabbit activity. To remediate damage, the rabbits are poisoned with Pindone; the holes excavated until firm ground is located then backfilled with material compacted in layers and grass cover reinstated. The example provided was a stopbank on the AFFCO farm and members sought clarification on whether the scheme had taken over management of that section of stopbank which was originally built by AFFCO.

ACTION:

Investigate whether the scheme has taken over management of the AFFCO farm stopbank.

- The three radial gates at Ōkere Falls are undergoing routine maintenance. The gates are being removed one at a time and sent to Kawerau for refurbishment. Flows through the gates are being managed accordingly.
- Upper Kaituna stream maintenance is focusing on tree removal and securing access to the streams for ongoing maintenance. Staff are working collaboratively with Rotorua Lakes Council on a number of projects.
- Waingaehe Floodway maintenance has included willow removal and channel desilting and de-weeding.
- Habitat enhancement work in the Utuhina and Ngongotahā Streams is being carried out in conjunction with the flood repair programme. This work has been recognised by the Eastern Fish and Game in a recent newsletter.
- Recently purchased a hydro-seeder to speed up revegetation of disturbed sites. Once sites have been repaired and top-soiled they are hydro-seeded with suitable vegetation seed mix, including native carex and rush species.
- Staff have been trialling eel tubes (a series of metal tubes formed into a triangular prism) placed into areas of new rock work to provide habitat for eels. They have been very successful with eels moving in soon after installation.

Discussion:

- The control of *Glyceria* (sweet reed grass) was discussed. Usually controlled by spraying from a boat. Currently investigating the purchase of an airboat for this purpose.
- Suitable grass species for planting of stopbanks was discussed and Bruce Crabbe asked for advice on drought hardy species that are deep rooted and good at holding soil together. Members suggested cocksfoot and chicory as options that are also good grazing for cattle.

Attendance: Mark Townsend joined the meeting at 10:46 am.

8 April 2017 Flood Repair Project update

Kirsty Brown spoke to the report provided in the agenda pack and Kerry Smith delivered a presentation showing progress with the April 2017 Flood Repair Project.

Key points included:

- As at end of February 2020, 61% of repair sites across the region have been completed.
- Work programmed on 19 Kaituna scheme repair sites in 2019-2020. Six sites have been completed to date.
- Some outstanding high priority sites are showing increased levels of damage compared to the initial assessments. Also finding that some low priority sites have self-healed and no longer require work.
- Rock supply continues to be an issue for the repair programme with limited supply and the price being more expensive than initial estimates. Supply is possible from further afield (e.g. Matamata and Katikati), however cartage costs make that expensive.
- A combination of limited rock supply and increased levels of damage has resulted in a revised estimated repair budget for the Kaituna scheme of \$4.6 million, compared to the original estimate of \$2.9 million (an increase of \$1.7 million).
- Total recoveries received from central government (Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management) is now close to \$7 million. Have also received two insurance progress payments totalling \$3 million.

ACTION:

Provide advisory group members with the Kaituna share of Flood Repair Project recoveries.

9 Engineering update

Mark Townsend spoke to the agenda report and delivered a presentation covering the following topics:

9.1 Ford Road pump station upgrade

- A preferred option has been determined – to move the Ford Road discharge to alongside the Diagonal Drain pump station (Option1).
- Water quality was the key deciding factor, and the need to meet water quality requirements at an acceptable cost.
- Construction was planned for 2020-2021 but has been pushed out to 2021-2022 to allow time for the consenting process.

9.2 Kaituna River desilting

- Three areas have been worked on with the available budget - Bell Road, Kopuaroa and Waiari outlets.
- At the Waiari outlet there have been issues with upstream material shifting into, and filling in, the dredged area. Has been dredged to bed level twice, and within a couple of weeks was filled up again. Need to look at silt sources within the catchment.
- Dredging of the Parawhenuamea Drain outlet has proven to be impractical.
- Bank erosion, stock in waterways, run off from farmland, forestry, earthworks within the catchment, and slips within the catchment, all contribute to siltation of the outlets.
- The material being dredged is sloppy and not really useful for construction purposes. There is a group interested in getting the sediment analysed to see if it could have a use.

9.3 Ngongotahā Stream flood mitigation

- Two main flood mitigation options being considered.
- Option 1 - raise Western Road. This option focuses on containing water within the stream by raising areas of known overtopping.
- Option 4 - construct an overflow channel to the South of the stream. This option would go through the AMP showgrounds and Ngati Whakaue land. There is also a variant of this option that avoids the AMP showgrounds by working within the margins of the stream. The two variants are currently being modelled.

9.4 Bell Road Drain modelling

Mark presented modelling results for the Bell Road catchment. Various scenarios were modelled based on a five year rainfall event. The scenarios included - the existing situation, various increased pump capacities at Bell Road C and Bell Road A, without the influence of Pond H or Tara Road subdivision, and the June 2018 rainfall event. All scenarios showed an area in the lower catchment that does not meet the level of service.

A number of options and questions to be considered:

- Designated ponding areas that are temporarily flooded, with compensation provided to the landowners.
- Options for retention higher up in the catchment.
- Should the scheme spend money on increasing pump capacity that may not achieve the level of service into the future (e.g with climate change and the lowering of land (peat drying out and shrinking))? Or is it better to purchase the affected land and change the land use?
- Some hard questions and decisions required - into the future is this the best place to be farming?

Mark also advised that Council is investigating appealing the resource consent for construction of Pond G. The RMA allows for an appeal to be made if the consent application contains inaccuracies and it is felt that this is the case. Also questioning why subdivision stormwater is being pumped into an at capacity internal drainage system rather than into the river.

10 Finance report

Kirsty Brown spoke to the finance report provided in the agenda pack and gave an overview of the scheme's revenue and expenditure for the six months ending 31 December 2019.

Key points included:

- Scheme currently has an operating deficit of \$242,000 and a total deficit of \$196,000.
- Total capital expenditure is currently lower than budget, however is forecast to be overspent at year end due to increased costs associated with the April 2017 Flood Repair Project as advised in the update provided in Agenda Item 8.
- Total reserve funds available of \$4 million.
- Internal loan balance has increased by \$835,000 to \$6.4 million.
- The scheme's assets as at 1 July 2019 are valued at \$68 million. This is an increase of \$3.6 million from the 1 July 2018 valuation.

ACTION:

Provide advisory group members with the current internal interest rate on loans and a breakdown of the 2019-2020 capital spend to date.

11 Co-governance/community group updates

Barry Roderick reported that the Freshwater Futures group had a big workshop at the end of last year focusing on ground water information. There is a lot of information for the group to take in and develop an understanding of.

Nick Chater reported that Te Maru o Kaituna River Authority have released [Te Tini a Tuna Kaituna Action Plan 2019-2020](#) outlining what will be done over the next ten years to deliver on the vision, objectives and outcomes of the Kaituna River Document. The action plan includes three priority actions, two supporting actions and 18 projects. Project 1 – Lowland drains and drainage canal improvement project is relevant to scheme management and this project is being led by Regional Council.

12 General business

12.1 Review of the Floodway and Drainage Bylaws 2008

Kirsty Brown provided an update on the Floodway and Drainage Bylaw review.

Key points included:

- Informal consultation occurred in October and November last year and feedback from these sessions has been considered, and where appropriate included, in the proposed bylaws. Staff appreciated the involvement of advisory group members in the workshop and drop-in sessions held in Te Puke.
- Statement of Proposal and proposed bylaws document being presented at a Council workshop seeking approval to commence the formal consultation phase of the review.
- Proposed consultation timeline is: formal consultation 4 April to 4 May, hearings 26-28 May, deliberations 9 June, and adoption by Council 25 June.
- Formal consultation will include a mail out to affected landowners and a series of drop-in sessions around the region.

12.2 River Scheme rating classification review

Kirsty Brown advised members that a project is underway to investigate rating contribution to the Kaituna Scheme from rural, urban and new residential developments. The project will assess whether adjustments to the rating system is required.

12.3 Infrastructure insurance

In 2009 Council moved away from the LAPP (Local Authority Protection Programme) cash pool to the BOPLASS shared service insurance programme to cover the 40% local government share of infrastructure replacement costs damaged by natural disaster. 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 Kaituna scheme's infrastructure premium for this year was \$130,000.

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.

12.4 Advisory group membership – September 2020 to September 2023

Kirsty Brown advised that the current members three year appointment to the advisory group ends in September 2020. Council staff are pleased with how the advisory groups are working and are recommending that current members continue in their roles for a further

three years (to September 2023). Most of the members present indicated that they would like to continue for a further term. An email will be circulated seeking written confirmation from each of the members. There is currently a vacancy for a Rotorua urban representative so this will be advertised along with any other vacancies created by current members not choosing to continue.

12.5 Other general business

Pim de Monchy (Eastern Catchments Manager) joined the meeting and gave a quick update on the Kaituna Re-diversion Project. Official opening celebration held on 12 February. Project completed ahead of schedule and on budget. Protocols for operation and a flood management plan are in place. The gates are being opened three at a time and monitored to ensure operating as planned.

Meeting closed at 12:42 pm