**Notes of the Whakatāne-Tauranga Rivers Scheme Advisory Group meeting held at CMR1, 5 Quay Street, Whakatane,   
on Wednesday, 16 September 2020, commencing at 10am**

**Chair:** Councillor Bill Clark

**Advisory Group:** Boots McNaught, Brian Power, Fraser McGougan, Scottie McLeod

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

**Public:** Richard Holmes

**Apologies:** Councillor Toi Kai Rākau Iti, Geoff Mercer

**Absent:** Andrew Iles, Bernie Clark, Jim Finlay (replaced by Glenn Cooper), Andy Dixon (replaced by Claire Gordon), Tom Pyatt had noted he would not be attending.

# Welcome

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

Two new items were added to General Business – the Rock Procurement Strategy and Kopeopeo West Clean Up.

Kirsty Brown introduced Lynne Hind as the Acting Asset Management Coordinator who will be filling in for Jo Heath, whilst Jo is on secondment until the end of the year.

# Apologies

Apologies received as recorded above.

# Notes of previous meeting held 18 March 2020

**Resolved**

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

1. **Confirm the notes of the meeting held 18 March 2020 as a true and correct record.**

**McNaught/Power**

**CARRIED**

# Matters arising from previous meeting

* Query around action for interest rate. Kirsty confirmed this had been emailed to the Advisory Group and was 4% last year and 3% this year.

# Central Government Funded Projects

Chris Ingle presented an overview of the Central Government Funding provided to   
Bay of Plenty Regional Council.

**Key points included:**

* 75% funding for all infrastructure projects funded by the Crown, including the Whakatāne scheme’s stopbanks upgrade – approximately $3 million funding.
* Kia Kaha Whakatāne – funds must be spent by 30 November 2020, $2.1 million for region-wide projects including track clearance, pest control, coast-care enhancement work and removing problem trees alongside waterways. Over 70 jobs created short-term, focus on those unemployed due to Covid-19.
* DoC Jobs for Nature – announced 15 September 2020. Significant new DoC funding for Raukumaras and Kaimais.

**Discussion:**

* Discussion around money targeting small areas, was it better to do work across larger areas? Confirmation this wouldn’t see a benefit if spread too thinly. Focus Catchments are the priority for the next three years.
* Questions around pest control product and cost for those who want to do it themselves - could Regional Council source a large amount and offer it to the public at a reduced rate? May be a question for DOC as they have a predator control focus and could possibly buy in bulk and make it available to volunteer groups.
* Is there a cheaper way to get trees to plant on private land, are there enough trees around? One Billion Trees funding can subsidise some of our trees.

***Attendance:*** *Paula Chapman arrived.*

# Engineering Update

**Key points included:**

* Mark spoke to his report and gave the Engineering presentation.
* Capacity Review – estimated finish date is end of 2020.
* Whakatāne Urban Stopbank Raising and Seepage Control – working with Whakatāne District Council and Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Awa.
* Diagram shown of seepage illustrating the three stages that can occur to a stopbank in a flood event – 1) water seeps slowly out onto the ground surface, 2) pressure domes can be created where the top soil lifts off the silt and forms a blister on the ground surface; water seeps through the lifted grass layer, 3) concentrated seepage points that ‘boil’ sand out with them, the washing out of sand from the stopbank foundations can lead to stopbank failure.
* Possible project solutions:
  + Sheet piles driven into the stopbank to lengthen the seepage path in areas with problems
  + Raising the stopbanks
  + Upstream detention
  + Moving the floodwalls to the landward side and raising them between 650-850 mm in all areas which currently have floodwalls
  + Increasing height of the existing stopbank in areas without floodwalls, e.g. Mataatua Reserve
* Flood hydrograph – climate change is predicting increased flood flows in the river.
* Mark went through River Scheme Sustainability Project Plan for the Whakatāne-Tauranga scheme.

**Discussion:**

* Discussion around levels of service and how 1% AEP is formulated. Mark described 1% AEP definition to the group.
* Mark proposed high level concepts for future flood management. Interested in Advisory Group feedback on retaining water on farm land for longer. Philosophy is that during a major flood if water is ponding on land for more than three days and killing the grass, does it matter if it has ponded for four or five days? Holding water back will reduce the peak flow downstream and therefore reduce the need to undertake expensive upgrades to infrastructure downstream. Feedback should be sent to Mark/Lynne with an update to be given at the March 2021 meeting.

# Gravel Management

Mark Townsend and Paula Chapman spoke to the Gravel Extraction report, which was taken as read.

**Key points included:**

* River health looked at as a whole, extractions allocated for the Whakatane and Tauranga rivers in the past two years were for river management purposes.
* Central Freight Lines Ltd (CFL) applied for consent to extract up to 20,000m3 pa from the Whakatāne River. Submissions closed 28 August with five submissions received. Early November will be the hearing date. All submitters have been notified directly, and publicly notified via Whakatane Beacon, BOPRC Councillors website and emails to the Advisory Group members.

**Discussion:**

* Richard Holmes was impressed with NERMN (Natural Environmental Regional Monitoring Network) findings at beginning of gravel management report. Mark Townsend offered to send copy of information relating to NERMN report to Richard.

***ACTION:***

***Mark to send information to Richard Holmes relating to NERMN report recommendations for gravel management.***

# Operations Update

Bruce Crabbe spoke to the Operations report and Geoff Stone gave a presentation.

**Key points included:**

* Geotech and stopbank investigations in the area discussed.
* Whitebait habitat construction and native planting in coastal estuarine environment.
* Orini Floodgate Structure – Beca to do an engineering report for Contech to repair concrete and steel reinforcing.
* Channel cut and erosion repairs – Tauranga River.
* Stopbank repairs at Te Rahu Canal to reinstate stopbank and remove trees.
* Tree removal on stopbanks at Trident High School – no allowance in this year’s budget, but being looked at long-term.
* Bruce Crabbe spoke about the wilding tree removal funded by the Kia Kaha Whakatāne Project. There has been tree clearing at Walter Reid Reserve. Whakatāne District Council have agreed to do ongoing maintenance, following initial knock-down.
* Inanga video played – Bruce Crabbe filmed discussing the new inanga habitat created above the bridge on the Whakatāne River berm. Wherever Rivers and Drainage do maintenance today they look for opportunities to create native fish habitats.

**Discussion:**

* Discussion around how we are making our waterways fish friendly.
* Advisory Group members keen to help land management team and Estuary Group around clean up and weeds. Could there be a Coordinator for the Catchment Group? Charles and Fraser to look into this idea with Bay of Plenty Regional Council funding.

***ACTION:***

***To investigate providing funding to take on a Catchment Care Coordinator for the Whakatane River Catchment.***

***McGougan/McNaught CARRIED***

# April 2017 Flood Repair Project Update

Paula Chapman spoke to the report provided in the agenda pack and delivered a presentation showing progress with the April 2017 Flood Repair Project.

**Key points included:**

* In Year Four of the flood repair project.
* As at 31 August 2020, 77 sites have been completed or are no longer required for the Whakatāne-Tauranga Rivers Scheme.
* 31 sites remain.
* There was an original works estimate of just over $11.5 million. This is now estimated to be less, at $9.95 million.
* Expenditure to date has been $6.15 million with $2.82 million in recoveries.
* Looking at low priority sites to see if they still need to be done, or have they self-healed.
* Expected progress in the next six months is to complete 90% of the Whakatane-Tauranga Rivers Scheme works including Reach 1 - river mouth to Valley Road recorder, Reach 2 - Valley Road recorder to Pekatahi Bridge, Reach 3 - Pekatahi Bridge to Ruatoki Bridge, Reach 5 - Tauranga River; and possibly Reach 4 works.
* It is also envisaged that NEMA Claim 13 will be drafted and the material damage claim will be concluded (pump stations).

**Discussion:**

* Advisory Group discussed concerns around rock supply. Paula went through Rock Procurement Plan - comprehensive Procurement Plan ready to be signed off in October/November 2020. Will be talking to many rock suppliers and testing the Procurement Plan with them.

# River Scheme Planning (AMP and LTP)

Hemi Barsdell presented the River Scheme Planning update.

**Key dates:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **6 October 2020** | Council review of draft Long Term Plan (LTP) 2021-2031 and AMP budgets |
| **10-11 November 2020** | Second Council review of draft Long Term Plan (LTP) 2021-2031 budgets and AMP documents |
| **December 2020** | AMPs and draft LTP 2021-2031 documents adopted by Council for review by Audit NZ |
| **February – May 2021** | LTP consultation, submissions, hearings |
| **March 2021** | Advisory Group meeting |
| **June 2021** | LTP approved |

**Key points included:**

* Audit NZ will be doing an audit in December 2020.
* Baseline maintenance and operations budgets will increase due mostly to an increase in the number of assets.
* The capital budget shared during the Long Term Plan (LTP) workshop with the Whakatāne-Tauranga Rivers Scheme Advisory Group on 21 August 2020, is the same.

**Discussion:**

* Insurance and depreciation were deemed two of the bigger costs, leading to a budget increase.
* More assets means more insurance costs. Need to have a strategic look at what is required and what communities can afford.

# Finance Report

Kirsty Brown spoke to the finance report for the 12 months ending 30 June 2020:

* Higher revenue and lower operational expenditure has resulted in a favourable operational position of $1.4 million.
* Capital revenue was higher than budget due to additional recoveries received for the April 2017 Flood Repair project (insurance and NEMA claims).
* Lower capital expenditure due to COVID-19 lockdown and lack of available rock.
* Total reserve funds available of $3.4 million.
* Internal loan balance of $7.4 million.
* Annual 2020 valuation is currently underway.

# Co-governance / community group updates

* Discussion with Charles Harley around idea for a Catchment Care Coordinator. Recommends Advisory Group consider what they want the outcome to be and what they would like to achieve from it.

# General business

## Infrastructure insurance

Kirsty presented an overview of the infrastructure insurance. Central government pays up to 60% of the repair costs for essential infrastructure to local authorities, conditional on us showing we can meet the remaining 40% through other means.

On 30 July 2020 a workshop was held between Council staff and Aon representatives. Aon will now be carrying out a frequency loss assessment for us and in turn we have created a video to show how the Bay of Plenty river and drainage area has been hit with recent disasters and what systems we have in place to prepare for this. As part of the loss assessment, Aon will identify and analyse the loss exposures for rivers and drainage assets and examine the feasibility of self-insurance as a cost-effective option. Other ways to manage risk will also be examined, e.g. capacity to borrow to fund any loss or damage.

As our insurance is obtained on the London market it was noted that due to the impact of Covid-19 on this market, our insurance premiums may go up by 15 percent.

The Whakatāne-Tauranga scheme’s infrastructure premium for this year was $134,000.

A video has been created by Bay of Plenty Regional Council to show what systems we have in place within Rivers and Drainage and how prepared we are for flood protection, as part of the information package for Aon. The video was shown to the Advisory Group.

## Review of the Floodway and Drainage Bylaw

The Flood Protection and Drainage Bylaws are regulations that safeguard flood protection and land drainage assets from third party damage or misuse. The bylaws are reviewed to ensure they are still fit-for-purpose and informed by the latest science and flood information.

Due to Covid-19, deliberation and adoption timeframes were postponed until the following dates:

* Hearings – 26 August 2020
* Deliberations – 30 September 2020
* Adoption – 29 October 2020

Submissions closed 28 April 2020 with a total of 43 submissions received. Fifteen organisations and individuals advised they would like to be heard at the hearing.

Further information on the proposed Flood Protection and Drainage Bylaws 2020 can be found on our website at <https://www.boprc.govt.nz/our-projects/flood-protection-and-drainage-bylaw-review>

## Advisory group membership – September 2020 to September 2023

The first three-year term for Advisory Group membership was due to finish this month (September 2020). Tom Pyatt resigned from the Whakatane-Tauranga Advisory Group, however as he was one of three urban representatives and only two were required; no new vacancy was created by his resignation.

## Other general business

* Bruce Crabbe gave an overview of the Kopeopeo Canal contamination situation in the section west (upstream) of SH30. Regional Council had no plans to undertake remediation works at this time, but monitoring was continuing and insitu treatment options were being investigated. Rating of the wetted canal area was raised by Brian Power. Bruce Crabbe is following up on this.
* The Rock Procurement Strategy had already been covered by Paula Chapman in the Flood Repair section of this meeting.

Hemi Barsdell closed the meeting with a karakia.

**Meeting closed at 1:20 pm**