

The Chairman and Councillors

Environmental Enhancement Fund Subcommittee

NOTICE IS GIVEN that a meeting of the **Environmental Enhancement Fund Subcommittee** will be held in **The Meeting Room, Bay of Plenty Regional Council, 6 Rata Street, Mount Maunganui** on:

EMBARGOED

Until 2 working days before meeting on:

Thursday, 17 February 2011

commencing at 10.30 a.m.

Bill Bayfield
Chief Executive

11 February 2011



Environmental Enhancement Fund Subcommittee – Terms of Reference

Delegated Function

To oversee the administration of the Council's Environmental Enhancement Fund including approving funding applications.

Membership

Five Councillors.

Term of the Committee

For the period of the 2010/2013 Triennium unless discharged earlier by the Parent Committee or the Regional Council.

Specific Responsibilities and Delegated Authority

The Environmental Enhancement Fund Subcommittee is delegated the power of authority to:

- 1 Approve and allocate grants of \$5,000 or more as provided for annually in the Ten Year Plan and Annual Plan and any unspent funds from the previous financial year.
- 2 Receive reports on outcomes as a result of allocating funds including grants under \$5,000.
- 3 Review the Environmental Enhancement Fund Policy Manual annually and recommend alterations if necessary.

Note:

The Environmental Enhancement Fund Subcommittee reports to the Operational Monitoring and Regulation Committee.

Public Forum

1. A period of up to 15 minutes shall be set aside near the beginning of the meeting to enable members of the public to make statements about any matter on the agenda of that meeting which is open to the public, but excluding any matter on which comment could prejudice any specified statutory process the council is required to follow.
2. The time allowed for each speaker will normally be up to 5 minutes but will be up to the discretion of the chair. A maximum of 3 public participants will be allowed per meeting.
3. No statements by public participants to the Council shall be allowed unless a written, electronic or oral application has been received by the Chief Executive (Governance Team) by 12.00 noon of the working day prior to the meeting and the Chair's approval has subsequently been obtained. The application shall include the following:
 - name of participant;
 - organisation represented (if any);
 - meeting at which they wish to participate; and matter on the agenda to be addressed.
4. Members of the meeting may put questions to any public participants, relevant to the matter being raised through the chair. Any questions must be asked and answered within the time period given to a public participant. The chair shall determine the number of questions.

Committee Membership

Chairman:	I Noble
Councillors:	R Bennett, N Oppatt, P Sherry, M Whitaker
Secretary:	L Butt

Recommendations in reports are not to be construed as Council policy until adopted by Council.

Agenda

1 **Apologies**

2 **General Business and Tabled Items**

Items not on the agenda for the meeting require a resolution under section 46A of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 stating the reasons why the item was not on the agenda and why it cannot be delayed until a subsequent meeting.

3 **Report**

3.1 **Environmental Enhancement Fund (EEF) Policy Review**

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The EEF Policy document - March 2010, is appended to the report

4 **Consideration of General Business**

Report

File Reference: 1.00398
Significance of Decision: Low



Report To: Environmental Enhancement Fund Subcommittee
Meeting Date: 17 February 2011
Report From: Bronwyn Campbell, Community Relations Manager

Environmental Enhancement Fund Policy Review

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to present the Environmental Enhancement Fund Subcommittee with suggested annual policy changes and options within the Environmental Enhancement Fund Policy 2011.

The purpose of the Environmental Enhancement Fund Policy is to support the management and operation of the Environmental Enhancement Fund.

1 Recommendations

That the Environmental Enhancement Fund Subcommittee under its delegated authority:

- 1 Receives the report, '*Environmental Enhancement Fund Policy Review*'.**
- 2 Confirms that the significance of the decision has been assessed as LOW, and under Section 79 of the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA) confirms that in light of the level of significance of the decision it does not require: (a) Further identification and assessment of different options under section 77 LGA; (b) Further investigation or consideration of community views under section 78 LGA; (c) Any further written record of the manner in which section 77 and section 78 matters have been addressed.**

2 Introduction

The Environmental Enhancement Fund (EEF) was established in 2000 as a proactive way for the Bay of Plenty Regional Council to work with the communities for a better environment. To date nearly \$7 million has been distributed to more than 400 environmental enhancement projects within the region.

The EEF is distributed to community groups through an annual funding round for projects seeking more than \$5,000 and throughout the year for projects seeking less than \$5,000. The EEF Subcommittee discusses and makes decisions on the annual funding round applications for more than \$5,000, while staff are delegated to make decisions on projects seeking less than \$5,000.

3 Background

The EEF Subcommittee met on Thursday 25 February 2010 to discuss changes, definitions and clarifications within the EEF policy. The EEF Subcommittee consisted of Cr Malcolm Whitaker (Chairman) and Cr Raewyn Bennett with apologies from Cr Nees and Cr Ford.

The EEF policy was updated with changes discussed and approved in the meeting with a copy of the updated EEF policy sent to the Subcommittee for confirmation of changes. The EEF policy was submitted to the Regulation, Monitoring & Operations (RMO) Committee on Tuesday 23 March 2010 for consideration and approval of changes to the policy and then reported to the Policy & Planning Committee.

Below are some of the items that were discussed and agreed on from the EEF Subcommittee meeting held Thursday 25 February 2010 as shown in Table 1.

Policy Aspect	Decision	Action undertaken	Reference
Funding amount	The maximum amount one group can apply for is \$30,000 (10 percent of the total fund)	Updated decision in the EEF policy and all promotional material relevant to the EEF.	Page 9 – Project eligibility
Applications from project groups	One application per applicant per year	Updated in the EEF policy and all promotional material relevant to the EEF.	Page 7 – Eligibility
Infrastructures	Clarify what will be funded	Clearer definitions around infrastructure have been updated in the policy.	Page 9 – Project eligibility (Aspects of projects that we will fund) Page 10 – Project eligibility (Aspects of projects that we will not fund)
Transport costs	Clarify what transport costs will be funded	Clearer definitions around transport costs have been updated in the policy.	Page 9 – Project eligibility (Aspects of projects that we will fund) Page 10 – Project eligibility (Aspects of projects that we will not fund)
Plant costs	Specify what plants will be funded and to what amount	Native plants only, which will be limited to a cost of \$2.50 per plant with	Page 9 – Project eligibility (Aspects of projects that we will fund)

		discretion of the EEF Subcommittee to fund plants to a higher amount.	
Successful application rate	Tightening of the assessment criteria to result in a higher ratio of approved applications	Bay of Plenty Regional Council staff will work with applicants to assist them with their applications to help them meet the Screening criteria.	Page 15 – Assessment process and funding decisions 1.3
Funding and viability	Clarify funding options and viability	Clearer definitions around partial funding and the viability of a project updated in the policy.	Page 17 – Assessment process and funding decisions 1.5
Funding decisions	Council's decisions on funding are final and there is no process for an unsuccessful applicant to appeal the decision.	Updated decision in the EEF policy and all promotional material relevant to the EEF.	Page 17 – Assessment process and funding decisions 1.6
Resource consent vs mitigation works	Follow up with the Consents Team about resource consent verse mitigation works	Clearer definitions around resource consent verse mitigation works is updated in the policy.	Page 10 Project eligibility (Aspects of projects that we will not fund)

Discussed changes and options

Policy Aspect	Discussion	Option	Reference
Labour costs (Consultants/Project Coordinator)	Costs for this labour will only be up to 10 percent of the total approved funding	Option – costs for this labour will only be between 10-20 percent of the total approved funding.	Page 9 – Project eligibility (Aspects of projects that we will fund) Page 10 – Project eligibility (Aspects of projects that we will not fund)

Capital items	Including, but not limited to, any type of vehicles, GPS units, garden tools, spray equipment, gazebos, picnic tables, BBQ, recycling sheds and materials, consumables and supporting sausage sizzles.	Option – as above “These decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis and will depend on the other aspects of the project.”	Page 10 – Project eligibility (Aspects of projects that we will not fund)
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4 Discussion

During the EEF Subcommittee Final Decisions meeting held on Wednesday 23 June 2010, the following points were raised and decisions were made;

- To ensure that there was a level of consistency across all personnel (Project Officers) when assessing and scoring an EEF application.
 - Decision: The EEF team will look at conducting Project Officer workshops before the end of the year to help create a more consistent approach to scoring.
 - **Outcome: The EEF team completed a successful Project Officers Workshop on Wednesday 17 November 2010. Project Officers are staff within the Bay of Plenty Regional Council and technical support for project groups.**
- The need to include more information from the Project Officers comments into the Assessment Report.
 - *Decision: This will be followed up with the IT Team to see if the comments can be included in the EEF database and run as part of the decision-making reports.*
 - **Outcome: This is not possible with the set up of the EEF database as it is not part of the reporting function. Another solution will have to support this action.**
- That project coordinators costs be raised from 10 percent to between 10 percent and 20 percent.
 - **Outcome: This action has been updated in the policy and noted above.**
- Areas that need more definition were identified to assist with the funding process.
 - *Materials costs – policy costs related to herbicide, spraying costs and related costs per metre for materials and labour.*
 - **Outcome: A draft material cost guideline will be available for comment at the EEF Subcommittee Policy Review Meeting.**

5 **He Matapuna Akoranga a Hawea Vercoe – Hawea Vercoe Commemoration Fund**

On 4 February 2010, Council approved the establishment of the He Matapuna Akoranga a Hawea Vercoe – a memorial fund established to honour the late Councillor Hawea Vercoe. Hawea Vercoe was the Principal of Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Te Rotoiti. He was particularly passionate about Māori education and the environment. It is therefore fitting that this initiative will help fund projects that have a positive impact on environmental values and culture.

The fund will provide up to \$20,000 in funding to assist environmental projects from Kura Kaupapa Māori, bilingual schools and Kohanga Reo. Schools will be able to apply for up to \$5000 for any one project per year through this funding scheme.

The commemoration fund will be run through the Environmental Enhancement Fund. It will provide financial support to promote, enhance or protect the natural, historical or cultural character of the Bay of Plenty's environment.

He Matapuna Akoranga a Hawea Vercoe fund will be reported to the Operations, Monitoring & Regulations Committee (OMR) and the Māori Committee listing successful and unsuccessful applicants that will be funded.

6 **Financial Implications**

Current Budget

There is currently \$187,000 that has been allocated to projects in the 2010/2011 funding round, and an additional \$100,000 for under \$5000 projects. If further funds are required for under \$5000 projects, then the EEF team will call a meeting of the EEF Subcommittee to seek a decision.

Future Implications

Council proposed to spend up to \$370,000 in grants to successful Environmental Enhancement Fund applicants this year, which is the \$300,000 provided annually through the Ten Year Plan as well as any unspent funds from the previous financial year. This amount does not include the administration costs of running the fund.

Additionally, an allocation of \$20,000 of the agreed EEF budget for the 2011/2012 year will be allocated to the He Matapuna Akoranga a Hawea Vercoe fund established in honour of the late Councillor Hawea Vercoe. These funds will be allocated through the annual funding round.

Ten Year / Annual Plan Implications

There are no Ten Year Plan or Annual Plan implications.

Sandy Hohepa
Environmental Enhancement Fund Officer

for Community Relations Manager

10 February 2011

Environmental Enhancement Fund Policy March 2010

environmental enhancement fund
Te Putea Hapai i te Taiao ki te Moana a Toi

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Introduction and background

1.1 Introduction

Promoting, enhancing and protecting the environment in the Bay of Plenty can be achieved using many different methods. These methods include regulation, education, awareness, facilitation, enforcement and incentives. Bay of Plenty Regional Council believes that a great deal of community goodwill exists towards the environment and its improvement. People living in the Bay of Plenty often cite the environment as a key reason for their decision to live here.

Discussions about how best to support community initiatives resulted in the establishment of the Environmental Enhancement Fund (EEF) in 2000/2001.

In the 2001/2002 Annual Plan funding for community groups was extended to \$500,000 and a separate \$750,000 district council component fund was also established. In the 2003/2004 funding round a total of \$900,000 was split between the community and the councils. A plus/minus of 15 percent gave a level of flexibility depending on which group had projects to fund.

In 2004/2005, the district council fund was disestablished and all groups and organisations applied to one fund with an allocation of \$450,000. Bay of Plenty Regional Council's Long-Term Council Community Plan 2006-2016 confirmed this funding.

Bay of Plenty Regional Council's Long Term Council Community Plan 2009-2019 confirmed funding at \$300,000 per year and government agencies and city and district councils were no longer eligible to apply to this fund.

In 2009 a five-year audit was carried out on completed projects. The key findings of this audit were:

- 91.5 percent of completed projects were either as successful as they were at completion of the project or had been improved since EEF funding has finalised; and
- at 24.7 percent Whakatāne had the highest proportion of completed EEF projects and Kawerau the lowest proportion at 5.7 percent.

The EEF is available to groups seeking funding for significant projects through a once a year funding round or for smaller projects (under \$5000) throughout the year.

The purpose of this policy is to support the management and operation of the EEF.

1.2 He Matapuna Akoranga a Hawea Vercoe – Hawea Vercoe Commemoration Fund

On 4 February 2010, Council approved the establishment of the He Matapuna Akoranga a Hawea Vercoe – a memorial fund established to honour the late Councillor Hawea Vercoe. Hawea Vercoe was the Principal of Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Te Rotoiti. He was particularly passionate about Māori education and the environment. It is therefore fitting that this initiative will help fund projects that have a positive impact on environmental values and culture.

The fund will provide up to \$20,000 in funding to assist environmental projects from Kura Kaupapa Māori, bilingual schools and Kohanga Reo. Schools will be able to apply for up to \$5000 for any one project per year through this funding scheme.

The commemoration fund will be run through the Environmental Enhancement Fund, the existing Regional Council community grant scheme. It will provide financial support to promote, enhance or protect the natural, historical or cultural character of the Bay of Plenty's environment.

The main purpose of the fund is to provide financial support to Kura Kaupapa Māori, Kohanga Reo or bilingual schools for activities or projects which promote, enhance or protect:

- the natural, historical or cultural character of;
- public access to;
- and/or public understanding of the Bay of Plenty's environment (coast, wetlands, lakes, rivers and their margins, historic and cultural features, outstanding natural features and landscapes and indigenous flora).

He Matapuna Akoranga a Hawea Vercoe fund will be reported to the Operations, Monitoring & Regulations Committee (OMR) and the Māori Committee listing successful and unsuccessful applicants that will be funded.

Aims and purpose

Bay of Plenty Regional Council's EEF aims to provide seed funding for community-based projects that:

- Improve the environment;
- Raise environmental awareness; and
- Use the enthusiasm and skills of the community.

The purpose of the fund is to assist Bay of Plenty organisations and community groups – by providing financial support for activities and projects, which have a primary purpose of directly promoting, enhancing or protecting:

- the natural or historic (including cultural) character of;
- public access to; and/or
- public understanding of;

the Bay of Plenty's environment including coast, wetlands, lakes, rivers and their margins, historic (and cultural) heritage features, outstanding natural features and landscapes, indigenous plants and animals and natural habitats.

Activities and projects that qualify for funding will be consistent with Bay of Plenty Regional Council's mission statement and statutory role and the Regional Community Outcomes.

Personnel structure

Project Manager

Environmental Enhancement Fund Officer

Review policy and implement ongoing improvements for EEF, liaise with project groups and general public, assess and screen projects, and Project Officer training and support.

Finance Team

Coordinate payments to successful community projects.

*GM Corporate Services
Community Relations
Manager
EEF Officer*

Administration Team

Coordinate and administer all applications, prepare monitoring reports and liaise with community groups. Liaise with Project Officers and EEF Subcommittee. All invoicing and administration

*EEF Officer
Community Relations
Officer*

Project Officers (POs)

Staff members provide technical advice and support to projects where required. They are the first port of call in the organisation for the community groups.

*Various staff as required
according to projects
funded.*

Community Relations Manager

Review screening and assessment; oversee recommendations to EEF Subcommittee. Review recommendations on under \$5000 applications throughout the year.

Community Relations Manager

GM Corporate Services

Provide strategic input to annual applications and EEF Policy. Approval for recommendations to EEF Subcommittee.

EEF Sub Committee

Make final funding decisions.

Four Councillors appointed triennially by Council's Regulation, Operations and Monitoring Committee have the delegated authority to make final decisions on funding.

Eligibility

Many people are eligible to apply for funding through the Environmental Enhancement Fund (EEF). They include:

- Individuals;
- Community groups;
- Iwi/hapu;
- Incorporated societies;
- Community trusts;
- Resident and ratepayer groups;
- Landowner groups;
- Educational institutions; and
- Businesses and industries.

People and groups that can not apply to this fund are:

- Central Government departments and agencies or city and district councils. (Applications from community groups with these agencies as partners or co-funders are encouraged. However, the lead agency must clearly be the community group). Examples of these groups include: Department of Conservation, Tauranga City Council, Western Bay of Plenty District Council, Whakatane District Council, Opotiki District Council, Kawerau District Council, Rotorua District Council, SCION, Ministry of Social Development, and Fish and Game;
- Groups not based within the Bay of Plenty Regional Council's legal boundaries;
- Landcare, Coastcare and Estuary Care and other groups that are funded through other Bay of Plenty Regional Council programmes or Central Government programmes.

A group can only lodge one application per funding round year (this is inclusive of both under \$5000 funding and over \$5000 funding).

A group will only be funded for three consecutive years on a project, however groups can seek funding on a different project. We will only agree to one year of funding on a multiple year project as part of any funding round.

Project eligibility

1.1 Aspects of projects that we will fund

Applications only up to \$30,000.

Groups that encourage and provide full and free public access to the project site and provide a broader environmental gain on the project site.

Projects/activities within Bay of Plenty Regional Council's legal boundaries and areas of responsibility.

Infrastructure where environmental enhancement outcomes of the project can not be achieved without the provision of these. Infrastructure items that may be funded include interpretation signs, sand ladders, boardwalks, rails and steps, tracks, composting toilet, rainwater and grey water tanks and culverts, shade-houses and fencing, but these will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will depend on other aspects of the project.

Native plants only, which will be limited to a cost of \$2.50 per plant with discretion of the EEF Subcommittee to fund plants to a higher amounts. This price is a guide only as it is accepted that some projects may require more expensive plants. These decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis and will depend on other aspects of the project.

Labour costs:

- Skilled worker/contractor where specialised experience/equipment including pesticide/herbicide sprayer, chainsaw operator, heavy machinery operator is required to complete the project; and
- Consultant/project coordinator who will engage the community and ensure project viability - costs for this labour will only be up to 10 percent of the total approved funding.

Transport costs, but only up to 10 percent of the total approved funding. The EEF Subcommittee may provide funding above this level, but it will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will depend on other aspects of the project.

Funding may be provided for project plans where there is clearly associated implementation of the project as part of the application. Where possible project plans will be developed with the assistance of Bay of Plenty Regional Council staff.

1.2 Aspects of projects that we will not fund

- Projects receiving funding from other Bay of Plenty Regional Council programmes.
- Projects more appropriately funded through other Bay of Plenty Regional Council programmes.
- Costs of gaining a resource consent.
- Projects that require a resource consent, but have not received one at the date of the close of the funding round.
- Any works/activities that are required as conditions of a resource consent.
- Any works/activities required as mitigation as part of a resource consent.
- Research projects and studies including feasibility studies, landscaping plans and action plans.
- Projects that result in or contribute to an organisation/group making commercial gain through the charging of an entry fee.
- Capital items including, but not limited to, any type of vehicles, GPS units, garden tools, spray equipment, gazebos, picnic tables, BBQ, recycling sheds and materials, consumables and supporting sausage sizzles.
- Infrastructure items including new buildings or significant renovations where it doesn't link to one of our wellbeings, fencing that should be provided under the Clean Streams Accord or another agreement, building of roads or bridges. These are general guidelines, but will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will depend on other aspects of the project.
- Incomplete applications or ones that do not provide enough information or the required information.
- Activities conducted prior to Bay of Plenty Regional Council receiving signed contracts (retrospective funding).
- Labour costs (except as previously stated).
- Transport costs (except as previously stated).
- Landscaping and beautification projects that do not have appropriate environmental outcome.

Protecting the Fund's investment

Each year as part of Bay of Plenty Regional Council's Annual Plan process, Council will determine the amount, if any, that will be budgeted for the Environmental Enhancement Fund (EEF). It is set at \$300,000 annually in our Ten Year Plan 2009-2019.

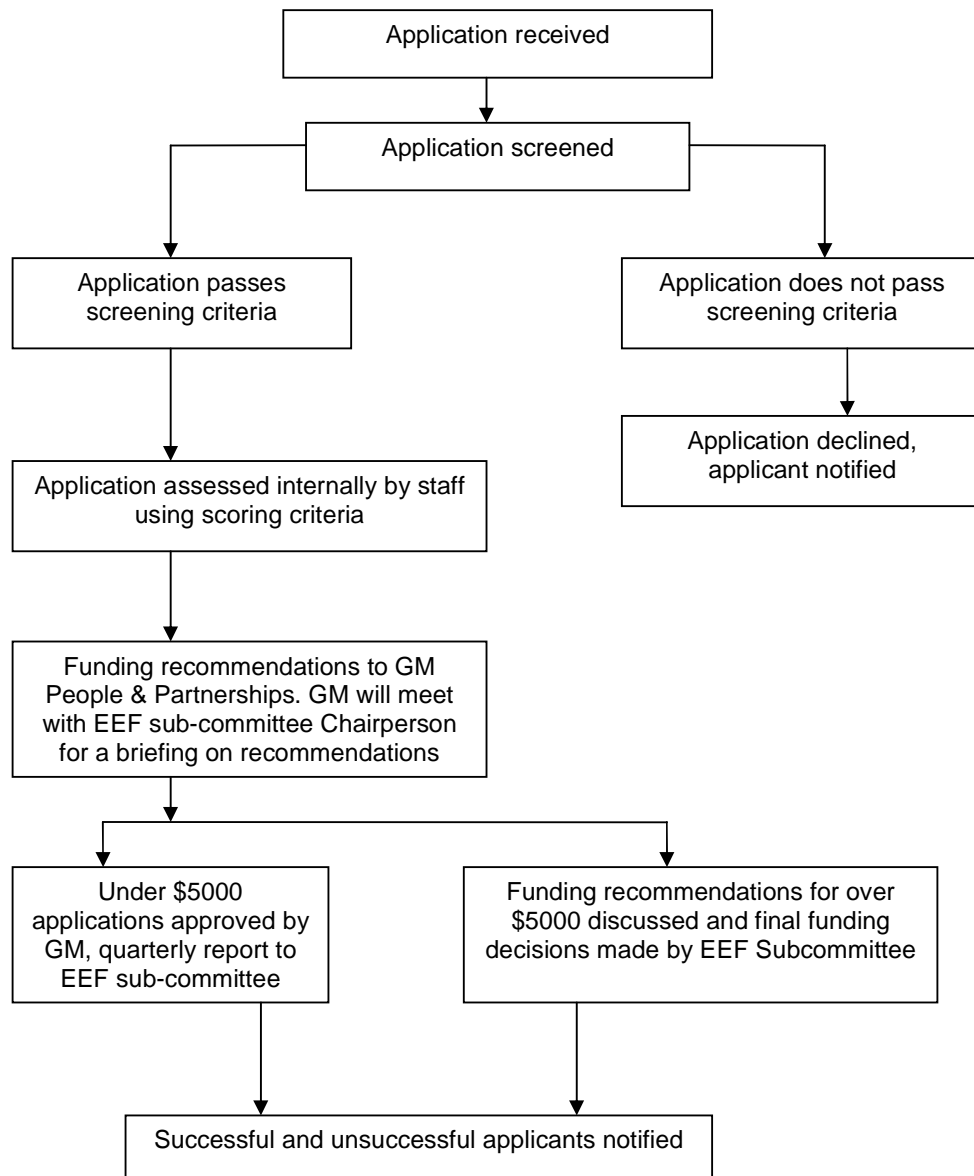
Funding is available through an annual funding round for applications requesting more than \$5,000. Applications for less than \$5000 can be submitted at any time throughout the year.

It is preferable that groups who have funding approved take those funds up during the financial year when they are approved. However Council understands that this is not always possible due to a variety of circumstances. Therefore any approved funding not taken up by a group during a financial year or funding that is withdrawn from a group will be rolled over within EEF. These funds will then be made available for re-allocation and distribution in subsequent year(s).

Groups can only apply to the EEF for three consecutive years to complete a project. The EEF will only accept one application, irrelevant of the amount of funding requested, from any group or individual during a financial year.

Every three years Council will undertake an audit to determine the gains made to the environment short-term to medium-term through projects undertaken with EEF assistance. Council will also review processes associated with the fund on a three-yearly basis (in line with the review of the Ten Year Plan) to ensure the fund is still relevant and useful for the community. This review will involve feedback from successful fund applicants and unsuccessful fund applicants with an aim to continuing to streamline the EEF process.

Assessment process



Assessment process and funding decisions

1.3 Introduction

Applications to the EEF are assessed through a two-step internal staff process. Step one is known as Screening and the second step is known as assessment. Any application that does not meet the requirements of step one, will not proceed to step two.

Bay of Plenty Regional Council staff will work with applicants to assist them with their applications to help them meet the Screening criteria.

The Assessment involves technical officers (Project Officers) throughout the Council providing feedback on the application and applicant group. Project Officers score the application using the Assessment criteria. Often Project Officers are previously aware of the project or the group and may have advised them on aspects of their application or encouraged them to apply to the EEF. This does not mean that the application will automatically receive funding as every one needs to be assessed and ranked accordingly.

As part of the Assessment each application will be reviewed by Environment Bay of Plenty's consents team and, when appropriate, an archaeological consultant.

1.4 Step one (Screening)

Applicants will be assessed on the following criteria:

- Our group is based in the Bay of Plenty.
- Our project will be carried out within the Bay of Plenty and is consistent with Bay of Plenty Regional Council's responsibilities.
- Our project is consistent with the aims and purpose of the fund as outlined in the application folder.
- We agree to sign a contract with Bay of Plenty Regional Council and comply with its conditions before any funding is released.
- We agree to regularly monitor the project and to report its progress and outcomes to Bay of Plenty Regional Council every 12 months and/or at completion.
- We are committed to completing the project and will maintain any structures or works created.
- We agree that Bay of Plenty Regional Council can refer to the project in promotional material.
- Bay of Plenty Regional Council received the application by the fund closing date.

- We are not a government agency or district or city council.
- Each year the fund looks at encouraging work in key target areas that align with our regional community outcomes (does your project align to any of these?).
- Are the group already receiving funding from Bay of Plenty Regional Council or would the project be more appropriately funded through a different Bay of Plenty Regional Council funding programme? Yes = does not proceed through screening.
- Is the work being undertaken by Bay of Plenty Regional Council in a programme where funding is set aside in the Annual Plan? Yes = does not proceed through screening.
- Is the group applying for more than 10 percent of the entire fund? Yes = does not proceed through screening.

1.5 **Step two (Assessment)**

Applicants will be assessed on the following criteria. The maximum score for each criteria is stated below.

Environmental Enhancement (20)

The extent to which the proposal states that it will enhance the Bay of Plenty's natural environment, (coast, wetlands, lakes, rivers and their margins, historic (and cultural) heritage features, outstanding natural features and landscapes, indigenous plants, animals and their habitat) for the benefit of present and future generations.

Community Awareness (10)

The extent to which the proposal states that it will heighten community knowledge, create awareness and promote active involvement in environmental issues.

Community Participation (10)

The extent to which the proposal states community involvement and community participation will be used to implement the project.

Target Areas (10)

Projects contributing to the enhancement of one or more of the stated target areas for the year in which they apply. Target areas are recommended annually by Council's EEF Subcommittee and agreed by Council's Regulations, Monitoring and Operations Committee. The target areas align with key areas that Bay of Plenty Regional Council is working towards in its current Ten Year Plan.

Innovation (5)

The extent to which the proposal states that it will develop and trial new methods in environmental management.

First time or previously unsuccessful applicants (2)

The applicant is a first time applicant or previously unsuccessful applicant.

History with EEF (-4)

A group has previously received funding through EEF, but has failed to complete reports, complete the project or through the audit process is found to have not maintained the project site.

Partial funding and therefore viability

At times the EEF Subcommittee has decided to partially fund certain projects. In some cases this has made the project unviable. To assist the Subcommittee to make a more informed decision, Project Officers will assess whether a project is viable with only partially funding. Project Officers will provide a high, medium or low assessment – high being it can proceed with partial funding through to low being that it is unviable with partial funding.

There is an opportunity to amend funding sought for the projects based on appropriateness of funding use, cost of labour, materials, and transport, unbudgeted items, for example, archaeological checks and Growsafe training.

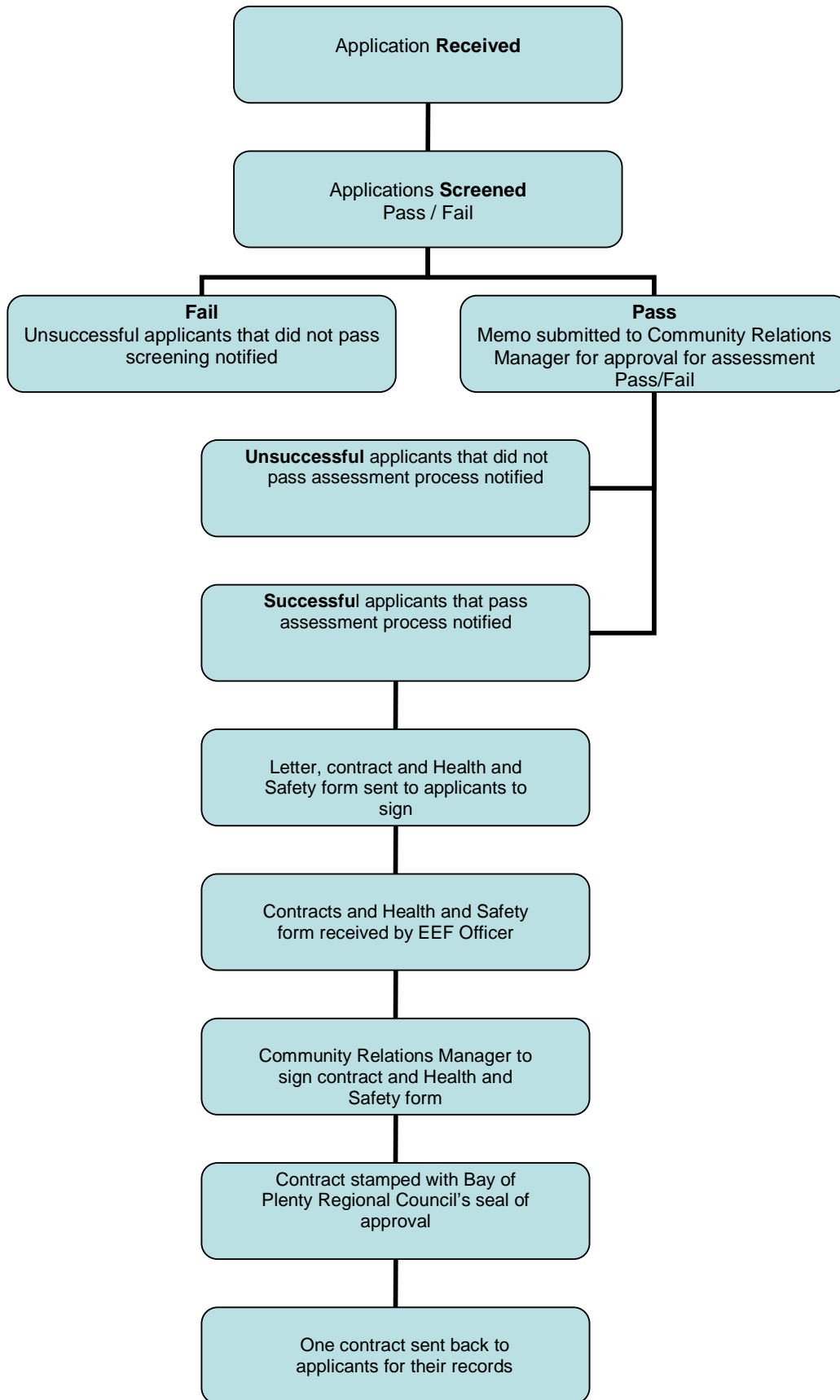
1.6 **Funding decisions**

For the annual funding round, after all applications have been processed a report is presented to the EEF Subcommittee. This report outlines screening and assessment and makes recommendations to the Subcommittee for funding decisions. At a meeting of the Subcommittee, councillors, with support from staff, decide which applications will be funded and to what levels. These decisions are then reported to the appropriate Council Committee at the next possible meeting.

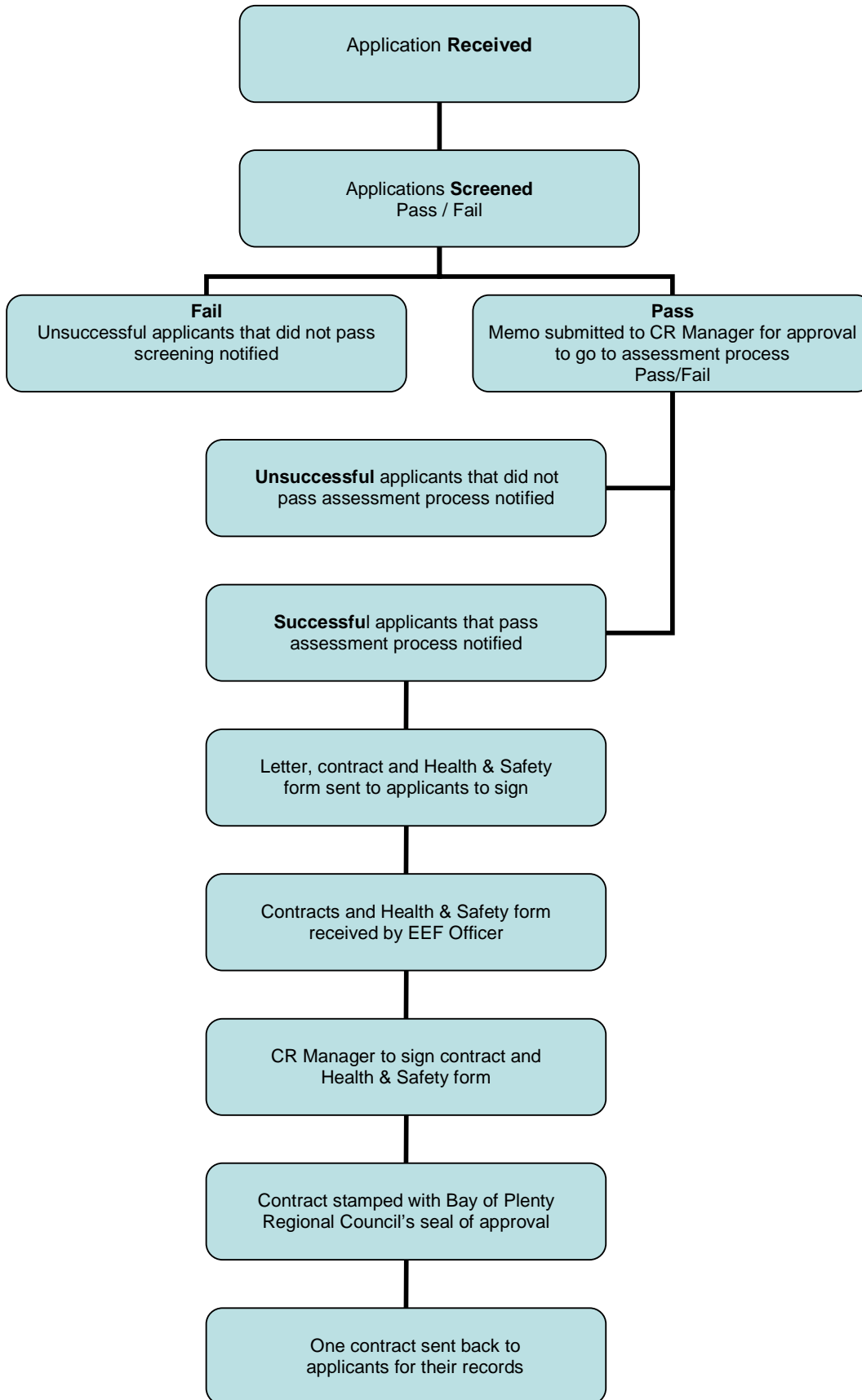
Following the Subcommittee's decisions, all applicants are advised in writing as to whether or not their application for funding has been successful. For unsuccessful applicants their letter will include an explanation of why their application was unsuccessful. Successful applicants will be sent two copies of their contract for signing. These are signed in line with the delegated authorities outlined in this policy.

Council's decisions on funding are final and there is no process for an unsuccessful applicant to appeal the decision. While some applications may score highly through the assessment process this does not guarantee them funding. Funding decisions are made by the Subcommittee and at times a decision not to approve an application may solely be based on the fund being oversubscribed.

Under \$5,000 process



Over \$5,000 process



Scoring guide

Proposals for funding will be scored on the scale stated below.

Environmental enhancement

The extent to which the proposal states that it will directly promote, enhance or protect the Bay of Plenty's natural environment, for the benefit of present and future generations. For the purpose of EEF assessment natural environment is defined as *coast, wetlands, lakes, rivers and their margins, historic (and cultural) heritage features, outstanding natural features and landscapes, indigenous plants, animals and their habitat.

Scoring guide

- 20 the proposal **greatly** and directly promotes, enhances or protects a **regionally significant** environment*.
- 16 the proposal **greatly** and directly promotes, enhances or protects an environment* of **district significance** or promotes, enhances or protects a regionally significant environment to a limited degree*.
- 12 the proposal **greatly** and directly promotes, enhances or protects a **locally significant** natural environment* or promotes, enhances or protects an environment* of district significance to a limited degree.
- 8 the proposal directly promotes, enhances or protects a locally significant environment*.
- 4 the proposal directly promotes, enhances or protects the environment* to a **limited degree**.
- 2 the project will have **little impact** on the environment*.
- 0 the project will have **no impact** on the environment*.

Community awareness

The extent to which the proposal states that it will heighten community knowledge, create awareness and promote active involvement in environmental issues.

Scoring guide

- 10 potential for a **large** increase in education/awareness/involvement for a large section of the regional community.
- 8 potential for a **large** increase in education/awareness/involvement for a large section of the **local** community or a **small** increase in a large section of the **regional** community.

- 6 potential for a large increase in education/awareness/involvement for a small section of the local community or a small increase in awareness/involvement for a large section of the local community.
- 4 potential for a **small increase** in education/awareness/involvement for a small section of the local community or potential for a **large increase** in awareness/involvement within the applicant group.
- 2 potential for a **small increase** in education/awareness/involvement within the applicant group.
- 0 potential for an increase in education/awareness/involvement for an individual or within an organisation (for example, project coordinator(s) or team within an organisation or an individual in a community group).

Community participation

The extent to which the proposal includes community involvement and community participation in the project.

Scoring guide

- 10 the project will include community/hapu/iwi participation **across the region**.
- 8 the project will include community/hapu/iwi participation throughout the **district community**.
- 6 the project will include community/hapu/iwi participation throughout the **local community**.
- 4 the project will include **multiple group** participation.
- 2 the project will include **group** participation (for example, the applicant group).
- 0 the project will include **individual** participation or within an organisation (for example, project coordinator/s or team within an organisation or an individual in a community group).

Please note: Contractors and consultants are not considered a group; periodic detention workers would be considered a group.

Target areas

Projects contributing to the enhancement of targeted areas as outlined below.

<p>2009/2010 target areas were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water quality (streams, lakes and lake margins); • Threatened native species and their habitats; and • Harbours and estuaries. 	<p>2010/2011 target areas are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water quality (streams, lakes and lake margins); • Threatened native species and their habitats; and • Harbours and estuaries.
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Scoring guide

- 10 the project contributes **greatly** to **multiple target areas**.
- 8 the project contributes **reasonably** to **multiple** target areas.
- 6 the project contributes **greatly** to a **single target** area or to multiple target areas.
- 4 the project contributes **reasonably** to a **single target** area.
- 2 the project contributes to a **single target** area.

Innovation

The ability of an activity/project to develop and trial new methods in environmental management.

Scoring guide

- 5 the project is **innovative**.
- 1 the project is a **tried and true** idea.

First time and previously unsuccessful applicants

- 2 The applicant is a **first time applicant** or **previously unsuccessful** applicant.
- 0 The applicant is a previous successful applicant.

History with EEF

- 0 The applicant has **successfully completed an EEF project** previously or they are a **first time applicant**.
- 2 The applicant has **not completed a previous EEF project**.
- 4 The applicant has **not completed a previous EEF project** and/or **not maintained their project site**.

Partial funding and therefore viability

- High** With a significant proportion of the funding this project is viable (minimum 80 percent funding).

Medium With a reasonable proportion of funding this project is viable (minimum 65 percent funding).

Low With some funding this project is viable (minimum 50 percent funding).

Payment methods

There are two preferred methods for releasing Environmental Enhancement Fund payments. These are payments in arrears as reimbursement and payments in advance on receipt of a tax invoice.

The method and timing of payment(s) shall be at the discretion of Bay of Plenty Regional Council. Payment of allocated funding from the Environmental Enhancement Fund shall be directly to the bank account of the recipient organisation. The recipient group must provide documentation to confirm the existence of this account (for example, a deposit slip) to the satisfaction of Bay of Plenty Regional Council. Payment shall be made through one of the follow two options.

- (a) In arrears in full or in part (taking into account the payment schedule the recipient is required to provide under their contract) as reimbursement for monies that have been spent on approved work. Bay of Plenty Regional Council, after appropriate enquiry, will release allocated funding directly to the recipient organisation's bank account on receipt of verified invoices for goods and services purchased and other appropriate documentation (for example, vehicle usage records).
- (b) In advance in full or in part (taking into account the payment schedule the recipient is required to provide under their contract). Generally, Bay of Plenty Regional Council prefers to pay out no more than 80 percent of the grant in advance, especially where no working history of the group has been established. Bay of Plenty Regional Council will release allocated funding directly to the recipient organisation's bank account upon receipt of an invoice or tax invoice. The recipient is required to verify the expenditure by providing documentation to the satisfaction of Bay of Plenty Regional Council on how the allocation has been spent. This shall be either prior to receiving any further payment, or, in the next six monthly progress report. If the payment is the only or final payment of allocated funds the documentation shall be provided in the summary report. Bay of Plenty Regional Council will make appropriate enquiries on the recipient organisation's expenditure. Grants of less than \$5000 can request 100 percent of the grant in advance.

In the majority of cases the recipients will be provided with the choice, from the above two methods, of how they wish to receive their funding allocation. However, Environment Bay of Plenty will stipulate in the contract that payment shall be in arrears only. This will occur in situations where it is considered appropriate based on an organisation's track record.

1.7 GST

All applicants are asked to provide their budget GST exclusive. GST is then added to funding allocations for GST registered and non-registered groups. The GST component will be paid to GST registered groups but is not a cost to the fund as Bay of Plenty Regional Council is able to claim back on this cost.

Recipient groups are required to provide full details on their bank account, whether or not they are GST registered (and if so their GST number) and the name and contact details for a financial contact person.

1.8 Projects over budget

It is recognised that projects may run over budget due to unforeseen circumstances. When Bay of Plenty Regional Council enters into a contract with a recipient a commitment is made to the project's implementation. Therefore, if project implementation is jeopardised due to a five percent budget overrun and the Environmental Enhancement Fund project team believes the following conditions apply, then Bay of Plenty Regional Council will pay the outstanding amount.

The outstanding amount, for the funding purpose outlined in the contract and signed by both parties, was due to:

- Contractors/consultants charges in excess of their quote;
- Material price increase (not quantity purchased); or
- Extenuating circumstances an example of which would be that during project implementation extra works were required but not accounted for in the application and this threatens the project's completion (for example, re-pilling a heritage building reveals a borer-infested beam that needs replacing).

In addition:

- 1 The outstanding amount will not exceed five percent of the total funding allocation;
- 2 The Environmental Enhancement Fund must have available funds; and
- 3 The extra funding must be approved by the Community Relations Manager.

1.9 Project expenditure

Recipients are advised to begin to access their allocated grant within one year of the funding being approved. If funds are not accessed after a year, the recipient will be contacted to discuss why their funds have not been accessed. If the recipient does not begin to use the allocated funds within the next year, they will be notified that funds will be withdrawn from the project and re-allocated through the EEF the following year.

Projects can take up to three years to be completed, but work must have started on the project no later than the second year. Recipients are asked to advise the Environmental Enhancement Fund Officer of any additional time the project may require to be completed. Usually after three years the recipient will be contacted and, if funds are not used, the allocated funds will be re-allocated through the EEF the following year.

2010 timeframes

Applications for funding for more than \$5,000

1 March	Fund opens for applications.
Mid March	Fund promotion meetings are held in Whakatane, Rotorua and Tauranga.
12 April	Applications close.
Late May	Assessment of applications is completed.
Early June	EEF Sub Committee makes final decisions on successful applicants.
Early July	Applicants notified.
August	Contracts finalised with successful applicants and funding is released.
August	Recipient briefing sessions are held in Whakatane, Rotorua and Tauranga

Applications for funding of less than \$5000

1 July	Fund opens for applications.
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The fund is open for these applications throughout the year pending availability of funds.

Promotion and publicity

The Environmental Enhancement Fund will be promoted through a variety of means including:

- A publicity flyer;
- Newspaper advertisements;
- Radio advertisements;
- Information and application on the website;
- Word of mouth by Councillors and staff (staff presentations);
- Media releases;
- Story in Backyard (Council newsletter);
- Public meetings;
- Applicant meetings (when appropriate); and
- Other internal opportunities such as roadshows or community open days where staff time allows.

Project Officers

1.10 Introduction

A Project Officer is assigned to each project and recipient organisation. Project Officers are assigned by the EEF team and approved by Executive Leadership Team. They are Bay of Plenty Regional Council's staff, including assessment team members. The Project Officer is assigned to a project based on their area of professional expertise and location. In some instances a Project Officer may be involved in several projects.

1.11 Roles and responsibilities

A Project Officer's role is to provide technical advice and support to the group or organisation carrying out an EEF project. Project Officers are the first point of contact for a group or organisation about practically carrying out their project. The extent of support required will vary from project to project. Project Officers need to be flexible in how (level and quantity) they support a group or organisation. Ultimately, the goal is to work with the funding recipient to successfully complete a project in alignment with the project plan. Any problems encountered regarding the amount of time required by the Project Officer should be addressed with the Environmental Enhancement Fund Officer and the individual's manager. The list of Project Officers for a particular year will be confirmed by managers in the first instance.

The EEF team provides support to a group for administration queries, contracts, including changes to project plans and budgets, acknowledging the fund and project promotion. If a group or organisation requires assistance to develop interpretation panels or similar, support is available through Council's Community Relations Team.

More specifically the Project Officer role is outlined below.

- Attending the recipient briefing session (Rotorua, Tauranga, Whakatane) following funding decisions.
- Being the first point of contact at Bay of Plenty Regional Council for technical matters. It is important for the Project Officer to be in regular contact with the group(s) and know how they are progressing. Administrative queries can be directed to the Environmental Enhancement Fund Officer.
- Confirm/amend project plan and budget with group before project implementation, document in the EEF project management database, sign by both parties (Project Officer and group) send signed copy to EEF Officer when finalised. Please note, any **budget changes need to be approved** by the EEF Officer or Community Relations Manager depending on financial delegation.

- Advise group on condition requirements.
- Progress reports: Project Officers will be notified by an email from the EEF database when project progress reports are due. The EEF Officer sends a request to the group along with a progress report template (optional to use) and an income and expenditure sheet. Project Officers will be required to:
 - (a) Support group to document project progress report if required;
 - (b) Verify that the information provided by the recipient is a full and accurate account of the project implementation to date;
 - (c) Request via the EEF Officer any additional information for the report; and
 - (d) Make comments regarding the project's progress, the group's implementation of project, problem areas and potential skill shortages.
- Keeping in regular contact with the group undertaking the project. This will need to be initiated by the Project Officer if the funding recipient does not initiate it.
- Provide regular feedback, documented as appropriate, to the Environmental Enhancement Fund Officer. The Project Officers should establish the most appropriate method of doing this for the project(s) they are involved in.
- Verify funding releases before each payment is made to the group, either reimbursement or in advance, Project Officers will be required to verify that the work has actually been carried out (for the second payment onwards in the case of payments in advance) or the group is ready to undertake the work and approve payments in writing.
- Assist the Environmental Enhancement Fund Officer to prepare an annual monitoring report, by providing relevant and timely information on their projects.
- The role of a Project Officer should not be onerous because of paperwork. The key thing is that the project management database is kept up to date and the Environmental Enhancement Fund Officer is regularly kept informed of how projects are progressing or any issues that arise.
- Project Officers are to code time spent with the group against the individual project code **e.g. 2002-C055** or **2003-D006**. This time spent is coded to the EEF budget.
- Internal meetings such as recipient briefing sessions should be charged to EEFPOADM.
- Meetings relating to funding rounds and project assessment should be charged to EEFPOASS.
- Project Officers will be rotated to include new staff so that the same staff are not overloaded with projects each year.

Administration databases

The Fund databases contain the following information:

- Mailing list of application inquiries;
- Applicant and project details;
- Project evaluation against screening criteria and related comments;
- Project scoring against assessment criteria and related comments;
- Assessment progress tables (generated for reports);
- EEF Sub Committee decisions and related comments;
- Contract details (to generate project contracts);
- Client contact/communication;
- Progress/project completion report summaries; and
- Recipient invoices.

For further detail refer to the database user manuals.

Flow charts

The flow charts are available as part of the March 2007 Easyflow project. This year's assessment process is shown below.

