

Notes of the Waioeka-Otara Rivers Scheme Advisory Group meeting held at Ōpōtiki District Council Chambers, Ōpōtiki, on Wednesday, 26 September 2018, commencing at 10:30am

Chair: Chairman Doug Leeder

Advisory Group: Dave Wilson, Jessica Wiseman, Robbie Petersen, Ari Erikson

BOPRC Councillors:

BOPRC Staff: Roger Waugh (Rivers and Drainage Assets Manager), Jo Heath (Asset Management Coordinator), Bruce Crabbe (Rivers and Drainage Operations Manager), Geoff Stone (Area Engineer), Tony Dunlop (Flood Restoration Project Engineer), Paula Chapman (Project Manager Flood Repair Project), Andy Dixon (Accounting Team Leader), Mark Townsend (Engineering Manager), Chris Ingle (General Manager, Integrated Catchments), Kay Boreham (Marketing and Communications Advisor), Nic Newman (Principal Advisor), Simon Stokes (Eastern Catchments Manager), Charles Harley (Land Management Officer), Tim Senior (Land Management Officer)

Public: Barry Hennessy, Ian Connor

Apologies: Ken Young, Tania Te Whenua, Dean Petersen, Councillor Norm Bruning, Councillor Bill Clark, Councillor Tiipene Marr.

1 **Welcome**

Chairman Leeder welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Members of the public and new staff were introduced.

2 **Apologies**

Apologies received as noted above.

3 **Notes of previous meeting held 22 February 2018**

Resolved

That the Waioeka-Otara Rivers Scheme Advisory Group:

- 1 **Confirm the notes of the meeting held 22 February 2018 as a true and correct record.**

Petersen/Wiseman
CARRIED

4 **Matters arising from previous meeting**

Roger Waugh ran through actions from the previous meeting.

- Membership – Dean Petersen has been appointed as Otara Catchment representative and Barry Hennessy is interested in filling the Urban representative vacancy.
- Long Term Plan submission was made on behalf of the advisory group recommending Option 2 for the rivers and drainage flood recovery project consultation topic. The Long Term Plan was adopted on 28 June 2018 with Council deciding to proceed with Council-preferred Option 1 and to use a number of options to reduce the rates impact on affected ratepayers. The average rate increase for ratepayers contributing to the Waioeka-Otara Rivers Scheme in 2018-2019 will be 6%. The Rivers and Drainage Asset Management Plan 2018-2068 was also adopted.

5 **Operations report**

Bruce Crabbe spoke to the maintenance works programme for 2018-2019 provided in the agenda pack highlighting the following:

- Geoff Stone appointed as Area Engineer covering the Whakatāne-Tauranga, Waiōtahe and Waioeka-Otara Rivers Schemes.
- Scheme was hit by two significant flood events early this year (5 January and 12 February). Resulted in significant number of new river bank erosion sites with an estimated repair cost of \$448,000, which is \$288,000 more than the annual flood damage budget. Will reduce expenditure through rest of the maintenance programme where possible and if still over budget the works reserve can be utilised with no effect on rates.
- Geoff Stone provided a handout on *Sagittaria platyphylla*, an emergent perennial aquatic weed. Geoff found this weed in the Otara end of Duke Street Drain. It is a nationally unwanted organism and is a new incursion for the Eastern Bay of Plenty (not found here before). Biosecurity staff are asking people to report any sightings. Rivers and Drainage staff are ensuring the weed is not spread through our river and drain works.

6 **Flood Repair Project report**

Paula Chapman and Tony Dunlop delivered a PowerPoint presentation providing an overview of the flood repair project, a summary of flood repair works completed to date and work planned for 2018-2019.

- 18 months into the four year programme repairing 520 flood damaged sites across the region with a budget in excess of \$45m. Targeted completion date is June 2021.
- Approximately 12% of the repair work is in the Waioeka-Otara Catchment with an estimated cost of \$6.1m.
- 22 of the 59 Waioeka-Otara sites have been completed as at 30 June 2018 (37% complete).
- Rock availability is an issue for some of the schemes but access to rock from Rakauroa Quarry at Matawai has enabled work to continue on the Waioeka and Otara Rivers. Rock has also been stockpiled in preparation for the summer construction season.
- Waioeka-Otara programmed works are well ahead of schedule and anticipate completing the Waioeka-Otara repairs earlier than anticipated.
- Repair work funded through insurance (40% of 'like for like' repairs), central government assistance through the Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management (60% of existing essential infrastructure repairs), minor funders like Territorial Local Authorities, NZTA where appropriate, targeted rates (80%) and general rates (20%).

Attendance

Charles Harley joined the meeting at 11:09am

7 Engineering update

Mark Townsend delivered a PowerPoint presentation covering the following key topics:

7.1 Duke Street Pump Station upgrade

Issue is that when it rains water cannot be effectively pumped with the current stopbank configuration and it floods into the urban area.

- 2018-2019 - \$100k for modelling and this is well underway.
- Anticipated that only minor work required to the pump station itself.
- Major work will involve building a stopbank between the rural and urban areas.
- Construction scheduled for 2019-2020 with a budget of \$1.5m.

Discussion

Pump station at end of Church Street was discussed – this is an Ōpōtiki District Council asset that pumps urban stormwater. Ari Erikson advised that solutions to the issues are currently being developed.

7.2 Stopbank Geotechnical Investigations

Undertaking geotechnical assessment of stopbanks in the region to assess condition and level of service being provided. If the stopbanks need to be raised we need to ensure the foundations are able to cope. Focus on Otara in 2019-2020 and Waioeka in 2020-2021.

7.3 River Scheme Sustainability (RSS)

Have \$100k per annum to look for river scheme management solutions that will be sustainable into the future. It is not an option to continue raising stopbanks so the project is investigating alternate solutions. Waioeka–Otara investigations are scheduled for 2018-2019 and 2019-2020, with an Action Plan being developed in 2020-2021 and 2021-2022. How the river schemes will cope with climate change, with predicted sea level rise and more intense rainfall, is a key part of the thinking.

7.4 Waioeka-Otara Capacity Review

River scheme capacity reviews are carried out on a ten year cycle, and the Waioeka and Otara Rivers are currently being reviewed. The review consists of hydrological assessment, cross-section surveys to identify changes in the rivers, and hydraulic modelling. All the information (including RSS, climate change and geotechnical investigations) is pulled together to make decisions about what work is needed to continue providing the agreed level of service. Physical works in the Waioeka-Otara Rivers Scheme are scheduled for 2022-2023 with a budget of \$1.62m.

7.5 Connor/Peterson Stopbank Restoration

Bruce Crabbe provided an update on the capital work project scheduled for summer to upgrade the Connor/Peterson stopbanks. Surveys have been carried out and consultation with landowners has identified the need for some additional culverts to improve drainage.

Discussion

Dave Wilson commented that the island is eroding and if it breaches 90% of the rivers flow is going to be hitting the low level stopbank along Ian Connor's property. Operations staff are aware of this, but not currently a high priority as does not pose significant risk.

Tony Dunlop added that the site is an identified low priority repair site in the April 2017 Flood Repair Project.

8 **Communications update**

Kay Boreham addressed the group, provided a quick background and explained her role focusing on communications across the Eastern Bay.

9 **Finance report**

Andy Dixon spoke to the finance report provided in the agenda pack and gave an overview of the scheme's revenue and expenditure for the year ending 30 June 2018. The following points were noted:

- Reserve balances as at 30 June 2018 were \$1,100,961 made up as follows:
 - Flood Damage Reserve \$297,388 (this is a contingency fund held for flood damage works and is currently on term deposit earning interest for the Scheme). An annual amount is allocated to the fund for it to accumulate a balance in anticipation of a future flood event. A larger allocation is made every five years to allow for larger flood events. The funds can only be activated when a flood event reaches a set threshold.
 - Works Reserve \$429,686 (surplus targeted rates from previous year available to fund operating expenditure) – has been used over the past few years to achieve a 0% increase in rates and can be used in the next few years to smooth out forecasted rate increases.
 - General Reserve \$160,715 (surplus general rates from previous year)
- Outstanding Loans \$4,376,172 – from 2015 to 2017 there were no additions to the loan balance and in the last year it has increased by approximately \$900k.
- Currently in a low interest rate environment and Regional Council can borrow from the Local Government Funding Agency at interest rates of 2% while investing the reserve balances at higher rates with the benefit being passed on to the Scheme. As the environment changes this approach will be reviewed to achieve best fiscal option for the Scheme.
- Financial report shows negative expenditure for contract work because April 2017 flood repair works have been reclassified from operating to capital expenditure. Capital expenditure can be spread over 20 years allowing council to keep rates down and ease financial pressure on ratepayers.

10 **Integrated Catchments update**

10.1 **Eastern Catchments work programme**

Simon Stokes explained that the Eastern Catchments work programmes includes all catchments in the Eastern Bay of Plenty except the Rangitāiki Catchment which as a priority catchment has its own work programme. The majority of the work in the Waioeka and Otara catchments is flood repairs. When asked by landowners, Council's land management officers will support the development of riparian management plans.

Simon brought Plan Change 9 to the attention of members. It is the first step in a two-stage approach to improving the rules for water quality and quantity management in the Bay of Plenty. The recommendations strengthen water allocation limits and improve management of water. The recommendations were adopted by Council on 18 September 2018 and will be publically notified on 9 October 2018.

10.2 Waiōtahe Catchment action plan

Charles Harley delivered a PowerPoint presentation on the Waiōtahe Catchment Action Plan, a community led project with the goal of improving water quality in the Waiōtahe catchment.

- Impetus was a Health Board warning that pipi in the Waiōtahe Estuary were a danger to human health because of levels of *E.coli*.
- Monitoring did not identify a specific source; the problem was throughout the catchment. DNA source tracking confirmed the *E.coli* source as being largely ruminant animals.
- The community didn't shy away from the issue, instead that joined together and asked what they needed to do.
- This led to a collaborative approach involving industry, landowners and the community. A number of agencies provide support – Dairy NZ, Fonterra, Massey University, Institute of Environmental Science and Research (ESR), Bay of Plenty Regional Council, Ōpōtiki District Council and Ministry for the Environment.
- The goal of improving water quality in the Waiōtahe Catchment was created by the community care group and everyone in the catchment has been involved in some way.
- Fonterra has worked with farmers to develop Farm Environment Plans. These plans identify risk areas and then recommend and apply mitigation techniques utilising best management practices.
- The project has a science and monitoring focus to improve understanding of the processes occurring and develop/research potential mitigation techniques.

10.3 Forestry debris

In response to questions at the previous meeting Simon was to update members on forestry issues in the area. Regional Council staff have been involved on the East Coast where forestry debris mobilisation has been a real issue. Suggested that a more detailed presentation, by the compliance and consent staff involved, could be made at the March 2019 meeting.

ACTION: March 2019 meeting agenda to include a presentation from compliance and consent staff on forestry debris mobilisation and the National Environmental Standards.

11 General business

11.1 Gravel management

A gravel management update was provided in the agenda pack. Key points were:

- Rivers and Drainage section of Council holds resource consent to extract 50,000 cubic metres per annum of gravel from both the Waioeka and Otara Rivers.
- Extraction volumes in 2017-2018 were 7,097 m³ from the Otara and 41,363m³ from the Waioeka.
- Continuing to work with local iwi to set up a workable consultation system to enable gravel extractions to continue.
- Current consents expire in 2019.

11.2 Continuous improvement

Chief Executive tasked Nic Newman to look at the advisory groups and identify any opportunities for improvement. Members discussed and provided feedback to Nic and additional comments can be emailed to nic.newman@boprc.govt.nz. A report of findings will be fed back to members.

Attendance

Simon Stokes left the meeting at 12:18pm

11.3 Public forum

Ian Connor addressed the group expressing concerns about the frequency his property is being flooded and the financial pressure it is putting on himself and his contract milker. Around 50% of his farm is affected during a flood and he estimates he loses between \$100k to \$250k every time it floods (lost production, cost of supplementary feed and sending stock off farm). He hears the area referred to as the 'Waioeka Floodway' but has been unable to find any evidence that the area has been formally designated as a floodway. Back in the Catchment Board days he was told that the lower level stopbank provided a 1 in 20 year level of protection and now he is told it is only 1 in 2 year.

Roger Waugh referred members to page 23 of the Asset Management Plan Executive Summary which is a map showing the level of service provided by stopbanks on the Waioeka and Otara Rivers. The section of stopbank Ian is referring to is clearly shown as 50% AEP (Annual Exceedance Probability) or a 1 in 2 year event. The intent of this lower section of bank is to provide an overflow floodable area that takes pressure off the stopbank on the right hand side of the river that protects the urban area.

ACTION:

Regional Council to provide a response on the legality of the area sometimes referred to as 'Waioeka Floodway'

Meeting ended: 12:40pm