



TAIRĀWHITI

REGIONAL FRESHWATER PLANNING ADVISORY GROUP

Hui agenda, minutes, and actions

Hui #5

Held at Rose Room, Lawson Field Theatre on 13 December 2023 at 09:00am

Advisory Group facilitator	Dr Jill Chrisp
Advisory Group members present	Stan Pardoe, Seanne Williams, Dave Hawea, Dianne Irwin, Joss Ruifrok, Nicki Davies, Taylor Howatson, Colin Kerlake, Mere Tamanui, Leo Kelso, Jacob Harrison, Alan Haronga, Phil Gaukrodger
Council	Janic Slupski, Oliver Vetter, Ariel Yann le Chew, Paul Murphy, Sarah Thompson Lois Easton, Wolfgang Kanz, Ian Mayhew, Adele Dawson
Apologies	Samuel Lewis, Murray Palmer, Bronwyn Wilson-Hokianga, Laura Watson, Shanna Cairns, Bella Hawkins, Elizabeth Kamana, Owen Lloyd, Matawhero Lloyd, Desire du Plooy

Agenda

Karakia and whakawhanaungatanga	09:00
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome Housekeeping Minutes and actions from hui #4 and #4.5 	
Recap of planning process	09:15
Session 1 – Discharges continued	
Introduction of content, review, issues & options	09:30
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hazardous substances and contaminated sites Unreticulated (on-site) wastewater treatment 	
Leg stretch and cuppa tea	09:45
Group exercise and discussion	10:00
Session 2 – Activities in the beds of rivers and lakes	
Recap and policy options	10:45
Closing karakia	11:25
Shared lunch with both advisory groups	11:30 – 12:30

Summary of actions

 Future Action *Refer to Parked List for summary  Current task

Notes:

- **Each task is allocated a unique identifier e.g. T2 for ease of reference**
- **The numbering continues from previous meeting minutes**

Task	Actions	Responsible	Due
T20	Future discussions to include business sector, as current discussions only have environmental and community aspects	Freshwater team	tbc
T21	Revisit discussion on beds of rivers and lakes	Freshwater team	tbc

Minutes

1. Karakia and whakawhanaungatanga - welcome & housekeeping

- 1.1. The hui commenced with an opening karakia, followed by the facilitator inviting Stan Pardoe to acknowledge the recent passing of fellow Advisory Group member Keith Katipa. Stan Pardoe and the facilitator commemorated the life of Keith Katipa by sharing their memories of him. The facilitator invited the group to have a minute of silence in remembrance of Keith.
- 1.2. Minutes and actions from the hui held on 11 October and 15 November 2023 were taken as read and accepted as a true reflection.

2. Recap of planning process, 2024 schedule, feedback on hui effectiveness

- 2.1. Staff recapped the four main sections of the Regional Freshwater Plan, and the role of Advisory Group members with a diagram illustrating how the Advisory Group feeds into the development of the overall plan.
- 2.2. Due to disruptions and various delays in the day-to-day Council operations caused by Cyclone Gabrielle, central government has granted Gisborne District Council a two-year extension. This extension will give us enough time to involve tangata whenua and the community in a meaningful way while developing the comprehensive plan. This extension has been taken into account when planning the meeting schedule for 2024.
- 2.3. Staff presented the proposed 2024 meeting schedule, spaced out to every 5 to 6 weeks. This gives Council staff adequate time to prepare for each meeting. The Advisory Group members didn't have any objections. The new meeting schedule is considered as approved.
- 2.4. One of the members asked how the legislative changes proposed through the manifesto of the coalition government will affect the freshwater planning process that this Advisory Group is a part of. Staff assured members that Council will continue to meet its statutory requirements by finding a balance between using water for economic purposes and protecting the environment for the future of Tairāwhiti.
- 2.5. Members had been asked to provide their feedback on the effectiveness of the advisory group hui to date in the 11 October hui. Based on the feedback received, staff suggested a series of actions to enhance the members' experience with the hui.

Session 1 – Discharges continued

3. Introduction to agrichemicals, on-site wastewater treatment, hazardous substances and contaminated sites

- 3.1. Staff introduced the remaining sub-topics under the discharges topic – agrichemicals, on-site (or non-reticulated) wastewater, and hazardous substances and contaminated sites. The key issues for each topic and possible options to resolve these issues have been highlighted in this session. This information is also available in the pre-circulated Report 1 for this hui.

4. Group exercise

- 4.1. The Group split into smaller groups to consider a range of different management approaches and options for managing these discharges and in what circumstances. These questions were circulated prior to the hui.
- 4.2. The discharges sub-topics were:
 - 4.2.1. Agrichemicals
 - 4.2.2. On-site wastewater
 - 4.2.3. Hazardous substances and contaminated sites.
- 4.3. There was no report back following the end of the breakout session. All information was collected, and verbatim feedback is attached to these minutes (**Appendix 1**).

Session 2 – Activities in the beds of rivers and lakes

5. Recap and options of activities in the beds of rivers and lakes - open discussion

- 5.1. Following information received from members at the 16 August 2023 hui on the topic of activities in the beds of rivers and lakes, staff have analysed and provided options to be discussed in this hui. Staff focused on three sub-topics:
 - 5.1.1. Gravel management
 - 5.1.2. Flood management and response
 - 5.1.3. Vegetation clearance and planting.
- 5.2. For this session, rather than breaking into smaller groups, members were asked to share their thoughts through an open group discussion. The verbatim feedback has been documented and is attached to these minutes (**Appendix 2**).

6. Wrap-up and next steps in the process

- 6.1. Staff thanked the Advisory Group members for their contributions during 2023 and welcomed them to return in the new year. They also extended thanks to Nicki Davies for her contributions to the Group to date, as she is leaving her role to pursue new opportunities. Staff wished her all the best in her future endeavours.
- 6.2. The next hui is scheduled for 13 March 2024, and will focus on the topics of riparian margins and wetlands.

7. Closing karakia

- 7.1. The hui closed at 11:30 with a karakia. The Group enjoyed a shared lunch with the Waipaoa Advisory Group.

8. Tasks to be actioned

Task	Actions	Responsible	Due
T20	Future discussions to include business sector, as current discussions only have environmental and community aspects	Freshwater team	tbc
T21	Revisit discussion on beds of rivers and lakes	Freshwater team	tbc

PARKING LIST

The following matters have been captured from discussions of the **TAIRĀWHITI REGIONAL FRESHWATER PLANNING ADVISORY GROUP** hui. They are captured here to be incorporated as supplementary recommendations in the Group's final report and/or responded to directly.

Ref	Item/Action	Date raised	Status
T11	Future discussion on stock exclusion regulations and implications	16/8/23	tbc
T16	Provide opportunity for members to actively participate in the information analysis processes as we progress through plan development	11/10/23	Ongoing
T19	Invitation extended to identify any emerging topics that can be explored in more detail within a smaller group. The goal is to share the findings more broadly afterward	15/11/23	Ongoing
T20	Future discussions to include business sector, as current discussions only have environmental and community aspects.	13/12/23	Ongoing
T21	Revisit discussion on beds of rivers and lakes	13/12/23	tbc

Appendix 1 – Written feedback

SESSION 1 – Discharges section

TOPIC 1: AGRICHEMICAL

Questions (Answers in table from submitted answer sheet)

1. What is the group's experience/familiarity with the use of agrichemicals?

- a. Are agrichemicals being used by trained operators in a proper and responsible manner that follows good practices?
- Yes grow safe education programmes etc is required by most operators/farms/hort/ag sector.
 - Yes grow safe education programmes etc is required by most operators/farms/hort/ag sector, mostly
- b. Do the operators know about the training and notification requirements set out in the TRMP – rule C1.5.4.1?
- Yes. Majority of Ag/Hort.
 - Yes, especially big operators

2. What option/approach do you think is best (see paper for more detail)?

- a. Update the status quo
- Education continue to make people aware.
- b. More stringent/rigorous requirements
- Lifestyle Ag Hort operations provide chemical plans to council? Lifestyle discussion days. GDC partnership re Agrichemical. Beef Lamb/Council run templates etc. Education days.
 - For key areas

3. If a more stringent option/approach, what aspects are the most important to manage?

- a. Maximum areas of spraying (As a permitted activity)
- b. Larger buffer distances
- c. Greater control in sensitive areas
- d. Are there other issues?
- Disposal of agrichemicals etc, containers expired etc
 - Certain more toxic chemicals identified only used by professional or trained operator
 - In PAs (Protected areas?) ok?

4. Are there alternative options we haven't considered?

- In PAs (Protected areas?) ok?

Written notes from breakout session

Is it an issue?

- What work do we need to do to understand?
- Monitoring? More?
- What does it include? Not fert.
- What does council do to monitor permitted rules currently?
- Land ownership/stewardship – does this change behaviour
- Washwater
- Low risk -> permitted
- High risk -> how to control?
- What are the true issues?
- What does MPI and industry bodies do and is this enough?
- Seasonal/Permanent & hort?
- What's in the Farm Environment plan?
- Education/Awareness
- Fertiliser vs herbicides etc
- Beef & Lamb vs intensive
- Drains & watercourses
- Compliance & enforcement
 - Disconnect between 'owner' of Farm Environment Plan & operator?
 - Culturally
 - Ka tangi te waiata o tew eka
 - We will no longer hear the calls of the weka on the Turanga flats

TOPIC 2: ON-SITE WASTEWATER TREATMENT

Questions (Answers in table from submitted answer sheet and breakout session)

5. What do we do about existing poor performing on-site wastewater systems?

- Current system working quite well – septic tank cleanage companies contact people
 - But is driven by companies not Council requirement
 - Links to septage disposal issues – septage sites are very contentious
 - Is a big issue for people buying new system is so expensive
 - New systems take up a lot of land
 - Not certain that the effluent fields are checked and maintained
- a. Nothing – unless there is a demonstrated problem
- b. Greater emphasis on compliance/regular maintenance (with associated costs)
- (✓)
- \$?

6. If there is a greater emphasis on compliance and maintenance:

- Are known issues at Tolaga, Makaraka & Wainui
 - Where groundwater is high might need to have a consenting process to ensure they are maintained
 - Are difficulties in summer – heaps of people come + overload system
 - Independent management vs Council taking over management
 - Don't support but need to build a system to manage the gaps
 - Need more community education & understanding about the need to manage systems
- a. Should this be everywhere or in problem areas/areas with lots of in-site septic tanks?
- b. What is the likely impact on individuals and communities
- High density communities & near water ways
- c. How do we balance cost vs better environmental outcomes?
- ?

7. Should the plan require a higher standard of on-site system? For example

- a. Remove rules allowing very basic systems (trenches/bores) but retain septic tanks in rural areas?
- Yes new dwelling require different systems that require solid collections
- b. Require a higher standard of treatment system (advanced) in areas where on-site systems are concentrated?

- Ngati Porou + using high-rate filamentous macroalgae for rural municipal wastewater treatment – Inai Novak
- Threshold set in the size of community & the quality of treatment/type of treatment
 - So don't allow basic systems where community is beyond a certain size
 - ECan has some thresholds?
- Needs to link to zoning + likely size of community
- Needs to be a lot more information to communities

8. Should the plan (or RPS) be directing towards more reticulation in some areas – i.e. small treatment plants – with the trade-off that they will require consents to discharge treated wastewater?

- e.g. Mahia wastewater good model - \$\$\$
- a. What approach is preferable – enabling on-site systems vs a preference for communal systems?
- Enabling on-site systems. On coast towns, mahia model – ruatorea?
- b. At what point should communal (reticulated wastewater + treatment plant) systems be considered?
- Higher population areas like Ruatorea
 - At what point?
 - Is there a best practice around numbers
 - Is there a threshold the plan sets?
 - Dealing with growth areas should require reticulation
 - But recognise public benefit – cost should be shared with wider community as is wider benefit not just polluter pays
 - Maybe the Wainui community needs its own system don't send it to the Gisborne wastewater treatment plant
 - Need to link the rules much better to the community size
 - Could have community scale systems for reticulation
 - Should the Council take responsibility for septic tank cleaning + charge a special rate in places where there are issues e.g. Wainui, Makaraka, Tolaga Bay, Ruatorea

TOPIC 3: HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES/CONTAMINATED SITES

Questions (Answers in table from submitted answer sheet)

9. What option/approach do you think is best (see paper for more detail)?

- a. Update the status quo
- b. Stronger emphasis on prevention (✓)
- c. Better enable/facilitate remediation/management
- d. More investigation/prioritisation and then management

10. What direction should the plan take to remediating/managing contaminated land?

- a. Do you agree with an emphasis on trying to manage/retain contamination on-site rather than dig material up and put it somewhere else (including a landfill)?
- b. Should the TRMP take the lead on this or let this be driven nationally?
 - TRMP

11. Should Tairāwhiti be self-sufficient – signal that Tairāwhiti should deal with its own generated waste – and that a landfill is necessary?

- Yes – environmental sustainability. What's coming into regional. Business need to look at plastic waste containers appliances that last. Ban wet wipes! \$\$\$ save.

Written notes from breakout session

Landfills – significant issue

- Legacy issues
 - Landfills
 - Other sites
- 1. Manage/contain
- 2. Identify issues
- Respond
- Deal with our problem

Focus on prevention – don't make it work

Identifying/prioritise

Change takes time

Level of pragmatism with waste

- Local vs cost/practical

Circular economy

- Waste
- Soil – filling up landfill

Raise awareness – waste, management of substance

- National? Make it easier

Best practice – need guidance

- Optimise/minimise

Research

- How much damage is it doing?

Solutions

- Information
- Education
- Change the market

Focus on prevention

- Public

Legacy

- Conversations with mana whenua
- e.g. sites for disposal
- respond in positive way
- engagement critical

Old landfills

- Conversation/solutions
- Mana whenua, industry

Practice

- Can we move away from chemicals
- Regenerative farming – different way of thinking
- Encourage – consumer demand, reduce use/enable

Cemetery

- Formaldehyde

Appendix 2 – Written feedback

SESSION 2 – Options for activities in bed of rivers and lakes

Note: This was an open discussion. Feedback was gathered from verbatim minutes (that fed into the official minutes) and those sent through emails.

GRAVEL MANAGEMENT

Questions:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do you have a preference between Option 1 and 2? If so, why? 2. Should a gravel management plan contain any other content not listed? 	
<p>Option 1 Revise the current plan framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give effect to the NPS-FM 2020 • Provide for gravel extraction across the region for individuals and commercial extractors • Require resource consent for commercial scale extraction and where there are environmental risks • Prefer extraction which has a flood management benefit 	
<p>Option 2 Revise the current plan framework and introduce gravel management plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes those listed in Option 1 above • Prepared for rivers, or catchments where there is gravel demand • Gravel management plan includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A description of the gravel resource and a sustainable limit ○ Areas where extraction is encouraged ○ Areas where extraction shall be avoided ○ Minimum bed levels ○ Monitoring and reporting requirements 	<p>One member vocally supported option 2, with the reason in bullet list below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aware there's some good areas where gravel is accumulating, but poor road access to get into

Feedback not specific to the questions, with some more like questions and others are suggestion:

- Are there alternatives aside from gravel to be used in roading? (e.g. plastic)
- Tier approach – permitted approach for low risk, provided that conditions are met. This does rely on a district-wide aggradation/degradation trend in order to inform approach.

- CIA/EIA should be applied to small streams.
- Mana whenua need to be in discussion about gravel management plan

FLOOD MANAGEMENT AND RESPONSE

<p>Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do you support Option 1 or Option 2? 2. There will be costs for preparing a Code of Practice to support Option 2 and it would not permit all activities. What are your thoughts about these costs compared to the works that could be enabled? 	
<p>Option 1 Revise the current plan framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give effect to the NPS-FM 2020 • Recognise the need for flood management and response but to manage potential impacts • Require soft engineering and nature-based solutions over hard engineering methods • Ensure consents are assessed in a holistic manner, considering upstream and downstream impacts • Provide for removal of flood debris 	
<p>Option 2 Revise the current plan framework and allow Council to undertake works without consent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject to compliance with a Code of Practice • Could allow works such as drain maintenance, stopbank maintenance, removal of flood debris, pest control • Code of Practice to detail how to undertake activities to ensure effects are minimised and acceptable • Controls around protecting significant sites and activities with greater potential impacts would require consent 	<p>One member verbally supported this option.</p>

Feedback not specific to the questions, with some more like questions and others are suggestion:

- Issue of Council's poor response seen in the recent Cyclone Gabrielle event
- Suggestion of keeping flood management separated from one-off emergency response. In terms of maintenance and upgrades, there's a risk of leaving it to only Council decision and not go out to wider public for consultation.

- Mentions of Council's civil defence team recent distribution of emergency containers to every marae in Manutuke. The kit includes generator, chainsaw tools, pumps etc.

VEGETATION CLEARANCE AND PLANTING

<p>Question:</p> <p>Are there any other outcomes the new Plan should achieve for vegetation clearance and planting?</p>	
<p>Proposed option</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow removal for restoration and enhancement • Prevent planting pest species • Protect flood and erosion control vegetation • Promote enhancement activities • Prefer planting native species over exotic plants 	<p>Consensus in the room that a discussion is needed to take into account the effect of planting along the banks and whether the effect is positive or negative when considered together with other restoration/removal projects happening on other banks up- and downstream of the same river.</p> <p><u>Further feedback provided to staff during lunch</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect flow capacity – making sure that trees planted won't exacerbate flooding of houses