

Strategy and Policy Committee

Open Minutes

- Commencing:** Tuesday 14 February 2023, 9.30 am
- Venue:** Council Chambers, Ground Floor, Regional House, 1 Elizabeth Street, Tauranga
- Chairperson:** Cr Paula Thompson
- Deputy Chairperson:** Cr Kat Macmillan
- Members:** Cr Stuart Crosby
Chairman Doug Leeder
Cr Jane Nees (via Zoom)
Cr Matemoana McDonald
Cr Toi Kai Rākau Iti
Cr Te Taru White (via Zoom)
Cr Kevin Winters (via Zoom)
Cr Lyall Thurston (via Zoom)
Cr Andrew von Dadelszen
Cr Ron Scott
Cr Ken Shirley
Cr Malcolm Campbell
- In Attendance:** Staff: Fiona McTavish - Chief Executive; Namouta Poutasi - General Manager, Strategy and Science; Kataraina O'Brien - General Manager, Strategic Engagement; Reuben Fraser - General Manager, Regulatory Services; Chris Ingle - General Manager Integrated Catchments; Julie Bevan - Policy and Planning Manager; Stephen Lamb - Environmental Strategy Manager; Dean Howie - Programme Manager, Regional Economic Development; Nic Newman - Climate Change Programme Manager; Kate Barnes - Communications Partner; Stephanie Macdonald - Community Engagement Team Leader; Nicola Green - Principal Advisor, Policy and Planning; Nassah Rolleston-Steed - Principal Advisor, Policy and Planning; James Low - Team Leader Policy (Freshwater); Samantha Pottage - Planner; Elva Conroy - Acting Manager Spatial Planning (Contractor); Jenny Teeuwen - Committee Advisor
- External: Julian Fitter and Michelle Elborn - Bay Conservation Alliance; Mary Dillon, Laura Wragg and Nick Gladding - EnviroHub BOP; Glen Crowther and Denise Arnold - Sustainable BOP; Graeme Coates - Chair BOP Aquaculture Group; Peter Vitasovich - CEO Whakatōhea Mussels Ōpōtiki Limited; Professor Chris Battershill - University of Waikato
- Apologies:** Cr Jane Nees

Please note that this meeting was livestreamed and the recording is available on the Council YouTube channel via this link: [Strategy and Policy Meeting 14 February 2023 - YouTube](#)

1. Opening Karakia

A karakia was provided by Cr Te Taru White.

2. Chairperson's Opening Statement

The Chairperson, Cr Paula Thompson, expressed grateful thanks to Tauranga City Council and the Civil Defence Emergency Management Team for their response to Cyclone Gabrielle.

3. Apologies

Resolved

That the Strategy and Policy Committee:

- 1 Accepts the apology from Cr Nees for possible intermittent attendance due to variable internet coverage, tendered at the meeting.**

**Thompson/von Dadelszen
CARRIED**

4. Items not on the Agenda

4.1 Bay of Plenty Regional Council Natural and Built Environment Bill and Spatial Planning Bill Submissions

Resolved

That the Strategy and Policy Committee:

- 1 Receives the report, Bay of Plenty Regional Council Natural and Built Environment Bill and Spatial Planning Bill Submissions and accepts it as an Item not on the Agenda. Notes the reason why this item was not on the Agenda is that time needed to incorporate feedback received on the draft submission versions meant that the item was not ready when the Agenda was finalised, and the reason why it cannot be delayed is that the submissions must be lodged by 19 February 2023.**

**Thompson/Shirley
CARRIED**

5. Order of Business

The Chairperson advised that due to the availability of external presenters, Item 8.1 - Bay of Plenty Aquaculture Group (BOPAG) - A Stocktake of Strategic Aquaculture Opportunities in the Bay of Plenty, would be taken at 10am and this could result in a change to the order of business.

6. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

There was none.

7. Presentations

7.1 Presentation - Bay Conservation Alliance

Presented by: Julian Fitter and Michelle Elborn

Presentation - Bay Conservation Alliance: Objective ID A4309042 [⇒](#)

Key Points

- Outlined the Vision and Purpose of Bay Conservation Alliance.
- The group provided professional operational support, increased the number of Bay of Plenty care groups, and facilitated training and capability building for volunteers.
- Provided an insight to the following member groups - Friends of the Blade, Ōtānewainuku Kiwi Trust, Project Parore, Maketū Ōngātoto Wetland Society, Manawahe Kokako Trust and Manawahe Eco Trust, Kaharoa Kokako Trust, and Kokako Ecosystem Expansion Programme (KEEP).
- Good governance and succession planning was really challenging and both professional and volunteer inputs were needed to be successful.

In response to Questions

- Important to recognise the variety of different groups and the need to nurture volunteers.
- Requested that Regional Council continue to be open to new ideas and ways of doing things - keep an open mind about projects and how they could be delivered.
- Bay Conservation Alliance experienced difficulty in retaining existing and attracting new Board members and were considering changing to a charitable trust in the future.
- Regional Council funding had supported volunteers participating in the Institute of Directors governance training. There was a need and opportunities to provide more of this type of training.
- The Jobs for Nature cadet programme was going well - currently up to intake seven. Around 45 applications received per intake for 11 spaces. Tangata whenua were well represented on the programme.

Due to the availability of the external presenters for the item, Item 8.1. was taken next.

8. Reports

Strategy

8.1 Bay of Plenty Aquaculture Group (BOPAG) – A Stocktake of Strategic Aquaculture Opportunities in the Bay of Plenty

Presented by: Dean Howie – Programme Manager, Regional Economic Development
Graeme Coates - BOPAG Chair

Peter Vitasovich - CEO Whakatōhea Mussels Ōpōtiki Limited
Professor Chris Battershill - University of Waikato

Presentation - Bay of Plenty Aquaculture Group: Objective ID A4309072 [⇒](#)

Key Points

- Aquaculture development happened regionally, mainly outside of cities, and had a positive effect on small towns.
- The aquaculture industry in New Zealand farmed mussels, oysters and salmon.
- Bay of Plenty was currently around one to one and a half percent of the industry in New Zealand - planned to be 10 - 15% by 2030.
- The focus in the Bay of Plenty was on mussels as the waters were too warm for salmon.
- Whilst frozen half shell mussels currently made up to 63% of the value of exported product, mussel oil and mussel powder would be the future of the industry, as over the next 10 to 15 years, pharmaceutical products were expected to play a bigger part in the use of the industry's product.
- The Bay of Plenty region had been recognised as the growth area for aquaculture over the next 10 to 15 years.
- As part of the aquaculture settlement between the Crown and iwi, 20% of marine space was automatically allocated to iwi participants.
- Marine space in the Bay of Plenty region would be focussed in the eastern Bay of Plenty in the Ōpōtiki and Te Kaha areas.

In Response to Questions

- BOPAG were working very closely with iwi to bring iwi aquaculture home through Treaty settlement, and to grow the aquaculture industry in the Bay of Plenty region.
- Unreliability of labour was a frustration and risk. Whakatōhea Mussels currently employed 190 and had an absenteeism rate of around 20-30 per day. The focus was on training and bringing communities together. Whakatōhea Mussels was working in conjunction with the Ministry for Social Development (MSD) and colleges to create a programme highlighting aquaculture industry career opportunities for young people, in all facets of the business.
- Much had been achieved since 2014; however, a collective effort and capital investment was required to develop fin fish or high value products.
- Aquaculture enhanced the productivity of the marine system by reducing the amount of take from the ocean, ensuring that the seabed stayed in its current state or better.
- Rainbow trout were more tolerant to higher water temperatures. Brown trout were generally found in the more southern parts of New Zealand. In the Bay of Plenty, for both freshwater and seawater, the temperature regime was more aligned to rainbow trout.

Resolved

That the Strategy and Policy Committee:

- 1 Receives the report, Bay of Plenty Aquaculture Group - A Stocktake of Strategic Aquaculture Opportunities in the Bay of Plenty.**

**Thompson/Scott
CARRIED**

7. Presentations (Continued)

7.1 Presentation - EnviroHub BOP

Presented by: Mary Dillon, Laura Wragg and Nick Gladding

Presentation - EnviroHub BOP: Objective ID A4309043 [⇒](#)

Key Points

- Introduced and demonstrated the Green Team app as a region specific way for people to take action and was aligned with Regional Council's four climate change goals.
- The App would provide the ability to scale awareness for government and council led initiatives.
- The goal now was to build, test and launch the app, starting with Tauranga Moana and then region-wide.

In response to Questions

- The Green Team app would enhance, not duplicate, the Regional Council's proposed Future Fit app.

7.2 Presentation - Sustainable BOP

Presented by: Glen Crowther and Denise Arnold

Presentation - Sustainable BOP: Objective ID A4309047 [⇒](#)

Key Points

- Outlined the vision and mission of sustainable BOP and introduced the Trustees.
- Sustainable BOP was an independent charitable trust. It was apolitical and their focus was at a strategic level.
- Thanked Regional Council for the three year funding agreement to June 2024.
- The challenge was to move towards a circular economy with more sustainable urban development and transport, and to focus on the transition to a low carbon economy.
- Better, deeper level engagement on the core issues was needed.
- In terms of climate change, New Zealand was not doing well, and had not done well, to change emissions.
- Western Bay of Plenty/Tauranga was lagging behind the rest of the country - there was no city, sub-regional or clear regional strategy or targets to reduce emissions.
- Before every investment, project or strategic decision it was important to assess if it was environmentally, socially or economically sustainable, and if not, then it was time for a rethink.

In response to Questions

- The key to the balance between self-sufficiency and free trade was life cycle analysis - understanding the cost and carbon embedded into everything, and promoting wherever possible local production, so that we move in the direction of taking more responsibility for the overall embedding of carbon and environmental costs.

11.30am - The meeting **adjourned**

11.30am - Chairman Leeder **withdrew** from the meeting.

11.50am - The meeting **reconvened**.

8. Reports (Continued)

Strategy

8.1 Operating Environment

Presented by: Namouta Poutasi - General Manager, Strategy and Science
Julie Bevan - Policy and Planning Manager

Resolved

That the Strategy and Policy Committee:

- 1 Receives the report, Operating Environment**
- 2 Endorses in principle the Strategy and Policy work programme 2023.**

**Thompson/Crosby
CARRIED**

8.2 Climate Change Update

Presentation - Future Fit: Objective ID A4309060 [⇒](#)

Presented by: Nic Newman – Climate Change Programme Manager
Kate Barnes – Communications Partner

Key Points

- Whakatāne District Council (WDC) and Regional Council staff would be talking with the Ministry for the Environment (MfE) regarding early thinking on the Climate Adaption Act (CAA) that was proposed to be introduced to the parliament this year.
- Feedback was provided by those who attended the Tauranga City Council Youth Climate Forum.
- Staff were providing “Climate Resilience” input into the update of the SmartGrowth Strategy.
- Marine heatwaves had been experienced in the Bay of Plenty over the summer. There had been no indication to date of changes to ecosystems due to the warmer sea temperatures other than they were keeping the population of sea lettuce down.
- The Regional Energy Transition Accelerator (RETA) Programme, run by the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA) was being launched in the Bay of Plenty.
- Guidance was sought for the Toi Moana Climate Change Scholarship. Guidance received included:
 - Degree majors needed to align with core business.
 - Consider the opportunity to obtain participants commitment to allow Regional Council to showcase them in Regional Council communications.

- Accept applicants from any degree major and then interview to determine how best the student and major aligned to the scholarship.
- Introduced and demonstrated the Future Fit tool which was a gamified carbon footprint tool that would be launched in the coming weeks. The tool helped individuals to understand their own carbon emissions and how to reduce these in a fun and engaging way.

12.11 pm - Chairman Leeder **entered** the meeting.

In Response to Questions

- Climate change anxiety was real. It was important to recognise that and consider what could be done so that the public were not over-burdened by it.
- Climate research suggested that 10 to 20% of the peak rainfall in the recent weather events could potentially be attributable to climate change/warming of the oceans.
- Future Fit:
 - It was suggested that Councillors also be involved in the Future Fit launch material.
 - Discussions with EnviroHub would be ongoing to ensure that the Green Team app and the Future Fit app would be complementary.
 - It was important that any communications also identified attitudinal shift.
 - It would be useful to promote or showcase the headwinds/difficulties some people faced in terms of wanting to come on this journey e.g. catching a bus.
 - \$30k had been allocated as part of the Climate Change Action Plan in the Long Term Plan (LTP) to support the project in its totality.

Resolved

That the Strategy and Policy Committee:

- 1 Receives the report, Climate Change Update.**

**Thompson/Macmillan
CARRIED**

Regulatory Policy

8.3 Essential Freshwater Policy Programme

Presented by: Nicki Green – Principal Advisor, Policy and Planning
 Stephen Lamb – Environmental Strategy Manager
 Kataraina O’Brien - General Manager, Strategic Engagement
 Stephanie Macdonald – Community Engagement Team Leader
 Kate Barnes – Communications Partner
 James Low – Team Leader Policy (Freshwater)

Presentation - Essential Freshwater Policy Programme: Objective ID A4309096 [⇒](#)

Key Points

- Change to notification date:
 - Tables One and Two of the agenda item outlined the reasons for extending the timeframe for notifying proposed changes to the Regional Policy Statement (RPS) and Regional Natural Resources

- Plan (RNRP) to implement the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020 (NPS-FM) to December 2024.
- Staff were of the view that a plan change and supporting documentation of reasonable robustness and quality could not be delivered by July 2024.
 - It was noted that the title of Section 3.1 of the agenda item should read National Policy and Regulatory Changes.
 - Outlined the amendments to the NPS-FM and the National Environment Standard for Freshwater (NES-F).
 - Outlined the communications and engagement planned for the Essential Freshwater Policy Programme in 2023.

In Response to Questions

- Change to notification date:
 - The uncertainty around potential solution options for nitrogen management was due to the review of the Overseer tool which had highlighted several deficiencies. Further research had been undertaken but draft guidance and a risk index tool which had been expected a year ago had still not been received.
- Communications and Engagement:
 - The capacity for iwi, hapū, trusts and marae to engage was challenging as Regional Council was also competing with other agencies and councils. Several tangata whenua led projects were being supported and were progressing.
 - It was recognised that this was a difficult and complex space. There would be different levels of engagement for different audiences - some were already on the journey and had been for some time and some were new to it.

Key Points - Members

- Change to notification date:
 - Supported the staff recommendation to change the notification date. Needed to do everything to limit or mitigate the risk.
 - Concern was raised that the extra time may not be enough - should be advocating to the Ministry that the December 2024 deadline needed to shift.
- Amendments to NPS-FM and NES-F:
 - There was some conflict between national policy directive instruments such as National Policy Statement for Urban Development (NPS-UD) versus National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land (NPS-HPL) versus NPS-FM. A National Policy Framework was not expected for another five to ten years. The challenge would be how Regional Council managed the conflicts going forward.
- Communications and engagement:
 - It was suggested that tangata whenua engagement included governance to governance.
 - Needed to use the Komiti Māori platform more to drive this issue, and also use Regional Council co-governance forums.
 - Work was underway in the Māori landscape in this space. Needed to provide whatever support was required in the workshops already happening.
 - Needed to find a way to better communicate with lay people, particularly Māori.

- Farmers were already overburdened with forums – consider involving Dairy NZ or Fonterra as well to make it more meaningful for farmers, and include tangata whenua in those engagements.

Resolved

That the Strategy and Policy Committee:

- 1 Receives the report, Essential Freshwater Policy Programme.**
- 2 Extends the timeframe for notifying proposed changes to the Regional Policy Statement and Regional Natural Resources Plan to implement the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020 to December 2024.**

**Thompson/von Dadelszen
CARRIED**

8.4 Update on Proposed Change 6: National Policy Statement - Urban Development (NPS-UD) to the Bay of Plenty Regional Policy Statement

Presented by: Nassah Rolleston-Steed
Samantha Pottage - Planner

Key Points - Members

- Hearings Panel should have two if not three councillors- should be a Regional Council driven process.
- If there were two or more councillors, the Chair needed to be independent.
- The appointment of the Chair should be left to the Hearing Panel.

Resolved

That the Strategy and Policy Committee:

- 1 Receives the report, Update on Proposed Change 6: National Policy Statement - Urban Development (NPS-UD) to the Bay of Plenty Regional Policy Statement.**
- 2 Establishes a Hearing Committee under section 34 of the Resource Management Act and delegates authority to it to hold and conduct the hearings process (including any interlocutory matters, consideration of written submissions and hearing of oral submissions) on Proposed Change 6: (National Policy Statement on Urban Development) to the Bay of Plenty Regional Policy Statement.**
- 3 Delegates authority to the Hearing Committee to provide a written report and recommendations on those submissions back to the Strategy and Policy Committee.**
- 4 Endorses the Hearing Panel make up of two Councillors; one panel member with tikanga Māori expertise and one panel member with urban growth technical expertise.**
- 5 Appoints two Councillors from the table in section 3.2 - Cr Jane Nees and Cr Paula Thompson - as members to the Hearing Panel.**

- 6 **Confirms one independent hearing panel member to be appointed to the hearing panel with tikanga Māori expertise from the persons listed at section 3.3 and appoints Mr Rawiri Faulkner.**
- 7 **Confirms one independent hearing panel member to be appointed to the hearing panel with urban growth technical expertise from the persons listed in section 3.4 and appoints Mr Robert Scott.**
- 8 **Confirms a Chairperson for the hearing panel from members with Chair endorsement in tables contained in section 3.2, 3.3 or 3.4.**
- 9 **Delegates Authority to the Chair of the Strategy and Policy Committee to appoint replacement members including the Chair to the Hearing Panel if necessary.**

**Leeder/Crosby
CARRIED**

9. Consideration of Items not on the Agenda

Regulatory Policy

9.1 Bay of Plenty Regional Council Natural and Built Environment Bill and Spatial Planning Bill Submissions

Presented by: Namouta Poutasi - General Manager, Strategy and Science
Julie Bevan - Policy and Planning Manager

Resolved

That the Strategy and Policy Committee:

- 1 **Receives the report, Bay of Plenty Regional Council Natural and Built Environment Bill and Spatial Planning Bill Submissions and accepts it as an Item not on the Agenda. Notes the reason why this item was not on the Agenda is that time needed to incorporate feedback received on the draft submission versions meant that the item was not ready when the Agenda was finalised, and the reason why it cannot be delayed is that the submissions must be lodged by 19 February 2023.**
- 2 **Endorses and confirms for lodgement of the Bay of Plenty Regional Council submissions on the Natural and Built Environment Bill and the Spatial Planning Bill.**
- 3 **Notes that if any changes result from this meeting and/or minor editorial changes or corrections are required to the Bay of Plenty Regional Council submissions, these will be incorporated before lodgement with the approval of the Strategy & Policy Committee Chair.**
- 4 **Endorses and confirms for lodgement the Bay of Plenty councils' submission on the Natural and Built Environment Bill and the Spatial Planning Bill.**
- 5 **Notes that any changes resulting from this meeting and/or from further partner feedback will be incorporated before lodgement with the approval of the Strategy & Policy Committee Chair.**

**Thompson/Macmillan
CARRIED**

20. Closing Karakia

A closing karakia was provided by Cr Te Taru White.

1.30 pm - the meeting closed.

CONFIRMED 16 MAY 2023

Cr Paula Thompson
Chairperson, Strategy and Policy Committee