

Ōhiwa Harbour Implementation Forum

Ngā Meneti Open Minutes

Commencing: Thursday 12 October 2023, 9.30 am

Venue: Waimana Kaaku Room, Waimana School, 9 Raroa Road, Waimana

Heamana

Chairperson: Cr Toi Kai Rākau Iti - Bay of Plenty Regional Council Toi Moana (BOPRC)

Heamana Tuarua

Deputy Chairperson: Charlie Bluett - Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Awa

Ngā Kopounga

Members:

Marewa Titoko - Alternate, Waimana Kaaku, Charlie Bluett - Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Awa, Karen Mokomoko - Whakatōhea Māori Trust Board, Gaylene Kohunui - Alternate, Te Upokorehe, Tuwhakairiora O'Brien - Alternate, Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Awa, Cr Malcolm Campbell - Alternate, BOPRC, Cr Andrew Iles - Whakatāne District Council

Te Hunga i Tae Ake In Attendance:

BOPRC: Pim de Monchy - Coastal Catchments Manager, Tim Senior - Land Management Officer, Dr Josie Crawshaw - Environmental Scientist, Gemma Moleta - Senior Planner (Water Policy), Amanda Namana - Committee Advisor

External: Kelly Hughes - ATS Environmental, Professor Kura Paul-Burke - University of Waikato, Joe Burke - MUSA Environmental

Ngā Hōnea

Apologies:

Cr Nándor Tánzos - Alternate, Whakatāne District Council, Cr Dean Petersen - Ōpōtiki District Council and Georgina Kohunui - Te Upokorehe

1. Karakia Whakatuwhera Opening Karakia

A karakia was provided by Paaku Titoko.

2. Ngā Hōnea Apologies

Resolved

That the Ōhiwa Harbour Implementation Forum:

- 1 Accepts the apologies from Cr Tánczos, Cr Petersen and Georgina Kohunui tendered at the meeting.

Iles/Iti
CARRIED

3. Whakapuakanga o Ngā Take Whai Taha-Rua Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

None declared.

4. Ngā Meneti Minutes

Kia Whakaūngia Ngā Meneti Minutes to be Confirmed

4.1 Ōhiwa Harbour Implementation Forum Minutes - 14 March 2023

Resolved

That the Ōhiwa Harbour Implementation Forum:

- 1 Confirms the Ōhiwa Harbour Implementation Forum Minutes - 14 March 2023 as a true and correct record, subject to the following amendments:
 - Correct the spelling of Upokorehe member Georgina's surname to 'Kohunui'.

Bluett/Iles
CARRIED

5. Whakahoutanga Kōrero Verbal Updates

5.1 Update from Chair/Host

- Waimana Kaaku host Marewa Titoko welcomed everyone and provided an overview of current projects and matters of interest:
 - Te Waimana Kaaku Tribal Authority was currently undergoing a review to ensure the structure reflected the people it represented
 - Providing support to farmers and whānau in the Nukuhou Catchment and for gravel extraction from the Tauranga River.

- Chair Cr Toi Kai Rākau Iti provided an update on BOPRC matters including the Long Term Plan (LTP) process, and encouraged the Forum to make a submission to ensure momentum was not lost on Ōhiwa Harbour progress to date.

6. Ngā Pūrongo Reports

Hei Pānui Anake Information Only

6.1 Ōhiwa Harbour Strategy annual work programme results

Presentation: Ōhiwa Harbour Strategy Annual Work Programme: Objective ID A4512190 [⇒](#)

Presented by: Tim Senior – Land Management Officer

Key Points:

- Highlighted the work that the Coastal Catchments team had completed over the past year with landowners in the catchment
- A river engineer had been engaged to look at options for a solution to Nukuhou River bank erosion issues. One suggestion was to install a series of small, low structures in the river bed to trap sediment coming downstream
- Navigational Safety Bylaw Review consultation had been delayed and was now open – encouraged everyone to engage in this
- Although vehicles were banned from the campground to the end of Ōhiwa Spit through a bylaw, it had made little difference to the ongoing issue.

Key Points - Members:

- Disappointed that cancellation of the Navigational Safety Bylaw Review consultation meetings had not been sufficiently notified to attendees
- Late January 2024 would likely be the best time to schedule the next Ōhiwa Harbour Strategy Group (OHSB) hui.

In Response to Questions:

- Planting the riverbanks was part of the solution, which was already underway and would continue. However, the bulk of the solution needed to be more substantial, e.g. the small weir-like structures mentioned which would reduce the river downcutting but came at a cost
- The care group not directly supported by BOPRC was the Ōhiwa Headland Sanctuary Trust which was funded by Jobs for Nature
- The use of jet skis for the harvesting of pipi was of major concern due to the lack of resource to monitor take.

Resolved

That the Ōhiwa Harbour Implementation Forum:

- 1 **Receives the report, Ōhiwa Harbour Strategy annual work programme results.**

Kohunui/Titoko

CARRIED

6.2 Blue carbon building blocks - Saltmarsh restoration

Presentation: Blue Carbon - An introduction to unlocking the potential in the region through saltmarsh restoration: Objective ID A4512188 [↗](#)

Presented by: Dr Josie Crawshaw - Environmental Scientist

Key Points:

- Blue carbon considered marine and coastal ecosystems with the potential to remove carbon and provide benefits for reducing the impacts of climate change, including a suite of additional benefits
- The three main blue carbon ecosystems were mangroves, saltmarshes and seagrasses. These ecosystems could lock away carbon for centuries and it was hoped that they could keep up with sea level rise (SLR) and continue to be a long-term store
- There was limited information available about seagrass habitats at this stage
- Approximately 60% of saltmarsh had been lost across the region and the land management team were working on significant restoration programmes
- Outlined some potential scenarios for SLR and the specific impacts this could have on Ōhiwa
- There was currently a limited understanding of carbon storage in New Zealand saltmarshes and how much our ecosystems could sequester, so BOPRC staff were working with partners to undertake carbon coring in existing habitats to learn more.

Key Points - Pim de Monchy, Coastal Catchments Manager:

- BOPRC had recently purchased a dairy farm at Pukehina, the majority of which would be on sold to the neighbouring property and 32 hectares retained with an iwi collective. A combination of treatment wetlands were being designed and two-thirds of the remaining land would be restored to saltmarsh. This project had many benefits including cultural, water quality, biodiversity and mahinga kai. This type of project could potentially be emulated elsewhere in the region - members expressed interest in a site visit to view the project.

In Response to Questions:

- Landowners creating drainage schemes in order to use lowlands for pasture was the primary driver for the original loss of saltmarsh habitat.

Resolved

That the Ōhiwa Harbour Implementation Forum:

- 1 Receives the report, Blue carbon building blocks - Saltmarsh restoration.**

**Iles/Bluett
CARRIED**

10.25 am - the meeting **adjourned.**

10.45 am - The meeting **reconvened.**

6.3 Ōhiwa Harbour Fish Barrier Identification and Remediation Report 2023

Tabled Document 1 - Ōhiwa Master Map: Objective ID A4513558 [⇒](#)

Tabled Document 2 - Ōhiwa barriers remaining 2023: Objective ID A4513559 [⇒](#)

Tabled Document 3 - Ōhiwa yet to be assessed 2023: Objective ID A4513560 [⇒](#)

Tabled Document 4 - Ōhiwa Summary: Objective ID A4513562 [⇒](#)

Tabled Document 5 - Brosnahan: Objective ID A4513564 [⇒](#)

Tabled Document 6 - Ramp rope after - pt2: Objective ID A4513565 [⇒](#)

Presented by: Kelly Hughes - Managing Director, ATS Environmental

Key Points:

- Provided a video about a vision of the future for fish passage remediation including:
 - Information on new low cost, low risk tools to effect mass remediation of small to medium structures
 - Data collection and management processes
 - Examples of remediation techniques
- Fish passage was a crucial indication of the connection people had with waterways and taonga species
- Provided a sankey diagram highlighting how many crossing points (with culverts that may present a barrier) had been identified in Ōhiwa
- Displayed information on what had been assessed within Ōhiwa and what was not currently a barrier - more information was available to members on request
- Material cost of the average 'fish barrier fix' in Ōhiwa was approximately \$180 plus labour
- Highlighted the different fish passage remediation options and how fish were using these.

Key Point - Kura Paul-Burke:

- Work undertaken in Ōhiwa Harbour for the mussel restoration project had involved research around using native fibres for mussel spat lines which could also be used for fish passage - when results were available there was an opportunity to share this information to achieve similar benefits.

Key Points - Members:

- Introduced BOPRC's Fish Passage Officer Jo Cranswick, who assisted in delivering fish passage projects across the region and was in the early stages of creating a fish passage action plan under the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPS-FM). This would include a work programme with remediations. She was also working with the consents team to standardise consent conditions and include fish passage provisions.

In Response to Questions:

- There was a hierarchy of regulations and historical issues which made it difficult to define the level of legal responsibility for landowners to ensure fish passage and enable remediation on their properties
- The ATS team were working with the concrete industry to have their baffles approved to be used in their culverts without voiding the warranty.

Resolved

That the Ōhiwa Harbour Implementation Forum:

- 1 Receives the report, Ōhiwa Harbour Fish Barrier Identification and Remediation Report 2023.**

Iles/Mokomoko
CARRIED

6.4 Final mussel restoration report for Awhi Mai Awhi Atu, Sustainable Seas, National Science Challenge project, September 2023

Presentation: Overview Mussel Restoration in Ōhiwa Harbour: Objective ID A4512189 [↗](#)

Presented by: Professor Kura Paul-Burke – University of Waikato

Key Points:

- Outlined the history of the Awhi Mai Awhi Atu project and the outcomes achieved:
 - In 2007, information was gathered about where mussels were collected from historically, which formed the baseline to overlay the science
 - From the original four mussel beds in the harbour, there was just one remaining by 2019, with the western side beds having disappeared. The cause of this was discovered to be the pātangaroa (eleven-armed seastar)
 - Micro-plastic pollution was a significant concern for mussels so natural mussel spat lines were produced for successful recruitment and biodiversity outcomes
 - Mussel numbers in Ōhiwa had reduced from 112 million in 2007, to just 78,000 in 2019. Through this project, there were three new beds by 2021 and numbers had increased to 745,000. There were now around 16 million mussels in the area where the original beds were
- At present, Ōhiwa Harbour was leading the country in mussel restoration
- A combination of fishing and diving was proven to be the most effective way to manage seastars. A hand cream had been developed as an option for using the removed seastars
- It was discovered that cushion stars also ate baby mussels, which was an important piece of knowledge for restoration efforts
- Highlighted the two potential options available to the Forum for restoration efforts going forward and the three most important factors to focus on:
 - Population surveys
 - Mussel spat lines and relocation
 - Starfish management.

Key Points - Members:

- Expert advice, kaumātua involvement and any other support required should be sought to assist a new care group, if established
- Ngāti Awa had applied for a Section 186A closure of the western side of the harbour under the Fisheries Act 1996 to protect the growing mussel beds and juvenile mussels, including requesting a rāhui of this space in the interim.

In Response to Questions:

- If future restoration efforts focused on one side of the harbour, it was likely the other side would also benefit through flow-on effects and currents
- Care groups assisting with some of the sea star management work was an option e.g. seastar trapping from a boat.

Resolved**That the Ōhiwa Harbour Implementation Forum:**

- 1 Receives the report, Final mussel restoration report for Awhi Mai Awhi Atu, Sustainable Seas, National Science Challenge project, September 2023;**
- 2 Supports the considerations identified in this report consistent with the Action Area priorities of the Ōhiwa Harbour Strategy, Refreshed 2014;**
- 3 Agrees to establish a Working Group to investigate funding opportunities for options to continue with mussel restoration, monitoring and seastar removal, with a focus on a whole harbour approach.**

**Bluett/Mokomoko
CARRIED**

6.5 Essential Freshwater Policy Programme Update

*Presentation: Essential Freshwater Policy Programme Update: Objective ID
A4512187* [⇒](#)

Presented by: Gemma Moleta – Senior Planner (Water Policy)

Key Points:

- Chair Cr Iti introduced the paper and acknowledged the size of this kaupapa, the work undertaken in the programme around Te Mana o Te Wai, the hierarchy and provisions for Te Ao Māori and Te Tiriti o Waitangi
- Significant feedback had been received at community events, including water quality concerns (mainly around E.coli and sediment), questioning whether swimming values were truly present in the freshwater areas of the Ōhiwa Harbour Freshwater Management Unit (FMU), the impact of stream bank erosion on the Nukuhou River and subdivision on water quality, upgrading septic tanks and consenting for forestry
- In response to management options, there had been strong opposition from landowners regarding grazing on slopes greater than 25 degrees
- Sediment control bunds were found to be a successful mitigation tool to prevent sediment entering the freshwater body
- Incorporating additional information regarding cultural values, attributes and monitoring after the Plan Change became operative may be possible with iwi management plans or future Plan Changes
- Displayed maps highlighting that surface and ground water quantity was not an issue affecting the Ōhiwa FMU as there were few takes.

In Response to Questions:

- National Environmental Standards for Plantation Forestry (NES-PF) had been recently updated and additional rules for forestry were being considered. BOPRC had hired a new Compliance Officer from the forestry

industry with a focus in this space and ensuring that operators were in line with environmental standards and new regional rules.

Resolved

That the Ōhiwa Harbour Implementation Forum:

- 1 Receives the report, Essential Freshwater Policy Programme Update.**

**Iles/Titoko
CARRIED**

7. Karakia Kati Closing Karakia

A karakia was provided by Paaku Titoko.

12.10 pm – the meeting closed.

CONFIRMED

Cr Toi Kai Rākau Iti
Chairperson
Ōhiwa Harbour Implementation Forum