

Ōhiwa Harbour Implementation Forum

Ngā Meneti Open Minutes

Commencing: Thursday 28 March 2024, 9:32 am

Venue: Totara Room, Whakatāne District Council, 14 Commerce Street, Whakatāne

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

**Heamana Tuarua
Deputy Chairperson:** Charlie Bluett - Te Runanga o Ngāti Awa

**Ngā Kopounga
Members:** Cr Andrew Iles - Whakatāne District Council (WDC), Gaylene Kohunui - Alternate, Te Upokorehe, Cr Nándor Tánzos - Alternate, WDC, Tuwhakairiora O'Brien - Alternate, Te Runanga o Ngāti Awa, Cr Malcolm Campbell - Alternate, BOPRC

**Te Hunga i Tae Ake
In Attendance:** Pim de Monchy - Coastal Catchments Manager, Tim Senior - Contractor (Land Management Officer), Sami Fox - Land Management Officer, Merehine Waiari - Senior Advisor, Linda Conning - Forest and Bird, Amanda Namana - Committee Advisor

External: Georgina Fletcher, General Manager, Community Experience - WDC

**Ngā Hōnea
Apologies:** Karen Mekomoko - Whakatōhea Māori Trust Board, Georgina Kohunui - Te Upokorehe, Marewa Titoko - Alternate, Waimana Kaaku, Cr Nándor Tánzos - Alternate, WDC (for lateness)

1. Karakia Whakatuwhera Opening Karakia

A karakia was provided by Charlie Bluett – Ngāti Awa.

2. Ngā Hōnea Apologies

Resolved

That the Ōhiwa Harbour Implementation Forum:

- 1 Accepts the apologies from Karen Mokokoko, Georgina Kohunui, Marewa Titoko and Cr Nándor Tánzcos (for lateness) 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 - 12 October 2023

Resolved

That the Ōhiwa Harbour Implementation Forum:

- 1 Confirms the Ōhiwa Harbour Implementation Forum Minutes - 12 October 2023 as a true and correct record.

Iles/Iti
CARRIED

5. Whakahoutanga Kōrero Verbal Updates

5.1 Update from Host Member: Whakatāne District Council

Presentation: Whakatāne Long Term Plan Update: Objective ID A4635000 [⇒](#)

Presented by: Cr Andrew Iles – WDC

Key Points:

- Welcomed the Forum to the refurbished WDC Chambers and provided a brief update:
 - Outlined Council's vision and workplan for the Whakatāne District
 - The Long Term Plan (LTP) had gone out for consultation and submitters were encouraged to include detail and additional information to their submissions

- Many consultation meetings had taken place across the rohe including in Murupara, Galatea and Cheddar Valley
- Raised the repeal of the Three Waters reforms and the funding issues arising from this
- Played the video 'Weaving a narrative': [Weaving a narrative \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com)
- Highlighted the importance of the work and investment to date on restoration of the mussel beds in Ōhiwa Harbour and the criticality of maintaining the momentum on this mahi.

Key Points - Members:

- Commended WDC for the extended consultation that had been undertaken with the wider community
- Suggested including the request for continued or increased funding for the Ōhiwa Harbour in the WDC submission to the BOPRC Long Term Plan
- Innovative thinking may be required to identify ways to redistribute resources within existing budgets to assist in continuing the work.

Georgina Fletcher - General Manager, Community Experience - In Response to Questions:

- Investment in Port Ōhope and development on the land surrounding the wharf would continue so feedback from the Forum would be welcomed regarding continued investment and improvements in this area
- WDC were also submitting to BOPRC on their Long Term Plan, reinforcing a desire to see continued investment in the Ōhope Spit, pest management and care groups.

5.2 Chairperson's Update

Presented by: Cr Toi Kai Rākau Iti - BOPRC

Key Points:

- Provided an Essential Freshwater Update to the Forum:
 - Due to a new central Government with differing ideas around freshwater, there were now many unknown factors as to how things would proceed in this space concerning resource management and freshwater policy direction
 - BOPRC had confirmed that it would notify the draft freshwater plan change to implement the NPS-FM by September 2025, following consultation on a draft document to be released at the end of 2024
- Noted the Ōhiwa land management report discussed at a recent Monitoring and Operations Committee meeting (similar to item 6.2 on this agenda), which had the outcome of further information requested to the Strategy and Policy Committee for viable options of mitigation measures related to the health of the harbour.

Key Points - Members:

- Expressed concern over any farms or properties in the catchment that may be affected by targeted rates for potentially both rivers (Whakatāne and Nukuhou).

In Response to Questions:

- There had been little detail provided to date from central government other than indicating the rebalancing of Te Mana O Te Wai – rather than being at the top of a decision hierarchy Te Mana O Te Wai would now be

one of several objectives to consider when deciding on rules for freshwater management.

- A catchment by catchment approach had been indicated, rather than a blanket approach which aligned with BOPRC's intended direction
- The river scheme for Tauranga/Whakatāne ended in the Waimana basin before the Nukuhou River. The Nukuhou River flowed down to Ōhiwa Harbour and was excluded from existing river schemes.

6. Ngā Pūrongo Reports

Hei Pānui Anake Information Only

6.1 Annual Work Programme report to 29 February 2024 and proposed work programme for 2024-25

Presentation: Ōhiwa Harbour Annual Work Programme: Objective ID A4640905 [⇒](#)

Presented by: Tim Senior – Contractor (Land Management) and Linda Conning – Forest and Bird

Key Points:

- Provided an update on fish passage and played a video showing freshwater shrimp already passing through during installation, with fish waiting at the bottom for passage
- Asian paddle crab update – in February 2023 there were 38 caught in traps, concerningly there were 173 caught in February 2024. Highlighted the areas of the harbour they were discovered in and noted that there were significantly more males, the reasons for which were uncertain
- Vehicles on the beach (to surfcast) and mud flats (to access the pipi beds) were of ongoing concern, particularly for dotterel nesting spots. People continued to ignore signage, sometimes going to great lengths to sabotage them.

10.30 am – Cr Nándor Tánczos **entered** the meeting.

- Whangakopikopiko pipi bed was now so depleted that it was taking up to an hour to find 150 pipi, and on random weekends more than 4700 people were observed collecting pipi
- Tokitoki Reserve erosion required repair of the sea wall, for which Department of Conservation now had resource consent to undertake the work and would begin immediately.

Key Points - Members:

- Policing and enforcing bylaws to keep vehicles off protected areas was the biggest challenge. Expressed concern that if the access point was permanently blocked, it may force people to find alternative options through other dotterel grounds
- Pipi monitoring was a very time consuming task for Upokorehe and covered a vast area including the pipi beds, Tokitoki, the boat ramp and further around toward the spit. This was increasingly challenging, particularly for personal safety reasons as intimidation was also becoming a factor

- Suggested a potential rāhui be placed to suspend pipi take and assist in replenishing the population. Noted the Ministry for Primary Industries had authority to enforce rāhui under Section 186A of the Fisheries Act 1996
- Consider inviting farmer-led catchment groups to attend future hui as observers in the interest of a whole of catchment approach.

In Response to Questions:

- Asian paddle crabs were edible, however caution was required as there were several species of native paddle crab also. They were known to have a negative impact on harbours as they were voracious feeders, yet staff were uncertain of long term impacts and suggested someone with expertise on this matter be invited to speak at a future meeting so that action could be taken sooner rather than later
- The Biosecurity Team performed annual surveys in each of the estuaries
- The most successful tool to date had been a security camera which was hired during the dotterel nesting season as a deterrent to vehicles on the beach and to identify offenders. Those vehicles that received letters were not observed to be repeat offending. Options for installation of a more permanent camera, or one specifically for the nesting season were being looked into, however funding was a significant issue
- There were people paying attention to the signs and abiding by the bylaw as some had been noted parking and walking.

Resolved

That the Ōhiwa Harbour Implementation Forum:

- 1 Receives the report, Annual Work Programme report to 29 February 2024 and proposed work programme for 2024-25;**
- 2 Endorses the proposed annual work programme 2024-25;**
- 3 Requests further information exploring costs and options for installing temporary or permanent cameras to deter vehicles at both locations, including potential trade-offs and funding partners;**

**Iti/Iles
CARRIED**

11.09 am – The meeting **adjourned.**

11.20 am – The meeting **reconvened.**

6.2 Ōhiwa FMU Land Management Update

Presentation: Ōhiwa Land Management Operations Update: Objective ID A4635216



Presented by: Sami Fox – Land Management Officer

Key Points:

- The Land Management team worked with willing landowners in the catchment under set parameters
- Sediment and e-coli in the Ōhiwa catchment were priority contaminants and required a high scale of change to meet the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPS-FM) targets and environmental outcomes

- SedNet monitoring had been undertaken in 2021 by Landcare Research, which identified sources of sediment and nutrients
- The main emphasis for land management works to date had been on retiring steep erodible land and riparian margins
- The Nukuhou River had seen significant downcutting of its bed, resulting in bank material being mobilised and ultimately ending up in the harbour. This river was not part of a rated river scheme, therefore current funding to address the issues was limited and third party funding to consider bed control structures was being explored
- Further focus was in biodiversity and working with care groups, of which Ōhiwa had the largest proportion in the Eastern Bay of Plenty (13 care groups protecting thousands of hectares of public land).

Key Points - Members:

- Would be useful to know the land use of the farms and lifestyle blocks that were working with the Land Management team, and those who were not (e.g beef, lifestyle, forestry), to gain a clearer picture of the overall catchment. Requested more information to a future meeting identifying what data was being collected, how it could be presented and best utilised
- Supported using native trees combined with willow and poplar wherever possible to assist in land management practices.

In Response to Questions:

- Many areas around the harbour were smaller lifestyle blocks with less contribution to the water quality issues
- Willows were used as a land management tool for steeper land and stream bank erosion due to having the densest root fibre
- The willow and poplar nursery was in early stages and housed on unused BOPRC land in Poroporo. The nursery would be managed by BOPRC and was of a small size used for inhouse land management purposes
- The vast majority of land management plantings were indigenous, with non-native species used where required for their effectiveness in managing erosion instead of using rock or other options.

Resolved

That the Ōhiwa Harbour Implementation Forum:

- 1 Receives the report, Ōhiwa FMU Land Management Update.**

**Iles/Petersen
CARRIED**

6.3 Mussel restoration project update

Presented by: Tim Senior – Contractor (Land Management Officer) and Pim de Monchy – Coastal Catchments Manager

Key Points:

- Considered that the highest expense of the project sat with the mussel and seastar population monitoring mahi, which needed to be undertaken by highly skilled scientific divers. Had now met with National Institute of Water and Atmospheric research (NIWA) who had a high level of interest in undertaking the work, which also aligned with another shellfish project they had underway. NIWA would discuss methodology with Dr. Kura-Paul Burke and costs would be provided in due course

- A renewal application for resource consent for the mussel stations/buoys had been submitted to BOPRC and put on hold pending the further work and consultation that needed to be undertaken
- At the meeting, BOPRC Science team indicated interest in taking a leadership role in the mussel restoration and monitoring, and in contributing \$10K-20K to the project annually.

Key Points - Members:

- Ngati Awa expressed support in assisting the science team if and where required in the ongoing mussel restoration mahi
- Encouraged continuing to work with young Māori scientists in this space as it was a unique and beneficial learning and research opportunity
- The Chair offered to bring relevant staff to engage with Upokorehe regarding this project and explore potential ways to work together in continuing the mussel restoration.

In Response to Questions:

- Using local divers for starfish removal was still a possibility which required further investigation, however the populations surveys needed to happen first, and other required tasks in progressing the project needed to be completed in the right order.

Resolved

That the Ōhiwa Harbour Implementation Forum:

- 1 Receives the report, Mussel restoration project update.**

**Iti/Bluett
CARRIED**

6.4 Long Term Plan 2024-2034 Consultation

Presentation: BOPRC Long Term Plan 2024-2034 Consultation: Objective ID A4635005

Presented by: Cr Toi Kai Rākau Iti - BOPRC

Key Points:

- Outlined the timeline with the Long Term Plan (LTP) currently out for consultation and hearings being held in May 2024, including one being held at a marae for the first time
- Highlighted the initiative 'Friend of the submitter' - Huiarau Stewart, who offered independent assistance in writing submissions
- For the first time, the LTP had a community outcome which spoke to tangata whenua 'Te Ara Poutama' - partnering with tangata whenua and community towards a prosperous and equitable regional future
- Whāinga (LTP Goal 14) Supported enhancing Māori participation in operational activities and progressing new opportunities where they arose, within existing operations
- Whāinga (LTP Goal 16) Ensuring and equitable approach to the four wellbeings and delivery of community outcomes
- Whāinga (LTP Goal 17) Partner with Māori to enhance delivery and share decision making
- This was also the first time the LTP document would be produced in both English and Te Reo Māori

- Outlined the contents of the LTP in relation to Kōhī, nationwide projects and plans of significance to the Forum
- Māori freehold land had a complex and particular ownership structure.

Key Points - Pim de Monchy - Coastal Catchments Manager

- Noted that the most appropriate way for the Forum to submit to each Council's LTP would be for staff from each council to offer support in writing submissions to other councils, rather than to their own.

Resolved

That the Ōhiwa Harbour Implementation Forum:

- 1 Receives the report, Long Term Plan 2024-2034 Consultation;**
- 2 Agrees to write submissions to the Long Term Plans of Ōpotiki District Council, Toi Moana Bay of Plenty Regional Council and Whakatāne District Council on Ōhiwa specific elements;**
- 3 Delegates final approval of the submissions to the Chair.**

**Kohunui/Iles
CARRIED**

**7. Karakia Kati
Closing Karakia**

A karakia was provided by Charlie Bluett - Ngāti Awa.

12.27 pm - the meeting closed.

CONFIRMED

Cr Toi Kai Rākau Iti
Chairperson, Ōhiwa Harbour Implementation
Forum