

# Informal Workshop Notes

## Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group Workshop

**Held:** 09:30 am, Friday 22 March 2024, BOPRC Rotorua Office, Waiariki Room, Corner Fenton & Pukaki Street, Rotorua and via Zoom (Audio Visual Meeting)

**Heamana  
Chairperson:** Pou Tākiwaiora Arapeta Tahana

**Heamana Tuarua  
Deputy Chairperson:** Deputy Chair Kevin Winters (Bay of Plenty Regional Council Toi Moana (BOPRC))

**Ngā Kopounga  
Members:**

**Te Arawa Lakes Trust (TALT):**

Nuki Nicholson, Rangitihī Pene (Alternate)

**Rotorua Lakes Council (RLC):**

Cr Gregg Brown; Phill Thomass - Lakes Community Board Chair (Alternate)

**BOPRC:**

Chairman Doug Leeder (via Zoom); Cr Te Taru White (Alternate)

**Ministry for the Environment (MfE) (Observer):**

Eugene Berryman-Kamp, Director Te Mana o Te Wai and Implementation, Partnerships

**Te Hunga i Tae Ake  
In Attendance:**

**TALT:** Geoff Rolleston - Interim Chair; Dr Daryn Bean - Tumu Whakarae (Chief Executive); Soweeta Fort-D'Ath - Lakes Programme Coordinator

**RLC:** Andrew Moraes - Chief Executive; Stavros Michael - Deputy Chief Executive Environmental and Infrastructure Solutions

**BOPRC:** Chris Ingle - General Manager, Integrated Catchments; Helen Creagh - Rotorua Catchments Manager; Rosemary Cross - Senior Projects Manager, Rotorua Catchments; Melissa Williams - Communications Partner; Merinda Pansegrouw - Committee Advisor

**External:** Chris Sutton - Rerewhakaaitu Incorporated Society; Don Atkinson - Lakes Water Quality Society; Ian McLean, former president Lakes Water Quality Society; Stewart Edward, Lakes Water Quality Society

**Facilitator:** Elva Conroy, Conroy Donald Consultants

## Ngā Hōnea

### Apologies:

Mayor Tania Tapsell (RLC) and Mariana Te Rangi (TALT)

## 1. Karakia Whakatuwhera Opening Karakia

Karakia whakatuwhera provided by Arapeta Tahana.

## 2. Workshop Purpose

Facilitated by: Elva Conroy, Conroy Donald Consultants.

Following the presentation of the Independent Review Report to the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group, the purpose of the workshop was to:

consider next steps and develop a clear pathway to implement the recommendations of the Review Report, by:

- Building on and improving what was already in place
- Identifying short and medium actions to progress improvements
- Focusing on recommendations 1 and 5 as a starting point.

Members were asked to ponder the following questions:

1. What would a successful collaborative partnership look like?
2. How to ensure the existing Lakes Strategy guided the Strategy Group's work, planning and decision making?
3. How to shift from "operational oversight" to "governance oversight"?

## 3. Workshop Outcomes

### 3.1 Consideration of next steps

*Tabled Document 1 - RTALSG Workshop Outcomes & Menti Survey prepared by  
Facilitator Elva Conroy: Objective ID A4631587*

#### **Key Points - Facilitator**

- The common interest/focus for all members of the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group (RTALSG) (the Strategy Group) was:
  - The health/well-being of the Lakes;
  - The Strategy Group had a collective responsibility (legislative/inherent) to care for the Lakes; and was the key group that could ensure this focus
- Overall findings of the Review Report:
  - The Strategy Group, Lakes Programme and Deed of Funding would not exist without the Te Arawa Lakes Settlement Act 2006
  - The Review Panel's opinion that the Strategy Group/associated Lakes Programme had not:
    - restored the mana and rangatiratanga of Te Arawa
    - established a meaningful relationship between Crown and Te Arawa
    - ensured that the relationship comprised mutual trust and cooperation
  - Section 3 highlighted significant concerns and deficiencies with the Strategy Group and associated Lakes Programme; critical changes were

needed as it was not working for all partner organisations, or delivering outcomes equitably for all Lakes.

A Menti Survey was used to collate and show collective ideas in real-time. The following questions were posed to members via the Menti Survey:

1. How did reading the Review Report make you feel?
2. What do you hope to see/hear/feel by the end of the Workshop?
3. What can we do together, that we cannot do alone?
4. What are the key elements of successful collaborative governance?
5. Governance vs operational oversight: what was the difference?
6. What do we do to ensure the Lakes Strategy guides our work planning and decision making?

The anonymous feedback was submitted electronically by members – and attached as Tabled Document 1.

### **Collaborative Governance**

#### **Key Points - Facilitator:**

- Highlighted the difference between co-management and collaborative governance (co-governance) as per directive from the Office of the Auditor General (2016) “Principles for effectively co-governing natural resources”:
  - Co-management (i.e. the Lakes Programme): a collaborative process of decision making and problem solving within the administration of conservation policy
  - Co-governance (i.e. the Strategy Group): arrangements in which ultimate decision-making authority resided with a collaborative body exercising devolved power – shared power and responsibility between government and local stakeholders.

#### **Key Points - Members:**

- Highlighted collective strengths in terms of collective governance:
  - Ability to influence government decisions and enable large-scale actions that may not be achievable individually
  - enabled shared responsibility, projects, resourcing and funding
  - resulted in connected action and greater environmental impact
- Key elements of successful collaborative governance:
  - Being clear on the why/wai
  - Having a clear purpose
  - Having clear roles, while acknowledging the responsibilities and accountabilities of each organisation
  - Shared values and/or guiding principles: equity/respect/reciprocity/humility/connectivity
  - Shared learnings, resourcing and language
  - Connecting with the community so they knew what the Group was doing/where and what help was needed or available
  - Enabled contributions by communities/stakeholders
  - Compared relationship/commitment strengths between partners in the Strategy Group to a three-legged stool
  - Acknowledged that other entities (partner organisations/community boards/stakeholders/interest groups) would also want to be involved/contribute.

## **Governance Oversight**

### **Key Points - Facilitator:**

- Referred to a comment made in the Review Report relating to governance/lack of strategic focus, namely that *“the Strategy Group had lost its governance oversight function. It has deserted itself of good effective governance over the programme, instead dropped its responsibilities and become merely a reporting forum”*
- Discussed the difference between governance direction and operations delivery, using Olympic-level rowing as an analogy.

### **Key Points - Members:**

- Governance = direction setting vs Operational = delivery
- Primary function of a governing body was to hold a chief executive accountable for delivery/goals/objectives. The Strategy Group’s current structure had no chief executive to be held accountable
- Current reporting structure required review
- Ideally, the independent chair/Pou Tākiwaiora should be in close liaison with the three partner organisations’ chief executives, meeting on a quarterly basis to track progress; supported greater connectivity between Pou Tākiwaiora and chief executives – accordingly needed to develop a methodology to align with structure
- Clarity of roles was important
- Highlighted the importance of having a common understanding of the vision/where we were going/tracking individual efforts/awareness of competing priorities.

## **Strategy as a Foundation**

### **Key Points - Facilitator:**

- Highlighted the importance of the [“Vision and Strategy for the Lakes of the Rotorua District” Document](#) – it provided leadership to the partner organisations and community in the implementation of the Vision and Strategy for the Lakes
- The Strategy consisted of three themes, nine focus areas and 11 goals
- Te Arawa Lakes Settlement Act 2006 – embedded the Strategy Group
- Lakes Strategy was the foundation for the Strategy Group
- Key documents of the three partners aligning with the health and well-being of the lakes, i.e. Te Tūāpapa & He Mahere Taiao (o ngā Wai o Te Arawa)/Regional Policy Statement, Regional Plans/Strategies/Spatial Plans/District Plans, as drivers for projects
- As demonstrated by Te Maru o Kaituna River Authority/Rangitāiki River Forum as examples, it would be important to have an action plan/work programme that aligned closely with the Group’s Strategy document.

### **Key Points - Members:**

- Acknowledged that the role of the Strategy Group was to provide leadership in relation to the implementation of the Strategy
- While the Lakes Programme primarily concentrated on achieving water quality goals (as per Deed Fund), other strategic outcomes or focus areas had not been incorporated into the planning, execution or reporting processes

- Each partner organisation was carrying out projects which aligned with the Strategy; however, these projects were not currently captured within the Lakes Programme
- Needed to focus more on the engagement of the community / informing them about lakes catchment issues
- Once the action plan/work programme was closely aligned with the Strategy document, going forward, future meeting agendas should be determined by the action plan
- Required the formal identification of the Strategy Group's values/guiding principles/shared culture
- Identification of future funding streams/Crown commitments was important
- Leadership by Te Arawa Lakes Trust was critical
- Involvement and ability for the Lakes Water Quality Society to contribute effectively was important.

### 3.2 Direction Provided:

#### **Next Steps/Actions arising from the Workshop:**

- Refresh the Strategy/develop an action plan in 2024
- Ensure the Lakes Programme delivers projects that align with the Strategy/Action Plan
- Ensure that all reporting aligned with the Strategy and Action Plan
- Ensure that all new Strategy Group members undergo an induction process, in relation to the Strategy Group's purpose, background/reason for its inception along with key foundational documents
- Acknowledged that the existing Lakes Strategy included good content that could be expanded on: a simplistic approach to a Strategy refresh could involve a brief review of the Strategy/summary of "what was still relevant/what was superfluous/missing" (to be developed by Elva Conroy)
- A 1-hour workshop of the Strategy Group to be scheduled for 14 June 2024, to be facilitated by Elva Conroy, reviewing the following:
  - Outcomes of Strategy review
  - Strategy outcomes – status quo or something else?
  - Guiding values and/or principles
  - Next steps for Strategy and action plan development.

## 4 Conclusion

Pou Tākiwaiora Arapeta Tahana thanked Elva Conroy for facilitating the discussion and Strategy Group members for the insightful kōrero.

He concluded by reminding all of what the values of water were and the lessons that the Strategy Group could learn from the wai:

- Water stayed low: let us stay humble and remember what the real kaupapa was
- Water kept reconnecting: let us collaborate
- Water always found its way back: let us come together
- Water kept supporting life/creation: let us support its health as our role
- Water could change its form: our form can change from time to time, but let us keep our focus.

**11:30am - Workshop closed.**