

**Minutes of a Meeting of the
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
held in the Council Chambers, 15 Seymour Street, Blenheim on
THURSDAY, 4 SEPTEMBER 2014 commencing at 1.00 pm.**

Present

Councillors P J S Jerram (Chairperson), J A Arbuckle, G S Barsanti, C J Brooks, D D Oddie, L M Shenfield, Mayor Sowman and Mr E R Beech (Rural representative).

In Attendance

Councillors J L Andrews, B G Dawson G I T Evans T E Hook, J C Leggett, and Mr H R Versteegh (Manager, Regulatory Department), and Kathy Payne (Committee Secretary).

Apology

An apology for non-attendance from Mr R Smith and Councillor Sloan was received and sustained.

Cllrs Barsanti/Shenfield:

That apologies from Mr R Smith and Councillor T M Sloan be received and sustained.

Carried**R.14/15.97 Confirmation of Sub-Committee Business****Cllrs Shenfield/Barsanti:**

That the following approvals granted by the Swimming Pools Sub-Committee acting under delegated authority (Regulatory Committee Minute (R.13/14.166) be received and the recommendations adopted:

- **S & J Hill – 12 Lakings Road, Blenheim - exemption to install a Coverstar safety pool cover in lieu of a fence (exemption pursuant to section 6 of the Fencing of Swimming Pools Act 1987).**
- **M Elkington and A Boock – 201 Oakwood Lane, Witherlea, Blenheim - exemption to install a Save-T 3 safety pool cover in lieu of a fence (exemption pursuant to section 6 of the Fencing of Swimming Pools Act 1987).**
- **R Beardsworth - 19A Adams Lane, Blenheim - exemption to install an Eclipse Coverstar safety pool cover in lieu of a fence (exemption pursuant to section 6 of the Fencing of Swimming Pools Act 1987).**
- **A & P Young, 110 Ben Morven Road, RD 2, Blenheim - exemption to install a Save T3 safety pool cover in lieu of a fence (exemption pursuant to section 6 of the Fencing of Swimming Pools Act 1987).**
- **P Morice & K Fowler – 502 Middle Renwick Road, Blenheim - exemption to install a Save T3 safety pool cover in lieu of a fence (exemption pursuant to section 6 of the Fencing of Swimming Pools Act 1987).**
- **R S & L J Findlater – 7 Rutledge Street, Blenheim - approval to use a lockable cover on an unfenced spa pool (exemption pursuant to section 6 of the Fencing of Swimming Pools Act 1987).**

Carried

ATTENDANCE: Mr P Davidson, Council's Groundwater Scientist, was present for the following item.

R.14/15.98 Analysis of Radon Data from the Wairau River and Adjoining Wairau Plains Aquifer - February 2014 E345-007-001

The report to the Committee provided information on the Council investigation into the reasons for the small but persistent decline in Wairau Aquifer levels in the Conders area since the early 1980s. The decline in the aquifer levels has implications for the future productivity of domestic, irrigation and municipal water supply if the trend continues over the longer term.

Along with other investigations, the Council hydrologists and river engineers are collaborating on a series of projects to explain the declining trend in well levels. The focus is on the exchange of water between the Wairau River and adjoining Wairau Aquifer and how this might be changing over time.

Members were advised that radon gas (which occurs naturally in very low concentrations) can be used to trace the interaction of the Wairau River with the Wairau Aquifer. Both the radon gas and temperature measurements support the historic loss gaugings which show significant recharge occurs in the Wairau River reach between the Waihopai River and Wratts Road as detailed in the "Analysis of Radon Data from the Wairau River and Adjoining Wairau Plains Aquifer – February 2014" report included with the agenda.

Cllrs Jerram/Arbuckle:

That the "Analysis of Radon Data from the Wairau River and Adjoining Wairau Plains Aquifer February 2014" report be received.

Carried

ATTENDANCE: Ms N Eade, Council's Land Resources Scientist, was present for the following two items.

R.14/15.99 Significant Natural Areas Project - Annual Report 2013/14 E310-006-001#01

The annual "Summary Report on the Results of the Significant Natural Areas Project 2013-2014" was included with the agenda for members' information. Members were aware that the Significant Natural Areas (SNA) project is a long term project although the emphasis has shifted, from an initial focus on identifying sites and collecting information through the ecological survey work, to a focus on on-going protection and monitoring work. Since the project commenced in 2001 a total of 284 properties have been surveyed and 708 individual sites identified with two new sites surveyed this year.

Ms Eade outlined the key activities over the last year in a presentation to the Committee. She covered the ecological survey work, protection projects, monitoring work, seed collection work, funding and the Tui to Town project. In respect of emerging issues, members were advised that the biodiversity fund is being changed to a community fund and Council will no longer be able to apply to this fund on behalf of landowners. The community initiatives that are happening were also noted.

The Committee discussed the possibility of extending the area of the Tui to Town programme to further areas in Marlborough that have been identified as threatened conservation so that funding support for native planting projects on private land can be offered. It was agreed that the Significant Natural Areas working group would discuss this and put forward a recommendation to the Committee.

Ms Eade advised that the SNA project picked up the seed collection project in Marlborough as there was no other collection of native seeds and has worked closely with a nursery. There is also a dairy farm initiative which has set up a native plant nursery.

In respect of the demand for protection works, members were advised that there is potential for further work. So far about 10% of identified sites have received restoration or protection and a monitoring programme to re-visit and assess a representative sample of these sites is being developed and will be trialled in the 2014/15 year.

Council has an undertaking to do follow-up weed control within the first two to three years and for further assistance share a 50/50 cost of ongoing weed control for significant cases. Fencing and maintenance is entirely the landowner's responsibility.

In addition, a separate wetland identification programme has been carried out and it is envisaged that these sites will be incorporated into the SNA programme. In respect of how the wetland sites previously identified under the SNA project (which is non scheduled) would be managed, Ms Eade advised that the landowners have been consulted regarding the sites becoming scheduled and the process has been smooth.

Cllrs Barsanti/Shenfield:
That the information be received.

Carried

R.14/15.100 Report on Council's Non-Regulatory Dairy Industry Programme in Marlborough

E355-008-004-04

The report to the Committee provided an update on Council's non-regulatory work with the dairy industry initiated in 2012 to work towards achieving environmental best practice standards in the region. This included the Dairy Farm Plan programme, the Regional Dairy Working Group and involvement in the Marlborough dairy monitor farm. "The Marlborough District Council's Non-regulatory Work Programme with the Dairy Industry 2012-June 2014" report included with the agenda provided details about these actions. Ms Eade also provided a presentation summarising the non-regulatory initiatives.

Members were advised that the farm plan project has had limited success as only six farmers have participated in the Council programme. It was thought the reason for this could be because suppliers to Fonterra are bound to comply with the Fonterra Environment Programme and farmers were busy completing waterway fencing by December 2013, although some outstanding work is yet to be completed. Fonterra, through its local Environmental Sustainability Officer, has also been providing advice on dairy effluent upgrades using the industry pond storage calculator and DairyNZ industry guidelines and standards.

The Committee discussed the dairy farm plan programme and was supportive of the programme being reframed to include nutrient management plans whilst keeping the option open for environmental farm plans. Ms Eade advised that there is potentially budget that has not been used that could fund some pilot nutrient management plans, which is a more relevant link to what Fonterra is now requiring for farmers, and could be refined through the Dairy Working Group.

Cllrs Brooks/Oddie:

- 1. That the information be received.**
- 2. That pilot Nutrient Management Plans be funded from the Environmental Dairy Farm Plan Programme budget.**

Carried

ATTENDANCE: Ms S Lines, Council's Environmental Protection Officer, was present for the following item.

R.14/15.101 Dairy Effluent and Stream Crossings

2013/14 E330-001-004

The report, "Dairyshed Effluent and Stream Crossing Survey 2013/2014" was included with the agenda for members' information.

Members were aware that the dairy effluent and stream crossing survey is an annual audit which Council staff undertake on Marlborough's dairy farms. The purpose of the survey is to promote good

dairy effluent management, provide information to the dairy farmers on dairy effluent systems and the best management practices, and to ensure compliance with the resource management plan rules and Resource Management Act 1991.

The report to the Committee summarised dairy shed effluent, washdown collection, containment and application systems, ponds and storage and stream crossings for the 2013/2014 year. Members were advised that reoccurring problems throughout the survey were unsatisfactory application rates from travelling irrigators and mechanical failures.

In summary, members were advised that of the 58 dairy farms inspected the wastewater collection, containment and application systems on six farms were too close to waterways. It was noted that 10 farms do not have contingency measures in place for system failures and/or heavy rainfall events. Members were advised that 2% of dairy farms were rated as significant non-compliance which is being actively addressed.

Ms Lines advised there are three farms that have a weeping wall system and having the liquids and solids separated makes it completely different for spreading to land. She noted that because industry standards and methods are changing rapidly, farmers are looking at above ground tank systems. The pond calculator method is used widely to determine how much storage is required.

Although there have been significant improvements since 1994 when monitoring commenced, generally the Committee was disappointed at the slow in progress updating systems. They felt that dairy farmers had been given adequate time to upgrade systems through the Council's collaborative approach.

It was noted that a possible reason for the slow improvements this year could be hesitation by farmers until the review of the plan rules has been completed. The new requirements in the draft rules would make a significant change towards upgrading systems.

In respect of stream crossings, there are still 49 stock stream crossings of the 229 identified in 2002 that need to be eliminated and fencing of waterways to exclude stock needs to be completed.

It was noted that the Council and the dairy industry are continually working together to help dairy farmers to achieve environmental standards. In relation to dairy effluent management, Fonterra is emphasising that all systems must comply with Council requirements 365 days of the year.

Cirs Barsanti/Jerram:

- 1. That the "Dairyshed Effluent & Stream Crossing Survey 2013/2014" summary report be received.**
- 2. That the "Dairyshed Effluent & Stream Crossing Survey 2013/2014" summary report be released to the public, a copy sent to all dairy farmers and a copy be put on Council's web page.**
- 3. That any outstanding issues which need to be addressed from previous surveys, be addressed during the 2014/2015 Dairyshed Effluent & Stream Crossing Survey.**
- 4. That the remaining stream crossings be a major focus during the 2014/2015 Dairy Survey and enforcement action taken if necessary.**

Carried

ATTENDANCE: Ms K McIlveney, Council's Solicitor, was present for the following item.

**R.14/15.102 Hearing and Determining Objections under
the Dog Control Act 1996 E305-004-001**

Members were advised that the Council has the power under the Dog Control Act to classify owners of dogs (probationary or disqualification) and the power to classify dogs (dangerous or menacing) and the Animal Control Sub-committee has been delegated the power to hear and determine objections to those classifications.

In 2011 the Auditor-General recommended that enforcement decisions should not be taken by councillors and subsequently the Council delegated enforcement decisions to the Enforcement and Prosecution Committee. Approval was now sought from the Committee that the responsibility for hearing and determining objections under the Dog Control Act 1996 be delegated to the Enforcement and Prosecution Committee subject to section 55 (barking notices) being added to the recommendation.

It was clarified that the Animal Control Sub-committee would retain its prime role of policy maker.

Cllrs Arbuckle/Oddie:

That the powers to hear and determine objections under sections 22 (probationary classification), 26 (disqualification), 31 (dangerous classification), 33B, 33D (menacing classification) and 55 (barking notices) of the Dog Control Act 1996 be delegated to the Enforcement and Prosecution Committee.

Carried

ATTENDANCE: Mrs S Edmonds, Council's Consultant, was present for the following item.

R.14/15.103 Review of the Regional Pest Management Strategy 2012 - Update E315-002-005-01

An update on the progress of the major review of the Regional Pest Management Strategy (RPMS) for Marlborough 2012 was provided to the Committee.

A minor review of the RPMS was undertaken in 2012 and at that time it was resolved that a major review would be undertaken as the legislative changes to the Biosecurity Act 1993 were adopted by central government. While the legislation is being finalised and a National Policy Direction produced, the Council staff are undertaking background preparation work for when the formal review steps can be taken.

Members were advised that internally work has been progressing on the review of the existing pest programmes which will initially be presented to the Regional Pest Management Plan Review Sub-Committee. The review has highlighted that the future Regional Pest Management Plan has a very specific role to manage pests using a regulatory approach and the Council's biosecurity role will be broader than just the pests that will be managed through the Regional Pest Management Plan. A collaborative project has been established between the South Island councils to work together on future regional plans. This platform is also being explored to share costs for analysis of benefits and costs for a given pest species.

Cllrs Brooks/Shenfield:

That the information be received.

Carried

R.14/15.104 2013/2014 Budget Carryovers F045-07-01, R450-002-G01

A request for Regulatory 2013/2014 Budget Carryovers to be incorporated into the 2014/2015 budget was put forward for consideration by the Committee.

It was noted that a number of works scheduled for completion in 2013/2014 did not proceed for a variety of reasons.

Cllrs Jerram/Arbuckle:

That the 2014/2015 budget be amended to incorporate the Regulatory Department 2013/2014 carryovers.

Environmental Review Projects	
Taylor River Water Quality	55,000
Coastal Monitoring Strategies	71,753
Marlborough Landscape group	8,000
	<u>134,753</u>
Biosecurity – Regional Pest Control	
RPS Review	25,000
Task Force Research	15,000
Wilding Pine	10,000
Chilean Needle Grass Management	45,000
Tb Free Contribution	10,000
	<u>105,000</u>
Harbour Control	
Risk Control Measures to Mitigate Harbour Hazards	429,152
Database and mapping development for harbour functions	160,000
	<u>589,152</u>
Environmental Health	
Food Premises Legislation Changes	100,000
	<u>100,000</u>
<u>Carried</u>	

R.14/15.105 Motel Association Submission on the Annual Plan R450-001-020-01

This item was withdrawn.

R.14/15.106 Information Package

Cllrs Barsanti/Brooks:
That the Regulatory Department Information Package dated 4 September 2014 be received and noted.

Carried

The meeting closed at 2.45 pm.

Record No. 14189075