

Climate Change Update

(Clr Hook) (Report prepared by Kaye McIlveney)

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Purpose

1. To report on climate change activities within Council.

Context

2. This report is an update on where we have got to in Council in our climate change activities. It addresses current mitigation actions and planning for adaptation. It also addresses central and local government actions.

Climate changes expected

3. The current advice from the Ministry for Environment has been reported on previously. It can be accessed here. <https://mfe.govt.nz/climate-change/likely-impacts-of-climate-change/how-could-climate-change-affect-my-region-0>

Local Government activities

Local Government Leaders' Climate Change Declaration 2017

4. Councillors will be aware that, in 2017, the Mayor, John Leggett, signed the Declaration. The Declaration acknowledges the importance and urgent need to address climate change. It made some specific commitments—
 - a) to promote walking, cycling, public transport and other low carbon transport options;
 - b) improve resource efficiency and the health of homes, businesses and infrastructure;
 - c) support the reasonable use of renewable energy and the uptake of electric vehicles.
5. Council has responded, and continues to respond, to each of these commitments.

Bike/Walk

6. Council has been running its Bike/Walk strategy for some years and has been providing walking and biking trails around the region.

Energy Efficiency Schemes

7. Council participates in a number of Energy Efficiency Schemes which provide advances to ratepayers to install clean home heating, water heating, solar power, and insulation in their homes. The Scheme has been running since 2010 and has assisted over 1,000 ratepayers in that time.

Council Energy Efficiency

8. Council's energy usage is monitored and a number of actions to increase efficiency and reduce usage have been implemented—
 - a) retrofitting street lights with LED bulbs (including MDC buildings and the airport);retrofitting MDC offices with energy efficient air conditioning;
eco rated vehicles in the main Council fleet;
consideration of energy consumption in the design of major infrastructure (e.g. pump stations);
9. Further work is also being undertaken, including—
 - a) conversion of waste streams to energy
 - b) options for electric vehicles in future fleet leases;

- c) energy efficient building and plant design;
 - d) plant operations being scheduled for low energy use times of day;
 - e) building management and systems policies to reduce energy consumption.
10. Council staff also maintain a watching brief for national and local energy efficiency initiatives.

Local Government Position Statement on Climate Change

11. Also in 2017, LGNZ issued a position statement on climate change. It set out commitments including to collaborate across the local government sector and called on central government to provide leadership and to formally recognise, through legislation, the role that local government has in managing the impacts of climate change.

LGNZ Report: Vulnerable: the quantum of local government infrastructure exposed to sea level rise

12. LGNZ commissioned an analysis of the replacement value of infrastructure at risk from sea level rise under four scenarios; a 0.5m, 1.00m, 1.5m and a 3m rise. Only those Councils with full LiDAR coverage were assessed at the first three levels. Once the LiDAR work is undertaken in Marlborough, further work can be done on infrastructure at risk from sea level rise.

LGNZ & SOLGM Guidance & training

13. Both LGNZ and SOLGM provide guidance and training for local authorities in many facets of climate change. They have provided decision-making tools, legal advice and opportunities for the exchange of experiences across the sector.

Central Government activities

14. Central government has introduced the Zero Carbon legislation. This was reported to Councillors at the last Planning, Finance and Community Committee meeting.
15. Government also announced changes to the Emissions Trading Scheme.
16. Government is due to release a national risk assessment framework which can be used to identify what the most serious impacts of climate change will be and who and where will be most affected. It is expected that we will be able to adapt this framework for use at a regional level.
17. MfE has provided decision-making tools, guidance and seminars on aspects of climate change such as sea level rise.
18. MPI has established a unit to work with primary producers and regional councils on managing the impacts on the primary production sector.
19. The Deep South Initiative, part of the National Science Challenge, has focussed on climate change science, including the social sciences such as community resilience.
20. The Productivity Commission has recently issued a report on Local Government Funding and Financing. The Report identifies climate change as one of four key areas where the existing funding model is insufficient to address cost pressures and where new tools are required.

Council activities

Climate Change Integrated Work Programme

21. Council commenced the Climate Change Integrated Work Programme to inventory the data and information Council needs to make climate change related decisions. The Programme—
- a) assesses each Activity Group as to the impacts that climate change may have on that activity;
 - b) ensures that climate change is being properly taken into account when relevant; and
 - c) ensures that staff have the data/information they need to assess the impacts of climate change.

22. There have been three reports to Council so far under the Integrated Work programme—
- a) Flood Protection & Control
 - b) Three waters; and
 - c) Solid Waste.
23. The Programme has scheduled reports from the following to be presented to Councillors over the rest of the year—
- a) Land Transport;
 - b) Water—quality and quantity;
 - c) Resource Management Policy and Practice;
 - d) Other including Biosecurity, Health, Building Control, Harbours, & Emergency Management

Mitigation actions

24. Council is incorporating mitigation actions across its activities. Apart from those mentioned earlier in this report, Council is also focussing on solid waste. Council's forestry portfolio also acts to mitigate against emissions we produce (so long as the forests are replanted post-harvest).

Solid Waste

25. As described in the last report on Solid Waste, Council flares its gas created at Bluegums and is a participant in the Emissions Trading Scheme. A lot of work has gone into waste minimisation and actions to divert waste from the waste scheme into reuse and recycling.

Marlborough Forestry

26. Council owns around 3000 hectares of land under forest production. The properties were eligible for one-off pre-1990 carbon credits under the Emissions Trading Scheme. Council still holds these credits. The forestry off-sets emissions caused by Council activities.

Adaptation

27. Council is factoring adaptation into its forward planning. Marlborough is lucky compared to some other regions in not yet having faced significant impacts from climate change. This allows use a window of time to research, assess the risks and, together with our communities, put plans in place to deal with the impacts. It also allows us to learn from other experiences around the country.

Proposed Marlborough Environment Plan

28. The PMEPP contains a climate change chapter. It contains commitments to undertake a number of actions; both mitigation and adaptation. A report will be prepared for this committee once the PMEPP decisions of the hearing panel have been notified.

Cross-council staff working group

29. A working group has recently been set up to coordinate Council's response to climate change across Council. The group will be tasked with keeping abreast of developments and ensuring Council is provided with the latest information on climate change. It will advise on what actions are appropriate and assist staff in factoring climate change into every aspect of their work.

Conclusions

30. There is a lot going on in the climate change area. Council faces challenges into the future in dealing with the impacts. However, we are not alone. There are significant resources put into ensuring local authorities are equipped at make the decisions necessary.

Next steps

31. A report on the Land Transport Activity Group will be presented to the next Planning, Finance & Community Committee.
32. A regular update on the activities of the working group will also be provided to each Planning, Finance and Community meeting.

RECOMMENDED

That the report be received.