

Meeting Notes of the Sounds Advisory Group held in the Committee Room at Marlborough District Council on Monday 26 November 2018 at 9.00 am

Present

Clr Hook (Chair), Clr Oddie, Clr Taylor, Ross Withell, Monyeen Wedge, Debbie Stone, Tim Greenhough, Linda Booth, Ken Roush, Judy Hellstrom, Rick Osbourne, Vic Koller, Lynley Perkins, Dave Hayes, Rachel Drake (9.20 am)

MDC Staff

Alan Johnson, Reuben Ferguson (10.45 am), Abi Mark (10.45 am)

In Attendance

Rebecca Waldron (Council Secretary)

Apologies

Poneke Rene, Rob Schuckard, Eric Jorgensen, Jodi Milne

1. Actions from the previous meeting

Action		Person Responsible
1.	Investigate resource consent notification process for Ruakaka Bay removed from Action Points	Gina Ferguson
2.	Report back on progress with the public jetty issue at the next SAG meeting – see below	Councillors
3.	Provide the maintenance schedule for the Sounds Road Crew at the next meeting – update provided by email – see below - completed	Steve Murrin
4.	Request a Council Staff member to look into issue of unformed legal road in Endeavour Inlet – this matter is being looked at by DOC - completed	Councillors
5.	Provide feedback on Manaora Consent – removed from Action Points	Gina Ferguson

Actions from Meeting

Point 2

- The three Sounds Councillors attended a meeting with Port Marlborough and members of the public including Lynley to discuss the Sounds Berthage Concession. Port Marlborough has agreed that the price will be locked in for two years at \$300.00 instead of \$450.00 and that they will consult again at the end of the two years.
 - Kenepuru residents have agreed to accept the charges.
 - Lynley noted that not all Queen Charlotte Sound/Tōtaranui residents have agreed to accept the charges.

Point 3 (Update via email provided by Steve Murrin)

- Work on Queen Charlotte Drive is just about complete.
- Big push before Christmas is planned for Kenepuru, French Pass and Port Underwood (but need good weather).
- Have had some issues with the Cyclic Crew, mainly staff changing but this has now settled down. Will be providing training for them and will get some better results.
- Currently have 1240 issues logged in our system on Sounds roads ranging from a pothole to major slips. Aim to have all completed over the summer.

2. MPI (Fisheries New Zealand) Update – (Jodi Milne via email)

Jodi was not able to attend the meeting but sent a short email update.

- We are finalising ideas for next year's stock assessment research rounds so if any of your members would like to put forward any suggestions for consideration could they please email me Jodi.Milne@mpi.govt.nz by the end of the week.
- Damian, Hannah and I will be at the Blenheim office at Grovetown Park on Wednesday 5 December between 10.30 am – 1.00 pm if anyone would like to call in to talk fisheries matters. It will be an informal open forum. If members would like to arrange a one-on-one session we can organise a subsequent meeting. Again members can email me or call me on 03 5458773 if they have any questions.

Comments

- Discussion on the flounder stocks followed by the Group. It was agreed that a request for information on flounder stocks would be sent to Jodi.
- It was suggested that Jodi be requested to update the group on geoducks and the sea cucumber population at the next meeting.

3. Sustainable Land Transition Fund Proposal (SLTF) – Judy Hellstrom

- Judy tabled the SLTF Status Report to the Sounds Advisory Group (Appendix 1).
- The Sounds Advisory Group passed a recommendation at the last meeting to endorse a proposal to the Environment Committee to apply for \$100,000.00 from the Provincial Growth Fund to enable a feasibility study to be undertaken to create a Sustainable Land Transition Fund.
 - It has been clarified that the Provincial Growth Fund grant would only provide 50% of the \$100,000.00 required for the feasibility study, leaving the remaining 50% to be raised by the applicant.
- An agenda item and report were prepared for the Environment Committee on 11 October. However the item was deferred to enable Councillors to hold a workshop on the item. At the workshop it was requested that Terms of Reference be completed for consideration and agreement before the matter is put to the Environment Committee.
- The Councillors Workshop voiced concerns that unrealistic expectations might be generated within communities, but in principle were supportive of the proposal.
- The updated Terms of Reference have yet to be completed. Judy requested that the Terms of Reference be sent out to SAG members prior to the next meeting.

Sustainable Seas Tipping Points

- Judy tabled a Tipping Points document which outlined a research project that was recently carried out in Queen Charlotte Sound/Tōtaranui by scientists. (Appendix 2).
 - Judy highlighted the information in the last paragraph for the group's attention regarding *Macrocyctis* (giant kelp) and noted there is a relationship between fisheries, *Macrocyctis* browsing and the benthic health of the Sounds.

Coastal Research Strategy

- Council has worked with Marlborough Marine Futures to develop a draft Coastal Research Strategy. The proposal for a plan to develop a strategy went to the Environment Committee in June 2017 and it was later approved by Council. Judy passed a draft of the strategy around the table, stressing that it was an illustrative copy only, prepared and presented to facilitate discussion.
- Alan clarified that the Council will continue to assist the working group to complete the Terms of Reference.
 - He noted that Steve Ulrich has resigned from Council and the position of Coastal Scientist is being advertised. However Steve is going to do some contract work for Council. He also noted that funding the feasibility study is a big hurdle.
 - There is also a new central Government programme which has recently been announced called At Risk Catchments. There is going to be a solution based approach to deal with contaminants in water ways in the top 25 catchments in New Zealand.
- Council is hoping to develop a quarterly forum with Central Government agencies at a high level to help develop themes from top down.
- Investigation work is being carried out by the National Science Challenge around rocky reefs and habitats in the Sounds.

4. DOC Update – Dave Hayes

- Dave provided an update to the group (Appendix 3).

Questions/Answers

- Dave clarified that DOC will make the final decision on the new Great Walk. He will send an update to the group via Rebecca if he finds out the timeframe for consultation.

5. King Salmon Monitoring Report Update – Abi Marks

- Abi presented the King Salmon Monitoring Report that was recently presented to the Environment Committee to the group. (Link to Environment Committee agenda below).
- https://www.marlborough.govt.nz/repository/libraries/id:1w1mps0ir17q9sgxanf9/hierarchy/Documents/Your%20Council/Meetings/2018/Environment%202018%20List/22_November_2018_Agenda.pdf

Questions/Answers

- Abi clarified that the Cawthron Institute monitors all the sites and provided the report to Council.
- Abi is going to check if there was a seabed survey at Ruakaka Bay done before the license to farm finfish was granted. **Following the meeting Abi provided this information:**

Ruakaka operates under resource consent U021247. This consent replaced 2 previous coastal permits U980543 and U950656. In the application for U021247 Cawthron Institute assessed the state of the salmon farm consented under U980543 and U950656 (this can be viewed in the application document saved under U021247). Ruakaka's original Marine Farm Licence dates back to 1975. In the 1995 application it appears Cawthron undertook an ecological site characterisation of the seabed where the farm existed, prior to this I can find an Environmental Impact Assessment from 1988 which is from page 90 of the application for U950656. I cannot find any seabed surveys prior to 1988.

- Abi clarified that zinc is monitored because it is in the food and copper because it is present in anti-fouling materials.

- Abi noted that there is a decision process set out in the MEMAMPS (Marine and Environmental Monitoring and Adaptive Management Plan) that the company follows if they are non-compliant or issues are highlighted.
- It was clarified that MPI will monitor for mortality rates.

6. Forestry Compliance Monitoring Update – Reuben Ferguson

- Reuben gave a presentation on the Forestry Compliance Monitoring Report that was recently presented to the Environment Committee. (The link to the item in the Environment Committee Agenda is above in Item 5).
- Council has a pro-active Forestry Compliance Monitoring Programme. Monitoring for forestry has been formalised since 2012 and is now more strategic than it was previously.
- Drones are being utilised in monitoring resulting in more parts of the forestry blocks being observed, this may be one reason that non-compliance rates have risen.
- A contractor is providing aerial maps and 3D maps which allow monitoring from a desk top.

Questions/Answers

- Reuben was asked whether trees left standing on Foreshore Reserve could be monitored. He clarified that it depends on the conditions of the consent.
- Monitoring is generally carried out during harvest and post-harvest remedial works. However 7 of the 20 forestry blocks were monitored because of complaints.
- Reuben confirmed that resource consents have archaeological conditions included and archaeological sites are marked on harvest plans.
- It was confirmed that the compliance reports are part of the publicly available information on Council's property files.

7. MDC Update – Alan Johnson

National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity

- A collaborative working group was formed some time ago to provide some framework and policy for a draft National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity. The group has been operating for the last 18 months and finished about 6 weeks ago. The group is made up of the Federated Farmers, forestry, Forest and Bird, Defence Society and other key infrastructure stake holders. There was also a group of active observers of the process from MfE, MPI, DOC and two council reps (including Alan).
- The resulting report was presented to the Ministers for Local Government (Minister Mahuta) and Conservation (Minister Sage). The report is available here: <https://www.biodiversitynz.org/>
- Minister Mahuta has not yet announced how the Policy Initiatives will be implemented. At the same time DOC is also reviewing its biodiversity strategy. It has been suggested that both the strategy and statement will be released as a package late in 2019 resulting in a refreshed biodiversity strategy and potentially a new NPS for Indigenous Biodiversity.
- A hui is being held by DOC on the NZ Biodiversity Strategy and the NPS for Indigenous Biodiversity in Blenheim on 7 or 8 February 2019.

Staffing Update

- The Regulatory Department has been split into two groups with Hans Versteegh being in charge of Policy, Science and Monitoring and Harbours. Gina Ferguson is now the head of the Resource Consents, Planning, Building Control and Compliance groups. Jamie Clark has been appointed as the new Compliance Manager.

Environment Committee Reports

The reports listed below have all been presented to the Environment Committee in October or November. They are available on the MDC website (Link below):

<https://www.marlborough.govt.nz/your-council/meetings?item=id:20lccgy261cxbyuky9s>

- **Marlborough Sounds Water Quality Monitoring.**

Alan noted that the trend in the report is showing that water quality is reasonably stable.

- **Expert panel review of selected significant marine sites surveyed in 2017-2018.**

- **Estuary Monitoring Programme for the past 12 months.** (Tennyson Inlet, the Grove Arm/Ngakuta, Greville Harbour/Wharariki, Whatamango Bay and Kenepuru Head.

The results in the different estuaries are good to very good except for Kenepuru Head which is graded poor. Every estuary in the Sounds has now been monitored, re-monitoring will begin again from next year.

- **Summary Report on the Results of the Significant Natural Areas Project 2017-2018.**

The majority of managed sites are showing stability with sites that have no management showing general decline.

It was noted that in South Marlborough there is only 2% of indigenous habitat left. The proposed new NPS for Indigenous Biodiversity will help signal high priorities for resourcing and may also impact the community's SNA programme.

Judy asked if the wetland at the estuary at Endeavour Inlet was included in the MEP. Alan agreed to look into this.

East Coast Protection Working Group (ECPWG)

- The Council is assisting the ECPWG to find solutions to deal with the degradation of the coastal strip from the Awatere to the Waima.

Biosecurity

- The Operational Plan for the Regional Pest Management Plan 2018 was presented to the Environment Committee as well last week.

https://www.marlborough.govt.nz/repository/libraries/id:1w1mps0ir17q9sgxanf9/hierarchy/Documents/Your%20Council/Meetings/2018/Environment%202018%20List/22_November_2018_Item_7_RPMP_2018_Operational_Plan.pdf

- As well as continuing the programme with DOC working on strategic pest plants such as boneseed and spartina, a new programme on D'Urville to control Hakea and Woolley nightshade will begin next year. Council monitors for Mediterranean fan worm in Picton and Havelock harbours. An underwater drone is being utilized to help with monitoring. Alan confirmed testing for copper has been carried out in some slipways but is not carried out in the harbours.
- It was suggested that information on the Pest Management Plan and the phone number (0800 80 99 66) for notifying of Mediterranean fan worm infestations be included in the newsletter.

MEP Update

- Hearings on the forestry provisions are being held next week. Water Allocation provisions will be held in February next year.

8. SAG Newsletter

- Additional items to be added to the SAG newsletter were suggested: King shags, Antenno, septic tanks, recycling bins at Port Underwood. DOC information on biosecurity and marine animals, Harbours update.

9. Offsite Meeting

- The next meeting is being held on 18 March 2019 at Port Underwood.

10. MFA Update – Debbie Stone

- 11 chicks and 1 adult were banded in the King Shag project. 9 chicks and the adult have been since been sited. Next year trackers may be put on the birds. MFA would like to receive information on any sightings of the banded birds.
- Debbie extended an invitation to anyone in the group who would like to join the Smart and Connected Harmony group. The next major project for the group is Aquaculture Week.
- The 50th anniversary of the Marine Farming Act was last week.
- An emergency equipment database has been developed for the Sounds. MFA is talking to Council about how to distribute the information and keep it updated.

11. Other Business

- There was an incident where an Australian cellphone was used to dial 111 in an emergency event in the Sounds and the call was diverted by the central call centre to 000 which is the Australian emergency number.
- Linda suggested that FENZ and Civil Defence be invited to speak at a SAG meeting to outline what work small communities need to do to protect themselves.
- Clr Hook suggested looking at setting up an initiative to tackle the problem of Banana passionfruit and Old man's beard in the Kenepuru. He suggested a small group look at applying for funding to do mapping of the pests.
 - Vic noted that his community gets together several times a year to tackle the pests on Mt Cawte Reserve and the problem is getting less each year. There is some difficulty with accessing private properties to carry out work.
 - Dave noted that there is a good precedent for the project called De-vine based in Takaka. (weblink below)
<http://projectde-vinetrust.org.nz/>
- Linda brought up the issues still being faced by the residents of Duncan Bay on the condition of their road. There are problems with the culverts still not being cleared. There are also issues with dairy effluent on the road.
 - Clr Hook read out a response from Steve Murrin on the effluent on the road; stating that the farmers are being sent a letter advising them that the road will be inspected. Linda noted that the situation is resulting in aggression between some locals and farmers. Alan is going to follow up on whether this issue is being dealt with by the Compliance Department.
- A Marlborough Roads worker is going to work with the Sounds Roding Crew for a week. There has been disappointment with how the crew has been performing.
- Linda noted that there is an issue with dog signage which has recently been put up in Duncan Bay. Alan will discuss this with the Compliance Department.

12. Positive Feedback

- Efforts to control freedom campers at Ohingaroa Bay were pleasing.
- A positive meeting was held at Tirimoana/Anakiwa on the freedom camping issue.
- General approval of the improvement of the monitoring and compliance programmes carried out by Council.

13. Actions from the meeting

Action	Person Responsible
1. Contact Jodi Milne regarding flounder stocks, geoducks and sea cucumber update	Alan
2. SLTF Terms of Reference for the next meeting	Judy/Alan
3. Look into whether the wetland at Endeavour Inlet is included in the MEP	Alan
4. Organise for Civil Defence and FENZ to do a presentation on small community preparedness.	Alan
5. Check whether a complaint about the effluent on Opouri Road has been lodged with Compliance.	Alan
6. Check with the Compliance Department on how dog signs were distributed in Duncan Bay	Alan

The meeting finished at 2.20 pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday March 2019 at 9.30 am at Port Underwood. Details will follow closer to the time.