

Planning & Regulatory Working Party Record of Actions

Meeting held in the Kaipara Room
36 Water Street, Whangārei
on Wednesday 29 January 2020, commencing at 9.00am

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| Present Tuhinga: | Cr Joce Yeoman (Chair) |
| | Cr Amy Macdonald |
| | Cr Colin Kitchen |
| | Cr Justin Blaikie |
| | Cr Penny Smart (Ex-Officio) |
| In Attendance I Tae Mai: | GM - Strategy, Governance and Engagement |
| | GM - Regulatory Services |
| | Strategy, Policy & Planning Manager |
| | Compliance Monitoring Manager |
| | Natural Resources Policy Manager |
| | Strategic Policy Specialist |
| | Policy Specialist – Water |
| | Policy Specialist |
| | Strategy, Planning & Policy Administrator (minutes) |

The Chair declared the meeting open at 9.00am

1.0 APOLOGIES | NGĀ WHAKAPAHĀ

The apologies from the NRC Chief Executive for non-attendance were received.

2.0 DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST | NGĀ WHAKAPUAKANGA

It was advised that members should make any declarations item-by-item as the meeting progressed.

3.0 REPORTS | NGĀ RIPOATA

3.1 Planning & Policy Work Programme

Presented by: Strategy, Policy & Planning Manager

- Work on the Proposed Regional Plan appeals is consuming approximately 90% of the team's time and this will continue for the next four to six months in order to meet Court timeframes
- The other big project is the Freshwater Plan Change – this will be addressed as a separate agenda item
- A workshop with council regarding coastal occupation charging is needed in the next few months
- Coastal occupation charging: put out discussion document in the middle of the year (endorsed by council) and then look to put out a draft towards the end of this year
- Discussion took place re possibility of external funding for marine biodiversity research

9.09am – Cr Penny Smart joined the meeting

- Current wetland mapping information is unable to distinguish between wet areas and wetlands - this could require additional funding once the decision as to what the next step should be is confirmed
- The next step will ideally enable not only the identification of wetlands, but also significant areas, however, ground truthing may also be required
- Discussion re issue raised at CE's forum – transfer of powers etc.

Agreed Action Points:

- Planning to present Coastal Occupation Charging to full Council workshop by April
- Project plan for the fishing controls project to be presented to the March WP meeting (BL)
- Update on wetland mapping to be presented to the March WP meeting (BL)

3.2 Regulatory Services Work Programme

Presented by: GM - Regulatory Services (tabled)

- Previously Regulatory has not been represented or reported at WP
- Currently halfway through the development of the RMA compliance monitoring and enforcement strategy
- Working with Civil Defence – internal “Drought Management Committee” to plan in case of critical water shortage where it may be necessary to tank water in to affected communities
- Hydrology work is currently the priority
- Looking at restrictions etc historically - what can NRC do to send a clear message to TAs to make changes / improve infrastructure

9.44am – a member of the public joined the meeting

Policy Specialist – Water left the meeting

- Issues are ongoing, while affordability is a key aspect, there is an ongoing issue with the likes of Kaikohe and Kaitāia needing to ensure that environmental bottom lines are not breached
- Bond requirements for marine farms – predominantly around removal of structures etc
- A lot of marine farmers have been hit by viruses and weren't producing, however, they are all up and running again now
- There is no reason now for those who haven't complied to put a bond in place – some are still struggling, but ultimately if there is a structure then a bond is necessary in case of abandonment

Agreed Action Points:

- Nil

3.3 Update on Regional Plan Appeals

Presented by: Natural Resources Policy Manager

- Eighteen days of mediation have been held to date
- Approximately 60% of appeal points mediated have been resolved
- Approximately 35% of points are unresolved, but resolution is considered possible – an update to court is due by 28 February

- Pre-hearing conference took place earlier in the month: there will be hearings in May (mangroves) and in April – (air quality)
- The Chair congratulated the team on their progress to date

Agreed Action Points:

- Proposed wording by 31 January – GM Strategy Governance & Engagement and Cr Yeoman to review before this is sent out (MD)

The order of the agenda items was rearranged to allow for other commitments by attendees

3.5 Central Government Initiatives - Overview

Presented by: Strategic Policy Specialist

- Where no attachments are included, information has been provided as to which direction things are likely to go
- Discussion took place regarding the increase in cost of NZUs

10.04am – Policy Specialist joined the meeting

- Proposed emissions budget (provisional) flatline trajectory from 2021 to 2050 - can always increase downwards pressure on emissions as further technology becomes available
- If all units are allocated and auctioned off prior to agriculture allocation, then farms will be left with limited units and will have to either decrease or pay
- Accelerating Renewable Energy – support for geothermal to be noted, however, while the resource is “green”, it is not an inexhaustible supply and requires careful management

Water Services Regulator Bill

- Affordability – do we have ballpark figures for updates to infrastructure?
- Next bill will set out function and criteria of Board, exact wording etc.

Indigenous Biodiversity

- This is largely focussed on district council functions and sets up a number of things that need to happen to manage biodiversity
- Recognises tangata whenua as kaitiaki
- The intention is commendable, but there are a large number of issues, contradictions and gaps with the way it’s written, including issues with overlap and the way it sits with other legislation
- Council has been involved in working groups and SIGs, as much as possible, to be at the front end of development and implementation, but this NPS is not a reflection of that
- Implementation can be an issue in terms of central government devolving responsibility, with no corresponding funding or resources provided

Agreed Action Points:

- Council to signal that from a regional perspective, there needs to be a balance between allocating to industries such as afforestation and leaving sufficient in reserve for farming
- A paper is being presented to Council on 18 February
- Other submissions will be sent out to WP members prior to being sent to agenda (JM)

10.33am – Compliance Monitoring Manager, Strategic Policy Specialist & Policy Specialist left the meeting

Policy Specialist – Water joined the meeting

3.4 Council Water Policy Development

Presented by: Policy Specialist - Water

- NIWA are currently developing a customised model for Northland – expected in mid-2020
- Once there is an understanding of what government wants to do, then Council will be able to look at what is required to improve water quality and the costs of doing so, bearing in mind that things could change if there is a change in government following this year's election
- Potential changes to water flows / volumes – several are fully allocated and may be showing signs of ecological effects
- Looking at exploring altering allocations to those water bodies – had to meet a set of criteria to be included
- Additional resource requirements will be factored into the LTP
- Limited drought modelling has been done through the science team to provide an idea of what impact a drought may have on water sources

Agreed Action Points:

- Keep this as a standing item on WP agenda moving forward (RK)
- Present water quality potential engagement models to the March WP meeting (BL & BT)
- Send a copy of the criteria to select water bodies to WP members (BT)

The meeting closed at 10.44am