



Report **06.344**
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Committee **Council**
Author **Ian Buchanan Chairman**

Chairman's Report

As it is only three weeks since my last report and one of those spent in a slightly warmer place (Cairns) this is of necessity a rather briefer effort than usual.

1. Flooding

Coinciding with my absence weather patterns conspired to dump a large amount of rain on the region, particularly in the Wairarapa Valley and eastern hill country. Every flood has its own characteristics, and this one was no exception. A very long (over two days) peak flow in the main river system put an enormous volume of water into Lake Wairarapa's system's safety valve. As a consequence there was extensive flooding on farmland around the lake, and this took a long time to subside due to the massive volume of water that needed to be passed out through the barrage gates. At the same time, some of the south eastern Wairarapa catchments received extreme rainfall, with considerable hill country soil erosion occurring in areas that have not been adequately managed for soil conservation. The Minister for Agriculture, Jim Anderton, made a brief visit to the South Wairarapa the week following the flood. Government is reluctant to provide short-term relief resources other than some enhanced task force green initiatives at this stage. Part of the importance of having the Minister out in the field was to alert him to the implications of the policy work currently underway within government on flood mitigation/management. LGNZ is engaged with this and I have become involved in this at a political level.

2. Whareroa

Together with Crs Laidlaw and Turver, I met with the Guardians group for this proposed park to gain an understanding of where the parties are at regarding future management of this area. This was a very productive meeting at which I believe we reached a good understanding of potential roles and arrangements, should the Regional Council ultimately have management of Whareroa within our parks network. Decisions on this are still some way off as final surveys will not be complete until after the McKay's Crossing roadworks are finished. Probably early 2007 this will come back to Council.

3. WRS

The draft strategy is in the final stages of completion, ready to go out for public consultation. This will require approval from all of the participating councils in the next month or so. Discussions are on-going regarding possible implementation and governance models. It is expected that the Forum will consider a preferred option on 27 July.

4. Meetings

Meetings I have attended (other than GW):

- Trustee interviews (Stadium) – two; one more to go
- Minister of Transport – LGNZ issues
- Transit breakfast – State Highway Programme
- Land Transport New Zealand – NZ Land Transport Plan
- Office of Treaty Settlement – claims briefing
- RAC Water Group

5. The late Les Paske

On 12 July, together with other Councillors, I attended the funeral of former Councillor Les Paske.

6. Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. *Receives the report.*
2. *Notes the content of the report.*

Report prepared by:

Ian Buchanan
Chairman