



greater WELLINGTON
REGIONAL COUNCIL

6 May 2008
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Minutes of the Wairarapa Hill Country Advisory Committee Meeting held in the Committee Room, Greater Wellington Regional Council, 34 Chapel Street, Masterton, on Monday, 5 May 2008, at 3.30pm.

Present:

Peter Gawith (Chairperson), GWRC Councillor Ian Buchanan, Jamie Falloon, Jenny Boyne, David Holmes (representing Wairarapa district councils), Michael Blundell, Andy Pottinger.

Officers Present:

Geoff Dick, David Cameron, Ian Gunn (GWRC).

Guest:

Anders Crofoot (Wairarapa Federated Farmers)

(1) Apology

Resolved (Peter Gawith/Michael Blundell)

That the apology for absence from Emily Crofoot be received.

(2) Confirmation of Minutes

Resolved (Michael Blundell/Peter Gawith)

That the minutes of the meeting of the Wairarapa Hill Country Advisory Committee held on 4 March 2008 be confirmed.

Matters arising:

Michael Blundell raised a point that when guest speakers were invited to Committee meetings members needed to be better prepared around the various issues in order that the Committee could give satisfactory responses.

It was agreed that better preparation be made prior to future meetings for guest speakers when addressing the Committee.

(3) Regional Pest Management Strategy Submission

Dave Cameron had previously circulated the RPMS document.

Members noted that although submissions to the RPMS Five Yearly Review closed on 28 April, an extension until 9 May had been granted for the Wairarapa Hill Country Advisory Committee (WHCAC) to forward a submission.

Discussion then focussed on any additions or changes from the previous document involving both Pest Plants and Pest Animals. There were ongoing issues with Old Mans Beard and gorse on riverbeds and whether they were classified under the RPMS for boundary clearance.

Pest Plants:

David Holmes indicated that during the recent series of river scheme advisory committee inspections it became clearly evident that submissions would be forwarded from these committees particularly in relation to the control of Old Mans Beard because of its potential spread from riverbeds to bush, forests, etc.

Members were advised that currently landowner boundary control was handled on a complaint basis only which did not work for riverbeds and this therefore would require a new category within the Strategy to have power to require clearance.

It was agreed that a submission covering the control of Old Mans Beard, Gorse, Nodding Thistle, and Variegated Thistle be prepared.

Pest Animals:

Members supported the importance of total Bovine Tb eradication for the control of possums and agreed that this be conveyed in the Committee's submission. Stoats, weasels and ferrets were added to the list for eradication.

Resolved

(David Holmes/Andrew Pottinger)

That a submission on the Proposed Regional Pest Management Strategy be prepared and forwarded on behalf of the Wairarapa Hill Country Advisory Committee.

(4) Regional Policy Statement Submission

The Committee was advised that submissions on the draft Regional Policy Statement closed on 16 May 2008.

David Cameron explained that Land Management were looking at the Regional Policy Statement and issues relating to sustainable land management and erosion control. A summary of the issues was being undertaken and a submission prepared. It was agreed that this would then be circulated to Committee members.

Cr Buchanan indicated that this was a draft and at its informal stages but there was an opportunity for specific stakeholders to take a view on issues within it. In July the Council will put out the Proposed Regional Policy Statement which would then be followed by the submissions process and hearings.

Resolved

(David Holmes/Jamie Falloon)

That a submission on the Regional Policy Statement be prepared and circulated to Committee members for feedback.

(5) Draft Communications Strategy

A Draft Communications Strategy has been developed and tabled for consideration by the Committee. This incorporated objectives and success measures on improving the awareness for Wairarapa hill country communities of the WHCAC Committee and its role as a useful voice on topics relevant to its mandate, and to encourage communication between hill country communities and GW through the Committee. Other key points of note were the key message to be conveyed, spokes people, key people and audiences, risks and issues, and tactics.

Members were asked to give feedback on the draft strategy for adoption at the next meeting.

It was agreed that communications would be an item for discussion with action points at each Committee meeting and placed on the agenda accordingly. In the meantime any issues that arise can be submitted to the Committee. Publicity formed part of the WHCAC Committee's role.

Jamie Falloon suggested that one key element was to eliminate the need for regulation.

(6) Hill Country Erosion Fund Application

David Cameron outlined the recent meeting with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry officials to discuss Greater Wellington's Stage 2 application for funding from the Hill Country Erosion Fund. Dave indicated it had been a

good meeting where it had been suggested that letters of support for the bid from the WHCAC Committee and Wairarapa Federated Farmers would add considerable value to the application. There is to be a panel to receive recommendations and comments on 5 June. A report is to be prepared for consideration by the Council at its meeting on 10 June to determine what stance GW will take on its contributions. Three options were to not support, support, or support subject to the LTCCP process and outcomes.

Discussion then focussed on the importance in seeking commitment to the full four year programme and accessing national funding for the land management programme.

Dave Cameron advised that because funding is under-subscribed MAF would be prepared to ring-fence any funding to allow for the LTCCP process.

It was agreed that a letter of support from the Committee Chair along with the attendance of 2-3 Committee members at the 10 June Council meeting would assist in stressing the importance of this programme for the long term future.

Agreed:

- That a WHCAC Committee meeting be held on 9 June to discuss and review the approach to be taken at the 10 June Council meeting.
- That the draft report be circulated to members prior to the Council meeting to formulate the approach to be taken by the group attending the Council meeting.
- Letters of support to the Stage 2 application were suggested to be forwarded from the WHCAC Committee, Wairarapa Federated Farmers, and the three Wairarapa district councils.

(7) Afforestation Grant Scheme Update

Dave Cameron reported that although there wasn't a great deal to report progress was being made but only from a legal aspect. There was approximately \$6m available from the total pool of which the consortium of regional councils would receive half from 1 July 2008. This equates to between 1,500 – 2,000 hectares to be planted under afforestation by regional councils. It was expected that legal documents would be completed and signed off by the various parties in late-May.

(8) Land Use Research Workshop

Peter Gawith gave an update on the recent Land Use Research workshop he had attended.

Peter reported that the statement from MAF indicated that landowners were not taking soil erosion seriously. He pointed out that the last poplar clone had been released in 1996. With funding having been taken away no research had been

undertaken. MAF were looking to put money into hill country research over the next few years. Other points raised included taxation on pollution, sediment pollution, stock emissions in the carbon trading scheme.

(9) General Business

- (1) Jamie Falloon asked for an update on the Catchment Management Committee and the relevance to Wairarapa hill country issues that may impact on the WHCAC Committee.

Geoff Dick advised that in future a short report covering Catchment Management Committee issues and outcomes, etc, would be attached to the minutes of each Committee meeting to keep members up to date with Catchment Management Committee proceedings.

- (2) Jamie Falloon asked whether there was any Fast Forward funding available for research work relating to agriculture.

Dave Cameron said that from the last Land Managers Group meeting he had attended there was little opportunity for Councils to engage in hill country erosion research funding.

- (3) Communications issues arising from meeting –

Ballance Farm Environment Award supreme winners field day held on 30 April. Approximately 90 -100 landowners had attended John and Yvonne Harvey's Daisybank property in Martinborough. Peter Gawith advised that it had been a great day with good speakers.

The meeting closed at 5.25pm.

Action Points:

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| (1) | Preparation of submission on behalf of WHCAC | David |
| (2) | Preparation of submission on Regional Policy Statement | Peter/Dave |
| (3) | Hill Country Erosion Fund Application – | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letters of support • Report to Council | Peter
Geoff/Dave |
| (4) | Communications issues –
Ballance Farm Environment Award | Dave |

