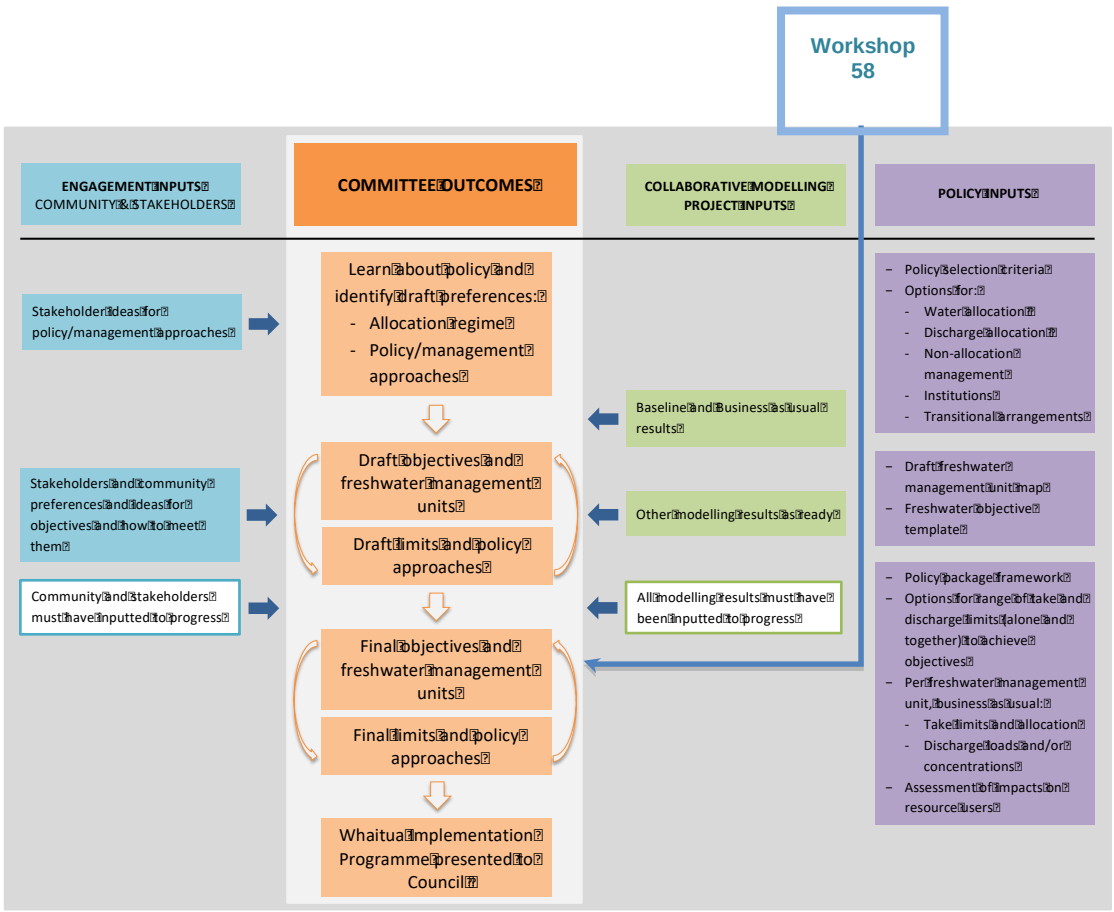
Meeting Notes: Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee

Deliberations Phase 3 – Workshop 58

Monday 12 March 12:00pm - 6:00pm

Carterton Events Centre



Summary This report summarises notes from a workshop of the Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee held 12:00pm to 6:00pm Monday 12 March 2018 at the Carterton Events Centre.

Contents These notes contain the following:

A Workshop Attendees

Workshop Attendees

RW Committee:
Mike Ashby, Aidan Bichan, Esther Dijkstra, Andy Duncan, Peter Gawith, David Holmes, Russell Kawana, Phil Palmer, Ra Smith, Vanessa Tipoki, Mike Birch.

Greater Wellington Project Team:
Alastair Smaill, Natasha Tomic, Kat Banyard, Mike Grace, Horipo Rimene, Jon Gabites, Mike Thompson, Caro Watson.

Independent Facilitator: Michelle Rush.

Apologises: Rebecca Fox, Chris Laidlaw, Colin Olds

B Workshop Purpose and Agenda

Purposes The purposes were:

1) Assess feedback from water user meeting in Carterton on 5 March and confirm decisions on water allocation timeframes and related policy measures

2) Review and confirm decisions on water allocation in small streams

3) Community engagement: Discuss and confirm community engagement methods, including where and when meetings will be held.

4) Refresh understanding of WIP structure and chapters, and identify who is responsible for what sections.

Purpose 1 was partially achieved. Purposes 2, 3 and 4 were not achieved.

Agenda

The agenda is detailed in the table below.

Time	**Task**
3:00	Welcome, Karakia, Purpose and Agenda
3:10	Reflection on Carterton Water Allocation Meeting
3:30	Confirming Transition for Allocation - Upper Ruamahanga, Waipoua and Category A
4:30	**Break**
5:00	Recommended Approach to Water Allocation for Small Streams
5:30	Proposed methods for community engagement
6:00	Introduction to WIP
7:00	**Close**

C General Business

General Business

Following discussion with Masterton District Council at 5 March 2018 meeting Andy Duncan has a solution he would like to pitch to territorial authorities around:

- Discharge of wastewater to private land without consent (permitted activity status) where this land is needed
- Deficit irrigation situation.

Agreed: Andy to pursue this work as he wishes as a professsional rather than representing the whaitua.

Agreed and Action:
Review RWC thinking with respect to the principle of wastewater being applied to land when the discharge policies are reviewed.

D Committee Decisions

Committee Decisions

Transitioning minimum flows and restrictions on Category A groundwater at minimum flow:

- Stepped change to raising minimum flows on the Waipoua River. No change at 0 years, half increase at 5 years, at 10 years move to full 340l/s minimum flow.
- Upper Ruamāhanga – Change over 20 years for greater number of users to adapt. Follow 'green line' transition to allow more time for change.
- Category A groundwater – No change from 50% restriction at minimum flow for the first 10 years. Want to move to 100% cease take at minimum flow in the future. Other measures to aid transition should be implemented as a priority. No further agreement on transition time period to 100% cease take.

E Workshop Notes – Review of Carterton Allocation Consultation meeting

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Overview

A recap and review of the recent meeting with those who had provided written feedback on the water allocation proposals was done. The meeting was held from 1-3PM on 5 March 2018 at the Carterton Event Centre. Approximately 20 water users attended. The meeting concerned the changes to the allocation regime being proposed for the Upper Ruamāhanga River, the Waipoua River and Category A groundwater.

The Committee discussed what had confirmed their thinking, what was of concern and the messages for the Committee to consider when finalising their allocation decisions, and the next steps.

What was confirmed?

- People believed we had listened!
- Financial economic impact - people anxious we don't have modelling results - ground truthing
- Questions from community about whether they really are directly connected to the surface water (Category A users)
- Will cease take regime changes work?
- Process confirmed – people liked being part of decision making process
- Support for ongoing collaboration process
- Catchment community approach – some industries front footing it and seeing benefits.

What was concerning?

- Expectation of rules vs 'fluffy' other steps like attenuation - how do we join those up as a Whaitua?
- Request to have nutrient information too, to consider this with the water allocation changes at the same time.
- Concern about on-farm storage costs
- Uncertainty around PNRP commissioner decisions
- People had concerns timing of the process wouldn't allow a good result.
- We need to consider non-irrigation users separately – e.g. Kintyre – employs 70 people and Gladstone Sports Complex - raised both the mental health and social dimension (although hadn't understood water for human health was exempt).
- Mental health concerns for the whaitua to consider.

What were the messages for RWC decision making - flows and limits?

- There was anxiety about other mechanisms for storage if it wasn't large scale storage. Committee discussed we'll need a variety of scales of storage – can't put all eggs in one basket focusing on a 'big dam'.
- How do we get past political and funding issues?
- Mitigations will need to maintain or improve reliability for users.
- We've got to fund mitigations and get on with them.
- We need an efficiency step change. How do we make happen?
- Problems with water races which need to be addressed.
- Positive that there is confidence in the whaitua process.
- How do we incentivise innovation? E.g. removing provisions in the PNRP that are a barrier to innovation or rewarding efficiency over 80%. How would we measure that and what would a reward look like? Some innovators are concerned to implement changes in cases it means they are penalised in the future. Don't want this to be the case.
- Reluctance to investigate on-farm alternatives – we need change to happen now, not waiting until the last moment. Need to implement to help people shift.

F Workshop Notes – Transitioning minimum flows and Category A groundwater restrictions

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Introduction

Paula Hammond gave a presentation on options for transitioning to higher minimum flows on the Upper Ruamāhanga and Waipoua Rivers, and options for transitioning to greater restrictions for Category A groundwater users.

Presentation on options for transitioning minimum flows and Category A restrictions

- Discussion on how efficiency criteria are currently used when assessing consents. What about value of water use across industries? Can't just rely on efficiency.
- Discussion on treating Category A users in the same way as we treat surface water users. Legally we have to stop those taking groundwater directly connected to surface water at minimum flow.
- There is variation in how connected those with Category A groundwater takes are to the river.

Breakout group results

The Committee worked in groups to discuss transition arrangements for minimum flow increases for Waipoua River surface takes, Upper Ruamāhanga surface takes and for Category A groundwater zone water take restrictions.

The results of these discussions are below.

Transition Arrangements	**Group 1**	**Group 2**	**Group 3**
Length of transition - Waipoua - Upper Ruamāhanga	Waipoua - 10 years Upper Ruamāhanga - 20 years	Both rivers 20 years	Waipoua – 20 years Upper Ruamāhanga -20 years But checking in/review @ 10 years to measure large range of improvements
Shape of Transition (See presentation for different shapes)	Waipoua – Green line transition Upper Ruamāhanga – Green line transition	Both rivers - Green line transition allows for re-investment manage for values	Waipoua - Red line transition Upper Ruamāhanga - Green line transition
Cat A policy package 100%	For Cat A groundwater: - define it - "cease take" Transition period?	Yes. Apply our values a 'lens', managing with values will be a way to meet this. Didn't talk about review specifically but recognise might get change early. Early implementation of package may do enough to meet other values at 15 years	Yes to package including review at 10 years > if under expectations ↑ effort

Plenary discussions

The Committee discussed what the groups had come up with.

Key points:

- Waipoua is in a more degraded state than the Upper Ruamāhanga so needs a quicker transition. It is a more dynamic river.
- Consider equity of change across the upper catchment.
- Waipoua has a smaller number of users so there is the opportunity for greater change in a quicker time period. The Committee considered the consent holders on the river and their ability to change.
- The Waipoua has significant mana whenua values that have been degraded e.g. it used to be used for waka.
- Increasing the water flow will provide benefits for water quality.
- MDC is a significant consent holder in the catchment – want to encourage quicker change from them as the Committee see this as a priority river.
- Category A groundwater – Is it cost effective to change all users to new consent conditions or wait until renewal?
- Want to move to 100% cease take for Category A groundwater users at minimum flow.
- The Committee has come up with a whole range of other measures to mitigate the reliability impacts on users. These should be implemented as a priority.
- Options considered for Category A groundwater – decide at 10 years how you move to 100% cease take by 20 years? Step from 50%, to 75%, to 100%, 100% cease take at 10 years. No agreement from the Committee on preferred option.
- Would determining the pathway reduce gaming?
- What are the implications of Category A groundwater users continuing to take below minimum flow for another 20 years if the Committee went down that option? Would be useful to get a freshwater ecologist view on this. What are the differences in the flow that would be in the river? Impacts of climate change on this? Project team to provide follow up information.

Agreed:

- Stepped change to raising minimum flows in the Waipoua River. No change at 0 years, half increase at 5 years, at 10 years move to full 340l/s minimum flow.
- Upper Ruamāhanga – Change over 20 years for greater number of users to adapt. Follow ‘green line’ transition to allow more time for change.
- Category A groundwater – No change to 50% restriction at minimum flow for the first 10 years. Want to move to 100% cease take at minimum flow in the future. Other measures to

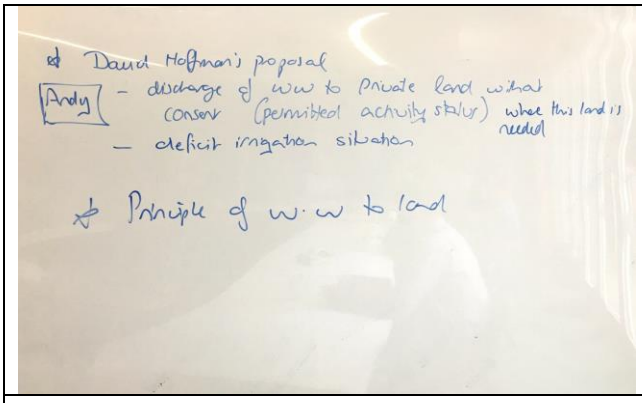
aid transition should be implemented as a priority. No further agreement on transition.

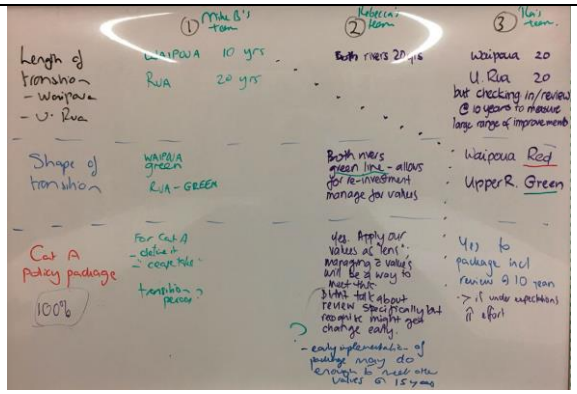
G Workshop Notes – Upcoming Committee discussions

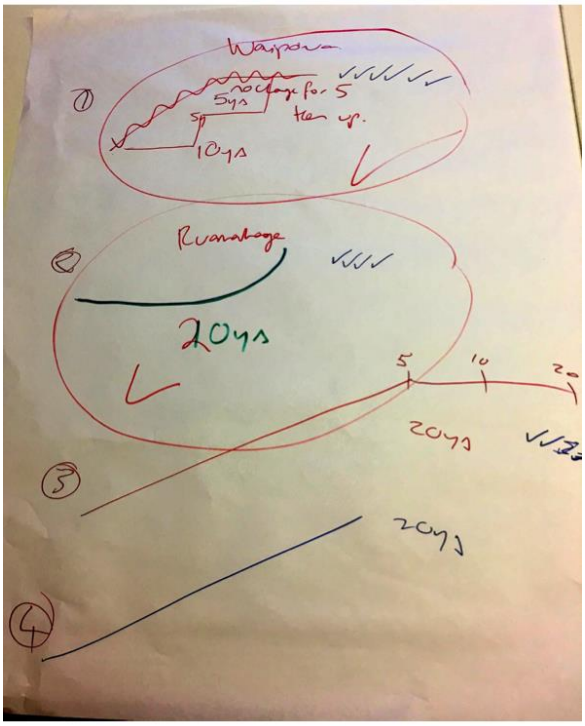
Small streams discussion	Ran out of time to discuss in the Committee workshop. Agreed to a small group meeting at an alternative time to discuss. Vanessa, Russell, Rebecca, David and Ra to attend. Will consider implementation issues as well as the minimum flow and allocation limit numbers, and any additional flow monitoring which may need to be done.
Mana whenua Engagement Hui - 14 April 2018	Esther, Vanessa. Ra, Rebecca, Phil, Russell all expect to attend.
Community and stakeholder engagement	Jon Gabites briefly highlighted the points of his draft paper on a community engagement approach to engagement on the 'whole package'. He requested feedback from the Committee on the overall approach and for the Committee to think about what they want to get out of it.

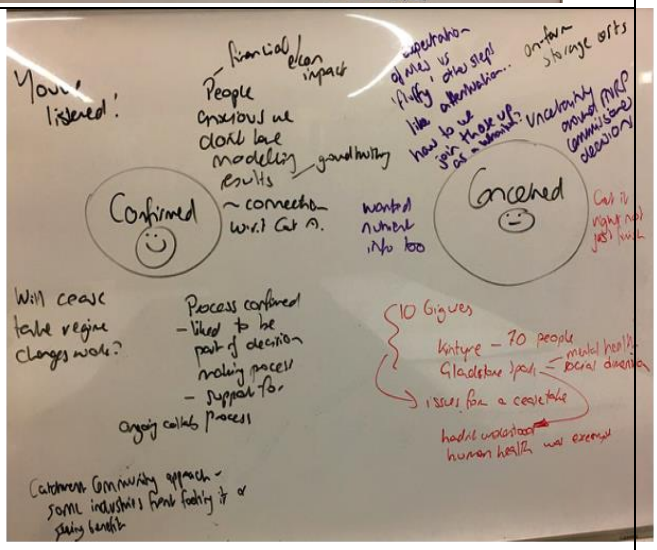
ENDS

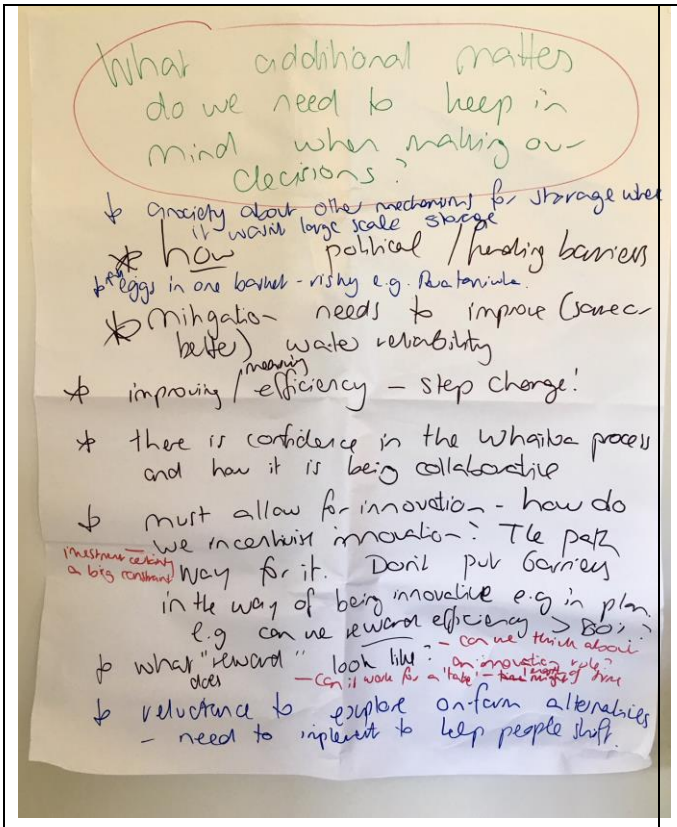
Appendix 1: Flipchart Photos










What additional matters do we need to keep in mind when making our decisions?
anxiety about other mechanisms for storage when it wasn't large scale storage
how political / funding barriers
eggs in one basket - risky e.g. Botswana
Mitigation needs to improve (connection better) water reliability
improving / maximising efficiency – step change!
there is confidence in the Whaiora process and how it is being collaborative
must allow for innovation - how do we incentivise innovation? The path way for it. Don't put barriers in the way of being innovative e.g. in plan. e.g. can we reward efficiency > 80%?
investment certainty a big constraint
what "reward" does look like?
reluctance to explore on-farm alternatives - need to implement to help people shift.

ENDS