

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CANTERBURY WATER MANAGEMENT STRATEGY
WAIMAKARIRI ZONE COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, 215 HIGH
STREET, RANGIORA ON MONDAY 2 SEPTEMBER 2024 COMMENCING AT 4PM.**

PRESENT

C Latham (Chairperson), J Cooke and A Reuben (Te Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga representatives), E Harvie, C Aldhamland, M Jolly, R Gill-Clifford (Youth Representative), WDC Councillor T Fulton, ECan Councillor C McKay

IN ATTENDANCE

Mayor D Gordon, S Allen (WDC Water Environment Advisor), M Griffin (ECan CWMS Facilitator), G Cleary (WDC General Manager Utilities and Roding), A Smith (WDC Governance Coordinator), D McCormack (WDC Land Drainage Engineer), K Simpson (WDC 3 Waters Manager), C Armour (Senior Biodiversity Officer – Regional Programmes, ECan), G Stanley (ECan Regional Lead – Braided River Revival), S Stewart (Deputy Chair Kaiapoi-Tuahivi Community Board), M Bate (Kaiapoi resident), J Ensor (Chair Mandeville Residents Association), WDC Councillor P Redmond,

A significant number of residents were also present in the public gallery, concerned about the impact of chlorine since it was introduced to the district council drinking water supply.

KARAKIA

Ruby Gill-Clifford opened the meeting with a karakia.

1. BUSINESS

1.1 Apologies

Moved C McKay

Seconded J Cooke

THAT an apology for absence be received and sustained from E Harvie

CARRIED

1.2 Welcome and Introductions

Members of the committee introduced themselves to all those present.

At this time the Chairperson, for the information of those members of the public present, provided a background summary of the history of the Zone Committee, from when they were formed in 2010.

1.3 Register of Interests

There were no updates advised for the Register of Interest.

2. OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO SPEAK

Michael Bate

M Bate referred to the oxidation ponds and wetlands in Kaiapoi and expressed concern on the number of dead birds due to avian botulism. He believed the build up of sludge had been a cause of this problem. There was 27 hectares of this and M Bate said this issue wasn't being addressed by the Council as it should.

M Bate also had concerns with the current state of the district's drinking water and acknowledged the large number of residents in the public gallery. He believed having chlorine

added to the drinking water supply was harmful for human consumption and for the environment.

G Cleary responded regarding the botulism issue, referring to the report that was included in the agenda for this meeting, that had been referred from the recent Utilities and Roding Committee meeting. It was advised that the Council did have compliant resource consents for its wastewater treatment plants. The pond based system was a standard approach to wastewater treatment and the Council believed it was using best practice methods to manage the issues of botulism, bringing in specialists to deal with it. This was an issue with wastewater treatment plants throughout the world and was not a unique situation in Waimakariri or in New Zealand. Regarding the sludge management, there was a scheduled programme in place as part of the maintenance activities at the wastewater treatment plants and the Council was conscious of minimising the risk of botulism.

James Ensor

J Ensor introduced himself as Independent Chairperson of the Mandeville Residents Association. There had been monitoring undertaken on the nitrate levels in domestic (privately operated) wells used for drinking water supplies over the last three years. Confirmed this was not water from Council drinking water supplies. With the use of a map, information on the variations in nitrate levels in the water supplies was shown in the Mandeville, Swannanoa, Eyreton and Clarkville areas. There were quite high levels in some areas. There were some concerns in the area near the forest with high levels recorded.

By way of background information and to provide clarification for all those present, C Latham advised that these results were from tests undertaken on private well water supplies. The drinking water from private wells was not monitored by the District Council and though it was not the council's responsibility under legislation, it would be good to make residents more aware that they may have high nitrate levels in the private drinking water supplies. The figures that had been referred to today were well below the New Zealand limits. The Council had stepped up and undertaken some testing of water in wells volunteered by the property owners.

Sophie Allen, WDC Water Advisor, responded providing some context on these results and the testing that the Council had been undertaking.

J Ensor extended thanks to the Council and to the Zone Committee members who had assisted on the water testing day. There were some concerns with some of the nitrate levels recorded in these private drinking water supplies.

Chair Latham invited anyone in the public galley who wished to speak on their concerns with the chlorine in the Council drinking water supplies.

Tania Britton

T Britton, had been a resident of Rangiora since 2003, expressed her concern with the introduction of chlorine to the Council public drinking water supplies. Many residents had now needed to purchase filters. It was acknowledged that the government had ruled that the Council's had to introduce chlorine to the water, which has had a detrimental impact on a lot of residents in the district. There were additional costs being imposed on residents having to purchase water filters or purchase bottled water and some people were experiencing skin irritations.

T Britton believed the chlorine in public drinking water supplies was harmful to residents.

G Cleary clarified that the Council delivered the water supply, and it was required to meet the Drinking Water Standards, as set by the government. It was pointed out that the matter of drinking water was not part of the business of the Waimakariri Water Zone Committee.

G Cleary provided some background information on the water supply for Rangiora, noting that currently the water for Rangiora came from a well supply in Kaiapoi. He noted that the WDC community had strongly voiced its wishes to not have chlorine in its drinking water supplies but pointed out that all water supplies across entire country needed to be chlorinated

to meet the Drinking Water Standards. The Council was conscious of the wishes of the residents, and that they were using the smallest level of chlorine in its water supply that was allowed – which was one teaspoon per 10,000 litres of water.

Mayor Gordon added his comments that the Council had taken its concerns and that of the community to Parliament in Wellington at the time but there were no further options for the Council to pursue. The Council cares about the community and keeping it safe and will continue to keep the public informed of any updates.

The Chairperson thanked the members of the public for attending.

3. REPORTS

3.1 Taranaki Creek 'letterbox' survey – update – Murray Griffin (CWMS Facilitator- Waimakariri)

This report provided the committee with an update on the survey results of the Taranaki Creek fish passage "letterbox". This was an experimental solution jointly developed by ECan engineering, science and biodiversity staff as the former top-hung flood gate that was in place at the creek almost totally blocked fish passage at some points of the tide cycle. This 'letterbox', which was a vertical slot in the new flood gate, would only allow a small amount of water through, but allowed fish species to travel up and down the river to complete their life cycles.

Chloe Armour (Senior Biodiversity Officer – Regional Programmes, Environment Canterbury), (attending remotely), provided background information on the history of Taranaki Floodgate and the impact on fish passage. There had been recent surveying undertaken which had indicated that the 'letterbox' was a popular upstream pathway for a number of fish species. To conduct the survey a net was placed on the upstream side of the floodgate to catch migrating fish heading upstream, and left out for 24 hours, or two tide cycles. This had showed that it was definitely being used, either the fish were swimming through or being carried through by the flow of water. There were ideas for future design improvements, and it was hopeful that this system could be used on other flood gates.

Thanks were extended to a number of Environment Canterbury staff who had worked on this project over many years.

R Gill-Clifford believed this was a great innovation, but was surprised that there was no design for a flood gate that had a fish passage incorporated in it. C Armour advised that this was specifically designed for this floodgate, and was not aware of any other design.

The Chair commented that it was encouraging to see the letterbox working so well. Suggested that it would be good to share this information out to other councils.

Following a question from M Griffin, C Armour said as this floodgate on Taranaki Stream had needed to be replaced, it was an opportune time to test this "letterbox" system in a new flood gate, but there would need to be further work undertaken to install such a system in a floodgate that was insitu.

Moved M Jolly

Seconded J Cooke

THAT the CWMS Waimakariri Zone Committee:

- (a) **Receives** this update with consideration to the Committee's 2021-2024 CWMS Acton Plan Priorities.

CARRIED

UNCONFIRMED

3.2 **Ashley Rakahuri Work Programme – Update – Murray Griffin (CWMS Facilitator- Waimakariri)**

G Stanley, Regional Lead – Braided River Revival, Environment Canterbury provided an update on the recent work programme priorities led by Ecan on the Braided River Revival programme of work including the Rangiora Reach Masterplan implementation and the Rakahuri Berm Transition (central Government co-funded works).

A PowerPoint presentation of photos showed the before and after of work undertaken on the Ashley river clearance. Exotics such as willows and poplar were being cleared and staff would keep monitoring the changes in the riverbeds. The programme of work was undertaken in two separate sections – from the Gorge reach to the Garry River confluence, and from there down. Work was undertaken as budget would allow.

The next steps include engaging a maintenance operator, with active mapping of targets to building information. So far there had been observed some positive impacts of the bird habitat.

Goals of the Berm Transition project were to improve flood protection, Biodiversity, kaitiakitanga and have community involvement. Targeted weeds were highlighted in the Waimakariri River bed, noting that removing one plant makes room for another plant. The next steps of the Berm Transition were then highlighted.

Strategy and Masterplan updates were also highlighted, with G Stanley noting the co-drafting of the Strategy was awaiting response from Ngāi Tūāhuriri.

There had been discussions held with Grant Davey from the Rakahuri Rivercare Group and their expectations which was to apply for funding for the bird islands. Consent has been produced and they can be implemented this season.

Development of upper catchment willow control strategy and associated wetland weeds. Lees Valley wetland enhancement collaboration, there will be extensive mapping of the willow infestations in the Lees Valley catchment by two summer students. This will provide information for a headwater control strategy.

In response to a question, G Stanley advised that there would always be willow trees. For flood protection it would be too risky to use all native planting, as this may fail and private property could be put at risk

A Reuben expressed concern that willow trees were being removed and then there was a lapse in time before replacement planting was undertaken. G Stanley responded that the willows were removed when the south branch was being cleared. On the berm, willows were not controlled or targeted, but targeted Old Mans Beard, Hawthorne, and vines. When doing the sub-canopy planting, willows were not being treated at all.

Councillor Fulton enquired regarding the Lees Valley wetland, had there been any discussions with the landowners up there and what was planned. It was confirmed that the ECan Ecologist had been in discussion with landowners there.

Further question from Councillor Fulton, what value would there be in prohibiting vehicle access to the river bed to protect the plants and birdlife. Vehicles and birds were both choosing to operate in the same open areas in riverbeds but G Stanley believed vehicles were predominantly driving on the tracks available.

Moved Councillor Fulton

Seconded R Gill-Clifford

THAT the CWMS Waimakariri Zone Committee:

- (a) **Receives** this update with consideration to the Committee's 2021-2024 CWMS Acton Plan Priorities.

CARRIED

4. COMMITTEE UPDATES – M GRIFFIN (CWMS FACILITATOR, ECAN)

4.1 Waimakariri Water Zone Committee Working Groups.

Martha spoke on the Environmental Awards for 2024, which would once again be held in conjunction with the WDC Community Service Awards on 10 October

Lifestyle Block Working Group

This update was taken as read, with no further comments or questions from members.

Monitoring Working Group

Erin was not present at the meeting.

4.2 Environment Canterbury Reports.

Councillor McKay provided an update on the recent changes to the Council's Committee Structure. This would align with the LTP 2024-34 and council's impact framework and three core services. In July the Council discharge five standing committees and established two new standing committees, being the Strategy and Policy Committee and a Regional Delivery committee.

Plan Change 8 went to the Environment Canterbury council meeting of 28 August and was passed to go out for consultation to the selected organisations, as required by statute. Staff would also be including some others into this consultation group. This Plan Change covered some consenting issues as a result of the AWA decision on water take use. This involved Christchurch City Council and Waimakariri District Council having issues getting consents for non-consumptive use of water in fully allocated, or over-allocated sites. There would also be consulting on a consent pathway for constructed wetlands, making this more straightforward for people and also seeking feedback on intensification rules, options around dairy conversions or dairy support.

The Mayoral Forum were still considering the future of Water Zone Committees, and a decision was to be made and advised in November. The committee would be kept updated on any progress prior to this.

4.3 Waimakariri District Council Updates – from Councillor Tim Fulton

Kaiapoi River / Cam River – Weed Die-back

- There has been recent concern from the community regarding weed die-back in the Cam and Kaiapoi rivers, including a letter to the North Canterbury News.
- Ecan have confirmed that no chemical instream spraying of the weed has been undertaken in the Cam River (or other local rivers) in recent years.
- It is suspected that the die-back is related to the increased salinity this year due to low flows in the Waimakariri River.

Woodend & Kaiapoi WWTP

- Council has recently initiated its midge management plan for at the Woodend WWTP following a report from neighbouring properties of the first midges emerging.

WDC have updated its website with additional information on chlorine levels in our water supplies.

<https://www.waimakariri.govt.nz/services/3-waters/water-supply/drinking-water-standards>

Youth Week – Clean Up Week (flyer screenshot was attached to the agenda)

Other updates:

- Councillors recently attended a site visit relating to the Mandeville resurgence upgrade, along with staff involved. This was beneficial for all who attended.
- The Council had recently hosted a meeting of residents of Threlkelds Road to address flooding concerns.

Report for information from the Utilities and Roothing Cttee August meeting on Avian Botulism Management 2023/24 – S Allen (Water Environment Advisor)

The information in this report was received, with no questions or comments from committee members.

Memo – Proposed Closure of Stockwater Race R3A and R3A-7, 949 and 1049 South Eyre Road – Declan McCormack (WDC Land Drainage Engineer)

D McCormack and K Simpson were present to speak to this application to close the Stockwater Races and 949 and 1049 South Eyre Road. These races had not been active for the last several years and were no longer needed. The neighbour at 1049 South Eyre Road was also in favour of the race closure.

It was pointed out that there had been four closures of stockwater races in the last ten years.

C Latham commented that the closure of water races at a larger scale than was currently occurring, could make the nitrate levels worse. The Zip Addendum highlighted that the stockwater races were keeping nitrate levels diluted. She hoped that those who were wanting stockwater races closed were aware of that, and thanked staff for keeping the Zone Committee updated as it was acknowledged that the purpose of the stock race network was not for nitrates dilution.

4.4 Kaiapoi Wetlands – Press Article.

The information in this Press article was received and there were no comments or questions from members.

4.5 Action points from the previous Zone Committee meetings.

A presentation was provided by Dr Adrian Meredith (Environment Canterbury Principal Scientist - Water Quality and Ecology) on the salinity levels in the Kaiapoi River. The salinity in Kaiapoi River was last reported to the community in mid-2021. Dr Meredith provided information on salinity levels of each year since then. He noted 2024 has had high salinity levels, especially on the high tide. There had been 25 weeks of high salinity

river incursions in 2024. This was mostly because the Waimakariri River was flowing very low with very few floods. The fresh water had been largely assaulted by the salt water in the last few months. This was primarily the consequence of a climate driven process. In the last two weeks there had been some flood water in the Waimakariri River which was keeping the salinity at bay. Showed evidence of low flows in the Waimakariri River.

Following a question from M Jolly, if the saline conditions remain, Dr Meredith suggested that this would have dire effects of plant and fish life. If fresh water returned, over time, so would the plant and fish life in the river.

Moved Councillor McKay Seconded J Cooke

THAT the CWMS Waimakariri Zone Committee:

- (a) **Receives** these updates for information.

CARRIED

5. **COMMITTEE SCHEDULE AND PRIORITIES FOR 2024**

5.1 **Zone Committee Schedule and Priorities – Review Discussion – Murray Griffin (CWMS Facilitator- Waimakariri)**

M Griffin spoke to this matter, noting the addition of the 27 January 2025 meeting

The Action Plan Fund for Waimakariri was to be open to the 24 October of funding applications, with an update to be presented to the November 11 meeting. Murray to follow up with possible applications for the Action Plan Funding and provide an update on these.

Moved M Jolly Seconded Councillor T Fulton

THAT the CWMS Waimakariri Zone Committee:

- (a) **Review** its schedule for the remainder of 2024.

CARRIED

6. **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

6.1 **Minutes of the Canterbury Water Management Strategy Waimakariri Zone Committee Meeting – 1 July 2024**

There were no updates for these minutes.

Moved J Cooke seconded C Aldhamland

THAT the CWMS Waimakariri Zone Committee:

- (a) **Confirms** the Minutes of the Canterbury Water Management Strategy Waimakariri Zone Committee meeting, held on 1 July 2024, as a true and accurate record.

CARRIED

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

7. GENERAL BUSINESS

J Cooke requested an update from either Councils on the state of the stop banks on the Cam River, after the flooding in 2023. Councillor Fulton agreed to source an update from WDC. Councillor McKay advised that ECan communications had provided feedback on the 2023 flooding, which advised that the stop bank had been rebuilt downstream from Bramleys Road using carefully controlled methods to protect regrowth and establish protective vegetation.

It was agreed that both the WDC and ECan Councillors would follow up on this matter and see if there had been a formal report that could be shared with the committee.

KARAKIA

R Gill-Clifford provided the karakia.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the CWMS Waimakariri Water Zone Committee is scheduled for Monday 11 November 2024 at 4pm, with a workshop on the 7 October 2024.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 6.05pm.

CONFIRMED

Chairperson
Carolyne Latham

Date