
MINUTES
of the
REGIONAL PEST MANAGEMENT JOINT COMMITTEE
MEETING
held
9.30 am, Wednesday, 29 June 2016
at
Tasman Council Chamber, 189 Queen Street, Richmond

Present: Tasman District Council: Councillors B Ensor, S Bryant, T Norriss
Nelson City Council: Councillors R Copeland, K Fulton, B McGurk

In Attendance: Nelson City Council: Environmental Programmes Adviser (R Frizzell),
Environmental Programmes Manager (D Evans)
Tasman District Council: Coordinator – Biosecurity and Biodiversity (P Sheldon), Environmental Information Manager (R Smith), Contracted Advisor (L Vaughan), Biosecurity Officers: (L Grueber and R Van Zoelen), Governance Advisor (P White)

1 OPENING, WELCOME

Paul Sheldon, Coordinator – Biosecurity and Biodiversity, introduced the Committee and the project.

Councillor Copeland offered apologies for early departure at 11.00am.

Election of the Joint Committee Chair and Deputy Chair.

It was recommended that the Joint Committee elect a Chair and Deputy Chair before the meeting proceed further.

Moved Cr Norriss/Cr Ensor

That the Regional Pest Management Joint Committee elects Cr Bryant as Chair of the Joint Committee and Cr McGurk as Deputy Chair.

Cr Copeland foreshadowed a motion of Cr Fulton to the role of Chair and Cr Bryant to the role of Deputy.

Councillors discussed the role and attributes of the nominees. The motion was then put:

Moved Cr Norriss/Cr Ensor
RMPC16-06-01

That the Regional Pest Management Joint Committee elects Cr Bryant as Chair of the Joint Committee and Cr McGurk as Deputy Chair.

CARRIED

2 APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Cr Copeland offered apologies for early departure.

Moved Cr Norriss/Cr Ensor
RPMC16-06-2

That apologies for Cr Copeland for early departure be accepted.

CARRIED

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Nil

4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

As this is the first Regional Pest Management Joint Committee meeting, there were no previous minutes to be confirmed.

5 PRESENTATIONS

Nil

6 REPORTS

6.1 Regional Pest Management Strategy / Review Briefing Notes

Lindsay Vaughan, Advisor to the Regional Pest Management Plan review, presented to the meeting.

In response to a question, Mr Vaughan said that a challenge to the Plan could be taken to the Environment Court. He said that he was unsure where costs would fall if an appeal was taken to the Court – he anticipated Councils would meet Councils' costs and the complainant's costs would fall with them, unless the judge ruled otherwise. Mr Sheldon would anticipate that an appeal would only be for the part of the Plan affected, not the whole Plan.

Mr Vaughan clarified that the Plan would need to be ratified by both Council's individually at the end of the process. There was a provision for pests to only be notified in the Council area that they existed in.

Mr Vaughan went on to outline the various biosecurity agencies and their responsibilities.

Councillors asked about the role of the Environmental Protection Agency. Mr Sheldon said the

agency covered chemical authorisations and toxins but not pest management within the Council borders.

Mr Vaughan said that previously staff and the committee had worked hard to make the existing Strategy user-friendly and simple to reference, but the legislation was going to make this difficult this time around. The new legislation made the structure and format more prescriptive. There was a suggestion of a separate document to the Plan as a more user friendly guide, but the cost of this needed to be considered. Was it possible to have a 'layperson's translation' within the document itself?

Mr Vaughan reminded Councillors that pest management was a long term commitment, and therefore the Committee needed careful consideration of what was in the Plan. He said the Plan was a social contract with the community, and warned that the community was sometimes slow to recognise changes in legislation and therefore the current terms of the 'contract'.

Mr Vaughan described the initial key stakeholder consultation as it was proposed, and invited Councillors to attend those sessions as they were able.

Asked about keeping the Plan consistent with the NPD, Mr Vaughan agreed that there was an option to take an application through the Environment Court to ensure consistency with the NPD. He recommend that if the Councils can take their community with them in the Plan development it may not be needed, but it was an option available to the Committee. Mr Sheldon added that MPI had promised a rapid turnaround on auditing the proposals (draft Plans), which would be helpful. There was some concern from members about the possibility of the Plan being challenged, and the challenge being that members had a predetermined view. They asked for staff advice on this.

Iwi would be involved as a key stakeholders and with eight iwi in the top of the south careful and thorough consultation would be needed.

The meeting discussed marine biosecurity and whether the Plan would address this. Two staff at the table (Mr Evans as Chair and Mr Sheldon) sat on the Top of the South Marine Biosecurity partnership. Mr Evans agreed Pathway Management Plans were an option. The Committee would need to consider this. Mr Evans referred Councillors to the Top of the South Marine Biosecurity partnership website for additional information on the partnership (<http://www.marinebiosecurity.co.nz/>). Provisions for Pathway Management Plans are outlined in sections 59 – 98 of the Biosecurity Act 1993.

Mr Sheldon also noted other concerns in the community (in regard to cats and ants for example) and a companion document may be needed on how the Councils would engage with their communities on these issues, where they did not fit under the Biosecurity Act.

In terms of timeframes, Mr Vaughan said the existing document in expired in November 2017. and the new Plan was to be operative (at least in part) by then. Councillors were referred to the timeframes in section 8 of the report.

The meeting broke for morning tea at 110.35am and reconvened at 10.50am.

Mr Vaughan took the meeting through the sections of the report in the agenda.

Mr Grueber spoke about the increased range of legislated requirements on people in the

community, especially rural and farm property owners and although enforcement staff tried to work with property owners generally there was increased resistance from sectors of the community. He said that the biosecurity officers used compliance/infringement action as a last resort.

Councillor Copeland left the meeting at 11.00 am.

Mr Smith confirmed that the budget for the Plan was split 75/25 Tasman/Nelson and confirmed the overall budget was for the Plan.

The Committee talked about community engagement on issues, for example Argentinian ants, where the pests were in the Strategy and enforcement wasn't an option because of the extent of the problem and lack of resources. Instead, surveillance, education and information was provided and asking the community to take action was the only option.

The Committee would need to consider with the new Plan what was not included in the Plan, and what recommendations the Committee would make on how the Council could deal with the issues that were not included in the Plan. Councillors discussed their Areas of Responsibility in their Terms of Reference. They acknowledged that the Committee's responsibility was only the Plan, but that they could make recommendations to their respective Council on non-regulatory approaches to issues, particularly raised by the community through submissions, that fell outside of the Plan.

Cr Fulton noted that it would be helpful if the Areas of Responsibility of the Committee could be broadened to include the ability for the Committee to make recommendations back to their Councils on items that fell outside the scope of the Plan.

In terms of stakeholder engagement meetings, Councillors requested that these be scheduled as much as possible to allow for their attendance. Staff noted this request. Councillors also requested that the form of public meetings in March 2017 followed a 'drop-in' sessions formatted along the lines of the recent Annual Plan consultation undertaken by Tasman ('at their place and on their terms').

The Committee discussed the issue with cat management and the strong feelings in the community about cat ownership and control. The Committee also discussed the groups considered key stakeholders and wanted to ensure the Biodiversity Forums were included and requested that a link be made into an existing Forum meeting if possible.

Mr Sheldon asked for the approval process for any media releases on the Plan process. The Committee agreed that media releases could be signed off by the Chair and Deputy Chair.

**Moved Cr Norriss/Councillor McGurk
RPMC16-06-3**

That the Regional Pest Management Joint Committee

- 1. receives the Regional Pest Management Strategy / Review Briefing Notes report REP16-06-01; and**
- 2. requests that the staff report back to the two Council's with a request that the Areas of Responsibility of the Committee include recommendations from the Committee that fall outside the scope of the Plan; and**
- 3. recommends that staff undertake key stakeholder consultation.**

CARRIED

The meeting concluded at 12.00pm

Date Confirmed:

Chair:

