

## **Report 99.380**

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Report to the Landcare Committee  
From Andrew Annakin, Divisional Manager, Landcare

### **Divisional Manager's Report**

#### **1. Purpose**

To inform the Landcare Committee about activities and matters of interest within the Landcare Division since the last Landcare Committee meeting, 8 June 1999. Departmental activity reports are also attached.

#### **2. Hutt River “Design Standard” Milestone**

As reported elsewhere in this Order Paper, at its 28 June meeting, the Hutt River Floodplain Management Advisory Committee agreed to recommend a “Design Standard” to the Landcare Committee, for community consultation.

This followed two successful workshops, for Regional Councillors and Advisory Committee members, on 14 and 16 June. Brendan Paul and his team put in a huge effort preparing for the workshops (including weekend practices!). I also particularly want to thank Joanne Blakely for her work developing the financial models that were so integral to the presentations.

Following the release of the landmark “*Living with the River*” (the Phase One summary report), achieving a basis for deciding a revised Hutt River “Design Standard” is a significant milestone. The Advisory Committee also considered a list of prioritised capital works for the Hutt River - a further key element of the “Design Standard”, but also aimed at the Council’s Long-term Financial Strategy. For strategic planning purposes this now completes the link with the two major Kapiti Floodplain Management Plans, finalised last year for the Otaki and Waikanea Rivers.

A lot now depends on the community consultation. Obviously, funding – the impact on rates – will be a key decision for the Regional Council. However, the accelerated Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan has always been positioned to align with the Council’s Long-term Financial Strategy processes. Thus, a community preferred “Design Standard” can be considered along with all flood protection priorities and every other Council priority, as part of the Long-term Financial Strategy later this year.

### 3. **Environmental Education and Communication Initiative**

The strategy document was very well received at the 22 June Policy and Finance Committee meeting. Jane Bradbury was right, that though the document has been a long time coming, it greatly benefited from the insights gained at the recent Councillors workshops and the developing thoughts on the Council's future direction, and its relationship with the community at large.

Jane didn't mention it, but I want to record Susan Edwards' contribution. Working with Nigel Clarke on the original strategy document, Susan visited a number of other Councils and reviewed environmental communication initiatives already happening in the WRC, especially in Regional Parks where the Rangers are a very visible and active WRC "front-end" in their local communities.

The next step is to establish the process to sift through the myriad of potential Environmental Education initiatives the Council will want to consider in the Long-term Financial Strategy.

Within Landcare, our focus will most likely be on *Community Connections* with care-groups and volunteers, and via *Learnwell* visits (particularly to the under-utilised Ken Grey Education Centre at Battle Hill), and to develop at least one "Environmental Trail". Jane and I will be working on this with the soon to be advertised Environmental Education Co-ordinator.

### 4. **Asset Management Plans**

As the Committee knows, one of the Divisional "planks" these last three years has been enhanced asset management. Developing formal Asset Management Plans for the functional areas is a corner stone of that. Last year we produced the first set of "basic" Asset Management Plans. These conformed to Audit NZ guidelines and set out the framework for developing Improvement Plans and linking these to Business Plans. More latterly, work has also progressed with the harder to define, and value, environmental assets.

This year we have refined the basic assumptions, and are now reaching some conclusions for costing all of our current service levels, well into the future. This has highlighted a series of what we call "maintenance (or renewal) gaps". These are where the sum total of our assets are not being maintained such that current service levels can continue for the life of the asset. Within that broad statement there are various levels of criticality and a range of definitions of what is deemed an asset. There are also a number of policy questions on what constitutes a level of service to the community and whether current service levels are appropriate.

It is increasingly clear that there are a number of long term funding shortfalls in Flood Protection and Regional Parks to be addressed through this question of establishing and maintaining appropriate services levels. These issues have already been flagged at various points: the Regional Parks "Future Directions" paper (Report 99.18), the subsequent "Porcupine Diagram" and more recently in the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan financial models.

All of this can be considered by to the Committee once the Asset Management Plans have looped through the Corporate review processes - we hope to have substantive reports for the next Landcare Committee meeting. Regardless, the Council's views on current and future service levels will be important as we move through the Long-term Financial Strategy.

## 5. **Joanne Blakely Flies Off**

Joanne leaves us on 17 July to work in Japan, after a holiday in England. Joanne has been acting for Paul Tryon while he samples the delights of SAP. She has very ably prepared one Quarterly Review, brought together the 1999/2000 Business Plans and, as mentioned, excelled with the financial modelling for the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan project. We tried valiantly to persuade Joanne to stay longer, but she was wise to all our scheming ("if I don't go now I might never leave!") and so heads off with my very best wishes.

## 6. **Recommendation**

*That the report be received and the contents noted.*

ANDREW ANNAKIN  
Divisional Manager, Landcare