

# Whaitua Te Whanganui-a-Tara Committee – Meeting 6 Notes

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Monday 22 July 2019  
9:15am-4:00pm  
Silverstream Retreat, Lower Hutt

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## Attendees

### **Te Whanganui-a-Tara Whaitua Committee:**

Louise Askin, Roger Blakeley, Quentin Duthie, Peter Gilberd, Wayne Guppy (until 2:30pm), Tui Lewis, Pete Matcham, Zoe Ogilvie, Jonny Osborne, Anya Pollock, Kara Puketapu-Dentice, Hikitia Ropata (until midday), Naomi Solomon, Paul Swain (until midday), Gabriel Tupou, Pat van Berkel

### **Project Team:**

Tim Sharp, Phill Barker, Matt Hickman, Anna Martin, Kat Banyard, Denise Young, Richard Sheild, Emily Osborne, Mark Heath, Brent King, Jon Gabites, Sharyn Westlake (GWRC), Onur Oktem, Helen Bolton (WCC), David Burt (HCC), James McKibbin (UHCC), Angela Penfold (WWL), Grace Katene (Ngāti Toa)

Apologies: Arpan Mukherjee (GWRC), Pekaira Jude, Tamahau Rowe (PNBST)

### **GWRC Flood Protection team:**

Graeme Campbell, Colin Munn, Alistair Allan, Tracy Berghan

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## Action points

### Project Team:

- Add the communications and engagement workstream to the project plan diagram.
- Provide the Committee with the updated meeting schedule as it changes.
- Follow up with additional information on the new Flood Protection global consent and code of practice.
- Draft a paper on the purpose of a science subgroup and options for what it would do.
- Provide a description of the science programme that is underway and include experience from previous whitua committees.
- Respond to items in the parking lot: the role of climate change in the whitua and the role of native and non-native species in river management.

### Committee members:

- The subgroups are to discuss and complete the Terms of Reference at their next meeting.
- Send Emily events and news articles to be added to the SharePoint site.
- Let co-Chairs know if you would like to add anything to the co-Chairs update.
- Email any follow up questions from meetings to Emily.
- Contact Emily if you have field trip ideas or are interested in organising a site visit.
- Let C&E subgroup know if you have connections with business groups or developers.

### Communications and engagement subgroup:

- Change syntax on the second objective in subgroup update to reflect that the Committee will take direction from community on the whitua vision.
- Community engagement on 2120 vision is to take place over the next 6-8 weeks.
- Update PowerPoint when branding has been confirmed, add Committee members, and Grace and Hikitia to review with a mana whenua lens.
- Include information about the collaboration between mana whenua partners on the Committee.

### Policy subgroup:

- Progress the vision and problem definition and analytical framework.
- Discuss proposal to have a workshop on what the Committee can or cannot influence in a quadrant diagram (low/high influence and low/high impact).
- Timeline rows to be shifted back by one month in policy framework alongside project plan timeline document to show the input of work from the policy subgroup into the Committee's work.

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## Decisions reached

- Agreement to publish all final meeting notes, reports, presentations, and the co-Chairs updates on the GWRC website. Not to include draft working papers, e.g., from subgroups.
- Subgroups will have 30 minutes or less to report back at each Committee meeting.

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## Meeting notes

### Session 1: Open meeting

Kara opened the meeting with a karakia. He acknowledged that the 10 June meeting was Morrie Love's last hui with the Committee but that he would be willing to continue providing support as needed. A new member from Taranaki Whānui will be appointed to the Committee.

The Meeting 5 notes were confirmed. The Committee agreed to publish all final meeting notes, reports, presentations, and the co-Chairs updates on the GWRC website, but not draft working papers, e.g., from subgroups.

Current actions:

- Kara wrote a draft Terms of Reference template for the subgroups. The subgroups are to discuss and complete the Terms of Reference at their next meeting.
- Kara and Louise will speak at the next Environment Committee meeting on 8 August at the GWRC Council Chambers.
- The policy workstream has been added to the project plan diagram. The Project Team is to add the communications and engagement workstream to the project plan diagram.
- The project plan is a guide, all topics will be covered but the design of meetings is subject to change. The Project Team will update the meeting schedule when it changes and circulate to the Committee.

Co-Chairs update – [see paper](#):

- Committee members can send Emily events and news articles to be added to the SharePoint site and circulated to the Committee.
- Decision that subgroups will have 30 minutes or less to report back at each Committee meeting.
- Committee members to let co-Chairs know if they would like to add anything to the co-Chairs update.
- The Te Awarua-o-Porirua Whaitua Implementation Programme has been launched. Congratulations to the leadership provided by the Ngāti Toa members involved.
- Shane's replacement on the Project Team is to be advertised through Te Hunga Whiriwhiri. New Project Team members are to be included in the co-Chairs update.

### Session 2: Communications and engagement subgroup update

*Zoe Ogilvie (subgroup lead)*

Subgroup update:

- If Committee members would like more detail on communications and engagement work, please check the subgroup meeting dates on the SharePoint calendar, and contact Zoe and Emily about attending.
- Subgroup did a stakeholder mapping exercise at their last meeting but need to identify which groups are missing from the list.
- There will be different phases of engagement and the first will be focused on gathering input from the community on their vision for water, identifying issues to be aware of, and raising awareness of the Whaitua Committee's work.

- Change syntax on the second objective in subgroup update to reflect that the Committee will take direction from community on the whaitua vision.
- Community engagement on their vision is to take place over the next 6-8 weeks.
- For engagement with business groups or developers, Committee to ask if they can meet with them in their space. Committee to let subgroup know if they have any connections to organise these meetings.
- Brand and logo designs to be displayed and discussed during the lunch break.

#### Engagement methods:

- [Have Your Say](#) was presented as the online platform for engagement since it displays responses on a topic and can be used to capture comments from conversations at public events. Jon distributed paper on how to use the site.
- Drawbacks to using Have Your Say were discussed. Alternative options (such as community workshops) might be better suited for different target audiences. Not everyone will want to create a separate account for this platform, although it is possible to register through Facebook. Online forums can become echo chambers based on who responds.
- The [Whaitua Facebook page](#) is now live for Committee members to like and share.
- Video suggested as a tool for sharing messages and generating an emotive response, possible to create a competition.
- FAQs and PowerPoint are available to use on SharePoint. Committee members can make a copy and add or edit information. Project Team to update PowerPoint when branding has been confirmed, add Committee members, and Hikitia to review with a mana whenua lens.
- Raised point about Committee's responsibility to educate the community about the mana whenua partners (Ngāti Toa and PNBST) on the Committee, and to highlight this collaborative relationship.

#### Climate change:

- Potential to link with ongoing discussions about climate change, although need to be careful that the conversation doesn't become diluted. Project Team to look at what Councils are doing in this space.
- Roger to contact Sophie Handford who was involved with the school strike for climate.

### Session 3: Policy subgroup update

*Roger Blakeley and Hikitia Ropata (subgroup co-leads)*

#### Amended policy framework diagram:

- The framework enables the Committee to ask important questions about equity from a policy perspective.

#### Amended vision and problem definition:

- Vision will not be further developed until engagement work has been done.
- Discussion about the tone of the problem definition. Still a bit negative and could be reframed more positively, build on good work that is already being done and show that the Committee's vision is leading the way forward. Also important to be honest about the challenges, i.e. children can't swim in the river.
- The document should use every day rather than policy language, subheadings were suggested.
- Potential to use this document at the front of the WIP along with the tūāpapa.

- Agreement on content and issues but it needs to be split into three parts: vision, problem, and solution. Subgroup to progress further, understanding that this is a living document which will evolve throughout the process.

#### Systems map:

- Purpose is to show the Committee's areas of focus and influence.
- Discussion about where climate, financial and economic systems fit into the map to be continued by subgroup over email.
- Suggested that this information could be developed in a quadrant diagram (low/high influence and low/high impact) as a collective exercise. Committee to have a workshop at the next meeting on what they can or cannot influence.

#### Venn diagram:

- Internal document to show that if the four areas (equitable, feasible, sustaining, desired) are taken into consideration, the Committee will succeed in making integrated policy recommendations.
- Clarified that equity includes all social and economic considerations.

#### Policy framework alongside project plan timeline:

- Timeline rows to be shifted back by one month to show the input of work from the policy subgroup into the Committee's work.

### Session 4: River management and ecological outcomes

*Tim Sharp, Whaitua Programme Manager, GWRC – Framing the day; Hutt River main stem as case study for learning about constraints and opportunities*

- This meeting is focused on ecological objectives, the current work of flood protection, where there are constraints and opportunities.
- Reminder of the Committee's areas of work: kawa and tūāpapa development, strategic relationships, communications and engagement, investment, vision and targets, policy. Need to be thinking about how and where we can influence these in each meeting.
- Kara added that we all have a responsibility to the river. Committee to consider how the Whaitua can enable outcomes within river management, what would an integrated approach look like in the future?

*Graeme Campbell, Manager of Flood Protection, GWRC – History of Hutt Valley settlement development, catchment context and river management; [see presentation](#)*

- Important to understand the development of the floodplain, looking backwards to go forward.
- Substantial changes in tectonic movements from 1060 to present day. The river was surrounded by bush when the British arrived, England drew plans and sections that didn't account for contours. Early stopbanks in 1860s, catchment boards were agents of the Crown.
- The Hutt valley was a food basket for growing vegetables and flooding has played a major part in its development.
- 150 years of mostly manmade changes. Livelihoods, safety and security were the main drivers.
- River had been highly channelised by the 1970s, Melling Bridge is the biggest point of constriction leaving few choices with development on either side.

- Legacy is that we've changed the river and we're now stuck in an engineering paradigm that requires us to manage the river.
- Opportunities for Committee to consider: shifting values to include ecological values in addition to safety and security; developments that include water sensitive urban design as a best practice, to be discussed at upcoming meetings; collaboration across Councils and agencies to plan for better green/brownfield development.

*Mark Heath, Senior Environmental Scientist, GWRC – Ecological consequences and current state; [see presentation](#)*

- Importance of understanding how human activities affect the natural hydrological cycle. Difference between the natural and urban water cycle.
- The Hutt River valley has been deforested and replaced by urban development, increased surface run off causes higher peak flows and lower lows. The river channel has been modified, loss of natural character and ecosystem health.
- This not only impacts the river, but the streams flowing into the river.
- Much of the natural form and habitats have been lost but there are still many native fish and biodiversity left to protect.

*Colin Munn, Team Leader of Operations Delivery & Planning, GWRC – Current river corridor management through FMP's and Hutt River Environment Strategy; [see presentation](#)*

- Flood Protection's operating framework is to contribute to regional resilience, maintain waterways, advise about flood hazards, and raise awareness of risks.
- Maintenance of watercourses is the responsibility of the land owner. Room for improvement in who is responsible for maintaining watercourses.
- Challenge to remember the level of risk when there hasn't been a flood in recent history. More frequent flooding with climate change.
- Council can change the schemes but often working under legislation that is 100 years old and based on previous thinking. Current Floodplain Management Plan completed in 2001.
- Flood Protection works include allowing room for the water to flow, managing its alignment, monitoring and maintaining bed levels.
- The Hutt River is highly constrained, its stop banks are high and close to the river, and there's a loss of natural character and meander.
- Willows planted along edge for bank protection because they develop deep roots and grow quickly.
- Gravel extraction to manage the depth of river and flow of water but ecologically intrusive and causes movement of sediment.
- Assets (including stop banks, culverts, floodgates) need to be well maintained to reduce risk of failure in a flooding event.
- Range of values and activities associated with the river, lots of community groups involved in planting but difficult to keep up maintenance.

*Mark Heath – Key ecological effects to manage/protect, opportunities for improvement*

- There have been many Hutt River management investigations to understand the impact of flood protection activities.
- 2012: gravel extraction investigation, before and 7 weeks after. There was a deeper riffle before with a range of velocity and species. Build-up of fine sediment after extraction, sediment plume downstream, which encourages growth of algae and periphyton. River reverted back after 7 weeks, activity was short lived and localised.
- 2015: re-contouring investigation. Reduced the riffle and deep pool habitat, increased shallow run, and sediment plume.

- Fine sediment investigation. Change in habitat and channel, fish mortality, increase in sediment. Need to consider what we are managing for as spawning and nesting seasons all happen at different times.
- Permanent and repeatable activities have a long lasting impact, adapt management based on investigations.

*Alistair Allan, Team Leader of FMP Implementation, GWRC – River management and future implementation: Riverlink, new approaches, and opportunities for Committee to influence outcomes; [see presentation](#)*

- Riverlink project is a partnership between HCC, NZTA, and GWRC, model of working together to achieve collective outcomes. Takes into account resilience, flood safety and security (GWRC), city growth and housing (HCC), transport accessibility and safety (NZTA).
- Met with landowners to purchase properties to create more space for the river. Design workshops with community, engagement in different public places targeting various age groups. River placed in the centre of plans to move toward greater connection with river.
- Improvements for habitat and biodiversity, use of river spaces for stormwater treatment, better pest and waste controls, more green spaces and water sensitive urban design.
- Query about sea level rise and its interaction with flood risk – to be considered at a later meeting.

## Session 5: Committee discussion with speaker panel

*Graeme Campbell, Mark Heath, Colin Munn, Alistair Allan*

*Why are willow trees planted along river and why wouldn't native trees be suitable?*

- Willows grow quickly whereas natives take longer to get established and require more maintenance.
- Willows can also be used in places as a nursery plant for succession to natives over time.
- But can create issues such as huge amount of leaf drop at the same time, and query whether at these times, being able to see right through to the river is appropriate.

*What the Whaitua Committee can do to make a difference for the future of the Hutt River?*

- Land use controls, room for vegetation and stop banks, avoid new development in flood-prone areas.
- Public ownership of watercourses rather than landowners responsibility.
- Prevent further encroachment, opportunities in tributaries and streams relating to erosion and stormwater.
- Challenge to whaitua is readdressing value sets, what investment are we prepared to make, e.g., for ecological outcomes
- Aligned decision-making to determine who pays, manages, and maintains river. Councils are already in the same room but central government doesn't operate in the same space.

*Is the current regulatory framework maintaining or still degrading?*

- Generally maintaining with slight improvement, some sites and streams decreasing, bias toward bigger rivers.

*How do we reconcile our vision statement and the demands of flood protection? Is water to be cherished or managed?*

- Proactive retreat rather than reactive red zoning as in Christchurch after the earthquake.
- Need to be encouraged by work we're doing and keep at it, set short, medium, and long-term goals, get the right people in the room to help achieve them, understand it can't be solved overnight.
- Climate change brings us all to the table, need funding tools for adaptation, see Productivity Commission's [local government funding and financing draft report](#).

*If you had an endless budget and there was no social backlash, what would you do?*

- Keep people away from floodwaters rather than floodwaters away from people.
- Collaboration is key at all levels.
- Buy all land where there's inappropriate development and put streams in public space to be protected, interesting ideas in [decolonised cities work by Ngāti Toa](#).
- Manage right land use for that parcel of land, use floodplain for traditional vegetable growing, decentralise wastewater and stormwater systems.

## Session 6: Co-chairs wrap up

Recap of parking lot questions:

- What is the role of climate change in the Whaitua Committee's work?
- Is there opportunity for native tree species to be planted along the river channel?
- Committee to email follow up questions to Project Team.

Field trips:

- Committee members to contact Emily if they have field trip ideas or are interested in organising a site visit that fits with meeting schedule, to be held outside of Committee meetings.
- Interest in an Upper Hutt field trip, swimming holes in the river and the weir near Silverstream, piped streams of Wellington.

Subgroups:

- Subgroups to test papers before they are sent to the Committee, be specific about feedback sought, and provide context when documents are circulated.
- Project Team to write a paper on the proposed purpose of a science subgroup and options for what it would do. Provide a description of the science programme that is underway and include experience from previous whaitua committees.
- Discussion that a science subgroup may not be needed if it is presented in a coherent form but could provide opportunity for Committee to input into science questions.

Peter Gilberd closed the meeting with gratitude for the day's discussion.

**Next meeting: Monday 19 August 2019 at the Greater Wellington Regional Council Chambers (15 Walter Street, Te Aro, Wellington, 6011).**

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