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**Report 01.301**

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Report to Environment Committee  
from Tim Porteous, Biodiversity Co-ordinator

## **Pauatahanui Inlet**

### **1. Purpose**

- a) To inform the Committee of the results of community consultation on proposals for the establishment of a community entity to oversee the implementation of the Pauatahanui Inlet Action Plan
- b) To recommend support in principle for the establishment of a charitable trust.

### **2. Background**

The Pauatahanui Inlet Advisory Group (PIAG) was established in August 1999 with the brief to prepare a Vision Statement and Action Plan for the Pauatahanui Inlet. Following extensive consultation and the receipt of submissions from the public, the Action Plan was finalised. The plan was adopted by both the Wellington Regional Council and the Porirua City Council in late 2000.

One of the recommendations contained within the plan (Action point 7.1) is the establishment of a permanent group to ensure that the Action Plan is implemented and that the objective of integrated management is achieved. The final task of the PIAG has been to determine the most suitable type of entity to achieve these outcomes. In fact, after considerable deliberation, the need for two separate but inter-related groups has been identified. The first, an Inter-Agency Liaison Committee is intended to ensure communication and co-ordination between the management agencies. The second, a community trust, provides the community with a vehicle to promote and support the implementation of the Action Plan. These, and the relationship between the two, are discussed below.

In early April this year, the PIAG's ideas were discussed with different stakeholder audiences in three workshops. These were with the community, representatives of the management agencies and some councillors from Porirua City Council and Wellington Regional Council. In all three discussions there was strong support for the PIAG's proposals.

### 3. **Inter-Agency Co-ordinating Committee**

It is proposed to establish an Inter-Agency Co-ordinating Committee to ensure that the management agencies have a forum through which information can be shared and issues debated at an officer level, (the management agencies are those agencies with statutory responsibilities within the Inlet or its catchment and includes the Department of Conservation, Ministry of Fisheries, Transit NZ, WRC and PCC, and the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society, which manages the Pauatahanui Wildlife Management Reserve). It is envisaged that this committee would meet every three months and encourage the early sharing of information and proposals.

The formation of this committee is, in some respects, merely a formalisation of the increasing level of interaction between these agencies resulting from the Action Plan exercise.

### 4. **Pauatahanui Inlet Community Trust**

Of greater significance is the proposal to establish a charitable trust to oversee the implementation of the Action Plan.

#### 4.1 **Why a charitable trust?**

Before arriving at the decision that a charitable trust would best meet the general requirement of “promoting and supporting the implementation of the Action Plan”, the PIAG examined a number of possible models, these were:

- Informal Groups (such as Friends of Waikanae River);
- Community Boards (under the Local Government Act 1974);
- Statutory Group (such as Guardians of Lake Wanaka);
- Incorporated Society; and
- Charitable Trust.

The models were assessed against a set of criteria. The criteria capture the qualities needed of a group to adequately achieve the above objective. The conclusion was reached that a charitable trust best met the criteria of:

- Permanence;
- Representativeness;
- Independence;
- Legal Status;
- Funding capability;
- Legal Accountability; and
- Feasibility.

#### 4.2 **What would the trust do?**

The core function of the Pauatahanui Inlet Community Trust will be to promote and support the implementation of the Pauatahanui Inlet Action Plan and its vision for the Inlet. The Trust will:

- drive the implementation process;
- ensure agencies work together;

- be an accountability mechanism for the plan;
- give the community a continuing voice in implementing the Action Plan; and
- generate additional funding for further implementing the plan.

#### 4.3 **What would be the composition of the Trust?**

The Pauatahanui Inlet Community Trust needs to be as representative as possible of the community that lives near, recreates on, and values, for whatever reason, the Inlet and its catchment. Therefore it is suggested that the membership be relatively large – up to 14 trustees. There are a number of organisations that have a clear association with the Inlet and their membership can be considered essential. These are:

Te Runanga o Toa Rangatira Inc  
 Guardians of Pauatahanui Inlet  
 Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society Inc  
 Porirua City Council  
 Wellington Regional Council

To make up the balance of nine members nominations will be called from the community for persons that have a mix of skills and expertise that can be applied to assisting the Trust in achieving its objective. Where possible members will be representative of a range of community interests in the Inlet.

#### 4.4 **When will the Trust be formed**

It is expected that the Trust will be established within the next three months. The PIAG will initiate the procedure to establish the Trust, and the Council and other 'founding' parties will be invited to participate.

### 5. **A Co-ordinator for the Trust**

At the workshops held to discuss the on-going entity the possibility of a co-ordinator to facilitate the operation of the Trust was discussed. There was general recognition that it was unrealistic to rely completely on voluntary contributions to co-ordinate and run the Trust (it was noted that the contribution by the community members of the PIAG had now totalled many hundreds of hours and was unsustainable) While the final decision would be one for the Trust itself to make, it is suggested that the success of the Trust concept and to a lesser extent the interaction between the Inter-Agency Committee and the Trust is probably dependent on the appointment of a part-time co-ordinator

#### 1. **What would the co-ordinator do?**

The role of the co-ordinator would be to do much of the day to day organising, liaising and sieving to allow the community volunteer trustees to focus on the “core business” of the trust, that of ensuring the Action Plan is implemented.

#### 2. **How would the co-ordinator be funded?**

While there may be some limited opportunities to raise funds externally to support a co-ordinator, it is suggested that the two Councils (PCC and WRC) largely fund the position. In many respects the officers from both Councils currently involved in the

Pauatahanui project have been undertaking many of the roles suggested for the co-ordinator. The establishment of a co-ordinator's position would free up these staff to undertake more strategic roles in relation to the project.

As noted, the decision on a part-time co-ordinator is one for the Trust to make once it is established. It is likely that the Trust will subsequently approach both Councils to assist in funding such a position and at that stage Council can consider the merits of the position and from where the funding would be drawn.

During the establishment phase of the community trust, the Council will continue to provide the same level of leadership, guidance and support that it has since the establishment of the PIAG

## 6. **Communication**

The Council's lead role in the initiatives associated with Pauatahanui Inlet will be the subject of an article in *Elements* when the details of the structures discussed in this report are established.

## 7. **Recommendation**

*That the report be noted and its contents received*

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