

10. KEY STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT IN WATERWAYS & WETLANDS MANAGEMENT

RR 9098

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The purpose of this report is to document progress made to date in the implementation of the Council's July 1997 resolution "That the Water Services Manager commence discussions with Tangata Whenua and other key stakeholders to further proposals for joint, integrated management of Christchurch's waterways and wetlands".

INTRODUCTION

The Council plays a major role in waterway and wetland management. This arises from its statutory functions relating to activities on land and the operation of a land drainage system. The Council's intentions are stated in the proposed City Plan and its Asset Management Strategy as represented in the Annual Plan and Budget. These two documents support an overall thrust to sustain all the values associated with the surface water environment and minimise the need for costly intervention works such as piping and concrete channels.

Other key stakeholders (ie groups with ownership rights and statutory functions over waterways and wetlands) are:

Property owners	The majority of waterways and wetlands lie within private property
Canterbury Regional Council	As water quality and quantity managers under the Resource Management Act
Ministry for the Environment	As promoters of sustainable management as set out in the Resource Management Act
Department of Conservation	As advocates and advisers on environmental matters
Tangata Whenua	As 'Treaty' partners

The job of translating policy into action clearly involves several Council units and outside organisations. Successful and efficient management demands a degree of integration between stakeholders. Experience shows that working together enhances the ability to fulfil statutory and other responsibilities rather than compromising them.

In recognition of this the Council in July 1997 supported the concept of a waterways and wetlands monitoring group comprising key stakeholders representatives and some experts being established. It was felt that such a group would have the knowledge and experience necessary to assess overall progress towards the medium and long term objectives of the Waterways and Wetlands Asset Management Strategy.

The Council resolved:

1. That the Water Services Manager commence discussions with Tangata Whenua and other key stakeholders to further proposals for joint, integrated management of Christchurch's waterways and wetlands.

2. That Councillor involvement be sought should a high level, monitoring/overview group be proposed.
3. That a target of 31 December 1997 be set for completion of the discussions and reporting outcomes to the Council.

PROGRESS TO DATE

The Water Services Manager and senior staff have met regularly approximately every two months with Tangata Whenua representatives to improve our relationship with our Treaty partner through greater understanding and to explore opportunities for a joint approach to planning and project implementation where our interests coincide. Examples of projects on which we are working together are an eel management strategy and a cultural audit process for information in relation to Tangata Whenua.

Progress in the pursuit of joint, integrated management of our waterways and wetlands with other key stakeholders was disrupted for a time late last year by re-organisation within the Water Services Unit which resulted in land drainage planning and operational staff joining forces in the new Waterways and Wetlands section. However, since its inception the Waterways and Wetlands team has planned the very successful launch and workshop with key stakeholders held in the Town Hall on Friday 21 August last. The purpose of the launch attended by over 130 partners and stakeholder representatives was to affirm both the integrated management of our waterways and wetlands and the City Council management structure set up to facilitate it.

The purpose of the associated workshop held in the afternoon and attended by 14 key stakeholders representatives including one City Councillor and two Community Board members was to advance the Council's July 1997 resolution and gauge stakeholder support for a high level monitoring/overview group.

There was general agreement amongst stakeholders represented at the workshop that:

- the management of Christchurch's waterways and wetlands is generally heading in the right direction
- the Christchurch City Council should retain its role as facilitator/leader in the process of promoting joint/integrated management
- stakeholders need to participate in management

Most participants agreed that it would be worthwhile for the stakeholder group to meet again, although individuals seemed reluctant to commit themselves until the role required of them became clearer.

In September 1998 the Unit presented its Waterways and Wetlands Asset Management Plan to the City Services Committee seeking Council endorsement of the documentation that had occurred since the Council's initial approval of levels of service and management direction in 1996. Questions were asked concerning the land acquisition policies being pursued to protect waterways particularly in rural areas in advance of urban development.

It was clear from the discussion that Councillors needed more information on this aspect of waterways work and it was agreed that the Asset Management Plan be re-presented later in 1999 with the intervening time used to explain and detail the land acquisition objectives. It is intended that the work required to ready the Asset

Management Plan for presentation be done in consultation with the key stakeholders. This will model the type of interaction we anticipate with this group and hopefully lead on to more formal arrangements.

CONCLUSIONS

The need for joint/integrated management of Christchurch's waterways and wetlands has been affirmed by key stakeholders. Although it is taking longer to complete discussions than originally envisaged the support forthcoming to date warrants the continuation of the process begun in July 1997. To pull out now could be perceived as a breach of faith.

It is intended to involve the key stakeholders in finalising the Waterways and Wetlands Asset Management Plan. This will model the type of involvement we seek from the group and hopefully lead to more formal arrangements envisaged by earlier Council resolutions.

- Recommendation:**
1. That the Water Services Manager continue discussions with key stakeholders to further proposals for joint/integrated management of Christchurch's waterways and wetlands (as detailed in the July 1997 report to the Council).
 2. That the key stakeholders be invited to participate in finalising Waterways and Wetlands Asset Management Plan due to be presented for Council approval in September 1999.
 3. That two members of the Parks and Recreation Committee be nominated as the City Council representatives within the key stakeholder group.
 4. That the Committee be kept informed of progress towards more formal joint management arrangements.

Chairman's

- Recommendation:**
1. That the above recommendation be adopted.
 2. That Councillors Ganda and Corbett be appointed as the Council's representatives on the key stakeholders group.