

6. AVON-HEATHCOTE ESTUARY/TE IHUTAI, MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE

Officer responsible Open Space and Water Policy Leader	Author David Newey, DDI 371-1810
Corporate Plan Output: Conservation Policy Advice	

The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the process toward meeting a resolution that work proceed toward the development of a non-statutory management strategy for the Avon-Heathcote Estuary (the Estuary) and its environs using a public consultation focused process.

RECENT ACTIONS

The latest steps in working toward a non-statutory management strategy (“the strategy”) which have been completed are:

- The completion of an Avon-Heathcote Estuary Draft Issues Discussion Report. The aim of the report is to form the basis of a possible non-statutory management strategy. It provides an overview of the issues affecting the Estuary in order to stimulate thought and focus public debate on the issues and possible options for their resolution. It outlines the process that Environment Canterbury and Christchurch City Council have agreed to follow in the development and implementation of a non-statutory strategy and the opportunities for the public to help develop the strategy.
- A public forum held on 9 June.

PUBLIC FORUM – “CHANGING THE FUTURE”

The purpose of the forum, held at the Mt Pleasant Community Centre, was to seek community involvement in tackling Estuary issues.

Approximately 70 people attended on the day including members of the public, representatives from a range of interest groups, iwi, and staff and Councillors from both Councils.

The outcomes which the were sought by the attendees from the Forum were:

- Community input into management
- Co-operative effort by community and agencies
- Identify and clarify the Issues
- Registering the significance of the wetland
- A renewed emphasis on the truth
- Have a nice day

The day consisted of a series of speakers who gave their thoughts on various aspects of the Estuary. Topic covered included water quality, ecology, community monitoring, recreation, natural hazards, impacts of development and cultural values.

Smaller breakout groups later in the day discussed these and other issues along with particular visions for the Estuary and actions needed to achieve them.

A summary of the “vision” sought for the Estuary and its margins is:

- Integrated management – managers and community participation with responsibility and obligation.
- Stormwater filter
- Healthy ecosystems – protected naturalised margins
- Removing, stopping pollution
- Shared environmental haven
- Safe playground
- Balanced use

A number of possible mechanisms were briefly discussed as contributing towards this vision. Two of the key areas raised were education/information and management.

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

Staff have given an undertaking to provide a copy of notes from the Forum back to attendees, Councillors and others along with an invitation to a further forum to be held in toward the end of July.

The intent of the next Forum is to gain some more specific feedback on what possible form integrated management for the Estuary and its margins may take and what form and scope any working group may take.

It is intended that the outcomes of that Forum along with more specific details and recommendations on possible models for a working group, its scope of operation and possible integrated management model will be presented to both Councils for adoption prior to formation of these groups.

Chairman's

Recommendation: That the information be received.