

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

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The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on progress 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.

PUBLIC FORUM – “CHANGING THE FUTURE”

A further public forum was held at the Mt Pleasant Community Centre on 28 August. The forum was a follow on from the 9 June public meeting, the outcomes of which were previously reported to this committee.

Approximately 65 people attended the meeting including members of the public, representatives from a range of interest groups and staff and Councillors from both Councils.

The intention of the forum was to build on the previous public meeting and to report back on some of the outcomes sought from that meeting, including:

- Further explanation of what a non-statutory management plan is all about, and
- Presentation of some examples of integrated catchment/estuary management from New Zealand/overseas

Following on from presentations on the above topics, the meeting broke into a number of working groups to discuss:

- Some possible structures for a committee/group/forum to provide input into a non-statutory management plan for the Avon/Heathcote Estuary
- Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of various structures
- Where to from here

There were a number of common themes which were raised through these discussions which included:

- The need for some form of legal entity (Trust, Incorporated society etc) to be created to enable that body to apply for funding.
- Whatever form the legal entity takes, it needs to carry out a number of actions including identifying defining what integrated management means for the Estuary, who it will report to and how and who will be involved and how it will be funded.

It was decided by the meeting that there were too many complex issues to resolve in the time available and so a number of volunteers from the meeting (including representatives from both Councils) formed a working party to look in more detail some of the issues raised. A copy of the agenda for the first meeting (18 September) is attached for your information. A verbal report of the meeting will be provided to the Committee.

It is intended that the outcomes of the working party be reported back to all stakeholders once further progress has been made.

Recommendation: That the information be received.