

# Minutes of the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group Meeting held in The Council Chamber, Rotorua Lakes Council, Civic Administration Building, 1061 Haupapa Street, Rotorua on Friday, 10 March 2017 commencing at 10.00 a.m.

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## **Present:**

**Chairman:** Sir T Curtis (Chairman, Te Arawa Lakes Trust)

**Deputy Chairman:** Mayor S Chadwick (Rotorua Lakes Council)

**Appointees:** W Emery (Te Arawa Lakes Trust), Councillor K Hunt (Rotorua Lakes Council), Chairman D Leeder (Bay of Plenty Regional Council), Councillor K Winters (Bay of Plenty Regional Council)

**In Attendance:** Te Arawa Lakes Trust: K Vercoe (Acting Chief Executive), R Mihinui (Strategic Manager, Environment & Freshwater); Ministry for the Environment: S Lewis; Rotorua Lakes Council: P Thomas (Rotorua Lakes Community Board), G Williams (Chief Executive), A McGregor (Project Management Office Manager), A Lowe (Environmental Scientist); D Atkinson (Chairman, Lake Water Quality Society); G Dohnt (Lake Rotoehu Water), I McLean (Chair - Rotomā Rotoiti Sewerage Steering Committee); Bay of Plenty Regional Council: Councillors S Crosby and L Thurston, A Bruere (Lakes Operations Manager), C Ingle (General Manager Integrated Catchments), H Ngatai (Marketing and Communications Advisor), J Pani (Executive Support Partner), L Mason (Integrated Catchments Programme Manager), L Goldsmith (Rotorua Catchments Manager), M Bell (Project Coordinator), R Burton (Senior Planner (Water Policy)), R Cross (Team Leader Land Resources), T Taru White (Incentives Programme Director), A MacCormick (Senior Lakes Technical Officer), R Garrett (Committee Advisor).

**Apologies:** Nil

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## **1 Welcome**

The Chairman welcomed members and attendees to the meeting, and noted the attendance of Councillors L Thurston and S Crosby from the Regional Council and Rotorua Lakes Community Board member P Thomas. The Chairman invited W Emery to open the meeting with a karakia.

**2 Declaration of conflicts of interest**

No conflicts of interest were declared.

**3 Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group minutes - 20 December 2016**

**Matters arising**

- i) Further to minute item 6.4 a member queried whether this deferred report was to be received at this meeting; staff advised that no update had been provided and this matter would be pursued at the next Strategy Group meeting.
- ii) Further to minute item 2.1 a member queried why this matter had arisen again at this meeting; staff explained that the appointment of the Chairman had been made in error in General Business at the previous meeting and would need to be ratified at this meeting.

**Resolved**

**That the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group under its delegated authority:**

- 1 Confirms the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group minutes - 20 December 2016**

**Chadwick/Leeder  
CARRIED**

**4 Reports**

**4.1 Appointment of Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and other Meeting Matters**

General Manager Integrated Catchments Chris Ingle assumed the chair and led members through the process to appoint the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the Strategy Group. Members ratified the decision made at the previous meeting to appoint Sir Toby Curtis as Chairperson.

Nominations for the position of Deputy Chairperson were called for. Mayor Steve Chadwick was nominated by Sir Toby Curtis with the nomination seconded by Chairman D Leeder; as no further nominations were received Mayor Chadwick was declared appointed as Deputy Chairperson.

Members noted the need to review the Strategy Group's Terms of Reference which had been in place since 2004.

Sir Toby Curtis assumed the chair for the rest of the meeting.

**Resolved**

**That the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group (RTALSG) under its delegated authority:**

- 1 **Receives the report, Appointment of Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson and other Meeting Matters;**
- 2 **Notes the procedural requirements regarding the election of the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson;**
- 3 **Ratifies the decision made by RTALSG at its meeting of 20 December 2016 regarding the appointment of Sir Toby Curtis as Chairperson;**
- 4 **Confirms Sir Toby Curtis as the Chairperson for the 2016-2019 Triennium and notes that in doing so agrees to waive the annual rotation of the Chairperson requirement in the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Terms of Reference.**
- 5 **Elects Mayor Steve Chadwick as the Deputy Chairperson for the 2016-2019 Triennium.**
6. **Notes the Strategy Group's Terms of Reference, attached as Appendix 1 to the report.**

**Chadwick/Leeder  
CARRIED**

7. **Notes the Standing Orders to be used for the conduct of its meetings, attached as Appendix 2, as adopted by the administering authority (Bay of Plenty Regional Council) on 15 November 2016.**
8. **Confirms its membership:**
  - Te Arawa Lakes Trust; Sir Toby Curtis and Willy Emery with Lana Ngawhika (alternate)**
  - Bay of Plenty Regional Council; Chairman Leeder and Councillor Kevin Winters with Councillor Tiipene Marr (alternate)**
  - Rotorua Lakes Council; Mayor Stevie Chadwick and Councillor Karen Hunt with Deputy Mayor Dave Donaldson (alternate)**
9. **Confirms the following 2017 meeting dates:**
  - 27 June 2017; 8 September 2017; 8 December 2017**

**Winters/Hunt  
CARRIED**

#### 4.2 **Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Programme - Status Report**

*Refer PowerPoint presentation Obj. id: A2558044*

Rotorua Catchments Manager Linda Goldsmith presented this report which updated members on key work undertaken in the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Programme since the Group's last meeting. Ms Goldsmith noted the signing of further Gorse Agreements, the development of the Lake Rotorua Incentives Board Strategic Plan and the release of the dNITRO tool which was developed as a Low Nitrogen Land Use Fund project.

A member asked whether any initiatives around the reduction of gorse along roadsides were planned. Staff clarified that the target had been gorse on private land and it was suggested the Regional Council pest management strategy could be used to address this problem and the concern could also be brought to the attention of the New Zealand Transport Authority.

A member asked for a breakdown between drystock and dairy of the landowners registered for Advice and Support; staff agreed to bring this information to the next Group meeting.

## **Resolved**

**That the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group under its delegated authority:**

- 1 Receives the report, Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Programme - Status Report;**

**Winters/Chadwick  
CARRIED**

### **4.3 Update on Lake Rotorua Incentives Board Activities**

Incentives Board Programme Director Te Taru White updated members on progress made by the Incentives Board towards achieving its nitrogen reduction targets within its terms of reference and within approved budgets. Mr White outlined nitrogen deals completed and those in the pipeline, noted the development of the Board's Strategic Plan and explained the Expressions of Interest process developed for small landowners with less than one tonne of nitrogen to sell.

A member queried what type of landuse change was involved in the nitrogen deals; Mr White responded that the majority were combinations of cropping, forestry and dry stock.

## **Resolved**

**That the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group under its delegated authority:**

- 1 Receives the report, Update on Lake Rotorua Incentives Board Activities;**

**Hunt/Chadwick  
CARRIED**

### **4.4 Te Arawa Lakes Trust update**

Strategic Manager, Environment & Freshwater, Mr Roku Mihinui provided this verbal update to members. Mr Mihinui outlined progress with the cultural monitoring programme involving Te Arawa students, noting that the programme had moved into its second phase with the development and

trailing of a data capture system. Mr Mihinui noted that negotiations for further support and funding with both Ministries for the Environment and Primary Industries were continuing, and observed that the continual restructuring within the Ministry for Primary Industries was holding up the progress of finalising the fisheries bylaws. Mr Mihinui confirmed that the New Zealand Navy would return later in the year to undertake further surveying work.

Members discussed possible funding sources for the students involved in the cultural monitoring programme, with the New Zealand Qualifications Authority, Ministry for the Environment, the Waikato University Freshwater Centre and Rotorua Lakes Council cadetships being mentioned.

## **Resolved**

**That the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group under its delegated authority:**

- 1 Receives the verbal report, Te Arawa Lakes Trust Update Report to Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group**

**Winters/Hunt  
CARRIED**

## **4.5 Rotorua Lakes Council Update Report to Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group**

*Refer Tabled Document 1: diagram of land contact beds*

Rotorua Lakes Council staff members Aimee McGregor and Alison Lowe presented this report which provided a brief update to members on Rotorua Lakes Council (RLC) activity related to lakes water quality. Ms McGregor outlined progress to date with the Rotorua Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrade and the Rotomā/Rotoiti sewerage scheme, and noted RLC involvement in the Regional Council Plan Change 10 process.

Members asked various questions relating to re-use of wastewater. Staff advised that the idea was to make the discharge water as clean as possible though non-potable, and make it available for re-use by the community e.g. for racecourse irrigation. Discharge water not re-used would be ultimately discharged to the lake via land contact beds; whether this water would be suitable for discharge to the lake would be determined through the cultural engagement process undertaken as part of the resource consent application.

A member commented that while the principle of re-use was laudable, re-use decisions would be driven by economics and RLC's overall water management plan needed to be looked at.

A member asked for clarification around the economic and equity issues associated with underdeveloped Māori land; staff responded that this issue would be addressed in the RLC submission to Plan Change 10.

## **Resolved**

**That the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group under its delegated authority:**

- 1 Receives the report, Rotorua Lakes Council Update Report to Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group**

**Emery/Hunt  
CARRIED**

#### **4.6 Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Programme - 6 Month Report (2016-2017)**

*Refer Powerpoint presentation Obj. id: A2558043*

Rotorua Catchments Manager Linda Goldsmith presented this report which sought approval for the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Programme Six Month Report for the 2015-2016 financial year. Once approved, the report will to be submitted to the Ministry for the Environment in accordance with the requirements of the Deed of Funding.

Ms Goldsmith outlined key interventions completed for the six month period including the first agreements being negotiated under the Lake Rotorua Gorse Scheme, achieving the first nitrogen reductions for the Programme under the Integrated Framework and a decision to notify the change to the Regional Water and Land Plan for Lake Rotorua. Ms Goldsmith noted the 31 December 2016 end date of this report and advised members that progress since that date was included in the status report presented earlier in the meeting.

In response to a member's query regarding the impact of boat use on nitrogen levels in the lakes, particularly Lake Ōkāreka, staff advised that there was not a significant impact. A member noted that the issue of boat use was to be considered by the Rotorua Lakes Community Board.

#### **Resolved**

**That the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group under its delegated authority:**

- 1 Receives the report, Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Programme - 6 Month Report (2016-2017).**
- 2 Approves the provision of the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Programme – Six Month Report 2016-2017 to the Ministry for the Environment as required by the Deed of Funding Agreement.**
- 3 Confirms that the decision has a low level of significance.**

**Winters/Chadwick  
CARRIED**

#### 4.7 **Disposal of Treated Wastewater: Position Statement from TAG and Proposed Nutrient Accounting approach for Rotorua City**

*Refer PowerPoint presentation Obj. id: A2563699*

Rotorua Lakes Council Project Manager Aimee McGregor presented this report, supported by Lakes Operations Manager Andy Bruere, Environmental Scientist Alison Lowe and Senior Lakes Technical Officer Alastair MacCormick. The report outlined the advice received from the Water Quality Technical Advisory Group on the disposal of treated wastewater in the management of Lake Rotorua, and the nutrient accounting approach developed to ensure target nutrient loads for Lake Rotorua are not compromised while still accommodating urban growth in the catchment.

Ms McGregor explained the background to the report. The current resource consent for the Rotorua Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) places limits on nitrogen (N) and phosphorus discharge; even with the plant operating to the highest standard, expected population growth indicates that these limits will be exceeded. The integrated framework allocations contained in Plan Change 10 do not account for any additional nitrogen discharge due to urban growth. The report presents a nutrient accounting approach that integrates the WWTP N discharge limit with catchment nitrogen accounting, proposing that N discharge rights attached to rural land transfer to the RLC wastewater discharge allowance as the city expands and subdivisions occur.

Members asked various questions of clarification regarding assumptions used in the proposed accounting method, peer review of the accounting mechanism, implications for developers, nitrogen allocation and transfer for subdivision, implications for the operation of the Lake Rotorua Incentives Board and its nitrogen purchase deals and incentives for sustainable use.

Staff answered questions and emphasised that the proposed accounting mechanism focuses on transferring nitrogen allocations and clarified that the total nitrogen discharge allowance allocated to a piece of land will not increase with a subdivision or urban development.

Staff further clarified that the report only seeks approval in principle from the Strategy Group as the proposal will be subject to Resource Management Act planning processes and approvals at the time of the future RLC WWTP resource consent application.

While members accepted that the Strategy Group's role was one of approving in principle the approach outlined, they requested to be kept up-to-date with progress on this issue and to be briefed prior to the WWTP consent application being lodged.

### **Resolved**

**That the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group under its delegated authority:**

- 1 Receives the report, Disposal of Treated Wastewater: Position Statement from TAG and Proposed Nutrient Accounting approach for Rotorua City.**

- 2 Supports a Nutrient Accounting approach in principle, recognising that its application will be subject to future planning approval processes that it cannot influence.
- 3 Directs that the RTALSG be updated as required.

Leeder/Chadwick  
CARRIED

## 5 Public Excluded Section

### Resolution to exclude the public

THAT the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting.

The general subject of each matter to be considered while the public is excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter, and the specific grounds under section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this resolution are as follows:

<i>General Subject of Matter to be Considered</i>	<i>Reason for Passing this Resolution in Relation to this Matter</i>	<i>Grounds Under Section 48(1) LGOIMA 1987 for Passing this Resolution</i>
8.1 Public excluded minutes Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group 20 December 2016	That the public conduct of the whole or the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding would exist.	Refer to the relevant clause in the meeting minutes.

Chadwick/Leeder  
CARRIED

## 6 Confidential business to be transferred into the open

The request by Ministry for the Environment Operations Director Mr Stuart Lewis for the Chief Financial Officers' Forum to submit a more detailed approach to the financial reporting on the overall project progress was noted.

**The meeting closed at 12.30pm.**