

# 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, 2 November 2018 commencing at 9.40 a.m.

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## Present:

**Chairman:** Sir Toby Curtis - Chairman, Te Arawa Lakes Trust

**Deputy Chairman:** Mayor Steve Chadwick, Rotorua Lakes Council

**Appointees:** Willie Emery - Te Arawa Lakes Trust, Cr Karen Hunt - Rotorua Lakes Council, Chairman Doug Leeder, Cr Kevin Winters - Bay of Plenty Regional Council

**In Attendance:** Shaun Lewis - Director, Mana Honohono – Investments and Partnerships, Ministry for the Environment; Geoff Williams – Chief Executive, Rotorua Lakes Council; Professor Troy Baisden, Chair In Lake and Freshwater Science, University of Waikato

Bay of Plenty Regional Council: Chris Ingle – Integrated Catchments Manager, Fiona McTavish – Chief Executive, Helen Creagh – Rotorua Catchments Manager, Shari Kameta - Committee Advisor, Yvonne Tatton - Governance Manager, Andy Bruere – Lake Operations Manager, Ruth Feist – Team Leader, Integrated Planning, Anna Grayling – Principal Advisor Rotorua Catchments, Shane Grayling – Biosecurity Team Leader, Ruth Keber – Marketing and Communications Advisor, Karla Kereopa – Rotorua Catchments Coordinator, Jude Pani - Rotorua Catchments Advisor

**Apologies:** R Meha - Te Arawa Lakes Trust

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## 1 Karakia

Provided by Willie Emery.

## 2 Apologies

### Resolved

That the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group:

- 1 Accepts the apology from Raina Meha tendered at the meeting.

Winters/Chadwick  
CARRIED

### 3 **Public Forum**

Nil

### 4 **Acceptance of Late Items**

Nil

### 5 **General Business**

- 1) Strategic Discussion on Land Interventions

### 6 **Declaration of Conflicts of Interest**

Nil

### 7 **Previous Minutes**

#### 7.1 **Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group Minutes - 15 June 2018**

#### **Resolved**

That the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group:

- 1 **Confirms the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group Minutes - 15 June 2018 are a true and correct record.**

Leeder/Hunt  
CARRIED

### 8 **Reports**

#### 8.1 **University of Waikato Chair In Lake and Freshwater Science Annual Report 2017-2018**

*Refer PowerPoint Presentation (Objective ID [A3032626](#))*

Professor Troy Baisden provided the Chair's In Lake and Freshwater Science Annual Report and gave a presentation on the future direction of the Chair's programme.

#### Key Points:

- Provided background on past successes of the programme and emphasized the value of independence being essential to the progress of the University's model, which would continue to focus on science to reflect the desired information and fundamental needs of people.
- Outlined a model and principles to target leadership, knowledge and insights for catchment science that would lead to better outcomes and provide for more engagement, trust and transparency;
- Programme development would incorporate tracers and catchment models to build on the existing programme to understand what was happening with freshwater;

- Current work included: Plan Change 10 science review on total nitrogen loads to Lake Rotorua, building capability and tools to communicate and identify information on algal blooms to grow community understanding (anticipated in January-February 2019), a focus on Trophic Level Indexes (TLIs) and excess of phosphorus;
- Highlighted the challenges to understand tracers for freshwater flows and impacts from soil, which would take several years.
- Sought feedback from the Strategy Group on the new flagship programme.

In response to questions:

- Professor Baisden advised that geothermal phosphorus was an important source that needed to be better identified and understood and that preliminary data was being gathered on tracers to better evaluate and understand heat flow processes;
- Noted potential to work with GNS Science on identifying and understanding mass balance activity and variability across the region;
- Professor Baisden had a high level of confidence in the PC10 nitrogen science information and assumption inputs ;
- Considered alum dosing and land use intervention should continue, with principles and values fundamental to investment decisions;
- Saw building capability within the Lake Chair's programme to enable Te Arawa's journey of leadership, more engagement, new science and creation of a new 5-year flagship programme as important.

Members' Comments:

- Saw the principles outlined as important and supported further discussion on developing science outcomes;

## **Resolved**

**That the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group:**

- 1 Receives the presentation and University of Waikato Chair In Lake and Freshwater Science Annual Report 2017-2018.**
- 2 Notes it values the contribution of the University of Waikato's Science programme to lake water quality and restoration so far and supports in principle an application to the Endeavour Fund to continue this programme.**

**Chadwick/Winters  
CARRIED**

## **Order of Business**

The Chair permitted a presentation on Lake TLIs that was part of agenda item 8.7, to be received next on the agenda, as the information correlated with the preceding item.

## 8.2 Presentation on Lake TLI Progress 2017/18

Refer PowerPoint Presentation (Objective ID [A3011287](#)).

Lake Operations Manager Andy Bruere gave a presentation on progress of Lake TLIs for the 2017/18 year.

### Key Points:

- TLI targets for the 12 lakes had not been met due to: record rainfall and high lake levels bringing more nutrients from erosion and leaching, long stratification periods in shallower lakes, unusual stratification periods in deeper lakes and consistent patterns of change in all lakes, indicating climate effects.
- Other non-TLI indicators had recorded improvement for Lakes Okareka and Rotoiti, where oxygen depletion rates were slower, therefore more resilient to stratification of nitrogen and phosphorus releases.
- Outlined the status for each of the Rotorua lakes and work programmes scheduled to understand the issues.

### In response to Questions:

- Hornwart had not been detected at Lake Okareka for the last three years;
- The overlay of extreme weather events had likely brought more in-lake nutrients;
- The dashboard on page 93 of the agenda provided an overall project snapshot, which differed to the status of TLI indexes.
- Emphasized Professor Baisden's comments on natural occurrences and variability in-lake and the need to progress further understanding on lake science;
- An update would be provided to the Strategy Group following the research workshop scheduled for Lake Rotoehu.

### Members' Comments:

- Acknowledged the improvement in the TLI status update, which clarified the status and steps that should be taken.

11:02 am – the meeting **adjourned** and **reconvened** at 11:08 am.

## 8.3 Amendments to the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group Agreement and Terms of Reference

General Manager Integrated Catchments Chris Ingle and Governance Manager Yvonne Tatton provided the report that sought consideration of a change to the Terms of Reference and membership.

### Key Points:

- Highlighted the agreement could only be changed with the consent of the partner organisations;

- Rotorua Lakes Council and Bay of Plenty Regional Council had considered the report and raised the following issues:
  - Rotorua Lakes Council questioned the non-voting rights of the Independent Chair however, had supported the changes proposed;
  - Bay of Plenty Regional Council questioned the proposed wording of an “Independent” Chair and additional functions on climate change and water quality and had left the matter to be considered at their next meeting.
- Further to both councils’ responses, it was noted that the original wording of specific responsibilities and delegated function within the Terms of Reference did not constrain the Strategy Group from including climate change and water quality matters on the agenda;
- Clarified that the Deed of Settlement did not allow for a change in membership to include the addition of a voting chair, beyond the existing membership;
- Sought the Strategy Group’s feedback to make further revisions for reporting to the partner organisations for ratification.

#### Members’ Comments:

- Noted the previous resolutions of the Strategy Group, which had sought an independent non-voting Chair to officiate meetings;
- Considered the mana of Te Arawa and the individual were key attributes of the Independent Chair.
- Supported the overall recommendations, with a further amendment to remove the last two bullet points within the specific responsibilities and delegated function of the Terms of Reference (Appendix 2) and retention of recommendation six (6).

## **Resolved**

### **That the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group:**

- 1 Receives the report, Amendments to the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group Agreement and Terms of Reference;**
- 2 Endorses the following amendment to the Rotorua Te Arawa Strategy Group Agreement and reflected in the Terms of Reference:**

#### **2. Membership:**

**The membership of the Group shall comprise of six members:**

- 2.1 Two members of the Te Arawa Lakes Trust Entity appointed by entity one of whom is a governance member and one of whom is a senior executive; and**
- 2.2 Two members of the Bay of Plenty Regional Council appointed by that Council one of whom is the Chairperson of that Council; and**
- 2.3 Two members of the Rotorua Lakes Council appointed by that Council one of whom is the Mayor of that Council.**

- 2.4 Plus one non-voting Independent Chairperson appointed by the members for a three year term in alignment with the Local Government triennium.**
- 2.5 Requests Te Arawa Lakes Trust to provide an appropriate title for the Independent Chairperson position.**
- 3 Approves the additional amendments to the Rotorua Te Arawa Strategy Group's Terms of Reference (outlined in Appendix 2), with the removal of references to climate change and water quality under Specific Responsibilities and Delegated Functions and that these be referred back to the partner organisations for ratification.**
- 4 Appoints Sir Toby Curtis as the Independent non-voting Chairperson of the Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group for the period up to the first meeting following the 2019 local government elections to align the three year term to the Local Government triennium.**
- 5 Acknowledges the appointment of Willie Emery as the Te Arawa Lakes Trust's governance member.**
- 6 Instruct partner Organisation staff to include the following matters as agenda items where appropriate: climate change impacts, lake related biosecurity matters, fisheries bylaw enforcement, Lake Tarawera as a priority lake.**

Leeder/Chadwick  
CARRIED

#### **8.4 Te Arawa Lakes Trust - Request for Funding for Programme Participation**

Te Arawa Lakes Trust (TALT) Chief Executive Karen Vercoe and Manager – Environment Nicki Douglas presented the report.

##### Key Points:

- TALT commercial entity had self-funded prior participation in the lakes programme and increased its capacity and wanted to strengthen its participation, therefore wished to seek funding assistance from the programme;
- TALT had provided a clear message within the programme to strengthen its participation and was in a strong position to deliver programme outcomes for Te Arawa.
- Noted the significant value of the work that TALT was delivering, which would not occur without its partnership.
- Confirmed the current work programme had been signed off with the next work programme to be endorsed in May 2019.

##### In response to questions:

- Advised that formal discussion had not taken place with Te Tatau o Te Arawa (TToTA) on this matter, but that work was occurring to formalise a Memorandum of Understanding with TToTA.

Members' Comments:

- Acknowledged the substantial value of TALT's participation in the programme, which under resourcing needed to be addressed.
- Considered the matter required further consideration by the partner organisations and Ministry for the Environment (MfE), with the potential to consider two funding options either via MfE deed funding allocation or funding outside the deed-funded lakes.
- Requested the partner organisation Chief Executives and Ministry for the Environment Deputy Secretary Partnerships and Customs meet to agree on a proposal to be brought back to the partner organisations by March 2019, noting the need to articulate clearly the considerable work being undertaken by TALT.

**Resolved****That the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group:**

- 1 Receives the report, Te Arawa Lakes Trust - Request for Funding for Programme Participation.**
- 2 Recommend the proposal go back to the partner organisations to consider that Te Arawa Lakes Trust receive funding to implement the outcomes as identified within the Lakes programme.**
- 3 Request the Chief Executives of the three partner organisations and the Deputy Secretary Partnerships and Customs meet to agree a proposal to put to the partner organisations by March 2019 to address Te Arawa Lakes Trust's funding request.**

**Chadwick/Winters  
CARRIED**

**8.5 Te Arawa Lakes Trust Update Report**

Manager – Environment Nicki Douglas highlighted points from the report.

Key Points:

- Noted the appointment of William Anaru to the role of Hunga Hika ahi – Hapori and the substantial impact he had made on community coordination within the catchment. Mr Anaru would provide an update to the Strategy Group in the New Year.
- Te Arawa Climate Change Working Group had hosted Minister James Shaw on 11 October and was interested in the working group's proposals to support the climate change programme.
- Highlighted TALT's focus on community engagement.

In response to questions:

- TALT had contributed \$130K to the current work programme from TALT's commercial funding dividends, which did not include work in kind that had been provided.

### Members' Comments

- Commended TALT's hands on approach, active management and endeavours to reduce catfish populations;
- Recognised the contribution TALT provided to both Councils' work programmes.

### **Resolved**

**That the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group:**

- 1 Receives the report, Te Arawa Lakes Trust Update Report.**

**Hunt/Winters  
CARRIED**

## 8.6 **Update Report from Rotorua Lakes Council**

*Refer PowerPoint Presentation (Objective ID [A3044543](#))*

Geoff Williams gave a presentation highlighting key activities from the report.

### Key Points:

- Outlined the design concept for the new Rotorua Wastewater Treatment Plant, noting options were being investigated on overseas partnerships. The proposal would be reported to Rotorua Lakes Council the following week;
- Provided an aerial view of the Rotoma/Rotoiti Sewerage Scheme, which would comprise a treatment station below ground level with no impact on the natural environment and amenity values;
- Significant work was taking place on the Tarawera reticulation scheme and the cultural impact assessment which was being facilitated by Te Arawa Lakes Trust;
- Noted the work of the Plan Change 10 (PC10) Natural Capital Group;
- Work was commencing on a programme of actions for the Rotorua Spatial Plan blueprint on future land use.

### In response to questions:

- The Rotoma/Rotoiti Sewerage Scheme was on time and expected to be within budget however some aspects of the project, such as piping to households was driving costs, with alternative solutions being investigated.
- A step system or biolytic was being explored for some properties' onsite treatment which would be resolved through a tender process and provide further clarity of costs for consideration.

### Members' Comments:

- Considered every effort must be made for the Rotoiti/Rotoma Sewerage scheme to be constructed as proposed and that any retraction to the original scope should be communicated to the funding partners.

- Looked forward to a fully funded scheme and a further update on the Rotoiti/Rotoma Sewerage scheme.

Staff Comments:

- In response to a request, staff advised that it was not appropriate for the Strategy Group to receive a presentation on the Alternative Natural Capital Allocation while PC10 was before the Environment Court.

## **Resolved**

### **That the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group:**

- 1 Receives the report, Update Report from Rotorua Lakes Council.**

**Leeder/Winters  
CARRIED**

## **8.7 Programme Status Report and 2017-2018 Annual Report**

The report provided an update on progress of the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Programme and sought approval of the 2017-2018 Annual Report. The report was taken as read without further discussion.

## **Resolved**

### **That the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Strategy Group:**

- 1 Receives the report, Programme Status Report and 2017-2018 Annual Report;**
- 2 Approves the 2017-2018 Annual Report for submission to the Minister for the Environment, in accordance with the requirements of the Deed of Funding.**

**Leeder/Hunt  
CARRIED**

## **Order of Business**

Due to time constraints and impending departure of members, the General Business item was taken next on the agenda.

## **9 General Business item**

### **9.1 Strategic Discussion on Land Interventions**

Discussion followed on the need to revisit the strategic direction of current land interventions and whether they were providing the necessary outcomes in nitrogen reduction for the Rotorua Lakes.

Members' Comments:

- Needed to be informed by science and further discuss how to go about reviewing and looking at the best solutions, noting a change proposal for Crown funding had been approved before;
- Supported an adaptive management approach looking at the bigger picture.

In response to questions:

- Ministry for the Environment Director Mr Shaun Lewis advised the pathway for a change proposal to the Deed of Funding would require Ministerial or Cabinet sign-off depending on the threshold and using best available information.

Staff Follow-Up:

- A report to be provided to a future meeting on a way forward.

12:18 pm – Mayor Chadwick, Councillor Karen Hunt and Mr Shaun Lewis **withdrew** from the meeting.

## 10 **Quorum Failure**

Due to a lack of quorum, the meeting lapsed with the remaining item of business - agenda item 8.8, 'Changing the On-site Effluent Treatment Regional Plan - implications for Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes' adjourned and carried over to the next meeting.

**The meeting closed at 12:18 pm.**

**CONFIRMED:**

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Chairperson