

# Ashburton Water Management Zone Committee

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**Minutes** of a meeting of the **Ashburton Water Management Zone Committee** held on Tuesday 25 October 2016, commencing at 1.06pm in the Council Chamber, 2 Baring Square East, Ashburton.

## **Present**

Ben Curry, Cr Stuart Wilson, Gordon Guthrie, Chris Allen, Jackie Wright, John Henry (Arowhenua Runanga), Bill Thomas (Chair)

## **In attendance**

Environment Canterbury: Olivia Smith (Facilitator)

Ashburton District Council: Louise Glennon (Business Support Officer – minutes)

Approximately 3 members of the public attended the meeting.

### **1 Welcome and Karakia**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and the opening karakia was offered by John Henry.

### **2 Apologies**

John Waugh, Arapata Reuben (Te Ngai Tuahuriri Runanga)

### **3 Extraordinary Business**

None

### **4 Register of Interests**

None

### **5 Confirmation of Minutes**

**That** the minutes of the Ashburton Water Management Zone Committee meeting held on 27 September 2016, be taken as read and confirmed.

Wilson/Curry

Carried

### **5.1 Matters Arising**

Stuart asked if there was any progress on the supplementation of the Hinds River. Ben advised that there is a site visit taking place on Friday, with members from Arowhenua Runanga, Ecan and RDR. The site is being looked at as a possible location for near river recharge. Currently there is surplus water to the irrigation demand and this is being released back into the Ashburton River. Ben will provide an update at the next meeting.

### **6 Correspondence**

A letter has been received from Ecan regarding roadside excavation on SH77. Ecan confirmed they will contact NZTA to discuss this further to ensure good practice is followed in the future.

### **7 Facilitator Update**

Olivia advised that some stories for the community newsletter have been drafted. The aim is to circulate the newsletter to the community in November/ early December.

Following the recent presentation from Marta on drinking water, information is being sent out shortly to people with private bores. A letter and information pamphlet will outline risks to drinking water, testing information and actions/treatment to reduce health risks.

Olivia advised that work is also underway to develop information to communicate the swap provisions.

The field trip to Ashburton River is taking place next month. In addition, BCI and Dairy NZ are keen to attend the committee meeting to talk about the work they are doing on Farm Environment Plans in the zone. Also, a draft annual zone committee report will be available for feedback at the next meeting. Olivia will send out the report prior to the meeting for review.

Olivia reminded everyone that the Rangitata field trip is taking place on Monday 7 November and for those that are still to confirm to let her know asap if they are attending.

## 8 Update on the Managed Aquifer Recharge Trial

Peter Lowe and Bob Bower presented their report.

The key goals of the MAR pilot project are to improve groundwater storage levels, increase groundwater quality and restore base flows to spring-fed coastal streams.

The project has a 5 year consent, currently in year 1. The source water is consented from the Rangitata River and the project was established with funding from MPI, Ecan, the community and in-kind services. Monitoring and research associated with the project includes nitrogen tracking, rural drinking water testing, aquifer mapping and modelling. Monitoring data is in real time and is available online. General operations are proceeding well with current recharge rates 95 to 105 l/s, and total recharge to date of 1.15 million m<sup>3</sup> and a total of 3 million m<sup>3</sup> projected for phase 1. Nitrogen levels have now dropped well below 6.9 which is the target level.

Peter confirmed that the results have exceeded expectations. Groundwater quality and quantity has improved. Ecological improvements in drains including flow have not been met as yet.

First phase of the pilot project finishes on 9 June 2017, with final reports in August 2017. Year 2 operations start on 10 June 2017 and commitment will need to be sought from various parties to ensure the pilot can continue. It's critical that the pilot continues to prove concept.

The MAR Pilot Working Group recommends continuation of the pilot through the 5 year consented period, formation of a MAR governance group to progress MAR through Mid Canterbury and would recommend this is put in place in early 2017.

Bill requested feedback from the committee regarding continuation of the MAR group and Ben believed it is crucial that this continues. It was queried as to whether the working group require authorisation from Ecan and/or from Council to continue. Peter advised they will need a mandate from the zone committee to continue on past June 2017.

Jackie recommended that the Committee endorse the continuation of the MAR project for the full 5 years.

Wright/Allen

Carried

Peter suggested the MAR Pilot Working Group develop some draft terms of reference for a MAR Governance Group to discuss with the committee next month.

Recommendation from the Committee for the formation of a MAR governance group in early 2017.

Allen/Wright

Carried

Council staff and MAR Team thanked by Bob for all their hard work and ongoing support.

## 9 Zone Delivery Quarterly Report

Donna Lill presented a quarterly report showing progress toward implementing the 5 year outcomes and milestones for the Ashburton Zone. Donna informed the Committee that one of the key projects her team has worked on in the last quarter is water metering. There have been 1,720 water take consents, 71 without meters, and 7 enforcement actions. Water metering & telemetry allow real time management of water.

One of the other key projects the zone delivery team has been working on is the Hinds Community Monitoring Programme. During the Hinds Drains Working Party process 27 monitoring sites were established and it is agreed that 12 of these sites should continue to be monitored for nitrate and flow. This ongoing monitoring is supported by Fish & Game, Dairy NZ, FAR, Beef & Lamb NZ, DOC and Ecan.

Donna provided an update on the CaREx project for the Harris C Drain which is a narrow drain with significant weed issues. The project demonstrates how important it is to get good establishment of native plants to ensure less need for weed management. Project staff are also working with river engineers to look at alternative options for weed management going forward.

Stuart asked whether problem consent holders are on real time data and Donna confirmed that previous non-compliant consent holders will be at the top of the list for compliance monitoring this season.

Olivia advised that the annual regional compliance report has now been completed, however the Zone report is still ongoing. This information will be provided to the committee once complete.

## **10 Rakaia Enhancement Fund Update**

Jackie advised that the only update since the last meeting is that the group now have a full complement of members.

## **11 Regional Committee Update**

Ben noted that there wasn't much to report other than there are a lot of new members. Regional committee members will also attend the Rangitata fieldtrip on the 7<sup>th</sup> November.

## **12 Reports for Committee Information**

### **12.1 Consents Update**

Chris asked about the cost of land use consent applications. He advised that he knows of someone who recently spend a significant amount of money getting a land use consent for a property that crossed two nutrient management zones. Olivia agreed to look into this.

## **13 General**

Jackie informed the Committee that she attended the Dorie Irrigation Workshop and found it very useful.

### **Next meeting**

The next meeting of the Ashburton Water Zone Committee will be held on Tuesday 29 November 2016, commencing at 1pm.

The meeting concluded at 2.27pm.

Dated this 29 day of November 2016 \_\_\_\_\_ (Chair)