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Report to the Landcare Committee
from Andrew Annakin, Divisional Manager, Landcare

Investing in the Future : Ara Tahī Submissions

1. Purpose

For the Landcare Committee to consider the detail of submissions made by Ara Tahī members on the Long-term Financial Strategy, as considered by the Policy and Finance Committee, 7 and 9 March, and as they relate to Landcare activities.

2. Background

The draft Long-term Financial Strategy (LTFS) proposals were presented to the 15 February 2000 Ara Tahī meeting. Members were then invited to make submissions; of which two commented on the Landcare Committee's areas of responsibility.

The *Te Ati Awa ki Whakarongotai* submission was reported to the 7 March Policy and Finance Committee by Wayne Hastie (Report 00.159). Landcare Division comments were part of that report. The second submission, *Te Runanganui o Taranaki Whanui ki te Upoko o Te Ika a Maui*, was considered at the 9 March reconvened Policy and Finance Committee meeting. Comment was forwarded to Wayne Hastie, but not required at the meeting.

The 9 March Policy and Finance Committee agreed, inter alia, that appropriate issues be referred to standing committees for further consideration "...in sufficient time to enable finalisation of the Council's Long-term Financial Strategy before 30 June". A subsequent memo from Wayne Hastie to Divisional Managers, says that Committee decision will be reported to the 30 May Policy and Finance Committee meeting, with any further implications reported to the 15 June meeting.

3. Addressing the Iwi Submissions

3.1 Te Ati Awa ki Whakarongotai

Queen Elizabeth Park Capex

Iwi submitted that elements of the proposed capital works programme, (e.g., toilets, Whareroa Bridge) be accelerated. The Parks and Forests capital programme has been prioritised against proposals for this and other parks; assessing safety, amenity and environmental concerns. On that basis, we see no need to make changes at Queen Elizabeth Park.

However, accelerating the Whareroa Bridge replacement may deserve consideration, to protect heritage values. Recently, iwi advised that a horse trail crosses the area they believe is the former Whareroa pa. Iwi would like the horse trail removed to protect the area. To do this requires relocating the inland track and the Whareroa Stream bridge. The bridge is programmed for replacement, starting 2002/03; \$15,000 allocated that year and \$15,000 the following year.

The bridge replacement could be brought forward to 2000/01. The funding implications of this are an additional \$3,000 loan servicing cost in the first two years and \$1,500 in year three. The cost of moving the associated horse trail is estimated at \$13,500. The Queen Elizabeth Park annual track maintenance budget is \$12,000. This would cover most of the cost, although no other track work would be undertaken that year.

Recommendation: That the Queen Elizabeth Park capital works programme remains the same, with the exception that the timing of the Whareroa Bridge replacement be accelerated into 2000/01, noting the additional loan servicing costs.

He Awanui Project, Waikanae River

The Council has, for some time, acknowledged iwi aspirations for a riparian/native plant nursery at some location on the Waikanae River. Current initiatives may well make available to iwi land that is suitable for their purpose. The “iwi projects” budget could take this vision further by funding any one or all of the following projects:

- Funding iwi to prepare a management plan with river management protocols and business arrangements between the Council and Kapakapanui;
- Funding training or practical initiatives to allow propagation of native plants, e.g., to recognise, collect, propagate, and cultivate locally sourced seeds and plants.

Recommendation: This project would be suitable for consideration through the budget in the Resource Policy Department Operating Plan for iwi projects.

Queen Elizabeth Park Management Plan

The Queen Elizabeth Park Management Plan is overdue for review. However, it is adequate for current management of the area. Recently, the work focus has been on the Asset Management framework. The Forest Lands and Water Collection Areas Interim Management Plan is the first priority for review (2000/01). The Regional Park plans are programmed for review starting 2001/02, when officers rework the overall parks planning framework. Therefore, the Queen Elizabeth Park Plan should not be treated in isolation. Also, the farm licences still have four years to run, so any changes to land management practices cannot reasonably happen before that.

Officers support the submission's general thrust, including the need for community based visioning and strategy, and an evaluation of alternative land use and income options. The exercise will be complex and may have financial implications for Park management. We also consider that work is needed within the Council on defining the Treaty framework. However, this aspect could occur ahead of, and compliment, the formal Plan review.

Another project for consideration is a review of the history section in the Queen Elizabeth Park Management Plan. The facts in the history section of the existing Plan are disputed. It would be useful for Te Ati Awa ki Whakarongotai to prepare a history from their research, for incorporation into the Plan review. This could also be considered for funding from within the \$300,000 allocated in the draft Resource Policy Department Operating Plan for iwi projects.

Recommendation: That the Committee endorse the Parks and Forests management planning programme, but notes that a preliminary visioning and a review of the Park history may be useful, and supports these projects for consideration through the budget allocated in the Resource Policy Department Operating Plan for iwi projects.

Whareroa Estuary Rehabilitation

Te Ati Awa ki Whakarongotai would like to undertake a rehabilitation project on the Whareroa Estuary. The project appears to have high Community Connection and biodiversity values. Without investigation, it is difficult to know if this should displace existing RPS implementation projects. It could be added to the RPS projects (an additional \$18,000 in 2002/03 and 2003/04), or preferably considered for funding from within the \$300,000 allocated in the draft Resource Policy Department Operating Plan for iwi projects.

Recommendation: That the Whareroa Estuary rehabilitation project be considered for funding through the budget allocated in the Resource Policy Department Operating Plan for iwi projects.

3.2 Te Runanganui o Taranaki Whanui ki te Upoko o Te Ika a Maui

East Harbour Regional Park

The Runanga has asked for involvement in the review of the East Harbour Regional Park Management Plan (planned to start in 2001/02) and for work to be undertaken on the cultural heritage and archaeology of the area.

The Long-term Financial Strategy proposals provide for an initial planning period focusing on access issues, leading to a substantive review of the Park Management Plan. We have only just begun working through the access options (following agreement on a programme from the Landcare Committee, Report 99.352). The proposed LTFS will accelerate this through the next financial year, with the expectation of a new management regime being in place from 2003/04.

When the Council is ready to commence a formal review of the Park Management Plan, we will most certainly expect a close involvement with iwi. However, at this stage our focus has largely centred on whether there are realistic access opportunities to enable the regional community to fully appreciate this area.

The other issue raised relates to enhancing our knowledge of the cultural heritage and archaeological values of the Park. Research into these values would help our understanding of their importance, assist management and provide interpretation opportunities for visitors.

Recommendation: That the Committee endorse the Parks and Forests management planning programme, but notes the opportunity to enhance the Council's understanding of the cultural heritage and archaeological values of the Park; this would be a suitable project for consideration through the budget in the Resource Policy Department Operating Plan for iwi projects.

Stewardship of Natural Forests

The Runanga has indicated an interest in being involved with the planning in respect to vegetation and pest management of forested areas.

The Council's vegetation and pest management responsibilities come from the Water Board Act. Some areas are managed directly by the Landcare Division, others are currently maintained by Landcare under an annual service contract to the Water Group.

The guiding Council policy document (covering Landcare and Utility Services operations) is the Forest Lands and Water Collection Areas Interim Management Plan (1996). The Plan contains strong statements on heritage and cultural values, and the expected future involvement of Tangata Whenua in forest lands management planning.

A full review of the Forest Lands Plan is programmed for 2000/01. This will be a major community consultation exercise and will undoubtedly involve iwi. A Councillor workshop is proposed in May, to establish the baseline principles for the Plan review.

There have been regular informal discussions between the Council Chairman and Kara Puketapu on management and pest control issues for the Wainuiomata/Orongorongo Catchment; the question of cultural harvest has been mentioned. Preparation of a cultural harvesting policy for Council lands may well be a suitable project for consideration through the budget allocated in the Resource Policy Department Operating Plan for iwi projects.

Recommendation: That the Committee notes the preparation of a cultural harvesting policy for all Council lands may be a suitable project for consideration through the budget in the Resource Policy Operating Plan for iwi projects.

4. **Other Opportunities**

Through a supplementary process, Wayne Hastie asked Divisions to consider specific additional projects for funding consideration through the iwi projects budget in the proposed Resource Policy Department Operating Plan.

There are several such opportunities within the Landcare area of responsibility. These have to yet be fully developed, but will be referred to the Environment Division for consideration.

Regional Parks

Heritage Interpretation at Queen Elizabeth Park

At a recent visit to Whakarongotai Marae, Susan Forbes expressed interest in interpreting the history of Maori occupation at Queen Elizabeth Park to visitors. The visitor survey undertaken in February supports additional interpretation of heritage and environmental features to visitors. Researching the information for interpretation could be a valuable project for iwi involvement in this and other parks. However, there would be unbudgeted additional costs (above iwi input) in the form of design work on signs and constructing the sign structures.

Flood Protection

- A project with Te Ati Awa which establishes protocols to join and participate with others, both practically and financially, in implementing the Hutt River Environmental Strategy, and/or managing the Hutt River environment;
- A similar project with the same iwi to further Environment Division initiatives for the Waiwhetu Stream;
- Provide Ngati Raukawa with support and financial assistance to prepare a practical plan and to develop one or more areas or sites identified in the Waitohu Tikanga Maori report (currently being prepared);
- Support Ngati Raukawa purchase of selected land parcels along the Waitohu Stream which will enable wetland and swamp restoration projects (several areas appear to be suitable);
- Provide practical and financial assistance and support Ngati Raukawa to produce a management plan and implement a wetland/swamp restoration project in the vicinity of the Katihiku Marae, adjacent to the Otaki River.

5. Recommendations

That the Landcare Committee:

- (1) *Receive this report and note its contents.*
- (2) *Resolve to recommend that the Policy and Finance Committee:*
 - (a) *agree that following consideration of the Ara Tahi submissions on the draft Long-term Financial Strategy, no adjustment be made to the proposed Landcare Operating Plans, 2000-2010 with the exception of the timing of the Whareroa Bridge replacement, to be accelerated into year 2000/01, noting the additional loan servicing costs;*
 - (b) *note that a number of issues raised through the iwi submissions and subsequently, are recommended as suitable for inclusion in the iwi projects budget in the proposed Resource Policy Department Operating Plan.*

Report prepared by:

Approved for Submission:

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