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Committee Rural Services and Wairarapa  
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## Divisional Managers' Report

### 1. Purpose

To inform the Committee about the activities and progress and any matters that have arisen since the Committee's previous meeting held in March 2006.

### 2. Significance of the decision

The matters for decision in this report do not trigger the significance policy of the Council or otherwise trigger section 76(3)(b) of the Local Government Act 2002.

### 3. Managers' reports

The Departmental Managers' reports and the Catchment Division's third quarter (to 31 March) management review are attached.

### 4. Divisional Matters

#### 4.1 Staffing Issues

##### Biorecurity

Two new Pest Animal Biorecurity staff have been employed to fill the vacancies at the Upper Hutt Office left by the resignation of Ken Wright and the advancement of Glen Falconer. They are Laurent van Ham and Gary Sue. Both commenced duties after Easter.

James Lambie, Team Leader (Monitoring and Investigations) has resigned with his last day being 19 May. Getting a similarly highly qualified replacement will not be easy.

## **Planning & Resources**

Recent staff recruitment has restored the Policy and Planning section to a functioning unit. Lucy Harper has been appointed as a permanent resource advisor and Alex Evans as a fixed term resource advisor.

Susannah Guscott, a resource advisor in the consents and compliance section, has left on parental leave and we hope to employ a fixed term replacement shortly.

## **Land & River Operations - Dave Sim's Retirement**

Dave Sim has recently retired from his position as River Supervisor, Southern Gang, after approximately 46 years with GWRC and its predecessor, the former Wairarapa Catchment Board. Dave's contribution and extensive knowledge of Wairarapa's southern rivers, and in particular the Lower Wairarapa Valley Development Scheme, will be greatly missed.

Deon Reweti has been appointed to replace Dave Sim. Deon has worked his way up through the Southern gang and has a good knowledge of the Lower Valley Scheme. Jason Popplewell has been appointed to the Southern rivers gang to replace Deon. Jason was a silver culture contractor.

## **4.2 Geoff Dick – Catchment Management**

Since the last RS&W Committee meeting I have managed two short visits out of the office. Otherwise I have been very much tied to the office – Masterton and Wellington. A few of the things I have been working on are outlined below.

I accepted an invite from David Holmes to view his stretch of the Ruamahanga River opposite the Masterton oxidation ponds. David is concerned about the proposed river works associated with the upgrade of the Masterton sewerage scheme. David took Mike Longworth and I up to the high point on his property where we were treated to a magnificent view of the surrounding country including the Tararua Range. I also managed an hour or so out along the Waipoua River, including the stretch adjacent to Peter Jackson's development.

### **Catchment Management restructure**

I have released my proposed structure changes to the Division staff for comment and input. The proposed changes align the Department structure with the Division's responsibilities and effectively create two new Departments with region wide responsibilities – Flood Protection and Land Management. I also propose a new fixed term position to help the Division implement the integrated catchment management approach to the work the Division, and ultimately Council, undertakes.

I am getting some constructive and useful feedback from staff.

## **Changes to the Bovine TB programme**

The proposed changes to the Bovine TB work programme have been confirmed, and the regional funding share calculated. The change will be reflected in the final version of GW's 2006-2016 LTCCP.

However there are still some outstanding matters to be finalised including renewal of the vector management contract, and discussion over Greater Wellington's share of the national AHB programme costs. The figure advised was 22% higher than expected.

## **BioWorks business plan**

Council's BioWorks business unit moves to a fully contestable environment for Bovine TB work from July 2006. The reduced Bovine TB programme in the Wellington region, and neighbouring areas, means that competition for the work available is likely to be higher than in the past couple of years.

I have been working with Scott Forbes, the Manager of BioWorks, on the unit's business plan to make sure we are as well placed to keep a viable unit. Issues include the total number of staff and consequent turnover required, ratio of permanent to fixed term employees, area of operation (tendering for work outside the Wellington region?), other work streams to fill the traditionally slow winter period) and non AHB GW work.

## **LTCCP Submissions**

The Catchment Division received about 65 submissions related to its areas of responsibility – Flood Protection, Land Management and Biosecurity. Generally the submissions were supportive of the activities and the programmes contained in the LTCCP. Issues raised included climate change and the potential effects on our flood schemes, the continued use of 1080 poison and the need to put more resources into our land management programmes.

All submissions have been commented on by officers. The submissions and officer comments will be considered by the Planning and Monitoring Subcommittee over 3 days from the 16 to 18 May.

## **4.3 Nigel Corry – Environment Management**

It has been a busy time since I was formally appointed as Divisional Manager in early April. I have continued to work closely with Ted Taylor and Geoff in staying on top of Wairarapa issues and developments, and to further discuss how we best might structure the new Environment Management Division. To this end I have had discussions with Wairarapa staff, as well as those in the Wellington office, in relation to how we can progress issues around working more closely together, creating better linkages and improving consistency between the two offices. We are making some excellent progress in this area, particularly in relation to the consent functions, and I am confident that this progress will continue.

I have also ensured that Ted attends the Environment Committee meetings in Wellington, and that he provides a formal report on Wairarapa issues for the Committee. Over time we will continue to refine how we report on the work of the Environment Management Division as a whole, and this will be reflected in future reports that are prepared for both the Rural Services and Wairarapa and Environment Committees.

Since the last meeting of the Rural Services and Wairarapa Committee, we have been able to add some much needed capacity to our Policy and Planning team with two new staff members employed on a fixed term basis. We are now, however, looking to recruit a new staff member in the consents section with the temporary departure of Susannah Guscott on maternity leave. At a broader level, it is certainly anticipated that the formation of the new Environment Management Division will allow for a more fluid, and ultimately productive, use of our resources across the region, which will hopefully be able to minimize as much as possible the effects of staff movements or departures.

#### **4.4 Murray Kennedy – Water Supply, Parks & Forests**

There has been no forestry logging during the period.

The debt levels associated with the Wairarapa Reserve Forests are of concern. However, a start has been made to look at the options for other sources of revenue that could be complimentary to the forestry activities, but not impede on their prime purpose of soil conservation.

### **5. Recommendations**

*That the Committee:*

1. ***Receives the report.***
2. ***Notes the content of the report.***

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**Attachments 1 & 2:**