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#### COUNCIL MEETINGS

##### July 2014

Hearings Appointment Subcommittee  
Tuesday 15 July 2014 – 9.30am

Strategy and Policy Committee  
Tuesday 15 July 2014 – 10.00am

## Keeping a lid on plant and animal pests



Have you 'liked' [Waikato Regional Council's Facebook page](#)? Every day in July we're posting interesting facts about biosecurity in the Waikato region and New Zealand, as well as ways that you can help, as part of Biosecurity Month.

'Biosecurity' means protection from the risks posed by organisms to the economy, environment and people's health. This is achieved through keeping them out in the first place, eradicating them if they get in and using control procedures to stop the spread if eradication isn't possible.

## Dig in to protect Port Waikato's dunes

Want to help restore and protect Port Waikato's dunes? Families are invited to join volunteers at a working bee this weekend to plant 1200 native plants which will help to address coastal erosion and improve biodiversity at the west coast beach.

The school holiday event is being held tomorrow



Council  
Thursday 31 July 2014 –  
10.30am

Please [visit the regional council website](#) for agendas and minutes of meetings.

(Saturday 12 July) from 1-3pm and has been organised by Port Waikato Beachcare, with support from the Ngati Karewa Ngati Tahinga Trust, Waikato Regional Council and the Department of Conservation.



The regional council's **Beachcare programme** has been supporting the group's efforts to restore a 20 hectare dune area damaged in a 2012 scrub fire, and the volunteers also received a grant through the council's environmental initiatives fund.

During this Saturday's working bee, 150 native trees will be planted in part of the area badly affected by the scrub fire. A further 1200 dune plants – including 400 pingao, an endangered native plant that is highly valued by Maori for weaving – will go in a blown-out dune area.

The event will also have a focus on encouraging young people to get involved in conservation.

**What:** Port Waikato Beachcare working bee: all ages welcome

**When:** 1-3pm, Saturday 12 July

**Where:** Meet at the end of Mission Rd, Port Waikato, then follow the signs to the planting location. Please bring a spade if you can.

## Available to read now online

The 2014/15 Annual Plan has just been adopted by Waikato Regional Council and is now **available to read online**. The council has confirmed an average 0.9 per cent rates increase to existing ratepayers. It means most ratepayers will pay less than \$5 extra a year for activities and services focused on our environment and economy. The approved plan represents the third year of the long term plan adopted by the council in June 2012 and will be delivered on a rates revenue of \$78.734 million.



## Whitebait hui to consider issues and options





Members of the Port Waikato whitebaiting community, and the wider public, are being invited to a series of meetings this month to discuss the way forward for the whitebait fishery and related environmental and safety issues.

The three community hui come after the release, earlier this year, of a [baseline report on whitebait stands and associated structures in the lower Waikato River between Tuakau and Port Waikato](#).

The report, compiled by Waikato Raupatu River Trust and Waikato Regional Council, identified a range of matters related to whitebait stands and associated baches.

The trust and the regional council, along with other agencies, are keen to work with the Port Waikato whitebaiting community on addressing these matters together. The other agencies include the Huakina Development Trust (representing local hapu), Land Information NZ, the Department of Conservation, the Ministry for Primary Industries and Waikato District Council.

The timetable for the meetings is as follows:

**TUAKAU** – Supper Room, Tuakau Memorial Hall, George St,  
Thursday 17 July, 5:30pm - 7:30pm

**WAIUKU** – Waiuku Memorial Hall, cnr Queen St and Victoria Ave,  
Thursday 24 July, 5:30pm - 7:30pm

**PORT WAIKATO** – Port Waikato Community Hall, Maunsell Rd, Friday  
25 July, 1pm - 3pm

A half-hour presentation will be given, followed by time to ask questions of the various agencies. There will also be a chance for community members to share their thoughts on what the next steps should be to manage the issues.

## Piggery effluent turns stream pink, results in \$41,250 fine

A Waikato effluent disposal company has been convicted and fined \$41,250 for turning a stream pink with piggery



effluent and then 'pretending' to clean it up.

In June 2013 Farm Effluent Services Limited was contracted to spread piggery effluent on a rural property at Scotsman Valley, approximately 18 kilometres south-east of Hamilton.



The company applied the effluent to land in large volumes, and in wet conditions, resulting in the effluent flowing off the land at multiple locations and into a nearby stream.

A local resident some 900 metres away noticed the Waitakaruru Stream running pink and alerted the Waikato Regional Council. Council officers traced the pink contamination upstream to where the effluent company had been operating and started assessing the scale of the discharge.

The officers were assured that clean up would commence that evening. Later that night Farm Effluent Services Limited placed a tractor on site and operated it in such a way as to appear as if they were cleaning up the remaining effluent. In fact, no clean up was carried out.

Council staff returned the following day to find piggery effluent still posing a risk to the environment and gave directions to halt further pollution, which was done.

A prosecution was initiated under the Resource Management Act following an investigation by the council.

In passing sentence this week, Hamilton District Court Judge David Kirkpatrick commented that "there was a lack of adequate precaution in managing the irrigation work, increased by the apparent lack of experience of the staff left in charge. The previous wet weather and the extra difficulties created by the nature of the effluent should have led the company to adopt a more cautious approach".

The judge termed the company's effort to deceive the council as a deliberate act that "tends to show a disregard for what harm may have been caused and what clean-up or other remediation should have been undertaken".

Council investigations manager Patrick Lynch said, "The circumstances of this case are really disappointing. Companies that are set up specifically to deal with effluent have an important role to play in protecting the environment. They must know how to do so lawfully and without causing adverse environmental effects. For a company to get it badly wrong and then attempt to deceive others into thinking they are cleaning up is completely unacceptable."



For farmers

we're hiring

## Raft of changes being considered for region's public bus services



Waikato Regional Council is investigating a raft of changes as part of a review of public transport in the region.

Details of some of the possible changes were outlined during a meeting this week of the multi-agency regional public transport plan development committee.

Residents in east Cambridge and Leamington are due to be surveyed to assess current and future travel patterns and public transport needs, the committee heard.

It follows a recent survey of north Hamilton residents, with the results currently being analysed and due to be reported to the committee at its next meeting in August.

Results of both surveys will be used to inform planning decisions for the region's public bus services.

A draft public transport plan is due to be released for public feedback in November and will also be based on a number of workshops with city and district councils, business representatives, bus companies – including the drivers – and community groups.

“A comprehensive review of the network was completed last year, which identified the need to minimise the duplication of routes in some areas, and where possible ensure that the frequency of services on key bus routes is attractive for passengers,” said the regional council's public transport operations manager, Ben Barlow.

“In line with that, and following extensive discussion with stakeholders and community representatives, we are looking at the reallocation of existing resources across our network, and in particular in Hamilton to

ensure a comprehensive network is provided to the customers," Mr Barlow said.

The committee heard there are a number of changes being considered which include:

- keeping the dedicated 29 Hamilton Gardens service, but removing the lake component as this is already well serviced by other bus routes
- reinstating the 12 Fitzroy to travel via Palmerston Street
- removing the Newstead cemetery stop from the 2 Silverdale service and potentially combining this service with an inter-peak targeted service
- changing the 2 Silverdale to service Hillcrest High School and Masters Ave at peak times only
- ensuring residents in retirement villages still have access to public transport following the proposed removal of the 15 Ruakura route
- supporting more urban buses to terminate at The Base.

Also during the meeting, the committee endorsed a staff recommendation to set a farebox recovery target of 40 to 43 per cent over the life of the new 2015/18 Regional Public Transport Plan. That means the regional council would use a range of initiatives to increase patronage and ensure fares cover 40 to 43 per cent of the cost of operating the bus network, thereby reducing the subsidy required from ratepayers and taxpayers.

Currently, fares cover about 38 per cent of the cost of public bus services. This proposed target recognises the need to achieve an equitable balance between user charges (fares) and subsidies, but not at a level that will risk undermining continued patronage growth.

Meanwhile, earlier in the day the regional transport committee heard that the South Waikato District Council has set aside \$200,000 in its 2014/15 Annual Plan to investigate public transport options for within Tokoroa and the wider district, as well as services between Tokoroa and Hamilton.. The results of the project will be provided to the regional council to consider as part of its public transport plan review.

## It all starts with an idea...

Thanks to all those people who stopped by our Fieldays site this year and shared an idea for creating an even better future for the Waikato.

We had a great response from people of all ages. The winner of the prize draw was Robin Singh from Taupiri, whose idea was:



**"Each farm should produce electricity from dung gas which should be used to run the farm, heating and cooking. Windmill**

fans to run electricity on farms because it's easier to put on farms than in towns."

Robin receives:

- One night's luxury accommodation for two at [Earthstead Villas in Cambridge](#), including a welcome platter and organic breakfast.
- Free bike hire and shuttle service for two people to ride the Karapiro section of the [Waikato River Trails](#).
- Two free passes for the southern enclosure of [Sanctuary Mountain Maungatautari](#).



Georgie and Amara check out some of the ideas shared at our Fieldays site.



Part of our site at Mystery Creek this year.

## Rivers group starts community field trips

A multi-stakeholder group working on ways to protect the Waikato and Waipa rivers has begun a series of field trips to help them understand the wider community's issues and perspectives.

The Collaborative Stakeholder Group (CSG) for the [Healthy Rivers: Plan for Change/Wai Ora: He Rautaki Whakapaipai](#) project is to develop recommendations for a regional plan change designed to manage land use affecting waterways.

The group has been hosted by two of the project partners, Raukawa and Maniapoto. Representatives from each iwi authority have conveyed the important relationship they have with the rivers. Raukawa regard the river as a whole living entity (not just its banks, beds and waters, but its many streams, lakes, tributaries, flora and fauna, flood plains) as well as a metaphysical being. Maniapoto hold a deeply felt obligation to restore and maintain the waters that flow into and form part of the Waipa.

The following photos are from two visits which have taken place over the past month. Future field trips will include a sheep and beef farm, and tourism, recreation and energy facilities.

### Tokoroa visit: No 'one size fits all' solution



The group visited the dairy farm of Tokoroa's George Moss in June. Mr Moss is one of two dairy sector representatives on the CSG.



CSG chair Bill Wasley said: "In developing solutions, the group needs to be highly aware of the geographic, as well as the social and cultural diversity in the Waikato and Waipa river catchments."



George Moss highlighted how operations on his farm relating to water quality were managed.



The key message for the group is that there is no 'one size fits all' approach for dealing with farming's impact on water quality.

### King Country visit: Locals working to improve water quality





Another CSG visit took place last week and involved meeting with Oparure community members doing their bit for the Mangapu River, near Te Kuiti.



The trip to the Mangapu River provided members with an understanding of the characteristics of the Waipa catchment.

A workshop followed the King Country site visit, and was held at Oparure Marae - Ngati Kinohaku.



The group also heard about a catchment plan under development and about other councils' approaches to regional planning for diffuse discharges.

## BUSIT for an adventure



Wondering what to do during the school holidays in Hamilton? We've [put together a list of places you can get to by bus](#) to keep you and the kids entertained.

And if you're in Taupo this school holidays, be connected to an adventure on our Taupo Connector bus service, travelling to Huka

Falls on weekdays. Buses are fitted with bike racks too. [Find out more about this great way to explore Taupo.](#)

## Finally...

We'd love you to share this e-newsletter with others so they're up-to-date with our latest news. You can do this via:



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Private Bag 3038  
Waikato Mail Centre  
Hamilton 3240

Freephone 0800 800 401