

**Minutes of the Oreti Catchment Liaison Committee  
Annual General Meeting, held at Salvation Army Hall,  
7 Dejoux Road, Winton on Tuesday,  
4 April 2024, at 1.00 pm.**

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<b>Present:</b>	Mr D Rose	Co-Chair
	Mr D Marshall	Co-Chair
	Mr L McCallum	
	Mr G Hubber	
	Mr W Currie	
	Mr J McDougall	
	Mr L McGregor	
	Mr L Gerrard	
	Mrs J Gerrard	
	Mr S McEwan	
	Mr T Dunnagh	
	Mr J McKenzie	
	Mr W Nelson	
	Mr H English	
	Mr A Baird	
	Mr J Erb	
	Mr R MacPherson	
	Ms A English	
	Mr J McDougall	
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Chairman Horrell	Environment Southland
	Cr M Rodway	Environment Southland
	Mr P Pollard	Environment Southland
	Mr G Gerrard	Environment Southland
	Ms E Lawton	Environment Southland
	Mr P Hulse	Environment Southland
	Mr R Bird	Environment Southland
	Mr R Beal	Environment Southland
	Mrs T Hawkins	Environment Southland
	Mrs A Flynn	(Personal Assistant – Minutes)

**1 Welcome and Chairman's Report (*Haere mai*)**

The Chairs welcomed all attending the meeting. Mr Rose and Mr Marshall presented their co-chairs report, which is appended as Appendix 1.

***Resolved:***

**Moved Mr D Rose, seconded Mr D Marshall that the co-chairs report for the 2024 Oreti Catchment Liaison Committee Annual General meeting be accepted.**

Carried

## 2 Apologies (*Nga Pa Pouri*)

*Resolved:*

Moved Mr D Rose, seconded Mr L McGregor, that apologies for absence be recorded on behalf of Mr G Milligan, Mr B Todd, Ms E Stevens, Mr D McGregor, Mr J Adamson, Mr T Dawkins, Ms R Dawkins, Mr C Senior, Mr C Smith, Mr H Swale, Mr P Thomson, Ms C Officer, Ms S Thorne, Ms A McDonald.

Carried

## 3 Confirmation of Minutes of Meeting of 21 February 2023

It was noted that the wording of the previous resolution in item 6, Financial Report was to be changed to say "...that the Oreti catchment liaison committee agreed to the proposed 2023/2024 budget increase of 4.5%".

*Resolved:*

Moved Mr H English, seconded Mr L McGregor, that the minutes of the Oreti Catchment Liaison Committee Annual General Meeting held on 21 February be confirmed as a true and accurate record once above amendments have been made.

Carried

## 4 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

## 5 Catchment Report

Mr G Gerrard and Mr P Pollard presented the catchment report with a focus on stopbanks and in particular those in the worst areas.

- Have resurveyed the lower reaches of the river and with the data received, the plan is to apply for a resource consent to start removing some of the gravel in the near future
- Andersons quarry is currently the only operating quarry that there is in the Oreti and Aparima catchments, work has been done there to bring it up to scratch
- Flooding last year caused a few issues up and down the catchment, one of the worst hit areas was a partial flooding of the Irthing stream
- Willows cause problems particularly when they are close to townships. There is also the problem of smoke if they are being burned. DT Kings will take them away to chip

- Gallagher Road – the river has been eating into the riverbank on the east side of the river and every time it does that it flows down Gallagher Road and cuts access to houses. There has been a collaboration between ES, SDC and landowners to find a solution. The plan is to open up a dry cut and create a river diversion. The landowner is paying for these costs, ES has added some design input and assisted with the resource consent
- Problems with willows at Wallacetown causing erosion along Larg Street – this is technically in the Oreti catchment, this is a work in progress.
- Floodbank defects on the Oreti river right up to Mossburn – 645 open as of 1 July 2023, 474 open as of 3 April 2024. We have managed to close of 171 and we are prioritising the ones that are most severe and could result in a breach of the flood banks
- Mr Pollard spoke to the slides and highlighted the different levels of defects from a series of photographs
- There was a question raised regarding the high priority defects (marked as priority 1) and how many there are, Mr Pollard answered saying there are 118.
- Longstanding historical issues – can we look at some trial work around how to put them right? And maybe these are the types of things that we can use our lease reserves on. **Action:** Mr Pollard to look at some examples to bring back to the group to look into
- There was also a suggestion to change the name of flood banks to something that reflects the severity of the situation if they fail
- The government needs to tighten up legislation on the management of grazing and the stacking of bailage (the areas where it is safe to do so). Mr Hulse intervened to advise that all bylaws are reviewed every ten years (with the most recent review in 2020). There are pretty stringent controls with anything to do with stopbanks either side so it is not a defunct bylaw but there is always room for improvement. It is possible for Council to look at an early review but this would rely on feedback from staff and catchment liaison committee members. Winter grazing rules should apply to flood banks but they don't
- The committee would like to be kept informed about any breaches of the flood banks and areas that need to be fixed.

## 6 Oreti Branxholme gravel extraction trial – report on Moxy river crossing trail - 15 February 2024

Mr McEwan spoke to a presentation about the river crossing trial on 15 February 2024:

- The trial was considered to be a great success with very little impact on the environment
- Data that was captured related to the suspended sediment, it started high at 110 and ended at 80
- There were 22 crossings in total and they got better with each one. Samples were taken all the way through to provide the data
- The emissions released when transporting via the road were three times as much as via the river
- The consents process will begin in the next two weeks
- A question was raised as to how much sediment was moved in the recent flood and the response was 172 tonnes/hr

## 7 Financial report – 2023/24 and proposed 2024/25

Mrs Hawkins presented the financial report and informed the committee there are three consultation processes going on at the moment.

Mrs Hawkins commenced with the actual budget results from 22/23:

- River works under budget by \$100k
- Structure maintenance over budget
- Stopbank inspections - we have started budgeting for this in each of the catchments
- Flood support costs over budget
- We ended up with a total under budget with a net movement of \$100k into the reserve.

This year's budget 24/25:

- This year's budget is \$1.175
- The 24/25 budget has some changes in it and there are a few numbers missing because it is part of the proposed rate change policy and part of that policy is that the support costs are not charged out directly to the catchment but are grouped together and charged as a regional cost across the whole of southland – sharing the costs differently
- Catchment Manager, Randal Beal wanted to consider a policy change regarding the allocation of staff costs and that it would be a better use staff costs and time if we grouped them together under the 'catchment operations' bucket and put staff where they need to be at any one time, e.g., after a flood which requires more resources. What this means is we will be making a regional budget which will reduce the total rates costs from \$1M to \$998k. This means that the catchment budget doesn't have to pay for it
- Mrs Hawkins clarified that with the proposal, there is no general rate but a targeted rate and instead of it being charged out to the catchment, it will be charged out to everyone in Southland
- Mrs Hawkins confirmed that there are still seven catchment budgets and seven committees but there is one rate (as proposed). The proposal of this budget is that the expenditure goes up with the rate of inflation and the overheads be moved out to the region wide catchment operations budget. This proposal is still draft and still subject to the consultation that is going on
- Mr Rose advised that he and Mr Marshall are struggling with putting this to the vote given that it might not happen and it is open to consultation. Mrs Hawkins advised that with other catchments they have approached it as an approval "subject to..." scenario
- Mr Rose stated that one of the main issues is the matter of the considerably large lease reserves budget and we've had \$30k coming into the budget every year and now that's not coming in under this proposed budget. Mrs Hawkins responded that other catchments have agreed to the proposed budget subject to ES putting those things back and that there is no policy change to the reserves
- A question was raised re staff costs and the response was that staff costs/overheads will go into the catchment operations sub-budget. This

means that the catchment budget ends up funding the direct costs of the work that is done

- Mr Rose suggested that the committee reconvene at a later date (before the end of June 2024) to look at the budget when it is finalised. Mr Rose expressed that he wasn't comfortable adopting the budget for \$998k today when it is different from all the other catchment budgets.

**Resolved:**

**Moved Mr D Rose, seconded Mr J Scully that the draft budget is not approved until after the end of the LTP submissions and the actual budget includes lease reserves.**

**Carried**

Cr McDonald introduced the LTP process and explained that it is a requirement by law to produce one and is a rolling budget. It's a ten-year timeframe and every term Council must update it. The discussion will start with the context around our thinking as a Council, then Mr Beal will talk about the technical aspects, followed by Mrs Hawkins to talk about the financials.

It's clear that for the last 35 years in this region that since all the great work has been done on our flood banks and infrastructure, we have been in a management phase, we've been prepping the committees over a period of time and the time has come now for us to go into a works phase. We knew we wanted a rates review to go along with this.

Mrs Hawkins' presentation will show a flattening of the rates, before we did that, we had to show Council a couple of key assumptions about why we are doing this. We've been in meetings all round the region but what is evident is that this province has changed a lot and everything that makes this province what it is, is reliant on its infrastructure to keep us safe. Now is the time that we're thinking of proposing that we take it to another level but to do that we need a better way to finance it through the rating system. Having 141 catchment rates is just not feasible.

Cr McDonald then invited Mr Beal, catchment operations manager, to talk about the technical aspects:

- Flood bylaw gets reviewed every five years and will be reviewed in May 2024
- Flooding is NZ's most natural hazard so it's very important to the nation's infrastructure that we get this right and is reliant on targeted rates to be maintained
- Last year we talked about climate change and how weather events will become more frequent and assets more tested. Levels of service will reduce
- The regional report is due to be updated
- By the year 2100, it is expected that sea level will have risen about one metre
- The infrastructure strategy is a 30-year document and the Council also has a 30 year budget and it is very similar to what we had last year. We are concentrating on our current assets and focus on improving our stopbanks and improving our flood bank capacity

- We have built a 2D hydrological model for Mataura, Gore and Wyndham and have quotes in to do the Oreti next
- Levels of service – there are two documents in the LTP for consultation for Winton and Lumsden. We are prioritising urban flood protection schemes
- We will be prioritising the defects and maintenance programme (1500 defects)
- We are prioritising improving stopbanks serviceability
- Gravel and vegetation have a huge impact on our flood capacity and this needs to be a priority also
- The issue of gravel management was raised. Mr Rose explained that he is part of the gravel working group and that progress is being made. Mr Beal added that we need to get away from site specific consents
- Another issue was raised regarding the speeding up of the river. Mr Beal talked about the Slow the Flow project and implementing nature-based solutions which are yet to be costed out

Mrs Hawkins was invited to talk through the financial aspects of the LTP:

- With the LTP we are trying to predict ten years and for infrastructure we try to predict 30 years
- There are three consultations underway at this present time, the first one is the revenue and financing policy rate changes – is the 40-year-old system still appropriate to share cost of catchment works?
- The second consultation is on the budget and how much money do we believe we need for the next 12 months?
- The third consultation is on the fees and charges schedule which is going up on estimated inflation.

The rate change proposal aims to remove the 140 different flood protection catchment rates and replace it with one rate and that the bio and land sustainability rate moves from land value to capital value.

We have 36 individual rate levies in the Oreti catchment alone (140 altogether). They were graded to fund the current flood infrastructure, but what do we need now? If we're preparing correctly for the future then we need to spend more regionwide. The classification system is no longer relevant. After many workshops, it became clear that this one proposal was the most equal way to do it.

Committee members expressed a need to have visibility of all the options with the reasoning and discussion behind each one and how Council came to land on the proposal that was chosen. Mrs Hawkins advised that all the workshop material is accessible online and we can have a more technical session if required.

Residential and rural have different profiles for land value, capital value and commercial. The land value rates have historically been paid largely by the rural community (66%). Large capital value properties and small land value properties were paying very little to towards the catchment rates/flood protection and very little towards biosecurity but things have now changed and the policy of the past does not reflect the present in terms of land value rates. The proposal is to restructure the

rates from land value to capital value and it will move the rates around. There will be one rate, seven committees and seven budgets.

The question was raised about control regarding input from the community into budgets. Mrs Hawkins advised that there were several discussions with the Chairs prior to this and that instead of presenting the budget in March that Chairs sit with Council from September and have input in the process from the start. The catchment committees are the closest we have got to community boards and are very important.

Mrs Hawkins spoke to slides that showed how the rates would change for different properties. The policy change is sharing the cake differently and overall.

There are 50,000 properties and the challenge was to impact those properties with as little change as possible. Plus or minus \$40 per year is the impact for most properties but there will be some that are impacted more depending on where they are situated.

As a proposal, it's future proofing the rates going forward. The budget increase is going to fall on a very small group of people.

This catchment as a whole is largely land rate based. The budget change will make more difference to the majority of this catchment than the policy change. There is an opportunity to submit on the budget change and on the policy change but please makes sure you submit an alternative.

This catchment as a whole is going to be more than \$400,000 better off under the policy change.

The LTP document is a way of looking forward to what Southland needs to deliver We need a new budget to allow for inflation, interest costs and infrastructure. The proposal is \$2.3M p/a. It also proposes that we need to be shovel ready, we can't afford to do all the infrastructure work ourselves, we need the government money and to get that money we need to be ready to spend money. We need to spend a bit to get a lot (hopefully). We're assuming that we can get \$130M from the Government if we get the proposal right. All regional councils are wanting to get bids in and are looking from moving from a three-year proposal to a ten-year proposal.

What is the impact of the proposed rate change – for an average property \$450k, there will be an average rate rise of \$65 per year but this is very much dependent on location.

## **8 Appointment of Committee and membership**

Cr Peter McDonald assumed the role of Chair and called for nominations for the Chair of the Oreti Catchment Liaison Committee.

***Resolved:***

**Moved Mr L McGregor, seconded Mr G Hubber that Mr David Rose and Mr David Marshall be elected to the positions of Co-Chairman of the Oreti Catchment Liaison Committee.**

**Carried**

Mr Rose and Mr Marshall resumed their roles as co-chairs at this time.

***Resolved:***

**Moved Mr D Marshall, seconded Mr C Smith that Oreti Catchment Liaison Committee comprise of all members present, those with apologies recorded and those who are listed on the mailing list that was circulated with the agenda of the meeting.**

**Carried**

***Resolved:***

**Moved Mr D Rose, seconded Mr L McCallum that the Oreti Catchment Liaison Committee comprise of all members present and those with apologies recorded and those that were on the circulation list for the agenda of the meeting.**

**Carried**

***Resolved:***

**Moved Mr D Rose, seconded Mr D Marshall that the Technical Group of the Oreti Catchment Liaison Committee comprise of Walter Currie, Hamish English, Roger Hamilton, Grant Hubber, John McDougall Snr, Dave Marshall, Peter O'Callaghan, David Rose, John Ferris, Tim Dawkins, Peter Thomson, Annie English, Lachlan McGregor, Scott Whyte and John McDougall.**

**Carried**

## **9 Catchment Group Reports**

Two group reports were presented to the committee for the lower Oreti catchment group and the greater Dipton catchment group and are appended as Appendix 2 and 3.

## **10 Showcasing the Oreti Catchment**

It was decided that this would be deferred to the end of the meeting if anyone wanted to stay.

## **11 General Business**



It was noted that the intention is to hold another meeting about rates and to get more detail. Committee members were encouraged to get a submission in by 7 May 2024.

## **12 Meeting close**

Mr Rose thanked everyone for their attendance and brought the meeting to a close at 3.52pm.

## ACTION SHEET

Action	Responsible	Date completed
Longstanding historical issues – can we look at some trial work around how to put them right? Action: Mr Pollard to look at some examples to bring back to the group to look into.	Paul Pollard	TBC