

Meeting Notes of the Sounds Advisory Group held in the Committee Room at Marlborough District Council on Monday 20 May 2019 at 9.30 am

Present

Clr Oddie (Chair), Clr Taylor, Monyeen Wedge, Rob Schuckard, Eric Jorgensen, Ross Withell, Tim Greenhough, Judy Hellstrom, Vic Koller, Lynley Perkins, Emma Hopkinson, Margot Ferrier, Linda Booth (until lunchtime)

Guest Speakers

Christine Coates (Civil Defence), Chris Hayles (FENZ)

MDC Staff

Alan Johnson, Oliver Wade, Reuben Fergusson (for part of the meeting), Pere Hawes (for part of the meeting)

In Attendance

Rebecca Waldron (Council Secretary)

Apologies

Clr Hook, Poneke Rene, Dave Hayes, Rick Osbourne, Jodi Milne, Ken Roush, Lynley Perkins, Tim Greenhough

Clr Taylor/Alan Johnson: that the apologies be accepted.

1. FENZ Update – Chris Hayles

- Chris presented a Powerpoint to the group with the main theme being preparedness. Some points to note:
 - Smoke Alarms save lives. There are new photoelectric smoke alarms which last for 10 years and don't need the batteries replaced. Smoke alarms have expiry dates on the back which need to be adhered to.
 - Sounds residents and visitors need to have a plan for emergencies. (Including knowing escape routes). Know the Rapid Number of your property. (The number corresponds with the jetty number). Make sure the Rapid Number is visible and ensure there is clearance for fire trucks on driveways and that culverts are strong enough for fire trucks to pass over. There is more information on Rapid Numbers on the Marlborough District Council website.
<https://www.marlborough.govt.nz/services/rapid-numbers>
 - Don't overestimate your ability to escape from a fire, ring 111 sooner rather than later.
 - New fire season status signs are being trialled to make it easier for the public to understand.
 - Chris distributed a booklet to the group which outlines how to help keep your home safe from fire.
 - If installing a water tank, have a fitting attached that can take a fireman's hose. (Three inch female cam lock is the ideal fitting).
 - The fire permitting process for the Sounds was discussed.
 - For more information go to www.mkrf.com which links to www.fireandemergency.nz
 - It was suggested that FENZ and Civil Defence make a short update for the SAG Christmas newsletter.

Questions/Answers/Discussion

- FENZ is able to use boats such as water taxis to attend fires in the Sounds.
- It was suggested that FENZ and Civil Defence provide a short update for the SAG Christmas newsletter.
- Discussion on the process for assigning fire permits, smoking on the Queen Charlotte Track and educating communities on their responsibilities to provide measures for their own protection in the case of fire or Civil Defence emergency.

2. Civil Defence – Catherine Coates

- Catherine made a presentation to the group on Small Community Civil Defence preparedness.
- Her main message is;
 - (a) make a plan which includes making a plan for your holiday accommodation and your pets; and
 - (b) that in a **major** event, individuals will be on their own and that Sounds Residents should have up to 14 days' worth of supplies.
- Other points included:
 - Know your exit route (in the case of a tsunami) and have a grab bag ready.
 - Stay informed (all radio stations will have information).
 - All emergency agencies are able to use the emergency mobile phone alert.
 - Picton/Waikawa has recently established a small Civil Defence group.

Questions/Answers/Discussion

- The Civil Defence preparedness flyer put out in the summer of 2017/18 will be repeated this upcoming summer.

Meeting adjourned for morning tea, reconvening at 11.00 pm.

3. Actions from the previous meeting

	Action	Person Responsible
1.	Organise for Civil Defence and FENZ to do a presentation on small community preparedness - completed	Rebecca
2.	Invite Jon Cunliffe to the next meeting to talk about forestry forecasting in the Sounds – no new information is available – deferred	Alan
3.	Get an update before the next meeting from DOC on progress of Unformed Legal Road issue at Endeavour Inlet – Council and DOC have agreed to send a joint letter about responsibility on the road to residents, with DOC leading this process - completed	Alan
4.	Check whether there is a plan for a salmon farm in the middle of the Waitata Reach – to be discussed further down the agenda – completed	Jodi
5.	Ask MDC Holdings about plans to implement better environmental forestry practices – deferred to the next meeting due to Councillor Hook being absent	Councillors
6.	Forward any information available on scallop studies to the group – discussed in Jodi's update below - completed	Jodi

4. Actions from the Public meeting at Port Underwood on 18 May 2019

	Action Points	Person Responsible
1.	Follow up on situation with regard to non-compliance at Whataroa – Reuben Fergusson will talk to this action point further down the agenda - completed	Alan
2.	Follow up an issue with a sign stipulating no freedom camping on Port Underwood Road – the area is not Council Reserve so are unable to put signs on the Reserve - completed	Alan
3.	Find out whether the reserve at Ngakuta Bay (PU) and Tom Canes Bay is Council, DOC or Roadside Reserve – as above - completed	Councillors

5. DOC Update – Margot Ferrier

- Margot attended the meeting in place of Dave Hayes and gave an update to the group (Appendix 1).

Questions/Answers/Discussion

- It was noted that Meretoto/Ship Cove and adjoining islands have been included as a Listed Site on the National Heritage Register. (Link below).
<https://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/9900>
- Judy will report back to the next meeting of SAG on the community based Biodiversity Forum which is taking place on 16 June at the Endeavour Pavilion. This will be an opportunity for different conservation groups to get together to share knowledge. The keynote speaker will be Ted Howard from the Hutton's Shearwater Recovery Project.
- The launch of Kotahitanga mō te Taiao Alliance Strategy (“collective action for our nature”) is taking place on 6 June.

6. Fisheries Update – Jodi Milne (by email)

- Jodi was unavailable for the meeting but provided an update by email. (Appendix 2).

Discussion

- A conversation was held on the best way to provide feedback to Jodi on the Sea Cucumber Draft Harvest Plan and Marlborough Sounds Scallop Strategy. It was decided that individuals would read the reports and then provide feedback directly to Jodi either by email or telephone.

7. Articles in the Dominion Post on the Marlborough Sounds – Monyeen Wedge

- A recent article in the Dominion Post highlighted the issue of an oil leak from one of the Bluebridge ferries Monyeen is concerned that the leak can't be fixed until it goes to dry dock.
 - The Harbourmaster provided a response via Alan, that to put the issue in context, the amount is very small (although it is a problem that needs to be fixed).
- Monyeen also highlighted another article in the Dominion Post on Steve Urlich which discussed the lack of Marine Reserve in Marlborough.
 - Discussion on Significant Marine sites followed, summarised below:
All existing significant marine sites are in the Proposed Marlborough Environment Plan (PMEP). There are regulations proposed in the PMEP on activities within or near the sites, which have been heavily submitted on. Some submitters have called for extensions to controls to prohibit any bed disturbance and requests for buffer zones in the significant marine sites.

The increasing effects on the sea floor in Meretoto/Ship Cove of ships anchoring were noted but it was pointed out that the significant marine site in this area was removed from the PMEP as monitoring showed it no longer existed.

Measuring thresholds were discussed. Oliver agreed to provide an update on the SNA (Significant Natural Area) Programme and how to determine an SNA and the role of Council and DOC in relation to these areas.

Pere referenced a document by MfE which summarised the responsibilities by different agencies.

<https://www.mfe.govt.nz/marine/reforms/marine-protected-areas>

8. Forestry Compliance Update – Reuben Fergusson

- Following on from the Action Point above, Reuben noted that there have been no further issues at Whataroa since failures at the last inspection. The site is due for another compliance inspection shortly.
- Reuben presented a Powerpoint showing the skid site failures in South East Bay, Pelorus Sound/Te Hoiere in 2017. Non-compliance of stormwater controls on the skid sites contributed to the failures. Two properties and multiple people were affected and the Court took those effects and those on the sea floor very seriously. An Enforcement Order ensures the offender carries out remediation and on-going monitoring at the site.
- Reuben's Powerpoint also covered the issued at Otenarau Bay (East Bay, Arapaoa Island). Compliance issued an Abatement Notice to a company that was carrying out harvesting activities using a consent for earthworks which did not comply with the new PMEP rules. However the Environment Court has cancelled the Abatement Notice on the basis that the 2012 earthworks consent actually consented the entire activity including harvesting. Council have filed a Notice of Appeal against the decision. If the decision is upheld it may have quite big implications on the way resource consents are dealt with.

Questions/Answers/Discussion

- General discussion on consents and forestry production problems in the Sounds followed.
- Linda brought up the issue of the ongoing problems on Opouri Road and asked Reuben how the Compliance Team was dealing with these issues, (forestry logging trucks and cows continually being on the road). The issue of repairs which are required on the road was also raised. She noted that the Toll Gate Bridge has slipped by 80 mm's. She asked that this issue be followed up, (added to the Action Points).
 - Reuben answered that he is not aware of these compliance issues – *(This issue was followed up after the meeting - the complaints received have been forwarded to Marlborough Roads to address)*. (It was requested that Steve Murrin address these issues - added to the Action Points).
- In a separate issue Linda asked what is happening with Opouri River and noted she had raised this issue at a previous SAG meeting. Although Linda has been told \$500,000 has been allocated for repairs and a resource consent had been applied for, no repair work has been carried out yet.
(This issue was followed up after the meeting – a resource consent U180466 has been granted to divert the river and a notification of commencement has been received by the Compliance Monitoring Group and the work is due to be carried out before the end of the financial year.)
- In relation to the skid-site failure in South East Bay referred to above, Reuben noted that the Council will continue to monitor the site and has enforcement powers which can direct remedial work to address environmental effects. There are also provisions in the RMA to require a bond as a condition of consent.

National Environmental Standard for Plantation Forestry (NES – PF) - Pere Hawes

- Forestry planting and harvesting is controlled under the NES-PF.
- The Marlborough Sounds is not considered a high risk area for erosion under the NES. Under limited circumstances, Council can exercise greater stringency and because of the risk of sedimentation has chosen to retain the stricter controls outlined in the PMEP.

- A 12 month review of the NES is taking place at the moment.
- A link to the NES – PF Alignment Report is included below:
https://www.marlborough.govt.nz/repository/libraries/id:1w1mps0ir17q9sgxanf9/hierarchy/Documents/Your%20Council/Environmental%20Policy%20and%20Plans/Hearings%20on%20the%20PMEP/Important%20Documents/NES%20Plantation%20Forestry%20list/MEP_Alignment_Report.pdf

Meeting adjourned for lunch.

Linda Booth withdrew from the meeting.

The meeting reconvened at 1.05 pm.

9. Confirmation of the Previous Minutes

Eric Jorgensen/Judi Hellstrom: That the minutes from the Sounds Advisory Group Meeting held on 18 March were confirmed.

10. NZKS Relocation – Rob Schuckard

- Rob had two questions (below) which followed on from the issue raised at the previous meeting regarding the information received on a proposal for a salmon farm in the mid-Waitata Reach (mid-bay farm). Rob's email regarding this issue had been pre-circulated to the group prior to the meeting.
 - i) Does Council think that the mid-bay farm could be approved (and have matters of Part two been addressed)?
 - ii) Is Council also one on the key parties in the debate about the mid-bay farm.
- Cllr Oddie addressed these questions: i) Council made decisions about that quite some time ago and nothing has changed. ii) It hasn't come to Council politically at all.
- Pere highlighted that NZKS has made a declaration to the Stock Exchange. Prompted by the declaration there has been an update on the MPI website about the relocation process.
<https://www.mpi.govt.nz/news-and-resources/consultations/marlborough-salmon-relocation/>
- He also addressed the questions above, ii) stating that Council has had no discussion on the mid-Waitata site and are not aware of any amended proposal other than what has been informed through the website update and i) Council would be reckless if it didn't have due regard to the Advisory Panel's recommendation.
- In response to a question asking if Council shouldn't be providing an opinion to MPI on this, Pere noted that Council responds to proposals but cannot be part of developing proposals.

11. Biodiversity Decline Is Getting Worse – Rob Schuckard

- Rob's email on this issue was circulated to the group prior to the meeting.
- He highlighted a report which identified the decline of biodiversity in the Marlborough Sounds (State of the Environment Report 2015. Our Land, Our water and Our Place. Marlborough District Council, pp150.)
- He also noted that Local Government New Zealand acknowledged this biodiversity decline earlier this year: and that Environment Aotearoa 2019 has just been released and biodiversity has further declined significantly with the extinction risk worsened for 86 species in the past 15 years.
- Rob raised several questions from these reports:
 - i) What actions by Council were triggered after SOE 2015 report to address decline in specifically marine biodiversity?
 - ii) How many protected areas in the marine environment have been protected since the 1991 Long Island Marine Reserve?

- iii) What is the target/goal for marine protected areas?
- iv) What update is available about the status and values identified in SNA's?
- v) Are pest eradication programmes effective enough to protect identified values?
- vi) Is there a correlation between biodiversity decline and unsustainable practices of resource use?
- vii) Should Policy 14 of NZCPS (Restoration of natural character of the coastal environment) be more committal? Instead of 'promote' such action, should it read like: 'avoid further decline and protect indigenous biological diversity part of natural character in the coastal environment'?

Alan and Pere provided responses to the questions above;

- i) The MEP had been the most significant trigger for addressing biodiversity. There is a summary of the draft objectives, policies, methods and Anticipated Environmental Results (AER's) for the Coastal Domain under the PMEP which Alan agreed to circulate to the group. No additional funding for marine biodiversity was included in the Long Term Plan as when the framework around Coastal Charging comes into effect will be the ideal time for recovering costs for managing the programme. Council has provided an extra \$70,000 for biodiversity in terrestrial and freshwater areas in the next 12 months and an additional biodiversity staff position has been included in the LTP in two years' time.
- ii) Additional significant marine sites have been included in updates to the MEP and it is possible to continue to add new sites to the MEP once it has been notified by the Plan Change process.
Discussion on marine protected sites followed.
- iii) This is not a function of Council.
- iv) An update of the SNA's can be included in the August meeting.
- v) This question will be addressed with the SNA update.
- vi) There is some impact from resource use and provisions from the Plan are supposed to mitigate these. Lack of resources is the main barrier to providing successful pest management. Council is trying to determine effects in order to focus management resources.
It was noted that the Council website doesn't have a link to a map showing all of the significant wetlands. Alan agreed to follow this up.
- vii) A review of the NZCPS is underway at the moment. It was agreed that DOC would be asked for an update on the NZCPS review at the next meeting.

12. MDC Update

Aquaculture Provisions – Pere Hawes

- The Aquaculture Review Working Group (ARWG) is nearing the end of its process. It is meeting again on 7 June and then may be in a position to confirm its recommendations to Council. Council will then decide what it wants to do with the recommendations and what form of community engagement will take place.
 - The group has not been able to tackle the spatial allocation of fin fish.
 - Cumulative effects have been highlighted as a concern by the group.

Integrated Management – Alan Johnson

- An integrated management group has been formed with NZ Fisheries (Inshore, Spatial and Aquaculture) and DOC to discuss holistic issues.

Science Update – Oliver Wade

- Council is having discussions with Sustainable Seas on undertaking a trial of ecosystem based management work in the Marlborough Sounds. This would link with the integrated management work that is being carried out at a higher level. It is hoped that the Sustainable Seas work would be dovetailed with some catchment based initiatives on land that originate from central government.
- Details of the Pelorus Sound/Te Hoiere multi-beam project are still being worked out.

- A review of Council's Estuarine Monitoring Programme has been received. The programme has been focussing on collecting baselines, but moving forward Oliver is reviewing the programme to see how better information for sediment mitigation and other relevant issues can be captured.
- An overarching strategy for the overall monitoring programme is being worked on. This strategy will also tie in with the integrated management project. Oliver has noticed that the Council's Marine Programme is focussed more on the Sounds than the East Coast.

13. General Discussion (other items)

Sustainable Land Transfer Fund (SLTF) – Update – Eric Jorgensen

- A submission to the Annual Plan was made by Eric on behalf of SAG. A time slot has been allocated to speak to the submission on 4 June (1.00 pm - 3.00 pm). It was agreed that Judy will speak to the submission and Vic and Eric will attend in support. Other SAG members were encouraged to attend.
- Oliver noted that a workshop between Marlborough Foresters and NIWA is currently being organised to work through the issue of Marlborough Foresters Group disputing the sedimentation work done by NIWA.

Moetapu Bay Road – Vic Koller

- The problem of lack of the road crew being seen on Moetapu Bay Road was again raised. Cllr Taylor noted that there have been meetings with Marlborough Roads and Sounds Community Groups on the issue of the poor condition of the Sounds roads. The contract is going out for tender shortly. Councillors have pushed for a comprehensive new contract in terms of delivery for district and Sounds roads. The tenders will be weighted on how they are intending to deliver the service e.g.; if they have a crew in Havelock (so time isn't wasted in travel). It has also been asked that they will be identifiable as the Sounds Roding Crew.

Tōtaranui 250 Update

- Chrissy Powlesland from Tōtaranui 250 will attend the next meeting to give an update on the commemorations being organised.

14. Positive Feedback

- The Environment Court decision where two marine farms at Pig Bay are to be decommissioned was noted.

15. Next Meeting

- The next meeting is scheduled for 19 August.
- It was suggested that the next off site meeting should be held at D'urville Island. This may take place closer to the end of this year or early next year.
- It was suggested that SAG have a meeting at Havelock, Alan noted that there are Residents Associations and Smart and Connected groups which in the area which need to be taken into consideration.

16. Actions from the meeting

Action	Person Responsible
1. Ask MDC Holdings about plans to implement better environmental forestry practices – deferred to the next meeting due to Councillor Hook being absent	Councillors
2. Report back on outcomes of Biodiversity Forum	Judy
3. Provide an update on the (SNA) Programme and how to determine an SNA and the role of Council and DOC in relation to these areas	Oliver
4. Request Steve Murrin provides a response to the roading issues on Opouri Road and an indication of when repairs are going to take place	Rebecca
5. Follow up on the Compliance issues on the Opouri Road	Alan
6. Follow up whether a map of Marlborough's Significant Wetlands can be added to an easily accessible area of the website	Alan
7. Circulate Anticipated Environmental Results (AER's) for the Coastal Domain to the group – completed	Alan
8. Provide update on review process of NZCPS	Dave Hayes
9. Follow up with Marlborough Roads to have Moetapu Bay Road culverts and water tables cleared before winter	Councillors

The meeting closed at 2.35 pm.

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Appendix 1

Department of Conservation Activities and Issues of Interest

Recreation

Queen Charlotte Track

- A decision has not been made yet on which of the three new Great Walk applications will be accepted. The panel has presented their report to the senior leadership team.

Campgrounds

- Having roving campground rangers over the summer period in the Kenepuru Sound area worked well again with potential problems able to be nipped in the bud and support being available to our very valuable voluntary camp hosts. Finding enough camp hosts has been more of a problem over the last season compared to previous years.

Infrastructure Upgrades

- The contractors working on the Schoolhouse Bay to Meretoto/Ship Cove track upgrade are producing a good quality track. Delays have occurred due to more rocky sections being encountered than anticipated and also from the need to share workers with the Paparoa Great Walk development which struck adverse conditions and delays.
- The tender process has started for the new sewage system to be installed at Meretoto/Ship Cove prior to November.

Historic

- There have been recent consultation meetings to discuss the proposal for Landmark status to be bestowed on Meretoto/Ship Cove. General consensus appears to be that most people are supportive and see this as another opportunity to improve the public knowledge of why this is such a significant site.

Biodiversity

Te Pakeka/Maud Island Mice

- Work is on track for eradication of mice from the island in June.

D'Urville Island Wetland Restoration

- More plantings have occurred using volunteers and a group of trainees involved with the Moturoa/Rabbit Island conservation traineeship.
- The first of the earthworks has been done to work towards restoring the hydrology of the wetland.

Large Animal Control

- Two resident deer were removed from Te Pakeka/Maud Island prior to the mice control programme.
- A further seven deer were removed from Oruawairua/Blumine Island but several more remain. We are learning that deer pass from Arapaoa Island to Blumine on a more frequent basis than previously thought.
- Ongoing goat control has occurred in the Mt Furneaux area recently but our programme has been impacted on by the change in gun laws as our hunters renew their licences for use of semi-automatic rifles.

Frog Monitoring

- Recent monitoring of the Maud Island frogs occurred with good numbers sighted. One frog caught was first recorded 30 years ago. We are still not sure how long these animals live for.

Community

- Development of a community-based Biodiversity Forum is still underway. Two meetings have been held to date, one to canvas for support for the concept and the second involving a team to develop the next stages. The next full meeting is scheduled for 16 June where it is intended that conservation-based community groups will be able to share more information about each of their projects.
- Staff are supporting the Totaranui 250 Trust in their preparation for events in November. In particular, the Meretoto/Ship Cove event will be a significant one for DOC.
- The current lease for Titirangi Farm Park ends at the end of July. David and Rachel Drake have been superb custodians and will be hard to replace. Expressions of Interest will be sought soon as we work to find new leases.
- The review of all current Sounds Foreshore Reserve licences is coming up in 2020. There are over 300 active licences at the moment. The process for renewal and for fee review is being worked on.

Staff

- We are currently recruiting for replacement staff for Takapourewa/Stephens Island.
- We will be seeking replacements for the managers at Momorangi Bay Campsite soon.
- We will soon be seeking a replacement for our Supervising Ranger, Recreation/Historic which is based in Picton.

Appendix 2

Fisheries Update – Jodi Milne by email

Ecosystem-Based Fisheries Management

In answer to Eric's question at the last meeting, I can advise Fisheries New Zealand is undertaking initial planning for developing an ecosystem-based fisheries management (EBFM) framework. As this work develops it could include the trial application of an ecosystem-based planning approach for 1-2 fisheries or regions before looking to extend the programme more widely. The team undertaking this work have offered to come talk to the SAG about EBFM in the future once they have made further progress.

October Sustainability Round

Work has started on the October sustainability round. Consultation documents on those stocks for review will be open to public consultation mid-June via the Fisheries New Zealand consultation pages (<https://www.mpi.govt.nz/news-and-resources/consultations?cat=8>).

Sea Cucumber Draft Harvest Plan

Fisheries New Zealand has been developing a sea cucumber harvest plan to mitigate concerns of the Marlborough Sounds community of the recent increase in sea cucumber total allowable commercial catch. We would be interested in getting the SAG's feedback on the draft plan. Unfortunately a final draft has not been completed in time to present at this meeting. Could the group please advise an alternative way they would like to receive this draft for feedback (email distribution, out-of-session meeting, work with a sub-group etc.).

Additional item – Marlborough Sounds Scallop Strategy

A scallop working group (including commercial and recreational fishers, iwi, scientists, and community representatives) has been working on developing a scallop strategy for the Marlborough Sounds. Once the strategy has been endorsed by the Minister, Fisheries New Zealand intends to undertake targeted consultation (with the MDC, environmental groups etc.). As part of this targeted consultation we would like to include the SAG and would like to canvas if the SAG would be interested in having an out-of-session meeting for us to give a presentation on the MS Scallop Strategy. If so, this will likely be mid-late June. After the targeted consultation the strategy will also go to public consultation where there will be drop-in sessions and an online survey in late June / July.

Members are welcome to contact me directly on any fisheries matters.