

## Biodiversity Advisory Group

1 February 2022



### *Biodiversity Advisory Group*

Minutes of the Biodiversity Advisory Group meeting held on Tuesday 1 February 2022, commencing at 1.00pm, in the Council Chamber, 137 Havelock Street, Ashburton (and also via MS Teams).

**Present:** Mayor Neil Brown; Councillors Lynette Lovett (Chair) and Diane Rawlinson; Ian Soper (ADC), Bert Hofmans (ADC), Christian Chukwuka (ADC), Alice Shanks *via Teams* (QEII Trust), Angela Cushnie (Ashburton Water Zone Committee), Edith Smith (Forest & Bird, ACCT), Val Clemens (Forest & Bird, ACCT), Brad Edwards (DOC), Jane Riach (Kanuka Trust) Marcelo Wibmer (Fonterra) Hemi Bedggood (Fonterra), Mary Ralston (Forest & Bird, Awa Awa Rata Reserve), Mark Webb (Fish & Game), Jayde Couper (Fish & Game) and Barry Austin (Mt Somers Walkway Society, Lake Heron Conservation Society).

**In attendance:** Steve Fabish (GM Community Services) and Mary Wilson (Governance Support).

New staff were introduced to the group.

#### 1. Apologies

Apologies accepted from:

- Cr Liz McMillan
- Donna Field (Environment Canterbury)
- Janine Holland (Environment Canterbury)
- Mary Ralston (Forest & Bird, Awa Awa Rata Reserve)
- Gen de Spa (Foothills Landcare Group)
- Ian Fraser (DOC)
- Michael Edmondson (Synlait)
- Mike Salvesen (Federated Farmers)

Smith/Clemens

Carried

#### 2. Extraordinary Business

Nil

#### 3. Declarations of Interest

Nil

#### 4. Confirmation of Minutes – 2 November 2021

**That** the minutes of the Biodiversity Advisory Group meeting held on 2 November 2021 be taken as read and confirmed.

Austin/Rawlinson

Carried

## **5. Terms of Reference**

**That** the updated Terms of Reference for the Biodiversity Advisory Group be adopted.

Riach/Rawlinson

Carried

## **6. Biodiversity Strategy Review**

- The need for a workshop, where the group can work together to develop a strategy and a list of their top 20-25 actions, was discussed. A yearly workshop was considered beneficial. Steve Fabish agreed to facilitate this and Mike Harding was suggested as an option to facilitate stage 2.
- GIS mapping of the groups' projects, on a district-wide basis, was discussed. This would be beneficial to determine where more work is required and to ensure doubling up of resources isn't occurring. It was suggested loading data from 5-10 years, to show the big picture.
- Long term maintenance work when projects are complete was discussed.
- It was noted that the Ashburton Water Zone Committee have developed an action plan, which took significant resources over the years.
- Publicity of the GIS project was considered, as there may be other people/groups in the district there that may benefit from the group and could be included in the GIS layer.
- ECan have a map on their website, and the Biodiversity Advisory group needs to be careful not to duplicate what has already been done.

## **7. Role of the Biodiversity Advisory Group**

- The role of the Biodiversity Advisory Group was discussed with the commencement of the Biodiversity Officer role at ADC.
- It was considered that the Officer's role will give strength to the group.

## **8. Ashton Beach motorbike park**

- Ashton Beach motorbike park was discussed, with some concern expressed around protecting the dryland biodiversity and other ecosystems in the area.

## **9. Agency Reports**

### **9.1 Ashburton District Council – Open Spaces** (Ian Soper, Bert Hofmans)

#### ***Lake Camp/Clearwater***

- Weed spraying carried out at Lake Camp and near the Lake Clearwater Settlement. Broom, gorse, rosehip, lupins and rowans were targeted.
- The contractor noted a large number of rowan seedlings (27) along the eastern margins of Lake Camp.
- It was agreed to coordinate with ADC's forester to determine what work needs to be carried out to tidy up the area.
- Developing a plan would be valuable as there are a number of issues that need to be included.

**(AP) Jane Donaldson will be invited to the next meeting to discuss, as her department is undertaking the consultation.**

- The Lake Camp plan budget was discussed, with approximately \$10,000 being suggested.

**(AP) Bert Hofmans to confirm Lake Camp plan budget and clarify at next meeting.**

#### ***Ashton Beach***

- A skink survey was conducted in November 2021, with the purpose being to assist Council in determining what measures will be required if it is to be successful with its wildlife permit application. This will be the subject of a report to Council in the very near future.
- The application is currently on hold while the survey has been conducted.

#### **9.2 Ashburton Water Zone Committee** (Angela Cushnie)

- The Mid Canterbury Catchment Collective was formed in December 2021. Updates once the strategy and action plan have been finalised. Chairman Duncan Barr and Catchment Coordinator Angela Cushnie are the contact people.
- An update was provided prior to the meeting and included in the Agenda.

#### **9.3 Awa Awa Rata Reserve** (Mary Ralston)

- Rat trap boxes have been placed around the Awa Awa Rata Reserve and are being checked regularly - so far numerous rats, mice and stoats have been caught.
- Another committee member has placed stoat and possum traps around the reserve and wasp bait was also put out this week around the reserve and along the DOC tracks above the picnic area.

**(AP) Invite Terry O'Neill to the next meeting to discuss a plantation of larches on Pudding Hill above the Awa Awa Rata Reserve.**

- Council are replacing the toilet facility at the reserve. Council are jointly funding the project, along with funding of \$158,00 that was secured from the Tourism Infrastructure Fund. The project also includes landscaping.

#### **9.4 Environment Canterbury** (Donna Field)

- An update was provided and included in the agenda.

#### **9.5 Fish and Game** (Mark Webb, Jayde Couper)

- Fish and Game have made significant progress in fish diversity, working with farmers and ECan to enhance habitat.
- Boundary Drain – 500m of enhancement - Boundary Drain is a trial for all other drains and if this project is successful there could be a large improvement in fish habitat in drains in the District.
- Progress reports available as ECan produce them. Final report will probably be ready mid 2022. Will provide a report for the next meeting.

#### **9.6 Fonterra** (Marcelo Wibmer, Hemi Bedggood)

- A presentation on projects being undertaken by Fonterra was given via MS Teams, including in support of farmers that were affected by the May 2021 flooding event.

#### ***Stock races***

- Council is encouraged to treat stock water races as an asset, not a liability.
- The Water Race Bylaw has relaxed in recent years and now allows planting on one side.

**9.7 Forest & Bird** (Edith Smith, Val Clemens, Mary Ralston)

- An update was prepared for the meeting and included in the Agenda.
- An ecological study of Awa Awa Rata Reserve, and the wider area, is being carried out by Mark Harding on behalf of ADC.
- The Harris Scientific Reserve was discussed, with members offering to host a visit of the Biodiversity Advisory Group.
- Mt Hutt College are interested in establishing a native area at the college.

**(AP) Bert Hofmans to consider signage for the Harris Scientific Reserve.**

***Wetland Film***

- *Rohe Koreporepo The Swamp, the Sacred Place*
- The film that was to be held on Saturday 12 February has now been postponed.

**9.8 Kanuka Trust** (Jane Riach)

- The Trust were invited to the Rakaia bike track opening, looking at some native planting.
- There is a collaborate project being undertaken with a local school and Talleys, with lots of learning opportunities for the local community coming out of it.

**9.9 Mt Somers Walkway Society & Lake Heron Conservation Society** (Barry Austin)

- An update was provided prior to the meeting and included in the agenda.

**9.10 QEII Trust** (Alice Shanks)

- Winds along the foot hills after the floods caused a number of the old Beech trees to fall over.
- It was suggested that Upper Downs Road needs a care group – to discuss further with ADC to see how the community can be assisted to look after their roadside.

**(AP) Bert Hofmans and Alice Shanks to visit Upper Downs Road to determine how ADC can assist with roadside maintenance.**

**Overview**

- The GIS map of the District showing Biodiversity projects is going to be an exciting project and a great start.
- It was suggested that Mike Hammond should be invited to the upcoming workshop **(AP: Steve Fabish)**
- Roadside biodiversity is to be included on the workshop agenda.

**Meeting completed:** 2:45pm

**Next meeting:** Tuesday 5 April 2022