

REPORT

TO: Members, Engineering Services Committee

FROM: Chair, Trevor Norriss

DATE: 19 May 2010

SUBJECT: **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – RESC10-05-01**
Report prepared for meeting of 27 May 2010

Welcome to today's meeting. The heavy rain event of last weekend has seen substantial damage to private property, forestry sites and Council roading infrastructure in the Upper Motueka catchment and a further report from Engineering staff will be provided at today's meeting.

I would like to thank our contractors, Downer for their efforts during the initial stages of this heavy rain event, especially Toby (Motueka end) and Steve (Tapawera end) and staff. Thanks also to Hancock Forest Management who had staff in the Woodstock area on Sunday afternoon and machinery working by Monday. The work of many volunteers at Tapawera helping those evacuated and others who have also lent and offered assistance has been much appreciated. My thanks also go to the Council staff and our consultants who spent their Sunday working to help the community.

The heartbreaking clean up for those who have been affected has begun and, in many cases, getting water supplies, sewerage, power and access reinstated will take some considerable time and cost and undoubtedly there will be accusations about who is at fault. The one-in-seventy year event (rainfall) is possibly to blame. The secret is everyone working together for a better outcome for the future.

A flyover of the area on Monday helped identify where Council roads have been damaged and it showed that considerable time and costs are going to result once limited access has been restored (photos will be available at today's meeting).

There is clear evidence that debris from logging operations, skid sites collapsing and general slash from these activities has not helped and I expect forestry owners will be helping in the clean up and associated costs. As mentioned earlier, some already are doing their bit.

Central government politicians grandstanding in the media and apportioning blame are not helpful. Perhaps if they directed their energy into changing some of the RMA rules it would be more useful.

Civil contractor, Adcock & Donaldson and other NZ Contractors Federation members have offered the use of machinery for work on private property – thanks guys. And undoubtedly there are others out there who are offering their services.

Connecting Tasman – Regional Land Transport Strategy

This has been signed off by the Regional Transport Committee and will be presented to full Council for ratification. This is a significant achievement for Tasman District Council

and it will be great to finally have it in place after wasting five years attempting to get a joint strategy in place with Nelson City. My thanks to the Regional Transport Committee and our staff and consultants for a job well done.

High Street, Motueka (Town section)

Motueka Ward Councillors along with Gary Clark, David Ogilvie (Community Board Chair) and Howie Timms (Our Town Motueka) and I met on site and decided on a course of action that should improve traffic flows (not speed) on the Tudor Street/High Street intersection. The work will be carried out as part of the present contract.

Unfortunately three trees and alterations to the streetscaping and furniture will be needed. At one stage I was accused of being an “environmental vandal” and the decision was not unanimous but was supported by the majority. Further suggestions have also been signalled in the recently released Motueka Transport Study and hopefully some of these will be investigated to make further improvements.

Once again it is disappointing that a bypass or new bridge are years away.

High Street North

This state highway 60 project is of concern, especially in terms of timing (middle of fruit picking season, more trucks and more people). It would have to be the biggest balls up since Dunkirk! Last evening the traffic was backed up from the Birdhurst packing shed to the fire station in Motueka (a 40-minute journey from the fire station in Motueka to Birdhurst gateway last night). On Sunday afternoon the High Street north section resembled a river and cars were actually driving along the new cycleway/walkway path to avoid drowning in the potholes lurking beneath the water. The roadside drains in this area will prove inadequate as they are only soak holes and are not connected to any stormwater system. Staff will be alerting NZTA of these concerns. Watch this space!

Footpath rehabilitation budget

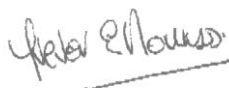
I would like Council to consider reinstating this budget to \$100,000 district-wide as the present budget of \$50,000 is not enough with the age of the some of the district's footpaths. The increased usage of footpaths (increasing number of mobility scooters, more people walking etc) is putting pressure on this budget. I would be happy if the new footpath budget was reduced for a number of years to accommodate this increase.

General

I was rather concerned when presenting a verbal report to Councillors on the recent flood damage to hear comments that they were not interested from one of them. It is not the response I expect when a section of our community is hurting. We are, after all District-wide representatives.

Finally, on behalf of the Engineering Services Committee, I would like to thank Dr Deb Hume who has resigned her role with the New Zealand Transport Agency. Deb has been a tremendous help to our district during her time as our Agency representative and I know we wish her well in her new position. Thanks Deb.

Regards



Trevor Norriss