

# STAFF REPORT

**TO:** Chairman and Members, Engineering Services Committee

**FROM:** Jeff Cuthbertson, Utilities Asset Manager

**REFERENCE:** S308

**DATE:** 11 July 2008

**SUBJECT:** **MOTUEKA WASTEWATER TASK GROUP**

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## 1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide a recommendation to the Engineering Services Committee to consider the future wastewater services of the communities between Marahau and Motueka.

## 2 INTRODUCTION

Council applied for resource consent to install a 200mm diameter HDPE sewage pumping main through Tapu Bay and the Riwaka River. The purpose of the new pumping main was to transport raw wastewater effluent from Kaiteriteri to the Motueka Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Following several years of negotiation and Court appearances, the Environment Court made an interim decision (W25/2003) in 2003 following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding in February 2004 and a final decision (W32/2004) was granted in April 2004.

The decision granted Council a consent for the pipe for a term of 15 years which expires on 1 October 2018. The decision also required that a "Task Group" be formed to discuss and provide recommendations relating to the future wastewater services of the communities between Marahau and Motueka for Council to consider by 30 June 2008.

## 3 MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MoU)

A MoU was developed representing

- Ngati Rarua Iwi Trust
- Ngati Rarua Atiawa Iwi Trust
- Ngati Tama Manawhenua Ki Te Tau Ihu Trust
- Te Atiawa Manawhenua Ki Te Tau Ihu Trust
- Resource Management Advisory Komiti (Motueka), and
- Council

The MoU was signed on 12 February 2004. It outlines the establishment of the Task Group, the limitations of the consent for the pipe within Tapu Bay and the consent expiry date of 1 October 2018. The issues relating to the assessment of wastewater services in the communities from Marahau to Motueka include:

- a) Existing services and public health issues.
- b) Likely future demands.
- c) Adequacy of existing services to meet likely future demands.
- d) Options to meet current and future demands and an assessment of the suitability of each option for each community.
- e) The health, cultural and environmental impacts of discharges of sewage (whether treated or untreated) arising from existing and future demands.
- f) Providing recommendations for Council consideration by 30 June 2005 to the extent practicable and by no later than 30 June 2008 concerning future wastewater services for these communities.

#### **4 BACKGROUND**

The Task Group was formed in 2005 and by way of several meetings has developed recommended principles for the wastewater requirements for the above communities. While the work of the Task Group is not completed, it is considered timely that it provides this Status Report to the Tasman District Council, iwi, and the Environment Court and other interested parties.

#### **5 STRUCTURE AND OBJECTIVES OF WORKING PARTY**

As defined in the Memorandum of Understanding attached to the final decision, the Council was required to establish a Task Group “comprising Council staff, iwi and Council-appointed specialist advisors”, and a requirement to fund up to two iwi representatives.

The original appeal was by the following iwi groups:

- Ngati Rarua Iwi Trust
- Ngati Rarua Atiawa Iwi Trust
- Ngati Tama Manawhenua Ki Te Tau Ihu Trust
- Te Atiawa Manawhenua Ki Te Tau Ihu Trust
- Resource Management Advisory Komiti (Motueka)

In the appeal decision it was not mandated or expected (by way of the funding arrangement) that all of these appellant groups would necessarily be part of the Task Group. Notwithstanding, all groups have been contacted to be part of the Task Group and with a general open invitation to participate at any stage or if situations change. This approach has been practical with some core participants being either representatives of more than one group, or having links with other groups and providing appropriate feedback. There have been two representatives appointed by MIRMAK and two representatives of iwi interests participating in the Task Group.

Minutes from the Task Group have also been circulated to interested iwi representatives, but not necessarily needing to or able to attend meetings. Feedback has occurred through representatives on the Task Group.

The current participants in the Task Group are:

- Graham Thomas      RM Consultants representing Ngati Rarua Iwi Trust
- Barney Thomas      Ngati Rarua Atiawa Iwi Trust
- Mick Park              MIRMAK (Te Atiawa Manawhenua Ki Te Tau Ihu Trust)

- Mike Ingram Wakatu Incorporation
- Cr Trevor Norriss Tasman District Council (Engineering Services Chairman)
- Peter Thomson Tasman District Council (Engineering Manager)
- Jeff Cuthbertson Tasman District Council (Utilities Manager)
- Juliet Westbury MWH (NZ) Ltd (Wastewater Engineer)
- Murray Sorrell MWH (NZ) Ltd (Specialist Advisor)

The matter of wider participation in the Task Group, along the lines of RMA consultation, has been discussed with the conclusion that the Task Group was specifically a forum between iwi and Council and that wider consultation should remain outside the normal Task Group meetings.

## 6 STATUS REPORT

### 6.1 Overview

While the specific outcomes from the Task Group meetings to date are summarised in Section 6.2, the following statement provides an overview of the success of the collaboration achieved between the parties within the Task Group:

*I rereke nga tirohanga, nga whakaaro, nga hiahia o ia taha. Heoi anon a te mahitahi o ia taha ka whai rongoa, ka whai whakaaro e whakaae an ate katoa mo te kaupapa o te "Waimoumou" I roto I tenei rohe.*

*We came with different views, opinions and by compulsion, but now work together with respect of the opinions of each other and to develop an acceptable wastewater development programme for members of the Task Group and for the benefit of the wider community.*

### 6.2 Specific Outcomes

The following are the specific outcomes from the Task Group Meetings to date:

- a) That presence of the Tapu Bay sewage pipeline is culturally unacceptable and that it should be replaced at the earliest practical time with an acceptable alternative.
- b) While detailed investigations are yet to be undertaken, it is expected that the acceptable alternative will be a pipeline generally following the Riwaka to Kaiteriteri road. It is expected that the detailing of this new pipeline will be such to reduce failures (spills to the environment) to a minimum level. To this end, a robust pipeline design, adequate storage and/or emergency pumping facilities could be expected.
- c) While the removal of the existing Tapu Bay pipeline would be preferred, the decommissioning involving cleaning and filling with potable or natural waters is seen as a practical outcome. The use of this pipeline in emergencies would be further considered in association with details of the new alternative pipeline.
- d) The finalisation of the alternative pipeline should be integrated with the definition of long term treatment and disposal option for the coastal communities and the overall development programme.
- e) Based on present information, it is considered that an upgraded facility at the existing Motueka Wastewater Treatment Plant should provide the necessary

service for the likely future demands of the urban communities between Kaiteriteri and Motueka.

- f) When there is a need for a reticulated sewage system at Marahau, then treatment and disposal should be undertaken in the general locality of Marahau (ie. not integrated with the Motueka Coastal Sewerage Catchment).
- g) The land that is currently between Marahau and Kaiteriteri should remain un-serviced and not contribute wastewater to any future Marahau sewerage catchment or the existing Motueka coastal sewerage catchment.
- h) The broad options for treatment and disposal for the coastal communities are summarised and then short listed in Table 1 (attached). From consideration of these options, it is concluded that upgrading the treatment and disposal system, centralized at the existing Motueka plant site, is presently the best option. It is considered that a treatment and disposal system for Kaiteriteri is unlikely to be a good option, particularly considering the benefits of a centralised system.
- i) The present treatment and disposal system at Motueka is unacceptable, with the disposal system requiring priority upgrading. It is recognised that the existing pond system is performing adequately and an upgraded pond may have a function in the long term development option. This will, however, depend on the ultimate population of the catchment and treatment and effluent standards determined by the receiving environment. The key features of the preferred options are presented in the attached Plan and Summary table.
- j) Present investigations and evaluation include the desirability of a disposal system based on a discharge to land and groundwater via rapid infiltration basins (Option A8), or if this is not viable, a high quality discharge to surface water in the vicinity of the Motueka River Mouth via wetlands (Option A3). The necessary investigation and determination of an acceptable long term reliable disposal system is seen as a priority to considering and determining the appropriate treatment requirements.
- k) It is considered that the original upgrade proposal of application to sand beds in the south-eastern sand dune area should be abandoned due to cultural issues (tapu area) and doubts about the long term reliability of disposal in this area.
- l) It is expected that this south-eastern sand dune area and the existing disposal area will be renovated in conjunction with the long term upgrade of the plant. It is noted that there is a desire by some parties (not necessarily members of the Task Group), to encourage the development of a natural wetland zone.
- m) It is anticipated that with the release of the sand dune area for sewage purposes, substitute land to the west (owned by Wakatu Incorporation) could be made available for sewage treatment and disposal purposes (given satisfactory agreement with the owner).
- n) To allow the determination of the most suitable disposal method, the trialling of rapid infiltration basins on the western block is encouraged, as is the necessary short term consent (maximum period three years).
- o) It is anticipated that a resource consent application for the long term upgrade of the Motueka Wastewater Treatment Plant could be submitted during 2008, subject to a successful rapid infiltration basin trial outcome and long-term landowner agreement. It is recognised that there should be ongoing involvement of the Task Group and other parties mentioned in (l) involved on

the detailing and development of the long term option and including the possible assistance with wetland developers.

## **7 OPTIONS NOW BEING TRIALLED**

Council has budgeted to trial rapid infiltration basin testing as outlined in Option A8 (see attached Table 1).

It is estimated that these trials will take a year to complete and will verify if it is possible to dispose of treated wastewater effluent into the groundwater zones and what quality that effluent must be to achieve minimal to no environmental impact. The trial will also ascertain the number of rapid infiltration basins required to dispose of the effluent now and in the future.

## **8 CONCLUSION**

While it has taken some time to reach the current position, some basic principles have been established which will provide a foundation for developing the long-term plan

The key principles are:

- When Marahau is reticulated the Wastewater Treatment Plant should be generally located at Marahau.
- The land situation between Marahau and Kaiteriteri should remain un-serviced.
- That Kaiteriteri wastewater should be centralised at an upgraded Motueka Wastewater Treatment Plant.
- That the interconnecting pipeline between Kaiteriteri and the Motueka Wastewater Treatment Plan should be land-based and not located across Tapu Bay.

It is recorded that the Task Group has been an ideal environment for open discussion on wastewater matters relevant to this area and through its work has developed consensus on a long-term plan and acknowledgement of the key principles of the respective members.

## **9 RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT the report be received.**

Jeff Cuthbertson  
**Utilities Asset Manager**