

Meeting Notes of the Sounds Advisory Group held in the Committee Room at Marlborough District Council on Monday 24 September 2018 at 9.30 am

Present

Clr Hook (Chair), Clr Oddie, Clr Taylor, Steve Ulrich, Ross Withell, Monyeen Wedge, Debbie Stone, Tim Greenhough, Linda Booth, Ken Roush, Judy Hellstrom, Rick Osbourne, Vic Koller, Poneke Rene, Lynley Perkins, Dave Hayes

Guest Speakers

Jodi Milne and Damien Cloeter (Fisheries New Zealand)

MDC Staff

Steve Ulrich, Linda Craighead (10.00 am), Jon Cunliffe (10.40 am), Pere Hawes (10.50 am)

In Attendance

Rebecca Waldron (Council Secretary)

Apologies

Rachel Drake, Rob Schuckard, Eric Jorgensen, Alan Johnson

Welcome

Trevor welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Jodi and Damien to the group.

1. Actions from the Previous Meeting

Action	Person Responsible
1. Provide clarification to the group on resource consents concerning river/land water works - Parked - MDC Review MEP Rivers Dept	Alan Johnson
2. Investigate resource consent notification process for Ruakaka Bay -TBC	Gina Ferguson
3. Investigate the no camping signage at Portage - Linda Craighead will address this today	Jane Tito

2. Actions from the Waitaria Bay Public Meeting

Actions	Person Responsible
1. Look at whether Council is legally obliged to provide communities with public wharves. (Resolution 1) (see below)	Councillors
2. Ask Port Marlborough why the original agreement has been disregarded (see below)	Councillors
3. Councillors and community delegation meet with Port Marlborough and report back via Residents Associations and emails provided within a month of SAG meeting (Resolution 2) (see below)	Councillors
4. Bring the issue of bunches of floats tied to the ends of mussel farms to the attention of the appropriate parties and will bring the result back to the next SAG meeting (see below)	Jonathan Large
5. Provide feedback on resource consents of mussel farms to see if it is part of the consent allow large bundling of floats tied to the structures (see below)	Alan Johnson

Actions	Person Responsible
6. Forward information to Brenda Aitken and Rick Osbourne on the Kenepuru Barge Site - Jon Cunliffe will address this today	Alan Johnson
7. Investigate corner at St Omer with a dangerous drop on either side – This is being inspected this week - completed	Steve Murrin
8. Include the walkway at Portage in the inspection schedule for the Portage jetty – Opus will inspect walkway when jetty inspection is carried out - completed	Steve Murrin
9. Look into the coastal permit of the Portage jetty – The walkway is not part of the coastal permit of the jetty - completed	Councillors
10. Provide feedback on the Manaroa jetty consent - tbc	Gina Ferguson
11. Send Residents Association email list to Mary at the Picton Police Station – completed	Rebecca

Actions from Public Meeting

Points 1,2 and 3

- The three Sounds Councillors attended a meeting with the CE of Port Marlborough to discuss the three actions regarding public access to the wharves that came from the Waitaria Bay Public meeting.
 - Since the meeting Port Marlborough have been looking into the issues.

The agreement was not a verbal agreement but a written agreement with 6 people for a one year period. Port Marlborough has shown the Councillors the letters and they are comfortable that this is how the agreement started.

The Councillors have asked if Port Marlborough can react to the communities concerns with regard to access, pricing and have discussion with communities on these issues.
 - A meeting has been organised on Wednesday with Port Marlborough, the Councillors and community members (Lynley Perkins from SAG is attending) to start a process of dialogue. The Councillors are encouraging Port Marlborough to draft a letter to members of the community on the issues.
- Monyeen noted that meetings between Port Marlborough and stakeholders used to occur.
- Clr Hook clarified that Port Marlborough operates under the Port Companies Act which means it has to be run as a commercial enterprise.
- Port Marlborough agreed that they would not send out the new invoices until after the meeting on Wednesday. There has been no agreement for a moratorium on price rises (a suggestion put forward by community members at the Public meeting).
- Judy has been in touch with Tim Healey who is concerned that there is inequity with how boat owners are treated by the Port Authority.
- It was noted that 55 Sounds Residents applied for the concession last year but only 44 this year.
- The Councillor's will report back on progress at the next SAG meeting and will put out an update to the public if nothing is forthcoming from Port Marlborough after the Wednesday meeting.
- Judy noted that this is a particular issue for Sounds Residents and Port Marlborough need to be aware that probably 100% of them are dissatisfied with the charges.

Point 4 & 5

- The industry has standard operating procedures with regard to floats being bundled. They are encouraged to bundle in areas where there are low numbers of residents, and not to bundle on outside and inside lines on the farms or tie floats on navigation ways. Very few consents contain conditions regarding bundling of floats. The consented area is a lot larger than what you see on the surface so the floats are not out of the consented area. Please let Jonathan know if there are particular farms that are of concern.

3. Freedom Camping and Reserves Update – Linda Craighead

- Freedom Camping legislation is being reviewed. A report has been made to the Minister on whether the existing system is fit for purpose, where changes need to be made to the Freedom Camping Act, the Self Containment standard and the roles of central and local government, the Tourism Industry and other providers.
- Funding has been made available to Councils to assist with freedom camping for the upcoming season. The Council has received \$195,000 to improve signage and car parking at six sites.
- Funding of \$668,000 on a 50/50 share basis has also been received from the Tourism Infrastructure Fund. This will be used to upgrade toilets in Anakiwa, Collins Memorial Reserve, Havelock, Rai Valley, Te Mahia, Okiwi Bay and a new toilet block at Torea Bay.
- In lodging the applications to the Tourism Infrastructure Fund a timetable for start and completion was required. Staff intended that some of the projects would be undertaken prior to Christmas. However, with the delay in Council receiving advice about the success of the applications, most work “on the ground work” will not now occur until after the summer season. However, the new toilet proposed for Torea Bay and the upgraded toilet for Te Mahia Bay will be put in place prior to Christmas as these are single off-the shelf toilet facilities and there is less involved with these two projects than with some of the others. Design works for these other projects will commence prior to Christmas.

Facility	Proposed Date
Te Mahia Bay - toilet upgrade Torea Bay - new toilet	Dec 2018
Anakiwa - toilet upgrade Havelock township - toilet upgrade Okiwi Bay - toilet upgrade Rai Valley - new toilets Collins Memorial Reserve - toilet upgrade and picnic shelter	June 2019

- The Self Containment Standard was discussed. Linda confirmed that there would be no changes for this season.
- Linda noted that reserves rangers have more problems with fly tipping than freedom campers.
- If there are issues with freedom campers or fly tipping please ring the Council on 520 7400. You can also use the Council’s new Antenno app to report issues.
<https://www.marlborough.govt.nz/services/apps/antenno>

Linda withdrew from the meeting at 10.20 am.

4. Sustainable Land Transition Fund Proposal (SLTF) – Judy Hellstrom

- A working group was formed after the last SAG meeting to look at forming a SLTF.
- The fund would provide exotic forest owners in the Marlborough Sounds and its catchments with financial incentives and technical expertise to implement setbacks, retire erosion prone slopes and mitigate the effects of ground disturbing forestry. Marlborough Sounds soils are among the most erosion prone in the country. The fund would tie in with the Billion Trees Project.
- The working group have a proposal to put forward to the Council at the next Environment Committee to request Council support to apply for \$100,000 from the Provincial Growth Fund (PGF) to enable a feasibility study to be undertaken to create a Sustainable Land Transition Fund. They would like SAG to endorse this proposal through a recommendation (see below).
- In July this year an annual event occurred causing sedimentation to be washed out into the Pelorus Sound/Te Hoiere. (See Figure 1).



Figure 1 Sedimentation 3 days after an annual rain event

- Steve noted that solely a RMA approach could be taken to put more stringent regulations around land uses to stabilize soils but that there are also precedents where the Government has helped communities transition to more sustainable land uses;
 - One of these is the West Coast Development Trust. They were given \$92 million in 2001 to help them transition from indigenous forest logging.
 - The Lake Taupō Nitrogen Trading Programme is another scheme that was introduced to reduce by 20% nitrogen discharges from land uses by 2020.
- Clr Oddie questioned if the silt was coming from forestry in the Sounds or further up in the catchments.
 - Steve clarified that the silt is a combination of catchment disturbance and forestry run off from hillsides in the Sounds. Judy noted that there is also a lot of forestry in Tory Channel/Kura Te Au but that because of the movement of strong tides the sediment is quickly dispersed.
- The Marine Farming Association and Marlborough Forest Industry Association have been involved in the working group. There is recognition that there are multiple sources of sediment into the Sounds but the fund will be starting with the issue of forestry.
- Judy put forward a recommendation:

Recommendation: That the Sounds Advisory Group endorse the proposal to the Environment Committee on 11 October to apply for \$100,000 from the Provincial Growth Fund for the Sustainable Land Transition Fund Feasibility Study.

Questions/Answers

- Steve clarified that the area covered by the SLTF will include the river catchments of Pelorus/Te Hoiere and Kaituna.
- Rick asked if there was an overlay which would show the areas of commercial forestry in the Sounds. Judy noted that there are 17,500 ha of forestry throughout the Sounds. This was reproduced in the 2015 review by Council of the causes and consequences of fine sediment discharge into the Sounds.
- Judy noted that the Fund could also be used for research into more sustainable logging practices.
- Clr Hook asked if concentrating on forestry was too narrow. Judy noted that they are starting with the biggest contributor of silt to the Marlborough Sounds.
 - Steve commented that estuaries in the inner Pelorus Sound (Havelock, Kaiuma, Mahakipawa, and Kenepuru are amongst the muddiest in New Zealand. There are multiple contributors to the sediment but the focus is on forestry first to stabilise the land.
- The figure of \$50 million has been suggested for the SLTF.
- Ken thanked everyone who has been involved in the working group. He commented that the group are almost pre-ordaining the research outcomes when they are going to offer financial incentives to forestry owners.
- Further discussion on this issue followed.
- **The recommendation noted above was unanimously passed by the group.**

5. Barge Sites Update - Jon Cunliffe

- The discussion held on the SLTF ties in with work that has been done on data collection by his team to capture the commercial forest estate as a layer on a map.
- Jon suggests that having a map that shows commercial forestry, its age, harvesting dates and yields would be valuable for the SLTF Project. It would also be useful to have other aerial components to the catchment picture such as dairy.
- Jon's team has been looking at how to bring commercial forestry out of the Central Kenepuru area by sea rather than road. Two key sites are being evaluated. Consultation is expected to be carried out with stakeholders Jan - Feb 2019. Pre-consultation is being carried out in the area at the moment. A recommendation on a preferred site is expected to go to Council between March and May. A year is being allowed for the consenting process to be completed.

Questions/Answers

- Economics are being refreshed and the Port Authority is being involved as a stakeholder at an early stage.
- Ross commented on the question posed by Brenda Aitken at the Waitaria Bay Public meeting that they have been blocked from harvesting since 2015 and it will be another two years before a barge site is available. Jon noted that a public facility is being established to deal with trees planted 25-30 years ago and that a planning decision was made in the past and they are now looking for the best solution going forward for the existing situation and legacy matters.
- The survey on forestry begun in Waitaria and Kenepuru has been extended to the whole district. The assessment is 80% complete and it will continue to be added to in order to keep the information current. This will be able to be used as a planning tool for stakeholders and Council in the future. Jon withdrew from the meeting but will come back to update SAG on progress.

Jon withdrew from the meeting at 11.30 am.

6. Environmental Policy Update – Pere Hawes

Marlborough Environment Plan

- The Hearings Panel is about 2/3 way through the hearings process.
- Topics still to be heard that might be of interest to the group:
 - Water Quality – (focus on fresh water quality).
 - Air Quality
 - Nuisance
 - Zoning Requests (including Sounds areas)
- In December the Forestry topic will be heard.
 - The Council needs to align its Operative and Proposed Plan with the National Environmental Standard for Plantation Forestry (NES-PF) before the hearings. This is to determine which provisions will be retained in the Notified Plan which will dictate which submissions will still be heard.
- The last topic of Water Allocation and Use will be heard in February.
- There will be a final decision at the end of the Hearing process. There has been an exception to this on the submission on the extension of the floodway zone with the Panel issuing an interim decision that it doesn't believe it is appropriate to re-zone the rivers without community engagement.
- Pere will report back to the group on the NES-PF alignment.

Aquaculture Review - Judy

- The process of considering spatial allocation of marine farms within coastal management units (bays) is still continuing.
- The process has allowed the identification of issues, which can potentially be addressed in the draft Aquaculture Provisions.
- Pere acknowledged the constructive approach from industry members in the group.

7. MPI (Fisheries New Zealand) Update – Jodi Milne and Damien Cloeter

On 1 May this year, Fisheries New Zealand was formed as a branch of MPI. In September a new team for the Top of the South comprising of Jodi (finfish stocks and Marlborough Sounds stakeholder engagement), Damian (marine mammals and protected species). and Hannah Charon-Dixon (shellfish stocks and key contact for the blue cod strategy). was formed in Nelson to look at Fisheries stock management issues.

- Local issues include:
 - Sustainable Rounds: 32 stocks nationwide have had a change of total allowable catch and commercial catch. In the top of the south John Dory and Rig has increased. Terakihi has decreased.
 - Consultation on pāua limits and rock lobster is taking place. Submissions are open for a few more weeks.
 - Scallop beds have not recovered enough to be sustainably harvested and remain closed.
- Jodi and/or Damien would like to continue to attend SAG meetings.
- Jodi provided a link to the website on the Review of the Sustainability Measures:
<https://www.fisheries.govt.nz/news-and-resources/consultations/review-of-sustainability-measures-for-1-october-2018/>

Questions/Answers

- Monyeen asked if there was any intention on the Ministry to put a limit on the amount of Sea Cucumbers being taken. Jodi noted that there has been a lot of nationwide research done on Sea Cucumbers and that it is good to raise these sorts of issues to help inform the next research round.
- The commercial flounder hatchery was discussed. Jodi agreed to forward any information that she has on the hatchery to the group.
- It was clarified that Fisheries Officers are still under MPI.

Pere Hawes, Jodi Milne and Damien Cloeter withdrew from the meeting at 12.15 pm.

8. Doc Update - Dave Hayes

Dave provided an update to the group. (Appendix 1).

Questions/Answers

- The Boneseed Control work is for sustained control rather than eradication.
- The Marlborough Conservation Education Toolbox can be accessed by following the link below:
<https://www.doc.govt.nz/marlborough-conservation-education-toolbox>
- If you would like to be consulted in the Great Walk Consultation Process, please let Dave know:
dhayes@doc.govt.nz
- There are no plans to upgrade the Nydia Track at present.

9. Coastal Science Update – Steve Urlich

- A series of events to publicly launch the results of the Queen Charlotte Sound/Tōtaranui Seabed Mapping Project.
 - The seabed habitat maps are now available on the Council's website.
<https://marlborough.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=155a89b0beb74035bd1c4c71f6f36646>
 - The scientific guide to the survey can be found here:
<https://www.marlborough.govt.nz/environment/coastal/seabed-habitat-mapping/totaranuiqueen-charlotte-sound-seabed-mapping>
 - The information can be programmed into hydrodynamic models and will be able to be used for ships modelling. The information is open to scientists around the world with the proviso they share analysed reports to Council.

Questions/Answers

- Judy thanked Council for making the project happen. Steve noted that there were more than 40 people involved in helping with the project.

10. General Discussion

SAG Newsletter

- Suggestions for the newsletter: Fire information, septic tank cleaning, Maritime Rules (Harbourmaster Update), Antenno (including reminder to ring the Council number for fly tipping or freedom camping issues), Dog Control (hunting rules), DOC Update (dogs around baches), King Shags.
- If there are any more suggestions please let Rebecca know as soon as possible.

Roading

- Vic noted that he has not seen the Roading Crew in his area for the last four months. It was suggested that the schedule of maintenance works by the Sounds Roading Crew be circulated to the group. Ross commented that the Roading Crew have been doing a good job on his stretch of road.
- Judy brought an issue to the group's attention regarding an unformed legal road in Endeavour Inlet on the route of Queen Charlotte Track which is being used by quad bikes and one car. There was discussion on this issue with Councillor Hook noting it is a matter of health and safety and agreement was reached that the Councillors will consult Council Staff on the problem.

11. Positive Feedback

- Lynley provided positive feedback about the funding for the toilet at Te Mahia.

12. Offsite Meeting

- Port Underwood was suggested for the next offsite meeting which will tentatively take place early next March. Ken agreed to research if the community there would like to host the meeting. Other suggestions were Homewood in the Pelorus Sound/Te Hoiere, French Pass, Furneaux or Punga Cove.

13. Actions from the Meeting

Action	Person Responsible
1. Investigate resource consent notification process for Ruakaka Bay	Gina Ferguson
2. Report back on progress with the public jetty issue at the next SAG meeting	Councillors
3. Provide the maintenance schedule for the Sounds Road Crew at the next meeting	Steve Murrin
4. Request a Council Staff member to look into issue of unformed legal road in Endeavour Inlet	Councillors
5. Provide feedback on Manaora Consent	Gina Ferguson

The meeting finished at 2.20 pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday 26 November at 9.00 am. Please note the meeting will take place in the **Council Chambers** (upstairs in the Council Building).

Appendix 1

Department of Conservation Activities and issues of interest.

Recreation

Queen Charlotte Track (QCT)

- Contractors, West Reef, will begin work on the upgrade between Schoolhouse Bay and Meretoto/Ship Cove next month. Work is planned to be completed before April.
- Data collected as part of the last summer season visitor survey is being analysed and a full report and a summary report will be available later in October. Over 700 people were interviewed. Some preliminary information so far:
 - 33% of users travelled the entire track
 - 36% of users were New Zealanders
 - 49% of users are 50yrs+
 - 58% said that this walk was their main reason for visiting the region
 - Overall satisfaction is very high.
- Further consultation will be occurring prior to a decision being made on which track(s) are granted Great Walk Status. This will include QCT.

Infrastructure Upgrades

- Several projects are underway to upgrade sewage facilities, including Momorangi and at Te Aumiti/French Pass. A new, larger containment tank and an irrigation field are planned for Meretoto/Ship Cove to cope with increasing usage.

Historic

- Heritage NZ are working through the processes for adding both Landmark and Wahi Tupuna status for Meretoto/Ship Cove This is further recognition of the significance of this site for all New Zealanders.

Biodiversity.

Te Pakeka/Maud Island Mice

- A plan has been prepared for the eradication of mice and funding has been secured. The operation will take place in Autumn.

Boneseed

- The annual control work has been completed in the Queen Charlotte/Tōtaranui and Tory Channel/Kura Te Au area.
- This is a programme that involves MDC and DOC staff working together over a two-week period every September.

D'Urville Island Wetland Restoration.

- Further freshwater monitoring has occurred, and staff planted another 1400 trees.
- Engineering advice has been sought on the best way to restore the original hydrology of the wetlands. This will likely involve closing off the existing drainage channels.

Marine Mammal Moratorium

- The Department has reviewed the available information relating to impacts on marine mammals in the Sounds from commercial and recreational viewing. This indicates a need to gather more data on population dynamics and current impacts before any further concessions are granted. An extension to the current moratorium is being recommended.

Large Animal Control

- The Sounds Annual Goat Control Programme, which occurs mainly over the winter months, is coming to an end. Areas focused on this year have been Mt Stokes, Mt Stanley, Mt Furneaux, and Arapaoa Island. Deer numbers appear to be on the rise and Blumine Island has had 8 animals removed recently.

Plague Skinks

- Staff have been supporting MPI in the containment and eradication of Plague Skinks in Havelock. Recent monitoring was carried out by a conservation dog team to check what sized area they occupy.

King Shags.

- It is concerning that monitoring of King Shag numbers has shown a drop in recent years. The cause of this is unknown and is likely to be a result of a range of reasons. These birds are special to the Sounds and further research has been initiated to learn more about them. This work is being effectively coordinated from a multi-organisation forum. More monitoring will be put in place prior to the next breeding season.

Community

- Another predator trapping workshop was held in Havelock this month. This was co-hosted by the Forest and Bird Pelorus Bat recovery project. Thirty people attended and there is interest in starting some new community-based predator control work.
- Another Teacher's Workshop was held at Momorangi in September which was co-hosted with Council's EnviroSchools staff. Twenty-one teachers attended. A Marlborough Conservation Education Toolbox has been produced which contains descriptions of all the conservation education opportunities in Marlborough.
- A new husband and wife team are on Takapourewa/Stephens Island. They have previously worked on Te Pakeka/Maud Island and are with us for one year.
- Another husband and wife team are about to move onto Te Pakeka/Maud Island. Their contract is for three years.
- We have a new Biodiversity Supervisor, Tansy Bliss. Tansy's role is to oversee the island staff and to lead specific portfolios, such as biosecurity.