

SOUTH WAIRARAPA DISTRICT COUNCIL

27 JUNE 2018

AGENDA ITEM B2

REPORT FROM WATER RACE USERS GROUP

Purpose of Report

To present Council with reports and minutes of Council committees and community boards.

Recommendations

Officers recommend that the Council:

1. *Receive the Report from the Water Race Users Group.*

1. Executive Summary

The South Wairarapa Water Race Users Group (WRUG) is an advisory group established by Council to assist in the continuing governance and management of the Longwood and Moroa Water Race systems.

2. Appendices

- Appendix 1 - Report from Water Race Users Group
- WRUG Terms of Reference

Contact Officer: Suzanne Clark, Committee Secretary

Reviewed By: Paul Crimp, Chief Executive

Appendix 1

- **Report from Water Race Users Group**
- **Water Race Users Group Terms of Reference**

WRUG report to SWDC – 27 June 2018

Introduction:

The Water Race User Group was formed in May 2016 following a 2015 LTP ratepayer's submission to SWDC expressing concerns regarding the Moroa Scheme and particularly how it relates to the Greytown storm water network. It also called for the establishment of a ratepayer liaison group, which duly happened following a call for expression of interest from users of both networks.

WRUG consists of the following representation;

- Longwood Race (2 reps): Garrick Emms, vacancy
- Moroa Race (3 reps): Leo Vollebregt, Mark Hewison, Bruce Farley (chairperson)
- Greytown Urban (1 rep): Mike Gray
- Iwi (1 rep): vacancy
- SWDC (1 rep): Councillor Colin Olds

A Terms of Reference between both parties was agreed to by Council; (abridge points)

- Assist in the provision of an effective interface and communication mechanism for dialogue between water race users and SWDC and their representatives.
- The ongoing review of the relevance & functionality of both the Longwood & Moroa water race systems.... This will include the establishment and any future application of a formal process for the closure or correction of channels.
- Provide user based consideration into all Resource consent, By-law, Code of Practice and rating requirements and any other relevant matters.
- Specific consideration to all Greytown Urban waterway and storm water channels...

Aims:

Our group identified initial priorities in conjunction with SWDC Assets & Operations Manager Lawrence Stephenson;

- To identify and establish improved communication opportunities between both parties by establishing a 'notification system' from council or their contractors to users, create a website and email facility for council & WRUG to communicate with users, and improve opportunities for users to communicate with council, their contractors and WRUG.
- Review and assist council to update their Code of Practice for both Longwood and Moroa scheme users.
- Review and assist council to prepare revised By-laws for Longwood and Moroa schemes or create a combined Bi-law if this is possible.
- Assist council in identification of issues relevant to Greytown Urban waterways and storm water, including consideration of an existing application from one rural ratepayer to have a section of the network closed.
- Assess and prioritise water intake issues such as physical functionality, telemetry and automation of volume controls, and reporting requirements to GWRC.

Outcomes:

Our concern is that in the two years since our establishment we have been completely ineffective in both our physical achievements and the quality of our relationship with SWDC and other users. Our principal aim to improve the relationship between both parties has been singularly disappointing.

Further, we feel our relationship with council has been used more to achieve councils wider aims as opposed to our Terms of Reference guidelines, further adding to our considerations of ineffectiveness.

Issues:

Some effort has been made in relation to lines of communication, such as a SWDC website link for WRUG, but really our sole achievement over these past two years has been the establishment of a combined Code of Practice that our group assisted council staff in developing. It was duly released to ratepayers late 2017.

And the format of this document highlights one of our concerns that have since been further entrenched; that council continues to over represent our group for its own ends.

From our commencement we have continued to stress to both council and users that we are not a committee the likes of the past that had management of the networks and a budget. We are merely an advisory user group with a focus to create a conduit between users and council and their representatives to achieve improved relationships, information and results. We have no authority, and no budget.

Yet for some reason this Code of Practice was sub-headed 'Revised by Water Race Users Group – 16 October 2017' and shadowed across each page 'WR Users Group'. We felt this was an over representation of our group in that it implied it was a WRUG document rather than SWDC.

Similarly we were disappointed with reference to WRUG in recent LTP documents. We were invited to and engaged in a LTP meeting with council late last year. Key areas and priorities were identified and recorded by council. We agreed to review these points and work together on issues.

However, we had immense difficulty getting access to the record of this meeting, and still await a response from CEO Paul Crimp after 3 email requests, but eventually were provided documents by Mayor Napier. This was not acceptable and prevented any progress on the issues.

Further, when the LTP documents came out we clearly read that we had been 'consulted' with but we saw no evidence of the matters we had raised at all. Our Greytown Urban representative Mike Gray, supported by Bruce Farley and many others, felt forced to make an independent submission on Greytown Storm water issues. It appears further consultation and reporting by SWDC is now the result. Have we not been there and done that?

Our WRUG had elected to not make any submissions feeling it should not have been necessary for us to do so considering our established relationship with SWDC.

Finally, at the recent meeting in Featherston on 14th May concerning their town waste-water treatment proposal consent application Lawrence Stephenson stated council would be working with WRUG to have the necessary Longwood water races closed to enable efficient land use for effluent disposal. Really?

We have had no prior consultation on this matter in any regard, were not invited to the meeting, and have had no communication since. In whose interest was this statement regarding WRUG

made? We have been unable to progress the original Greytown application for closure from 2 years ago, and no formal process yet exists, but suddenly we are part of this process?

Expectations:

Our group still seeks to positively assist council in our initial aims but to date it has been plenty of talk, poor communication, misrepresentation, and no results. We fully acknowledge that we are an advisory group only, but our effectiveness and relationship with ratepayers is at issue here as well.

We want to assist you to get the job done. We need assurance that our relationship with SWDC is honest, valued and worth our volunteer time.

Yes, a preliminary letter of some of these concerns to Mark Allingham dated 07.03.18 did meet with a willingness to meet and discuss it, but we as a group elected to allow your LTP priorities to settle a bit beforehand. Now we have determined the most appropriate measure to take is this presentation to our elected representatives.

To move forward we do need to have some meaningful objectives, identified means of achieving them and see some actual appetite for results both for our own reassurance, and for that of rate payers and surely for yourselves as well.

SWDC Water Race Users Group

SOUTH WAIRARAPA WATER RACE USERS GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

NAME:

The name of the group is the – SOUTH WAIRARAPA WATER RACE USERS GROUP (WRUG)

STATUS:

The South Wairarapa Water Race Users Group (WRUG) is an advisory group established by the South Wairarapa District Council (SWDC) to assist in the continuing governance and management of the Longwood & Moroa Water Race systems.

KEY ROLES:

Key roles of the WRUG include, but are not limited to;

1. Assist in the provision of an effective interface and communication mechanism for dialogue between water race users and SWDC & their representatives.
2. The on-going review of the relevance & functionality of both the Longwood & Moroa Water Race systems existing design today & into the future; their general purposes, operating & maintenance principles & management. This will include the establishment and any future application of a formal process for the closure or correction of channels.
3. Provide user based consideration into all Resource Consent, By-law, Code of Practice and rating requirements and any other related matters.
4. Representation from time to time on behalf of users and Council at relevant district forums such as Fonterra, Federated Farmer, GWRC and others as the group deems appropriate or necessary.
5. Specific consideration to all Greytown Urban waterways and storm water channels as per all previous points; to consider implications and make recommendations as required.

MEMBERSHIP:

Representation with an annual review to occur with the annual report.

- Longwood water race, 2 representatives
- Moroa water race, 3 rural representatives
- Moroa water race – Greytown Urban, 1 representative
- Iwi, 1 representative
- South Wairarapa District Council, 1 elected and 1 staff representative

How to be decided [To follow from agreed representation framework]

ACCOUNTABILTY:

As an interfacing agent WRUG has a responsibility to both water racer users and the SWDC to aid in achieving the outlined aims.

REPORTING:

The group shall report as necessary to both parties, but not less than yearly in the month of February. This date will enable users and SWDC to factor any required activities into Annual Planning processes as may be required.

REMUNERATION:

[To be considered later]

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT:

Administrative support will be provided by SWDC.