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MKS/CHAIRREP

Report to Wellington Regional Council
from Margaret Shields, Chairperson

Chairperson's Report

1. Whitireia Park Board

I attended the first Board meeting of the new triennium on 13 March 2002. Rob Forlong, Matt Ballantine (Senior Ranger), and Ken Wright (Biosecurity Officer) were also present. The Council is becoming more closely involved with this Park. At this stage, Council representation at the meeting is in a non-voting capacity. Also Council makes a financial contribution to agreed Whitireia Park projects and also provides management advice in areas relevant to the Regional Council's responsibilities.

The Board is serviced by the Department of Conservation and its members include representation from Department of Conservation, Porirua City Council, the Raukawa Marae Trustees, the community and also a nominee of the Smith family.

As a result of past representations from the Park's managers our LTFS provides for the Wellington Regional Council to assume full responsibility for management of the Park as a regional park from 2005.

The main issue discussed at the meeting, relevant to the Wellington Regional Council, were proposals by our staff for possum control in the Park. These were agreed to.

2. Rating Act

You will have noted from the "Bulletin" that the new Rating Legislation has now passed through Parliament. The new Act will take affect from 1 July 2003 and will certainly have major impacts on Local Government, particularly for Regional Councils, which will in the future have the same rating powers as Territorial Authorities.

As stated by *Local Government New Zealand's* President, Basil Morrison, I emphasise that the new legislation is not intended to create a vehicle to raise more revenue, but rather to provide greater equity and fairness in rating systems.

The way in which this Council should utilise the new rating tools, will be a matter for review as part of the development of the new Long Term Council Community Plan.

3. ***Local Government New Zealand Matters***

(a) **Zone 4**

Cr McDavitt and I, together with Mr Maguire, attended the Zone 4 meeting at Masterton on 25 February. In the main, the meeting was an update of current issues, most of which have been well traversed in material circulated in the "Bulletin".

Cr McDavitt may wish to comment further.

(b) **President/Vice Presidential Elections**

Nominations have been invited for the above posts. Changes to the *Local Government New Zealand's* Constitution last year, means there will only be one Vice President in future (currently there are two). I have been approached and agreed to accept nomination for the Vice Presidential post by Environment Waikato and Timaru City Council. If an election is required, it will take place at the *Local Government New Zealand* Annual Conference in July.

4. **Tranz Metro**

The first meeting of the working party of CEOs has now been organised for Friday, 5 April. It is expected that analytical work will commence following agreement of the Terms of Reference for the working party.

In the meantime, as agreed at the meeting on 22 March, work is continuing on the assessment of proposals made by prospective joint venture partners.

5. **1080 Briefing**

As Councillors are aware, a briefing was held on 28 March for our Councillors, members of Upper Hutt City Council, Hutt City Council, Ara Tahi and representatives of the Upper Hutt protest group.

There were presentations by Dr Charles Eason, a toxicologist from Landcare Research, who spoke on 1080 and its effects. Dr Eason was joined by Dr Paul Livingstone from the Animal Health Board. Dr Livingstone gave a brief presentation on the relationship between NZ wildlife and domestic livestock with regards to the transmission of Bovine Tb.

Both Dr Eason and Dr Livingstone are recognised as New Zealand's leading experts in their respective fields.

Cr Long, as Chair, may wish to comment further on the outcome of that meeting.

Recommendation

That the Report be received.

MARGARET SHIELDS
Chairperson