

Since the last report I have attended all required meetings and workshops along with a collection of small local gatherings. I also attended in Auckland the CCO briefing for local board members on 10th February and the Auckland Symposium on 24th February, dinner at Glenfern with the Elected Leadership Team, and a couple of the new sub-regional workshops. With our previous monthly reporting system it was easier to provide feedback from all this action but I think this new quarterly reporting would become bogged down at that level of detail, and some of it seems a bit old now. I will just say that Council provides members with many opportunities to become better informed across a massive amount of stuff, some of it doesn't come off all that well, but, they are making an immense effort to improve our functionality and these opportunities are there for us to contribute, learn, and be heard.

At our local level it has been very enjoyable working on the Draft Aotea Local Board Plan with new faces at the table and with a few bold new projects on the go...the Dark Sky Sanctuary, the Learning Hub, the Cellphone/Broadband project, the Water Security for GBI project etc.

PORTFOLIOS:

Environment

We've had 13 projects underway this year and now their reports are coming in as we close the 16/17 year on June 30th. There are several highlights so far:

1. Pest Booklet - this was actually a 2015/16 project that required a lot of effort but we got there eventually. It is now printed and available free to any household to keep for their ongoing reference. It will be followed up with a "Jewels" booklet because our unique species are the whole point of any pest management, and they are the positive side of the story.
2. Fish Passage at Awana - the removal of the weir was a very big deal and a great team effort.
3. New Biodiversity role - this is a major success from the board's perspective and we appreciate the effort the ES team has made to enable the role to be accommodated. It's an important new job on the island and the appointment of Shanti Morgan is fantastic.
4. Fresh Water Quality Project - some wonderful work has been done in the Tryphena catchment with Taryn Wilks leading the effort. Having a talented local living in the area and talking to so many people has opened up an enthusiastic response and advanced local knowledge. Taryn says people really do care about the waterways and appreciate the board's attention to this. We look forward to the reports and results.

Lowlights - only one really, we haven't made progress in the marine environment while we wait for the Marine Spatial Plan to be accepted and activated (or not) by the agencies. We also wait for local Treaty Settlement because all things marine need mana whenua partnership/leadership. We plan now to hold a public event where we can all be informed about the Marine Spatial Plan, about changes from central government in marine protection laws, and about mana whenua opportunities and principles.

Community Facilities

With all the changes within the Parks department this portfolio has been slow to take shape. However, a few of the long-running projects are progressing very well:

- 1) Mulberry Grove Stone Wall Restoration - we have the Scottish Building crew here again working with Don Prince, our archaeologist, and Envirokiwi to restore this historic wall. Ally Gibbs, school Principal, has been fantastically helpful making it possible for the work to be done during school time (not ideal) and I'm told the pupils will be given some authentic dry stone wall building lessons along the way.
- 2) Gooseberry Flat Reserve Plan - after some negative feedback about the walkway we installed at the southern end of this beach and about rejecting our plans for a picnic table there, we have worked with a small group of residents to address their issues. We now have some new interpretive signage going up in the playground area and at each end of the walkway/steps alerting people to the birds that use this area and how to protect them, especially around dogs. We will also be re-aligning the path that goes up from the beach so that people are kept away from nesting areas, and we will do some planting to improve the general habitat. This part of the project will require some new budget from the next financial year. There will be no picnic table.
- 3) Interpretive Signage Stage 2 - this stage had Whangaparapara receiving the attention. While we were renovating their historic wharf shed last year this community had expressed a real desire to have their area's significant European history told. After a couple of public meetings in the shed we have a series of panels nearly finalised that will line the walls and tell the stories with some stunning photographs. This will effectively make the shed a sort of outside museum. We are also installing ability for people to scan the area with their cellphones using a free app which will link them to more knowledge....

MOTU KAIKOURA TRUST:

I have been the board's rep on this trust for three years and we have agreed not to continue this role. The purpose of the appointment was to help the trust better assimilate with the Great Barrier Island community. All the trust's meetings are held in Auckland so this has been an expensive investment for the board and cannot be sustained. It is also difficult for trusts, I think, when members can only speak on behalf of their organisations...not as individuals...trusts need a massive amount of energy and creativity in order to flourish. I want to thank the board for this opportunity. Motu Kaikoura is a very important part of our place and we need to understand, appreciate and support it going forward. I have agreed to stay on the trust in a private capacity as long as I can teleconference in to the meetings and on the understanding that it is my intention to try to get the meetings to be held on the island and to have more local trustees included. There is general support for this, I think. My first 3 years have created quite a passion in me for this sanctuary and a great respect for those who have worked on it so far.

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