

# 1. Report: Whangarei District Council Briefing Thursday 21 April 2016

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*Report of a Briefing to the Whangarei District Council held in the Council Chamber, Forum North on Thursday 21 April 2016 at 1.03pm*

**Present:**

Her Worship the Mayor S L Mai, Crs S J Bell, S J Bretherton, P A Cutforth, S J Deeming, S M Glen, P R Halse, C M Hermon, S L Morgan and J D T Williamson

**Apologies:**

Crs C B Christie, G C Innes, G M Martin and B L McLachlan

**In Attendance:**

Chief Executive (R Forlong), Group Manager District Living (P Dell), Policy and Monitoring Manager (P Waanders), Team Leader Futures Planning (J Wilson), Senior Policy Planner (S Glen), State of the Environment Co ordinator (J Wilson), Media Relations Adviser (A Midson) and Senior Meeting Co-ordinator (C Brindle)

## 1 Draft Blue/Green Network Strategy

Facilitators: Her Worship the Mayor  
P Dell

Her Worship the Mayor convened the meeting.

J Wilson covered the content of the Briefing including:

- Background
- Themes
  - Theme 1 – Enhancing and connecting our communities
  - Theme 2 – Enhancing ecosystem services and ecological connectivity
  - Theme 3 – Providing opportunities for economic development
  - Theme 4 – Protecting our communities from natural hazards.
- Blue/Green Network Plans
- Implementation.

The project is a long term strategy and will be implemented over an extended period of time (50 Years) as opportunities arise and funding becomes available. Putting a strategy in place ensures that as various initiatives are undertaken (eg flood works, walkway/cycleway/shared use path extensions, infrastructure, planning, policy etc), the Blue/Green network strategy will act as an overarching framework that will ensure multiple benefits are realised over time.

By adopting this approach, all four themes can be integrated in a holistic manner that will ensure more effective and efficient outcomes for the Whangarei community and its environment.

The benefits of this approach are many, and include reduced risk of flooding, enhanced ecological corridors and riparian margins, improved water quality, increased sense of place, better connectivity, extended cycle and walkways, increased tourism, and better protection of Maori cultural and spiritual values.

The draft Strategy highlights options for each waterway, with the major ones such as the Hatea River and Waiarohia Stream acting as primary recreational corridors and providing the greatest opportunity for economic development. The focus of the minor waterways would be more toward creating attractive ecological corridors that link diverse parts of our city.

The total project comes with a hefty price tag, meaning we would need to implement it over many decades and complete each element as funding and opportunities became available. However, as each phase is completed, the Blue/Green Network will transform our city into a stunning and unique urban environment, and one that attracts many more people to live, work, play and visit here.

The document will be presented to the Planning Committee for approval for public consideration.

**The Briefing closed at 1.43pm**