

Chair's Report

The Environment Court

We are now on our 10th year at CRU. For a decade our commitment to good science, good law and good planning has never wavered. However, on the flip side of this, is that Council has yet to provide us with District Plan provisions for the management of coastal hazards.

On 23 November 2016, at the Environment Court, the Council committed to a **four-year timeframe** (Affidavit of Sarah Stevenson) to notification of new proposed coastal hazard plan changes. The Judge noted that timeframe in his decision at paragraph 36. Therefore, a proposed coastal hazards plan change was due to be notified in **November 2020**.

We are now approaching 2023 – with no proposed plan provisions in sight!

Moreover, the first step toward such a plan change is to complete a hazard risk assessment – and neither has this work been done yet.

A remedy for this unacceptable delay must be found. And CRU does not see this remedy as being the Takutai Kāpiti/CAP process. An adaptation plan is not a legal requirement of the NZCPS – a risk assessment is.

Takutai Kapiti

For those of you who don't know, I received a phone call in January from Jim Bolger – And he was very clear. He called CRU – and I quote - “a bunch of bullshitters and climate change deniers”. In addition, he also said that there is no place for CRU in the project.

This same sentiment was re-iterated to me by him when I ran into him at the Waikanae Market in August. I subsequently wrote to both elected Councillors and senior Council management to make them aware of these two incidents, with no response from anyone with the authority to remedy this angst and marginalisation.

The only takeaway from our interactions with Mr Bolger and his panel is that they refuse to consult with affected homeowners/ratepayers in a meaningful and accountable way.

The Coastal Adaptation Panel continues to operate behind closed doors as their meetings are not open to the public. No video record of their meetings is made available. And the minutes that are produced lack detailed information. And, the panel continues its work despite it being 4 iwi members short.

Consequently, CRU remains marginalised from a Council initiative that is not committed to transparency and accountability – and operates in opposition to the majority of potentially affected ratepayers. And I am advised by our legal team that the Coastal Adaptation Panel are not operating within the legal requirements of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.

The way forward is now to work with the new Mayor and Councillors to find a low-cost, efficient and effective path toward notification of a coastal hazards plan change. As the NZCPS requires, attention should be focused on “areas at high risk” of erosion and inundation hazard. These areas are already well known given they have existing seawalls. And this very straight-forward and simple risk assessment can be completed independent of the Takutai Kāpiti adaptation process.

Jacobs' Reports

First and foremost, Jacobs' have not delivered a report that they were contracted to undertake, that being a coastal hazard risk assessment. Through months of Official Information requests this is what we now know:

- Jacobs was contracted to do a Coastal Hazard Risk Assessment – the total cost of the contract at the time of being awarded was \$250 000.
- Instead, Jacobs delivered a Susceptibility and Vulnerability Assessment.
- Council has confirmed to the Ombudsman that it holds no information as to how this change to the Scope of the original contact occurred, and neither does Jacobs hold any information on that change of Scope either.

As a result, the Office of the Ombudsman has written to CRU stating that they are now investigating this bizarre matter with a senior investigation team. We have also received recommendations from the Ombudsman to follow up with the Chief Archivist and the Auditor General. We also have been told that the Office of the Ombudsman will co-operate with these other investigations.

What is disturbing from this situation is Council's refusal to admit that the entire scope of Jacobs work was amended without any documentation. Risk analysis, as per NZCPS Policy 24, is the first step required in the identification of coastal hazards.

Secondly, the Takutai Kāpiti project has identified Adaptation Areas to which Kathy spoke. The points that we need to keep in mind are:

- The extent of these areas susceptible to coastal flooding captures many more homes than the 1800 identified by Shand in 2012
- Jacobs suggests that sea level rise is the key contributor to these flood hazards, however the inland extent of many of these now identified properties might instead be suffering from stormwater ponding and runoff, as opposed to coastal flooding arising from sea level rise.
- And importantly, Jacobs continue to use the IPCC sea level rise scenario referred to as SSP5-RCP8.5 – even though the IPCC states that this scenario is implausible and should not be used for regulatory purposes.
- The degree to which the use of this high-end scenario might have over-egged the inland extent of projected coastal flooding has not been quantified.

To date, Jacobs' has been paid close to \$500,000 for their work within the Takutai Kāpiti/CAP process.