

Picton Regional Forum held at Picton Emergency Centre, Memorial Park, Picton, on Monday 8 March 2021, at 1.30 pm

Present

Clr Faulls (Chairperson), Clr Taylor, Dean Heiford (MDC).

Group Representatives

Raewyn Buchanan (Karakā Point & Environs Residents Inc), Monyeen Wedge (QCS Residents Association), Stuart Eyes (Bike Walk Picton), John Reuhman (Picton, Marlborough Sounds Tourism), Bosun Huntley (Picton Historical Society), Beryl Bowers (Picton Historical Society), Diane Smith (Picton Historical Society), Linda Thompson (Envirohub Marlborough), Tim Newsham (Bay of Many Coves), Don Miller (Greater Whatamango Bay Residents Association), Brian Henstock (Waikawa Bay Ratepayers & Residents Association), Vimbayi Chitaka (Rata Foundation), Bryan Strong (Linkwater Settlers & Hall Committee).

Guest Speakers

Stuart Smith (MP), Luke Grogan (MDC), Ian Shapcott (Te Ātiawa Trust) and Rose Prendeville (Port Marlborough).

Attending

Kirsty Baldwin (MDC Secretary)

1. Apologies

Clr David Oddie, Margaret McHugh.

2. MP – Stuart Smith

- The ferry terminal and upgrades of new vessels are important topics. Written parliamentary questions are being asked.
- The wider issues with the larger ferries are the significant traffic issues and how they will be dealt with. Consideration needs to be given to the large volumes of traffic going into State Highway 1 and on to Blenheim.
- We have a lot of 20-foot containers going into the railway wagons, from Auckland or Tauranga, through to Christchurch. With a view to climate change and efficiency these should be going by coastal ship direct to Lyttelton. The challenge is that we allow cabotage, which is international ships picking up domestic freight and dropping it at another port so long as they are stopping there. The marginal cost of putting 20-30 containers on a large vessel, if it's already going that way, is nothing whereas a coastal ship is required to make money on each container it sends, so it is not competitive for coastal shipping to operate and survive.
- Mr Smith's personal view would be to have our exports going out of this port, in a hub-and-spoke model, to Lyttelton, Tauranga or Auckland to depart from the country. This would be good for the economy and the environment. It would be more efficient to utilise the blue highway, with no need for maintenance costs.

Port Marlborough is continually working on getting a better service here.

- The environment and forestry and how that links in to the Sounds are other important issues. Connectivity is a big issue in the Sounds, which is being worked on. There has recently been a new satellite installed making it easier to get a signal for internet connections.
- Mr Smith is the climate change spokesperson for National. He has recently received the Climate Change Commissions report that sets emissions budgets through until 2025. His suggestion was to go for three year budgets, like a Council election year, to match it up in the middle of an election cycle each time.

- Mr Smith spoke to the Zero Carbon Bill indicating that we have a target of net zero by 2050. Discussions are being held as part of the budget process about how we are going to achieve that. The Commission's report has been written with recommended policies including Electric Vehicle Only areas in the middle of towns. How many tons of CO₂ that will abate and at what cost? Unfortunately the Commission have not / will not release the costs so we don't know. National supports the budgets but the issue is the marginal abatement costs associated with the policies has not been supplied.
- Mr Smith spoke about the popularity of subsidising EVs as one of the most expensive ways to reduce emissions and that we should concentrate on the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) which the Commission itself say will achieve net zero in 2050 without any other interventions.
- To sum up, National does not oppose the Climate Commissions report as such; they oppose some of the recommendations until such time as we know the numbers that underpin those policies and that they prove to be a sensible solution.

Questions/Answers

- Why has New Zealand still not signed the Maritime Pollution Act?

They have had the option for 40 years.

We have emission issues here in Picton such as ferries not being able to dry dock in Singapore or Australia without changing their fuel source and the cattle ship that foundered recently because the new fuel it was using caused the engines to fail.

The cruise industry has voluntarily been complying with Marpol Annex 6 in New Zealand waters since it became necessary internationally. Any cruise ships coming in to Picton Port since 1 January 2020 have been on those sorts of fuels.

A year ago there was talk of dry dock in Shakespeare Bay but Port Marlborough said the latest information they heard is it would most likely happen in Whangarei.

A popular emissions policy is a feebate scheme where high emission vehicles attract a penalty fee which then becomes available to vehicles with low emissions to reduce their cost. However, this has proven to be an expensive way to reduce emissions, often over \$1,000 per tonne abated compared to \$50 per tonne with the ETS, which the Climate Change Commission Report identified would get New Zealand to net zero by 2050.

3. Harbourmaster – Luke Grogan

- Coastal shipping and cabotage were discussed and how much change there has been in the size of ships. It was explained that cabotage intended that you could carry freight around the New Zealand coast, at very low cost. The container ships have doubled in size and because of that can only safely navigate into a handful of ports, which becomes problematic. Events such as the Kaikoura earthquake and Covid-19 have made us realise the ability to ship freight around the coast when we have major infrastructure outages or have difficulties finding international crews to run ships are all big issues. This reinforces how important coastal shipping is. Without local ships we don't have the training opportunities for young people which could become a future weakness.
- Luke Grogan was interviewed by Kathryn Ryan from Radio New Zealand to explain the Navigation Risk Assessment work he is leading and how that related to the proposed new KiwiRail ships. To summarise, everyone is supportive of iReX objectives, to improve things between the North and South Island and make the link more resilient. The new ships are significantly larger than any ferry that has traded here before so will be a significant change.
- Having four significant serious events in 20 years has caused the Harbourmaster to question how effectively the risk in Tory Channel is being managed.
- With the new larger ships there is work that needs to be done on systems and processes to fully support the operation and to minimise risk.
- The Harbourmaster is looking forward to building on goodwill, and obtaining community involvement in the risk assessment process.

Questions/Answers

- Since the recent high wind weather event with numerous ferries and passengers going around the Sounds and Allports Island has anyone thought about the length and size of the ships?

That event was quite unusual to have sustained wind from midday to 6.00 pm of over 50 knots, with gusts up to 75 knots. From the perspective of a Ships Master there is plenty of space to navigate safely and it doesn't necessarily need to be controlled by anything more than the Masters on those vessels. A de-brief was done the next day about what was needed. Work is currently being done to work out what the systems are and the roles of different players. The main focus is on the passage plan from Wellington to Picton, analysing that, drawing on different risks and controls to manage the risks. There is a need to work together, gaining a full understanding of that risk, talking openly and honestly; having risk assessment conversations that are genuine and real.

- Who makes the decisions to go through Queen Charlotte Sound rather than Tory Channel?

Each shipping company will have their own operating parameters and procedures based on their risk assessments. As long as they are operating within the parameters set within legislation they are free to make that call. The Harbourmaster has powers to instruct Council to implement immediate actions, for safety. This is only done when needed for maritime safety but can impact on schedules and timetables.

Severe weather events add another layer of knowledge for engineering and design modelling. The more knowledge you have the better you can make your design and prepare for route planning in various weather scenarios.

A media release issued in December last year stated KiwiRail will use a ship yard in Korea to build the new ships.

- Have you got particular topics you want community input from?

The main thing is that people who want to have input have the opportunity. We would then merge that information, if needed, into the technical risk assessment. The guidelines that we are now following in the maritime space is a document titled Key Principles to Maritime Risk Management in Ports and Harbours. Public input and awareness is one of the Key Principles.

- The drone that was operating over summer was operational solely over the height of summer as an idea to get a conversation going on the national stage about recreational boating safety.

- The Harbourmaster routinely works with the MDC coastal scientist on projects such as Waikawa Bay moorings, exploring new options for mooring management and new technology and a multibeam project to get a full view of the sea floor of Queen Charlotte and Pelorus Sounds. There is a huge amount of synergy in what both the Harbourmaster and coastal scientist do, and a huge opportunity to share resources; both out on boats, and both engaging with people to understand what is going on in the Sounds environment. The team has recently merged into one team to work together effectively.

The Harbourmasters' role is primarily about navigation safety. The coastal scientist's role is about environmental safety. What the Harbourmaster is trying to change is human behaviour, for good safe systems and a safe harbour. In the same way the coastal science role is to get a level of knowledge, information and understanding and having a conversation about how we are all acting in that environmental space. There are a lot of overlaps and positives. We are calling it the Nautical and Coastal team, sharing office space.

It was noted by the Harbourmaster that Marlborough Marine Radio was a critical organisational link in safety and communication at sea.

- How are we going with the jet skis?

Maritime New Zealand has annual funding available for navigation safety projects. The target this summer was jet skis. The regulation has two components; with a focus on education and enforcement. This year the focus was education. A program was established to enable people to come along, ride a jet ski, learn about safety, and build a safe culture. We had great success doing this with boating, but the level of engagement was very low with jet skiers so we will re-think their educational approach. Next summer will be about enforcement.

A bouquet of thanks was offered to the Harbourmaster about their response to irresponsible jet skiers. A non-compliant fizz boat was also picked up. It was asked whether jet skis had any practical use and it was pointed out they do have uses for search and rescue, and surf life-saving functions.

4. Update from Te Ātiawa – Ian Shapcott

- Te Ātiawa iwi is the manawhenua iwi in the Waitohi/Picton area. Ian Shapcott has been working in the Kaitiaki o te Taiao offices supporting the Kaitiaki responsibilities of Te Ātiawa whanau. Their role is to try and make sure the Settlement benefits are supportive of socio-cultural, health and responsibilities.
- The Sounds Rohe includes Tōtaranui/Queen Charlotte Sound, Kura Te Au/Tory Channel and its catchments, Nelson/Whakatu catchment around Nelson city, and the Motueka catchment area. There is a parallel organisation called Manawhenua Ki Mohua, which looks after Takaka/Golden Bay.
- The Kaitiaki o te Taiao office is staffed by Darren Horn, who has whakapapa into Te Ātiawa, Sylvia Heard, and Ian Shapcott.
- In the wider organisation, eight out of the 12 people are now iwi (Te Ātiawa) members. When Ian started in 2011 there was only one. That's an indicator of the positive nature of the journey. The three people, dealing with central government and the like, can't succeed on their own. One of the things they try and do is to engage the community. It is holistic management that they are looking at and supporting.
- The settlement of the top of the south essentially happened in 2014. Prior to then the consultation had been haphazard and tick-box consultation. Post-Settlement, this is a collaborative partnership. There has been a lot of good responses and positive support from the Council and Port Marlborough. Te Ātiawa are trying to focus on the things that will give the best bang for buck, so that seems to be working with the three councils on the review of the Resource Management Plans, so that they get on the front foot with those policies and controls. At present, the old documents are impoverished, because they didn't have adequate iwi participation. Te Ātiawa have been working with the MDC on the pMEP and now with the appeal process. A lot of positive progress has been made, but is still inadequate. The drawback is there are so many things happening all the time.
- One of the struggles is they are not even holding the line in terms of environmental improvement and socio-cultural health. The habitat in the Sounds is seriously decreased on many fronts.
- Ian was involved in helping the original funding for the application for the Marlborough Sounds Restoration Trust. The work on wilding pines is one of a number of emerging positive outcomes. In the last six months there have been significantly more positive outcomes. Quite a lot of that is driven by the Covid-19 funding opportunities; and the pause to stop, reconsider and look at the reality they are in, and understand what they are facing and make brave and responsible and sensible scientific decisions around it.

Questions/Answers

- Is it correct that other iwi are facing similar capacity and capability issues?
There are about 15 of us who meet quarterly. This is an example of potential unification. We are obliged to come together in a common challenge. Together, we are much stronger than divided.
- Bosun Huntly is on the Board of Trustees for Ngāti Apa ki te Ra To. Bosun is on the Taiao Committee. Ngāti Apa has just appointed a Taiao Officer who will be working alongside Ian Shapcott at Te Ātiawa shortly.

5. Update from Port Marlborough – Rose Prendeville

- As part of Sea Week there are a number of events that Port Marlborough are doing alongside Cawthron.
 - There is a presentation on Wednesday night at the Waikawa Boating Club about a marine mammal research project undertaken by Port Marlborough.
 - Cawthron scientists are taking school groups to Shakespeare Bay intertidal area to look at tidal pools.
- The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is the agency responsible for processing fast-track Resource Consent Applications and they are currently considering resource consents for the Waitohi Picton Ferry Development project.
 - The applications were lodged at the end of December and were formally accepted for processing on 17 January.
 - A panel of four people were appointed to consider the applications.
 - The panel has made a site visit to Picton.

- The panel contacted all directly affected parties and asked for their feedback on the applications. This feedback was provided to the applicants (Port Marlborough, Council and KiwiRail) for comment. The EPA has also asked Port Marlborough for additional information to enable them to complete their work.
- A decision is likely in early March/late April.
- At this stage Port Marlborough has not been advised if a hearing will be required.

6. Confirmation of previous meeting minutes

The Minutes of Meeting held on 9 November 2020 were confirmed by CI Faults.

7. Actions from the previous meeting

| Action | Person Responsible |
|---|--------------------|
| 1. Arrange a donation for the use of the Picton Emergency Operations Centre for Picton Regional Forum meetings during 2020. <i>Completed.</i> | Dean Heiford |
| 2. Send invitation to MP Stuart Smith to attend the next meeting. <i>Completed.</i> | Kirsty Baldwin |
| 3. Invite a speaker from Port Marlborough, Luke Grogan, to the next meeting. <i>Completed.</i> | Kirsty Baldwin |
| 4. Invite Ian Shapcott to do an update from Te Ātiawa Kaitiaki o te Taiao office. <i>Completed.</i> | Kirsty Baldwin |
| 5. Circulate to members the link to resource consent applications when lodged. <i>Completed.</i> | Kirsty Baldwin |

8. Other Matters

Picton Police

- Picton Police have 90% new personnel. Can we invite them to a meeting again?
- The Picton Police said they would attend our meetings to keep up with local issues.

Picton Trees

- There is now a bigger area around the native tree roots in the high street.
- It was suggested some signs are made to be placed by the trees with their names. A proposed poster was passed around. A poster could have an impact on people and affect their behaviour. It could also give the age of the trees.

Picton Smart and Connected – Linda Thompson

- The group are working towards a public meeting in April. People can come and have their input about what their priorities are. Date to be advised.
- Dean Heiford suggested the PRF could potentially have the public meeting after feedback is gained from the Picton Feasibility Study.
- Ian Shapcott has been trying to have the PRF engage with Te Ātiawa and other key groups. They are trying to aim for 29 March for that meeting.

QR Codes

- As a tourist town it is imperative to have signage in multiple languages around town.

Dean Heiford

- Council will be undertaking a representation review this year of local government prior to the 2022 elections. Councillors are getting a briefing on 22 March around this.

- Council need to discuss what the best level of representation of various aspects of Marlborough would be. This will be a good forum for the consultant to come and have a chat and see what the key issues are, without negating the need to go out to the smaller communities to also gain their views.

Business News

- The Westpac bank is closing on April 1 and there will be no other banks in Picton. The expectation is that customers will go to Blenheim to do their banking.
- This will impact small businesses in Picton as they will need to get change from the bank and won't be able to do so easily. The Picton and Blenheim libraries have DORA (Digital On-Road Access) available that library staff is using to help people in the community with internet banking. That will become a permanent service to help support people, especially older people who do not have any family living locally to help.
- There has been a request from the *Blenheim Sun* newspaper to attend our meetings. The consensus was it could hinder having open and honest discussion.

Items for 2021 Agendas

- Jacqui Lloyd, of Destination Marlborough, could come and discuss the future of cruise ships in New Zealand and whether there is a future cap on the numbers of ships coming to Picton for environmental reasons. This could be brought up at the public meeting for people to voice their opinions.
- There is an opportunity, because of Covid, to intentionally choose or reinvent what the community want for the future of Picton.
- Port Marlborough would also like to be involved and are interested in what the future implications are for the cruise industry locally, as well as internationally.

New Member

- A warm welcome was extended to Vimbayi Chitaka, from the Rata Foundation.

At 3.00pm Stuart Smith and Luke Grogan left the meeting.

Destination Marlborough Management Review

- Cllr Faulls spoke about a Destination Marlborough Management Review being done currently, with input from both central government and Tourism New Zealand. They are being very thorough in what they are doing. There is very much an awareness that with social licence people can have a voice about what they envisage tourism to be like. If tourism reaches saturation point a town can turn it around. It can divide a small town.
- Destination Marlborough and Tourism New Zealand are very open to ideas.
- A highly-valuable tourist is to be defined. That is someone who respects and contributes to the local community. That is being fine-tuned between Council, Te Ātiawa and Destination Marlborough.

Matariki Festival

- Nicci Neilson, from the Picton Resource Centre, and Chrissy Powlesland are in discussion with local iwi and community stakeholders about a possible Matariki Festival which will build on Tuia 250 in 2019 and the Waitohi Picton Matariki Festival in 2018. Both events involved the community, and raised awareness of Tikanga and Māori stories. It has been very successful in previous years.

Trial Bus Service

- The bus becomes more vital for people to access the bank in Blenheim.

Ungulates

- The Bay of Many Coves Association reported they have been struggling with the exploding ungulate problem. They were granted \$4,000 from the Council Mahi mō te Taiao Working For Nature Fund. In the category of protecting the environment there were 18 other applicants.
- Bay of Many Coves would not be able to deal with the problem without the help of these funds. Bay of Many Coves are hoping to use that \$4,000 to hire a co-ordinator who will co-ordinate deer stalking control, to grow the funding base and maybe go to the Rata Foundation.
- Tim Newsham would like to see the Sounds Restoration Trust take it under their umbrella. With their reputation and ability they could go for some big funding to address the problem. In the next six months he hopes to start a funding round to grow the project. It is not a short-term or localised issue, it is throughout the Sounds.
- The group had a successful weekend in the Outer Queen Charlotte Sounds taking out some 129 deer, goats and pigs. The members have indicated they are very supportive of the cull and will try and do it again. There has been a significant increase in numbers over the last 10 years.

9. Actions from the meeting

| | Action | Person Responsible |
|----|---|---------------------------------|
| 1. | Email information to the group about the Sea Week Marine Mammal presentation at Waikawa Boating Club on 10 March. <i>Completed.</i> | Kirsty Baldwin/Rose Prendeville |
| 2. | Add the Picton Police to the PRF email list, so they can have a regular presence and attend meetings. <i>Completed.</i> | Kirsty Baldwin |
| 3. | Clr Taylor to forward the tree signage poster to the MDC Reserves Department. | Clr Taylor |
| 4. | Clr Faulls to report support for Matariki Festival from PRF Group to the MDC Events Co-ordinator, Sam Young. | Clr Faulls |

10. Future Speakers

- Marlborough Roads/Waka Kotahi Agency – iRex Roading requirements as per the finalised SSBC.
- Picton Police Update.
- Jacqui Lloyd, Destination Marlborough – Future of Cruise Ships in Picton.
- MDC – regarding Picton Water Supply:
 - Quality – monitoring program.
 - Quantity - now and after 2020 upgrade.
 - Usage – Residential/commercial.
 - Plans for conservation – roof water collection tanks, recycling systems in factories, fixing leaking pipes.
- MDC Reserves Team regarding the implementation process for the new Reserve Management Plans.

11. Proposed Meeting Dates for 2021

Picton Regional Forum

3 May 2021
 5 July 2021
 6 September 2021
 8 November 2021

Sounds Advisory Group

17 May 2021
 9 August 2021
 15 November 2021

The meeting closed at 3.20 pm.