

# **Kenepuru and Central Sounds Residents' Association**

## **President's Report for the 2019/2020 Year.**

### **Introduction**

As you will be aware, due to the Covid 19 pandemic, we will not be able to have the Association's AGM on our usual Easter date. However the Committee felt it was important that the likes of the President's report for the past year be prepared and made available to our members at around the usual time. I also believe that, given the volume of work undertaken by your Committee, it is desirable to spend a little time on looking back and reflecting on a very productive year.

I would like to thank Tom Wright, our Vice President, for his unstinting support and willingness to protect my back in the various external meetings we have participated in together. Stefan Schulz, our Treasurer and primo Internet communications person, is the key element in the way we efficiently administer and communicate with our large membership.

Then there is the rest of the Committee – a big vote of thanks. We all work hard for the Association but it can difficult to accept how long it can take for that hard work to achieve results. However, given that all the existing Committee members have agreed to serve another term there must be a fair amount of belief among the Committee members in that together we can and are making a difference.

### **Some Detail**

**Committee Meetings:** The Committee met four times by teleconference call and once by a face-to-face meeting at Portage. We circulated eight President Chatlines to keep you informed of Committee work streams.

**Roading Matters:** A consequence of the 2016 earthquake was both a further deterioration of the local road network and a shift of maintenance away from Marlborough rural roads generally. Our decision in 2019 to restructure our efforts and bring the roading committee into the full committee, as clearly matters had got to a stage where rectification was going to take considerable time, effort and full committee focus. This, I believe, is paying off. My caveat is the risk that, under cover of the Covid 19 crisis, roading maintenance and repairs may again slip. More on that aspect later.

Alistair Cameron and I have maintained our regular meetings with the Council and Marlborough Roads to keep an eye on progress on agreed repair and maintenance work as well as raise new issues. A major achievement arising from this oversight was the completion of the sealing of that section of Kenepuru road from Taradale to Waitaria. Only 6.2 kms but what a relief to have, after some five years of persistent effort, that completed to a satisfactory standard, before the lockdown!

Adrian Harvey's and my efforts in working with local Sounds Ward Councillors and the Port Underwood Association to try and retain and enhance the Sounds Cyclic Road crew by having this as an explicit requirement of the new seven-year Marlborough wide roading contract were also successful. This contract (a Joint Venture of Fulton Hogan and HEBs) kicked in on 1 April. We have been engaging with local Sounds Ward Councillor Nadine Taylor (now Deputy Mayor and chair of the key Assets and Services committee) as to how we proactively engage with and monitor the new arrangements.

To that end we hosted a Portage meeting with Councillor Maher whom Nadine has tasked with the portfolios of roads, jetties and log barge sites. With committee member Robin Bowron at the wheel we then took Councillor Maher on a field trip along Titirangi road. Following this we agreed a plan to prioritise remedial work on the shocking section of Kenepuru road from Ohingarua to Lawrence Road as well as dealing to the inexplicable lack of cleared culverts on Titirangi road. All good till Covid 19 swept in. However we will not let matters lie once the lockdown dust has settled a little.

No joy on the log barge site as yet– so essential if the large volume of local logs coming on-stream are not to be trucked to market over the stressed and inadequate Kenepuru road. We will keep working on this matter behind the scenes.

**Marlborough Environment Plan:** The final decision of the hearing panel for the MEP was released on 20 February. This is a large 4-volume affair, which we are slowly ploughing through. In my late February President Chatline I touched on some of the gains and losses identified to date. The time frame to lodge appeals has been extended to May and we will look with interest as to where that process lands.

A missing element of the MEP is the chapter on Aquaculture Policy. The Council pulled this from the notified MEP on the grounds more consultation was needed. Trevor Offen of our Marine sub committee has been our representative (with back up from Hanneke Kroon) on the Council-convened Aquaculture Review Working Group. This proved a tough assignment battling a fundamentally flawed minimalist pre-set industry focussed agenda. Ultimately Trevor produced on behalf of KCSRA a dissenting opinion to be attached (along with another community representatives dissenting views) to the ARWG information pack that went to Council.

The next stage of the process requires the Council to make a decision as to the form of the MEP Aquaculture chapter, release it and convene a hearing panel. This matter has been a major policy work stream for the committee since 2016. Recognising its importance we have carefully conserved some NIF funds to brief a lawyer and experts to assist in the run up to our submission and the hearing.

However, Central Government (MPI) progressing a National Environment Standard for Aquaculture late last year has complicated matters (and not for the better). Following a review, and in conjunction with another concerned group, we raised various concerns with Minister Nash and then more directly with his MPI officials. A work in progress.

**Infrastructure Projects:** I am absolutely delighted to report that our project to bring about a Council upgrade of the Te Mahia jetty to a new floating jetty for health and safety reasons has been completed. Many thanks to Tom Wright. Fingers crossed the new structure performs well over winter in running seas. A lesson here was our successful use of the Council Annual Plan process to put this project before Council.

The Committee also decided to have another attempt at obtaining funding for an emergency Helipad midway between Te Mahia and Portage. This time our more established relationship with Marlborough Roads proved useful in getting them on board. Tania Croucher led the team that put together and lodged an application for Council community grant funding. We will monitor this carefully.

**Marine Subcommittee – Salmon Farming:** The Government seems to have shelved the King Salmon /MPI so called initiative for a number of large new farms in the Pelorus. However King Salmon has not let its ambitions rest.

It has publically notified three new consent applications. Two applications involved significant variations to existing farms and the other a new huge (1800 hectare) farm in the near shore area of Cape Lambert. The latter application is an extremely important application and has attracted a significant number of submissions in opposition from the likes of DOC and a range of concerned national groups.

As might be appreciated this work stream was proving something of a challenge both in terms of complexity and resources. However we have helped form a coalition of local organisations. This has proved most effective in spreading the heavy workload and significantly increased our leverage.

By way of example, the coalition members were most heartened by our successful combined efforts in opposing an unnecessary extension to King Salmon's existing Waitata Reach farm. The Commissioner hearing the matter soundly rejected the application. At writing the appeal period has yet to end so we have yet to see if King Salmon will accept the decision (or not).

**Marine Subcommittee – Mussel farm applications:** Early in the year we became concerned at the increasing volume of "early" continuation mussel farm applications. Upon review some of these applications were straightforward and others not so - for example they also sought to expand the farmed area. Thus, for example, we supported residents of South East Bay opposing such an expansion application and were partially successful in that the applicant dropped the proposed extension.

From a policy perspective it seemed that applicants in some cases were trying to get in ahead of the finalised MEP. Accordingly we raised the matter with the Policy and Compliance sections of Council to little effect. However, as a result of our involvement with the coalition referred to above we joined in with a letter to Minister Nash requesting a moratorium on such applications until the MEP is in place. Interestingly, this approach was supported by some sections of Council - but not much luck as yet.

Accordingly, through the good efforts of Hanneke Kroon, we have submitted in opposition to some of the more egregious applications. We will also continue to try

and bring balance to this area via on-going policy initiatives in conjunction with like minded concerned groups.

**Marine Subcommittee – Sounds Scallops:** In conjunction with our other two long - term alliance members we have actively and successfully participated in the Ministerial approved Southern Scallop Working Group (SSWG). After a robust process the SSWG agreed the terms of a draft management Strategy for the Marlborough scallop resource. The Strategy document was released for public comment in early July. The response to the document was overwhelmingly supportive.

The SSWG has been busy reviewing that feed back and working up a revised document, incorporating, as appropriate, that feed back, with a view that it is presented to the Minister of Fisheries about now. All was proceeding well with this and discussion around a draft implementation plan until MPI and Industry representatives proposed inserting express references to an enhancement strategy. Iwi and our alliance representatives pushed back for various reasons not the least being that such a reference had not formed part of the strategy that we had sought public feedback on nor was it timely or appropriate.

The onset of the Covid 19 crisis has now slightly complicated matters but the Marine Subcommittee remains determined to progress this matter to the Minister.

**Sounds Advisory Group:** Ross Withell is the KCSRA rep on SAG and his report is worth a careful read. This Council-convened group was largely used by Council to funnel Council information down to Sounds representatives. In the last couple of years SAG community representatives wanted to funnel information and views **up to** Council. Coincidentally (or not) Council has suggested a review of SAG is in order. Something Ross will watch carefully.

The above represent our major on-going work streams. However, we have through the year been involved in a number of other matters. For example, Ron Rolston supported former KCSRA president Pat Williams in his submission on the Council proposal around Wilding Pines. By all accounts Ron gave the Councillors on the hearing panel a useful refresh on the Council's role under the appropriate legislation.

**Membership:** An important part of being an effective organisation is being able to point to a wide and deep membership base when dealing with Local or Central Government. Accordingly, I was very pleased to see we finished the year with 272 paid up members. This year we also reworked our flyer, made a mail out to our catchment area seeking new members and refreshed our web site. At writing I understand subscriptions are coming in at a good rate.

As noted I, and the rest of the Committee, are willing to serve again, and if elected look forward to advancing our views..

Andrew Caddie, President  
2 April 2020