

MEDIA RELEASE – 27 May 2022

Flood protection options - stakeholder engagement meeting

Elected members from the West Coast Regional Council and Buller District Council, as well as members from the Westport Rating District Joint Committee and Buller Flood Recovery Steering Group met on Thursday night where the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) presented seven options for flood protection for Westport based on the initial proposal consulted on in the Long-term Plan in 2021.

Heather Mabin, West Coast Regional Council Chief Executive, said that this was an opportunity for these groups to receive the information at the same time, ask questions and hear from the engineering experts on the various protection options available.

“The TAG have been working really hard to assess the various options available based on the original ring embankment we consulted on, including its engineering ‘do-ability’,” said Ms Mabin. “The TAG have identified a preferred option, which will be presented to the Westport Joint Committee at its meeting on 8 June. Randal Beal pulled together a very talented group of people to do this work and we want to also acknowledge their hard work on behalf the Regional Council.”

Ms Mabin noted that the final decision has not yet been made.

“A Business Case seeking central government funding is due to be submitted to Minister Mahuta by 30 June. TAG’s recommendation of the Flood Protection Scheme to be included in the business case must be endorsed by the Westport Joint Committee and then put forward to the Regional Council. The Regional Council is committed to the investment of \$10.2M in the scheme.”

The TAG reviews the data and modelling of the Buller River, Orowaiti and other nearby water bodies to make informed recommendations regarding flood protection options to the Westport Rating District Joint Committee. The TAG is made up of engineering experts including Chris Coll, Matt Gardner, Gary Williams and John Ellis, as well as Engineers from both the Regional Council and Buller District Council.

ENDS -

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