

*Ngāti Mutunga o Wharekauri Iwi Trust*

*Chatham Islands Council Draft Long Term Plan  
2012-22*

*Submission – June 2012*

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## **Introduction**

The Ngāti Mutunga o Wharekauri Iwi Trust ("the Trust") represents the collective interests of Ngāti Mutunga o Wharekauri (NMOW), and is a mandated iwi authority for the purposes of the Resource Management Act 1991 and the Māori Fisheries Act 2004. Although the Trust speaks for NMOW on a number of matters, the mana and decision-making powers remain with NMOW, according to NMOW tikanga/kawa. This then forms the basis for this submission from the Trust to the Chatham Islands Council (CIC).

## **Our Purpose**

- To be the repository of the collective Tino Rangatiratanga of Ngati Mutunga O Wharekauri
- To represent the collective interest of Ngati Mutunga O Wharekauri and be the legal representative of Ngati Mutunga O Wharekauri in relation to the collective interest
- To make and pursue the settlement of claims on behalf and for the benefit of Ngati Mutunga O Wharekauri under the provisions of the Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975
- To be the mandated iwi organisation for Ngati Mutunga O Wharekauri

## **Benefit Provision**

To advance the social and cultural development of Ngati Mutunga o Wharekauri beneficiaries and distribute benefits directly or indirectly to beneficiaries, irrespective of where they may reside, when and where the Trust may decide.

## **Tikanga**

To promote and preserve, protect and maintain the identity, mana, Tino Rangatiratanga, culture, history, traditions, arts and crafts, tikanga, reo, and taonga tuku iho of Ngati Mutunga o Wharekauri.

## **Overview**

The long term viability and success of our motu remains the key focus of NMOW. NMOW are a critical component of the people who make up our unique island way of life. We are the owners of significant fishing assets which are used both as a basis for island employment, and to ensure our long term future as tangata whēnua of Wharekauri.

The viability and success we strive for is inextricably tied to the broader Chatham Island community. Our linkages to Moriori and Pakeha are by whakapapa and by our shared and lived experience. We hold to the whakatauki that runs:

*Ko tou rourou, ko taku rourou, ka ora ai te Iwi  
(With your resources and our resources, our people will prosper)*

It is this that underpins our response to the long term plan.

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### **Shared Vision (pages 6 - 7)**

The Trust applauds the detailing of the Shared Vision. It is precisely that – a vision that encapsulates community aspirations. We would however urge the Council to take an active role in promoting the Vision. The risk is that the sentiments expressed in pages 6 to 7 remain nothing more than 'tick boxes' in the preparation of plans such as this. It is important the vision underpins all council hui, considerations, and interactions with its community. It is our expectation that all decisions, approaches and directions of the council will be actively linked to the appropriate part of the Shared Vision.

We note Council's recognition of Maori and Moriori on page 6 in respect of Resource Management. We acknowledge and support specific references to the Enterprise Trusts' Strategic Plan and to Ha O Te Ora o Wharekauri Trust whānau ora activities. We would ask that Council specifically recognise The Trust's 3-year strategic Direction in relation to the management of our island based assets and its relationship to Community Outcomes.

### **Key Projects (pages 8 - 12)**

**Sanitary Landfill:** The development of a landfill with accompanying transfer stations are a welcome (albeit overdue) initiative. NMOW remains concerned that koiwi are located in and around the Te One landfill. The dumping of rubbish over burial areas presents an immediate threat to the mana of our people. It should be noted that rubbish tips located on and around burial sites are unacceptable in any culture. This will be a welcome development.

**Emergency Management:** The events in Otautahi, Japan and Tauranga remind us that we are not immune to the effects of natural and man-made disasters. Whilst such disasters are devastating to any community that has to face them, they are likely to be magnified by our isolation and lack of on-island resource should they be experienced here. The development of the emergency operations centre is a necessary initiative. The Trust expects to take an active role in both supporting the initiative and providing expert input to the development of emergency responses.

**Township Water Schemes:** The building of the Ngāti Mutunga whare in Te One brings this issue into sharp relief for us. Council should be aware that we intend to continue our development activities on the island both in the housing and Iwi building spheres. Te One is now the central focal point for Trust and NMOW activities. We are working closely with the Maori Committee on possible options for Whakamaharatanga; we are determined to continue housing development; we are taking active roles in the support of the school and Kohanga Reo; and we are exploring options for our Trust physical presence. The provision of a sustainable and reliable water supply for Te One is critical. We note that Te One has not been included in any of the proposed water scheme development phases. We would like to see this corrected.

**Waitangi & Pitt Island Wharf Upgrades:** The Trust is clear that the proposed wharf upgrades must be driven by economic imperatives underpinned by a commitment to minimising the environmental impacts of the upgrade. We expect to be actively consulted with and included in the ongoing process of upgrading our core infrastructure facility.



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Pa Tangaroa. This is now being followed up with the Resource Management initiative and a proposed MOU between DOC and Iwi/Imi.

**General:** The Trust has previously commented on consultation through its submission on the *Chatham Islands Marine Oil Spill Contingency Plan*. The need to consult in terms of Iwi/Imi is primarily through the descent groups. We reiterate the proposal we put in that plan noting:

*“NMOW see that the preparation of a MOU with CIC will allow for a clearer understanding of respective roles for both parties within their Treaty of Waitangi relationship, and will provide a solid, future-focussed platform to develop a more appropriate and informed working relationship. An MOU will also reinforce the goodwill and personal relationships which already exist between NMOW and CIC.”*

And noting that:

- NMOW seek to work towards securing an over-arching MOU with the CIC, which recognises the mana and establishes the roles/responsibilities of both parties;
- An MOU based on the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi will provide a strong position for both parties to work together for mutual benefit on all resource management and policy matters, and will allow CIC to meet its statutory requirements;
- NMOW acknowledge the CIC work currently being undertaken by Edward Ellison to prepare an MOU with CIC/ NMOW Iwi Trust/ Hokotehi Moriori Trust, specifically focussed on tangata whēnua inputs to the Resource Management Plan review. A NMOW/CIC MOU would build upon the goodwill established by this relationship.

**Roading (Page 23)**

The issue of roading remains a key consideration for The Trust. Whilst the issues facing Council are myriad we would draw your attention to the following:

- Te One has a significant number of children accessing the school and Kohanga
- The building of three, three bedroom homes will increase the number of children in the area
- The number of scheduled activities at Whakamaharatanga are increasing as The Trust takes a more active role in programme development and delivery.
- The current footpaths are inadequate and present a hazard to children and adults using the road
- The lack of adequate street lighting presents a hazard for all people who reside in the area

The Trust believes the Council must include appropriate footpaths and street lighting for Te One. This will address safety issues and have the added effect of enhancing the aesthetic appeal of the area.

**Stormwater (Page 26)**

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We have some concern that the automatic response to stormwater run off into Te Whaanga is to open Hikurangi. This appears a policy response in the absence of a broader consideration of the implications of interfering in a natural process. NMOW believes this activity should be measured against a broader review of the natural environmental process and potential symbiotic relationship between land water run-off, stormwater build up in Te Whaanga, the natural biological responses that have historically occurred, and the pataka benefits that may be associated with this natural process.

The Trust is equally mindful of the land management impacts of rising lagoon levels and associated silting and phosphate build-up that may occur if Hikurangi is not opened. That said, we understand the tidal cleansing effect may only apply to areas adjacent to Hikurangi. We note that there is no specific reference to 'manmade' stormwater run off, natural land run-off, and the contribution each makes.

We are also concerned the plan in relation to the water build-up, does not address water quality issues both in Te Whaanga and in our roto, awa, and puna respectively. Non-specified references to water pollution do not go far enough. NMOW has a Kaitiaki responsibility to all our waterways. The impact of intensive land management and usage techniques, and their impact on our food gathering tikanga in relation to our waterways must be recognised. Property rights have to be carefully measured against our long standing rights to gather our traditional foods. And those rights extend to protection of the natural mechanisms that ensure the ongoing supply of our kai.

We would add that stating there are 'no significant negative effects...' being identified does not reassure us in the absence of any studies that underpin this assertion (see page 80).

We do note that issues of water quality are included in the 'Environmental Services' part of the plan (page 29).

### **Environmental Services (Page 29)**

The Trust would recommend that closer alignment of this section with Te Whaanga lagoon and stormwater occur. Biosecurity is an absolute and fundamental concern of NMOW and The Trust. This is particularly so in relation to marine and freshwater biosecurity. The expression of our mana is underpinned by our ability to utilise our mahinga kai. Equally, our economic livelihood is tied up with the same concern. They are inextricably linked to each other.

The Trust expects to take a place alongside Council when it comes to developing effective responses in this sphere. We have a number of our Iwi that, in their individual and whānau capacity, act as Kaitiaki on behalf of the Iwi. We seek to work alongside council in developing those Kaitiaki roles through the provision of training and specific up-skilling programmes.

The Trust equally welcomes a collective approach to the re-mapping of sites of significance and other initiatives for the identification and protection of them. Council should take an active role in promoting the role of Iwi with the likes of the Historic Places Trust. This will have a positive flow on effect for Council should this recommended approach be adopted and pursued.

## **Financial Overview (Page 34 onwards)**

Ensuring an adequate and predictable income stream remains a pressing concern for the Council and community. The rates collected and associated service charges represent approximately 18% of total revenue.

We note the plan in its entirety seeks to outline proposed tasks and activities in relation to forecast revenue. We acknowledge the legislative fiscal constraints that ensure prudent financial management by the Council.

We equally note Council's and the community's overwhelming reliance on subsidies and grants.

**Subsidies & Grants:** The Trust is clear the level of subsidisation of Council revenue is an absolute risk. We understand the political process involved in ensuring ongoing Crown (and by definition 'taxpayer') patronage. There is a base level of income support required to ensure the Council and Crown meet their statutory responsibilities. Amounts over and above that are subject to the political process.

The Trust also understands that Council's role is primarily a service provision role. We would ordinarily agree that growing an economy remains the role of the private sector and specified agencies (e.g. the Chatham Island Enterprise Trust).

Wharekauri however, has serious infrastructural and capacity issues that would strongly support the need for intervention. The shrinking human capital base exacerbates revenue inflow shortfalls and equally impacts Wellington appetite for increased subsidisation.

**Debt:** The Trust notes that Council runs a debt policy that is virtually the same as our own. There is little appetite for running up debt. The Trust notes the virtually non-existent debt to equity ratio and would ordinarily applaud this.

We are concerned however, that this approach places the burden of infrastructural development squarely on the shoulders of current rate and tax payers. We would expect Council to take a 'life of development' approach and apportion costs accordingly (e.g. if the life of the wharf upgrade is 50 years then the apportionment of costs over that time should be similar given that at least two future generations will benefit from it). It is debt that enables this approach.

Equally we are concerned that an absolute focus on infrastructural development and service provision does not address the core human capital issue. The need to grow an independent and effective island economy is intricately tied to the size of its population. And the population will not grow where no opportunity for economic development exists. The Trust acknowledges the chicken and egg situation this poses.

The Trust urges Council to include economic development in its plan. We are clear economic development must address critical issues of land, water, and marine usage. It must address population issues. It must endeavour to identify possible economic development opportunities and plan how they may be capitalised on. It must be prepared to confront luddite responses to population growth which by definition underpins economic growth.

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**Assets:** We would also urge Council to review its policy on Council owned assets. The Council's non-current asset base is valued at \$45m (and this stands well against the Council's average current liabilities of \$1.7m). The net asset position of \$43m would ordinarily be laudable.

However, in reviewing the accounts, there appears to be no return on the asset base. We would ordinarily expect to see returns of between 4 to 5% on those assets (\$1.8m). A review of the income statement does not suggest this is occurring. Indeed it indicates that there is virtually no return on assets.

Divesting non-performing assets is a normal and prudent policy. It frees up cash to put into investments that can provide income streams. If for example, Council is maintaining its offices at a certain value, and is not taking any revenue stream from them, then some consideration should be given as to whether Council wishes to remain a 'landlord' rather than take a more prudent approach and become a lease holder – particularly if revenue streams off reinvestments exceed the cost of lease servicing.

Accordingly, we query the efficiency of using investment disposal to firstly service debt. A more prudent policy would be to assess returns on possible reinvestments against current debt servicing requirements.

### **Conclusion**

The Trust thanks Council for the opportunity to submit on the Long Term Plan. We reiterate our commitment to sharing knowledge and resources for the long term benefit (and viability) of our island.

Ngāti Mutunga o Wharekauri Iwi Trust welcomes the opportunity to discuss this proposal further with Council.



Ward Kamo  
Trust Secretary  
Ngāti Mutunga o Wharekauri Iwi Trust