

# Review Terms of Reference

## Ngongotaha Flood Event

### Background

An unprecedented level of rainfall (165 millimetres: 1.5 times the April normal in 36 hours) during the weekend 28-29 April 2018 caused the Ngongotaha Stream to overflow its banks causing widespread flooding in the Western Road area. Inundation of the sewerage system further exacerbated the situation through the direct contamination of flood waters.

These events triggered a Civil Defence Emergency and evacuation of approximately 85 homes and an adjacent tourism operation. Subsequently 328 homes across Rotorua and including 73 homes in Ngongotaha have since been inspected with 42 homes issued insanitary notices and now uninhabitable. These residents now face lengthy and costly rebuilds to enable them to return to their homes. There are others with partial notices issued.

This event and its effects have justifiably generated considerable concern about the level of risk to the wider community wellbeing.

Many Rotorua district residents were impacted by flooding during this period; however, the community impact in Ngongotaha stands out both in terms of the number of homes affected and the level of inundation experienced.

Current practice is for storm water infrastructure to be designed to cope with a 1 in 50 year event and for water courses within stop-banked urban river scheme areas to be designed to cope with a 1 in 100 year event. Whilst this has been seen as prudent approach in the past, climate change and the advent of more frequent extreme weather events raises a question as to the ongoing acceptability of this policy in the future. This is a serious issue and one which could have far reaching consequences for all Rotorua residents.

### Purpose

The purpose of this work is to understand the circumstances and contributing factors which led to the flooding of the Ngongotaha subdivisions and to make recommendations to the Rotorua Lakes Council (RLC) and Bay of Plenty Regional Council (BOPRC) on measures which may prevent or minimise the risk and effects of future flood events.

It is also to provide clarity as to the various roles and responsibilities of RLC, BOPRC and landowners in relation to stormwater and waterbody management for future residential development.

### Governance and Leadership

The RLC in conjunction with the BOPRC have co-commissioned and approved the establishment of an independent and suitably qualified advisory panel for this work and are the approvers of this Terms of Reference.

The panel will be independently led by Judith Stanway and includes Te Ururoa Flavell, Rob van Voorthuysen and Kyle Christensen. This will ensure the review is impartial and objective.

The panel will be supported by senior Council staff - Stavros Michael (RLC) and Chris Ingle (BOPRC).

## Scope

- I. The review will primarily focus on the serious flooding which took place in the Ngongotaha area, however, it is expected that learnings relevant to others parts of the district will also be identified.
- II. The advisory panel will consider Regional and District planning matters, engineering options, storm water, catchment management, mātauranga Māori, future land use and subdivision development considerations.

## Exclusions

- I. The effectiveness of the local and Group Civil Defence Emergency Management response.
- II. The establishment and implementation of the recovery phase of the flood event.

## Methodology

The panel will consider information provided by both Councils as well as undertaking community consultation to ensure a complete understanding of the event and pertinent contributing factors.

The panel will produce a report, which shall be made public, outlining key findings and making recommendations for future action to BOPRC and RLC.

## Timeframe

There is a need to progress with some urgency, however, it is recognised the panel will require sufficient time to develop robust and valid findings. It is envisaged the work will start early June with a report being released by 1 September 2018.

## Outcomes Sought

The panel will focus on the identification of potential improvements which may prevent and or minimise future flood events in the Ngongotaha catchment. In recommending potential improvements the panel will take into account the feasibility, cost effectiveness and funding alternatives of each option.

The applicability of any recommendations for other catchments in the Rotorua District will also be identified and incorporated into risk reduction planning.