

Report 14.556
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Committee Strategy and Policy Committee
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Wellington Water Limited - Bulk Water Supply update

1. Purpose

To inform the Committee of Wellington Water Limited's (WWL's) activities relating to the Bulk Water Supply.

2. Comment

2.1 Emergency water supply

Following an initial presentation in May 2014, a second presentation on emergency water supply was made to Councillors on 9 September. The September presentation compared the costs and benefits of three emergency water supply options; a cross harbour pipeline, storage ponds in the East of Wellington city and a storage lake to the North of Wellington city near Takapu Road.

The recommendation to Council was to consult on two projects, the cross harbour pipeline and the Takapu Road storage lake, concurrently with the Long-Term Plan 2015-25.

2.2 Water integration

On the 19 September, Greater Wellington Regional Council's (GWRC) Water Supply Department transferred to WWL. The transfer went smoothly and has had no impact on service levels or the delivery of work programmes. The next phase of organisational re-design will be complete by mid-December 2014. The consultative process has gone very well and staff feedback indicates a good level of engagement.

2.3 Lake quality

In early May 2014 it was decided to drain and then refill one of the storage lakes at Te Marua, due to very high levels of a taste and odour causing compound called Geosmin. Emptying the lake took a little longer than expected because of an issue with water retention beneath the newly installed liner. The liner issue has now been resolved and the lake will be refilled by the end of November 2014, in time for the summer demand period.

2.4 Iron bacteria

As previously reported, iron bacteria has been identified in one of the eight wells at the Waterloo water treatment plant. As a result, this well has been out of service for some time while a resource consent for a cleaning procedure was acquired. This cleaning procedure will be undertaken shortly.

Iron bacteria are naturally-occurring and not directly harmful, but the associated biofilm can mask the presence of harmful organisms and increase the turbidity (clarity) of the water. Turbidity levels from the affected well are above drinking water standard maximum level.

Six wells can deliver the maximum allowable water-take, so the immediate impact is a loss of backup, rather than a reduction in supply potential.

Geological and Nuclear Sciences (GNS) has been engaged to investigate the extent of the risk to the well-field, including how widespread the bacteria is and the precursors for its presence. Findings from both the well cleaning and the well-field risk report will guide our future steps.

3. The decision-making process and significance

No decision is being sought in this report.

4. Recommendations

That the Committee:

- 1. Receives the report.*
- 2. Notes the content of the report.*

Report prepared by:

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Limited