



THE WEST COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

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Flood response actions progressing at pace

Feedback gathered from those involved in the July 2021 weather event have resulted in a number of quick wins implemented increasing the readiness and preparedness of the community and responding organisations.

These have included the alignment of systems and processes throughout the emergency coordination centres across the West Coast, mutual agreements with our neighbouring regions for providing support during an event, as well as investing in IT capability for a response.

Enhancing the capability of responders, both those in the Emergency Operations Centre and in the field, has been planned for the first six months of 2022.

“We know the status of the draft Westport Response Plan, what was previously referred to as the evacuation plan, has been a topic of interest to many,” said Claire Brown, Civil Defence Regional Director. “The Response Plan is not just about evacuation, but how we respond in an event of this nature.”

The event in July provided an opportunity to ground truth a number of procedures.

“We are working through the Response Plan to incorporate this information, update our procedures and ensure that for future events we are that much more prepared with this new knowledge.”

The updated draft will be provided to the stakeholder group initially involved in its development, including the key response agencies, for further input in early 2022.

Progress is also being made with the Westport Flood Protection project.

Heather Mabin, West Coast Regional Council Chief Executive, said that the first year of the project was always going to focus on the survey and design work, including a flood modelling review to ensure that the protection scheme meets the recommended level of service consulted on.

“We are progressing well with this stage of the work, even though we started three months late with the Long-term Plan not being adopted until 5 October 2021.”

Councillors, engineering, hydrological and construction experts walked the proposed wall alignment to assess potential refinements, risks, issues and opportunities.

“The fieldtrip was an invaluable opportunity to get on the ground and walk the wall.”

ENDS

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