

## **MEDIA RELEASE – 20 June 2022**

### **Significant milestone reached as proposed future flood resilience options for Westport are finalised**

Westport residents will soon see their town's future flood resilience options proposed when they are publicly released this week. The information is contained in an Indicative Business Case drafted on behalf of the West Coast Regional Council and Buller District Council.

The Business Case, which will be considered by both Councils at their meetings (on 28 June and 29 June 2022 respectively), sets out the proposed integrated package of long-term measures to improve Westport's flood resilience.

Sharon Mason, Buller District Council Chief Executive, said that the Business Case had been developed on the instruction of Minister of Local Government, Hon. Nanaia Mahuta.

"Together, the Councils have developed a robust, and compelling, co-investment plan to seek Government assistance for the future. In terms of process, both Councils and iwi must approve the Business Case before we submit it on 30 June."

The Business Case will outline a mix of protect, avoid, adapt and retreat options and priorities, the full range of solutions that are needed to make Westport more resilient to future floods, both now and in the future. A key component of the Business Case is the inclusion of the Westport Flood Protection project – a structural flood protection option for Westport signalled in the Regional Council's Long-term Plan in 2021.

West Coast Regional Council Chief Executive Officer, Heather Mabin, acknowledged the huge community interest in regard to the Westport Flood Protection project and re-iterated that the final decision on its design and alignment proposed in the Business Case had not yet been made.

"In October last year, when Council agreed to prepare for a more far-reaching flood protection scheme than initially planned, we were asked to investigate the likely adverse impacts. Rigorous river modelling and engineering analysis has now been completed, and we now know what the preferred scheme will cost and that it is in excess of what we had originally consulted on. To progress, we need co-investment from Government so that is why it is to be included in the Business Case. Until we know the outcome of the Business Case, the flood protection proposal should be viewed simply as a 'proposal'."

Both Chief Executives noted the ongoing work to be undertaken with the Community.

"We know that wherever the Business Case lands, our people and communities will be affected. We will be working closely with them over the coming months, and in all likelihood years, as well as continuing to advocate on their behalf, to secure the positive future Westport deserves."

Copies of the Business Case will be available in the Council meeting papers to be released on Thursday 23 June 2022.

ENDS

---

Media contact

Heather Mabin | Chief Executive | West Coast Regional Council | 021 346 829

Sharon Mason | Chief Executive | Buller District Council | 027 248 8380