

Chairperson report March 11 2024 General meeting

1. We are still seeking a permanent secretary as Lou Gallagher will be heading overseas in late May.
2. The executive is in the process of updating many of our society's processes in line with the requirements of the constitution review, such as a Register of Conflicts of Interest and a ballot system for formal voting. The Constitution subcommittee, headed by Paul McIntosh will be reporting back regularly to the General meeting on the progress of the review.
3. The Māpua Master Plan brainstorming public meeting saw about 80 participants share their thoughts and ideas on the plan which will help inform our community submissions on the plan. The recorded thoughts and views of participants will be available on the ourmapua.org website.
4. I draw members' attention to the letter in this meeting's correspondence from the Council on "Wastewater overflows and the connection to Inflow and Infiltration in Māpua" . This is a good example of what the MDCA can achieve in terms of engaging with the Council. The report gives an outline of some of the reasons for sewerage discharges into the environment, such as at the nine discharges of raw wastewater into the Waimea Estuary in 2023 alone.

The reasons for this success are:

- a. High quality technical expertise on waste water from Jan Heijs who is a technical expert on water resource management with significant work experience with other Councils, plus working knowledge of national laws and local regulations on wastewater discharges.
- b. The MDCA has provided Jan with a platform to engage with the relevant section of the Council that both operates and oversees (being a unitary authority) the sewerage system. In this our secretary Lou Gallagher also made a significant contribution.
- c. Our councillors, particular Christeen MacKenzie, have been able to utilise Jan's work at the governance level of the Council to obtain further transparency, a matter highlighted by the Chief Ombudsman Peter Boshier's recent statement after his investigation into how eight Councils managed their Official Information requests:

"Trust is at the core of the relationship between the people and their locally elected representatives. One way local government can earn trust is through transparent decision making that is open to public involvement and scrutiny."

Jim Vause

Chairperson

MDCA