

STAFF REPORT

TO: Chairman & Members, Corporate Services Committee

FROM: David Ward

DATE: 30 August 2005

SUBJECT: Waimea Fireblight Eradication

PURPOSE

This report is prepared to provide information to members of the Corporate Services Committee in their consideration of the proposal to eradicate hawthorn hedges containing the fireblight virus, within a defined rating area on the Waimea Plains.

INTRODUCTION

Attached to this report is a copy of minutes of a meeting held on Wednesday 24 August 2005 with property owners within the defined rating area.

In adopting its 2005/2006 Annual Plan, Council identified a rate for the eradication of fireblight in a defined area on the Waimea Plains, subject to further consultation with the affected property owners.

All property owners were invited to a meeting on 24 August 2005. This meeting was chaired by Cr Richard Kempthorne who detailed the background to the proposal. Further information was given to the meeting by Julian Raine, with technical advice provided by Council contractor, Graham Strickett and Corporate Services Manager, David Ward

DISCUSSION

During the course of the meeting, the process for extracting the hawthorn hedges was discussed, together with the proposed timeframe, rating options and rating payment methodology. The meeting resolved, by show of hands, that Council proceed with the proposed eradication project, acknowledging the tight timeframe that exists for the work to be undertaken during the 2005 calendar year. The meeting also agreed by majority show of hands to pay a rate on a planted hectare basis over a five year period. In acknowledging current issues facing the pipfruit industry, it was suggested that the number of planted hectares will be defined at the end of January 2006 and that these be used for the basis of charging over the five year period.

If today's meeting agrees with the decision of the meeting of 24 August 2005, the next stage is for tenders to be called, to be evaluated and a report be made to the next meeting of the appropriate Council Committee to accept a preferred tenderer for the project.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Corporate Services Committee accept the recommendation from a meeting of affected property owners held on 24 August 2005 to proceed with the eradication of hawthorn from within a defined rating area on the Waimea Plains, and that tenders for the eradication of these hedges and fence replacement be called.

David Ward
Corporate Services Manager