

PACIFIC ADVISORY GROUP

June 2015 – December 2015
Annual Report

***Tālōfa lava, Taloha ni, Bula Vinaka, Kia Orana,
Mālo e lelei, Fakalofa lahi atu and Warm Pacific Greetings from
the Pacific Advisory Group.***

Purpose

The purpose of the Pacific Advisory Group is to:

- Advise Council on how to help grow a great City, where Pasifika peoples thrive and contribute to Council's priorities.
- Bring knowledge and extra insight into Council about how the different needs of Wellington's Pasifika communities can be addressed in the context of Council's roles and priorities.

Group Composition

The Pacific Advisory Group (PAG) consists of 15 members from 8 Pacific Island communities. Membership demonstrates the diversity of Pacific peoples as a multi ethnic group residing in Wellington.

PAG Members as at December 2015

Samoa

Anthony Leaupepe
Ida Faiumu-Isa'ako (Deputy Chair)
Meremine Auelua

Fiji

Ledua Taucilagi
Sai Lealea (Chair)

Cook Islands

Kimi Higginson
Merio Marsters

Tuvalu

[vacancy]

Tonga

Alapeta Faletau
Rev. Siofilisi Latu Ta'ufo'ou

Melanesia

Leina Isno

Niue

Dr Alvin Mitikulena
Nicole Rex

Micronesia

[vacancy]

Tokelau

Herbert Bartley
Sharon Samasoni

Council appointed members

Councillor Paul Eagle
Councillor Sarah Free

Reporting Structure

Please note that this Annual report covers a smaller timespan than previous reports, due to WCC restructures. As such PAG's contributions for the 2015 year are not fully captured.

Membership and Meetings

The Pacific Advisory Group is currently carrying vacancies for a Tuvalu, and Micronesian representative on PAG.

Under the Terms of Reference review in 2014, positions for a Melanesian and Micronesian representative were added. The aim of this was to provide a Melanesian and Micronesian voice to the diversity of PAG. PAG invited Leina Isno from the Vanuatu community to represent the Melanesian community.

The Pacific Advisory Group met each month within the reporting period. The agendas and minutes of these meetings have been uploaded to the Wellington City Council's website.

The meetings have been well attended and member's contributions have been valuable.

Annual Work Programme

The Annual Work Programme sets out the priority work areas for the year that Council seeks involvement and early engagement from PAG.

As part of the 2014 Terms of Reference Review, a new process of agreeing a work programme between officers and the Pacific Advisory Group was instituted (see Appendix One).

PAG has contributed to those key priority areas as well as assisting Council on other policies and projects as they have arisen. PAG are pleased with this new process which has given good direction to the work of PAG and we look forward to reviewing and setting the new priority areas for the next year of work.

Activity

As well as the regular monthly meetings, PAG activity from June 2015 to December 2015 has varied from the public events, community initiatives, to contributions to Council consultations.

PAG also provides the opportunity to discuss issues and topics relevant to Pacific communities. The meetings also allow members to receive presentations from outside groups keen to engage PAG and their communities. Major events and activities in Pacific communities are also able to be tabled and shared by members during the meetings.

Pasifika Forum:

The Pacific Forum was an event for the Pacific community of Wellington City. It was to showcase the services of Wellington City Council. The Forum took place on the 16th September at the Ioane Vito Centre in Newtown. Around 40-50 people attended the forum.

The biggest issue of the evening was housing which was discussed by all attendees before breaking out into smaller areas.

PAG was tasked with inviting their communities to the Forum.

A summary of the topics covered during the Forum included the following:

- Housing Pacific Peoples (large group): (Anthony), Ledua, Alapeta, Leina
- Better Council Services for Pasifika/Governance: (Herbert), Merio, Kimi
- Opportunities in Economic Development/Arts and Culture: (Ida), Sai, Siofilisi, Silika
- Youth Engagement: (Sharon), Meremine, Nicole

The organising of the Forum and the objectives required greater clarity. As objectives were not set there may have been some confusion around what the forum was actually for. Having an objective or set of goals would have contributed to more tangible outcomes.

While some council staffing roles had to be explained, their attendance in good numbers, led by the Chief Executive Officer, were appreciated especially in responding to questions and queries from the community.

Led by the Mayor, it was also pleasing to have Council support at the Forum.

The smaller workshops generated some good discussions and feedback but it could also have benefited from better clarity.

Recommendations for 2016:

The venue and the catering from the Ioane Vito centre were well received by the community.

The content of the Pacific Forum requires more development, so that the Pacific community can achieve tangible outcomes and benefits for both Pacific people and the Council.

The 2016 Forum should clearly state whom it is targeted at and for what reason.

PAG would like to advise Council on the objectives and goals, but ultimately it is a council event.

Staff supporting levels should reflect this in both development and attendance on the night.

PAG are looking forward to formalising the working relationship with Council to help deliver success in 2016.

Pasifika Festival

PAG has set up a Pasifika Festival Subcommittee to start the discussion around the 2016 Festival and identify lessons from last year and previous year's festivals. PAG would like to ensure:

- There is a good balance between cultural activities;
- An ability to showcase Pacific identity; and
- The promotion of those elements in today's contemporary and diverse environment.

More input by PAG into the organisation and planning of the Festival is also to be explored as part of the discussion.

PAG has indicated they wish to have full control of the festival by 2017, given that the Pasifika name and identity is associated with it.

Several meetings were held between PAG and Council officers to advise on the Forum structure and content.

Issues highlighted included;

- Too contemporary, drifting from an authentic celebration of the Pacific
- Layout of the festival stalls and stage
- Content of advertisements & their authenticity
- Media channels used to promote the event
- Theme of the event
- Stall fees
- Date & timing of the event
- Clarity of event purpose
- Role of PAG in organising the event

The fundamental issue that needs to be resolved going forward is:

- Is it a Pacific festival run by Pacific for Pacific communities and the Wellington public?

PAG would like to see this addressed by Council.

Provision of Advice

During this period of reporting, PAG provided feedback, assistance and advice to the following:

- Housing
 - PAG members led by Anthony Leaupepe provided a submission to Council and supported Pacific tenants take up their cases during the rent review of Council flats. The recent housing crisis has prompted PAG to expand its scope of support to include support for families who are faced with social issues including housing affordability. Anthony Leaupepe and few other members of the PAG Group had been advocating for affordable housing for low income families in Wellington. Five Pacific families who are members of the union received eviction notices from Wellington City Council. After several meetings with Council officials all notices were cancelled. Council officials also attended a meeting with tenants who are members of the Pacific Island community to discuss issues on rent increase.
- Pacific Patrol
 - PAG promoted the programme at the Pasifika Festival and urged their community to support and register for the programme.
- Living Wage
 - PAG members supported the drive to place Council staff on a living wage, especially Pasifika staff working at Council.
- Pacific Language Weeks
 - PAG members contributed to their Language Week Programmes and facilitated support from Council via the provision of venues for some of the activities.
- Central Government Pacific Programmes and Strategies
 - Various Pacific staff from central government agencies sought input from PAG on their Pasifika strategies and programmes and tabled the interest in engaging with Wellington Pasifika communities for the future as well as participating at the Pasifika Festival.
- Vanuatu Cyclone Relief
 - PAG members supported fundraising efforts undertaken for the Vanuatu Cyclone relief and plans are underway to engage with the NZ Red Cross for educating Pasifika communities on disaster relief management and fundraising for future natural disasters in New Zealand and the Pacific.

Aspirations and challenges for the year ahead

Overview:

PAG wants to add value and feel pride by being able to contribute to the shaping of relevant Council events and policies. To this end, PAG is keen to table ideas for consideration by Council staff on ways to provide Pacific perspectives into policy development and implementation as well as in engaging with Pasifika communities.

Pacific Translation work – council information being accessible to the Pacific community is integral to Pacific engagement with Council and its services. PAG is tasked with promoting Pacific language and culture; as such translation of certain council documents would go a long way to achieving this. PAG members are available to help Council in understanding Pacific culture.

Branding of the Pasifika Festival;

PAG should be consulted.

PAG appreciate council's efforts to promote the event, but feel that authenticity and value could be added by listening to and seeking input from PAG.

Pasifika Fale:

PAG continues to advocate and explore how this dream can be realised in partnership with the Council. As a first step, PAG would like to promote having a feasibility study undertaken to assess the viability of such a venture in adding value to the economic, cultural and social prospects of the Wellington City. Identifying partners for the project would also be a useful step in promoting it.

Pacific Councillor:

PAG identifies that Pasifika representation in Council is of great importance; a Pacific Councillor is a long term goal for PAG.

Executive Leadership Team (ELT) Member attending PAG meetings

To work more effectively with Council, PAG would like the opportunity to engage directly with senior executives of the Council during its meetings especially over key topics of interest to them.

Advisors note: Greg Orchard has been appointed to PAG (2016)

Remuneration

PAG are seeking an increase in the meeting fees to be on par with other Pacific advisory groups around the country.

Council Support to Advisory Groups

There is a need for a continuation of stable advisory support for PAG from Council to ensure continuity and close ongoing engagement.

Pacific Forum:

Engagement with our Pacific communities is important in the work that PAG produces. PAG members are disappointed there has been no opportunity for Council to engage directly with their communities to provide two way feedback on work by Council in promoting Pacific communities. It is hoped there will be opportunity for this in the new financial year.

Acknowledgements

The PAG has valued the continued contribution of Councillors Eagle and Free to its work and deliberations. Both have been strong advocates and allies over a number of issues considered by PAG during the year.

The PAG has valued the continued support and services provided by Council Officers in the past year.

The PAG would also like to acknowledge those Councillors and Council Officers who seek to encourage greater participation of the Pacific Advisory Group, and Pasifika people in the decision-making process of Council. Our work would not have been possible without their support and commitment in the last year.

Appendix One: Annual Work Programme 2015

Chair – Pacific Advisory Group
Wellington City Council
101 Wakefield Street, PO Box 2199
WELLINGTON 6140

Dear Chair

Re: Letter setting the Work Programme for the Pacific Advisory Group (PAG)

Purpose of this letter

I am writing to you as the Chair to clarify the Council's priorities and outline Council's expectations for your Advisory Group over the next 12 months.

The PAG is part of Council and I know that your group wants to contribute in the best possible way to our City. This letter will help focus the work of the group so that Council officers can engage with you at an early stage and in an effective way.

PAG's work over the next 12 months

The City Council recently finalised its Annual Plan (AP) and is working on developing the 2015-25 Long Term Plan (LTP). It is important that the work of your advisory group aligns with the priorities of the AP and LTP.

We want you to bring your experience as a group to help solve problems and find solutions for the work streams below. This is consistent with your group having deeper and more-ongoing involvement with the work-streams of greatest priority to the City

Key AP and LTP priorities	PAG input
Communications: The Council wishes to maintain effective two-way communication with Pacific communities. It would like to work with PAG to promote Council services, opportunities to participate in Council decision-making and Council-related board opportunities to potential Pacific candidates.	Work with officers to update Council's database of contacts within Pacific communities including media and community organisations through which Council can distribute information.
Arts & Culture: The Council's Arts & Culture Strategy supports the development and promotion of Pasifika arts & cultural experiences, particularly contemporary arts activities. The annual Pasifika Festival provides an important platform to nurture and showcase Pacific Island arts and culture in Wellington.	Work with officers to ensure participation in the Festival from diverse Pasifika communities. Actively work with officers to extend the range of activities taking place as part of the Festival including a combined church service. In addition, work with officers to develop and promote activities related to Pacific language weeks, e.g. displays and activities within Council libraries.
Community well-being: The Council is wanting to increase utilisation of its existing services and facilities, particularly its recreation facilities. It also wants to ensure its policies take into account the needs of Wellington's diverse communities.	Work with officers to develop and promote opportunities for Pasifika communities to increase their awareness and use of Council's recreation facilities. Provide a Pacific perspective and input into relevant Council policies including the review of its Housing Policy.
Work placement opportunities: The Council is developing a secondment /placement programme to provide people with an opportunity to work at Council and to broaden our	Work with officers to develop and promote work placement opportunities at Council for Pasifika people.

talent base.	
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As part of Council's wider engagement, the Council will also consult with other groups on the issues that we bring to PAG. Furthermore, the above list does not preclude the PAG from having input into other Council projects and policies as these become apparent during the year. Such items can be considered by PAG with the agreement of the Chair and the Council Liaison Officer.

Additional information on how we see PAG operating is set out in the Terms of Reference.

Meeting to discuss and agree the work programme

Once you have discussed the priorities and suggested work-streams outlined in this letter with the other members of your group, we would like to finalise and begin working on the programme with you.

Please contact me with your response to this letter by Wednesday 15 October 2014.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Martin Rodgers

Manager, Research, Consultation & Planning

Appendix Two: Individual Meeting Attendance

Name	Number of Meetings	Attended	% Attendance
Alapeta Faletau	6	4	66.6%
Alvin Mitikulena	6	5	83.3%
Anthony Leaupepe	6	6	100%
Herbert Bartley	6	5	83.3%
Ida Faiumu-Isa'ako	6	5	83.3%
Kimi Higginson	6	5	83.3%
Ledua Taucilagi	6	4	66.6%
Leina Isno	6	5	83.3%
Meremine Auelua	6	5	83.3%
Merio Marsters	6	5	83.3%
Nicole Rex	6	4	66.6%
Sai Lealea (Chair)	6	6	100%
Sharon Samasoni	6	5	83.3%
Siofilisi Taifo'ou	6	4	66.6%