

Environmental Reference Group Meeting Minutes

3 August 2009, Te Mahanga - Committee Room 1, Wellington City Council

Present:

Sea Rotmann (Co-chair)
Councillor Wade-Brown
Councillor Pannett
Peter Gilberd
Bev Abbott
Ian Shearer
Tushara Kodikara
Nick Potter
Nigel Smith (Youth Council)
Philip Mladenov
Mel Cutler

Apologies

Members

Hamish Allardice (Co-chair)
Kathryn Maxwell
Mike Ennis

GWRC Officers: Tami Woods

Mana Whenua Representatives:
Graeme Hastilow

WCC Officers:

Chris Cameron (Climate Change)
Dave Campbell (Building and Property)
Brian Hannah (Planning, Performance and Research)

Guests/Speakers: Nick Urlich (Capacity)

Welcome

Attendees were welcomed and apologies recorded.

- Draft minutes from the 8 June 2009 meeting were confirmed, but noting that the issues around the draft Conservation Strategy relate to the need for a coherent approach across Local Government and Central Government. It was requested that Tami provide an update on the GPI reporting to the ERG
- The Group noted with regret the resignation of Liz Hibbs, and thanked her for her valuable efforts and contributions.

ERG impacts 2009

Cr Wade-Brown outlined the requirement for an annual ERG report to committee on its activity which is due in December 2009.

- Key areas of impact include recycling and the water network
- It was suggested that views were gathered from the group and from previous meeting minutes to inform the report
- It was suggested that the paper in December is an opportunity to highlight the important role of the group and outline how it can continue to improve

Energy planning update

Dave Campbell provided an outline of the energy management programme within council.

- This has included creating an accurate inventory and monitoring of energy use
- It allows for us to assess if the best possible decisions are being made with existing/new facilities
- Work to renew contracts for electricity and gas to deliver best deal to the city
- Dave is involved in a local government energy management focus group which is looking at benchmarking within local government in New Zealand
- The importance of reducing energy use in reducing greenhouse emissions was noted.
- A number of completed energy reduction projects were outlined, together with several upcoming projects.

Water Update

Cr Wade-Brown outlined recent reports on the sewerage spills to Wellington harbour, and noted an overall reduction in water use in Wellington. She highlighted that the Water Conservation Strategy is due out in September for consultation, and that the Regional Storm Water Action plan is an important guiding document.

Nick Ulrich (Capacity) presented a series of charts indicating the variability of pollution to the harbour, noting that

- 90 stormwater sites are monitored fortnightly, while GW does more in-depth sampling
- 50 area meters are in place to establish flows throughout the city
- Overall reduction in incidents and trending down dramatically since 1992
- Much of the infrastructure is old (70-80 yrs) so problems are expected
- Some recent issues at the overseas terminal
- Sumps are generally the only storm water treatment method
- Water pollution charts to be circulated to the Group (**Action:** Chris to send)

LTCCP Update

Brian Hannah outlined the final form of the LTCCP and the environment strategy. In particular it was noted that:

- The rates position: with average rates increases at around 3.5% for each year of the ten year plan
- The borrowings position: set to remain well within prudential limits with an increase from \$325m to \$370m over the ten years

- Spending in the environment area: this makes up around 36% of the council's operating budget
- The overall strategic approach: to continue the city's momentum toward an affordable internationally competitive city, focusing on the 'growth spine' including the promotion of transport options and more efficient use of land
- Specific initiatives are bus priority measures such as Manners Mall and extra funding for a strategic cycling network
- The key priorities for the environment strategy include: protecting sensitive natural areas - through the biodiversity action plan, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, managing and minimising waste, managing water demand and promoting environmental attractions
- The increased focus on the work of volunteers was also drawn the attention of the reference group, as was the feasibility study for the Marine Education Centre
- Brian committed to follow up with Bev to discuss her thoughts on the structure and presentation of information in future publications.

Climate Change work update

Chris Cameron outlined progress on the review of the councils Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP), which included:

- Rationale around the review, involving cross-council ownership and the need for in depth actions linked to targets (via community outcomes)
- The dual focus of emissions and adaptation responses and the development of frameworks to assess appropriate actions
- In discussion it was suggested that the ERG could provide input into the draft frameworks (**Action:** Chris to send out presentation)
- ERG could also provide input into the draft of the CCAP – it is suggested that this occur via a workshop in mid-September
- Ian suggested that stronger links between the work of local and central government were needed, including input into the Copenhagen meeting in Dec.

Scheduled ERG Meetings

The group discussed the content and structure of future meetings including:

- How best to provide input into council funding decisions
- How best to engage with organisations outside of council
- Whether to hold a community “environmental forum” (similar to the sports forum) or to hold more specific forums, e.g., on biodiversity or climate change
- It was suggested that it would be useful to receive updates on progress against plans (e.g. the Biodiversity plan)

ERG Draft Forward Programme for 2009

Date	Theme / Key Items
2 February	1. Final recruitment selection
9 February	1. LTCCP - engagement 2. Sewage and storm water mixing - inflow & infiltration 3. Sludge process – how this operates 4. Waste Operator Licensing Bylaw
2 March	1. Waste Minimisation Act 2008 – implications [recycling, cradle-to-cradle, consumption, design 2 Waste] 2. Wellington Regional Strategy – genuine progress indicators 3. Water Day – discussion 4. Group Goals – discussion
6 April	1. LTCCP – formal stage – Presentation 2. Greater Wellington – Proposed Regional Policy Statement 3. Group Goals – discussion
8 June	1. Update from Climate Change team 2. Transport and joint Road Safety/ERG Reference Groups meeting (Celia and Ian) 3. DOC – Wellington Draft Conservation Strategy 4. Ngati Toa's Treaty Settlement – Graeme Hastilow
3 August	1. ERG impacts 2009 – December SPC report planning 2. Climate Change
17 September	Climate Change: Workshop on the Councils action frameworks for mitigation and adaptation and Draft Action Plan
5 October	1. Update on the GPI from GW (Tami) 2. Scoping of the Committee report on ERG impact
7 December	1.

The meeting closed at 7:35 pm