

**Environmental Reference Group Meeting Minutes
16 February, Te Mahanga - Committee Room 1, Wellington City Council**

Present:

Hamish Allardice (Co-chair)
Councillor Pannet
Peter Gilbert
Mel Cutler
Marc Slade
Phil Hancock
Sarah Free
Tushara Kodikara
Nick Potter
Philip Mladenov
Mike Ennis
WCC Officers:
Zach Rissel (Policy)
Bryan Smith (Policy)
Mike Mendonca (CitiOperations)

Apologies

Members
Sea Rotmann (Co-chair)
Councillor Wade-Brown
Nigel Smith (Youth Council)
Kathryn Maxwell
Bev Abbott
Tami Woods

Agenda

1. Welcome and introduction to new members
2. Waste Minimisation and Management Plan
3. Draft 2010 Climate Change Action Plan
4. Terms of Reference

New Members Welcomed

New members Marc Slade, Phil Hancock and Sarah Free were welcomed and apologies recorded.

Waste Minimisation Plan

Bryan and Mike Mendonca gave overview of Waste Minimisation Act and the requirements placed on local government under the Act.

Bryan asked for ideas on the scope of the Waste Minimisation Plan. The discussion points were as follows:

Mike Ennis identified e-waste as a priority waste stream because of its toxicity and the components are high value. A product stewardship scheme could be considered, but noted there were many 'orphan' products (eg old TV sets) that may make this difficult. Also challenges because of the infrastructure required for separation, storage and collection.

Also, discussed how it's very difficult to make recycling pay for itself because producers externalize costs with packaging so that true costs aren't being passed on.

Tushara recommended to look at each waste stream and find the best point to intervene/leverage in the product life-cycle. Best way to reduce waste is to reduce consumption but since that is unlikely to be an option, focus on creating a culture of change in the community that supports residents and businesses with waste minimisation actions. Tush asked what were the Council's priorities.

Mike Mendonca – packaging (items collected in kerbside recycling) is an important issue because of the costs put on ratepayers and some of the questionable environmental benefits (much of the recycling material collected in Wellington ends up in countries with low environmental controls).

Bryan Smith – biosolids (sewage sludge) is an important area because of the large amount (18,000 tonnes per year) and the fact that to landfill one tone of sludge it is necessary to mix four tones of rubbish for proper landfill compaction (i.e. it's a wastestream that needs other waste in order to be landfilled).

Phil Hancock spoke about how recycling is a growth industry and diversion rates can increase at the same time landfilling volumes increase. Real reductions in landfilling can only take place when waste is reduced further up the supply chain in packaging and the way we consume.

General discussion about the role TLAs can play in waste stream management compared to national-level initiatives. Comments made that many issues required a national approach, but TLAs had a role in advocating for these and implementation.

Peter Gilbert recommended to focus on four areas:

- Research and development to find solutions
- Rewarding the community and creating a culture of change (e.g. community leaders)
- Identify ways to expand composting operations
- Product stewardship schemes – when people have to pay for disposal it helps to create culture change.

March Slade agreed with the recommendations to target people's behavior and discussed the Brooklyn initiative to make the suburb plastic bag free. Look to ways to support community initiatives (the grants programme was raised and it was noted that few quality waste projects get considered by grants each year).

It was also suggested that working with supermarkets directly would be a good start since they are large sources of waste

Sarah Free discussed the idea of community "plot gardens" that can enhance connections between communities and also get residents composting their kitchen scraps. Suggested some public land might be made available for this. Sarah talked about investigating ways to publicise waste minimisation programmes and options and that schools were a worthwhile place to start.

Climate Change Action Plan

Zach Rissel reviewed the progress of the Action Plan development and reported back on how the ERG's input at the climate change workshop had been considered and addressed in the Action Plan.

Some discussion included:

- Wanting understanding of how the Cycling Plan is supposed to coincide with planned road upgrades.
- Statements about how building roads and expanding airport services could be viewed as inconsistent with plans to reduce emissions.
- Whether cities were going to take on a large role in the response to climate change because there was a failure to reach a multi-lateral agreement in Copenhagen.

Terms of Reference

The review of the Terms of Reference was discussed and the group suggested that Aroha Rangi, who is leading the review, setup a meeting in March and invite members of the group to participate.

Possible Additions to the Forward Programme

- Submissions to the Resource Management Act
- Inflow and infiltration work.
- Noted that October meeting will likely have to change due to timing with the election.

ERG Draft Forward Programme for 2010

Date	Potential agenda items
Tuesday, 16 February	Welcome new members and introduction Waste Minimisation and Management Plan Draft 2010 Climate Change Action Plan Terms of Reference
Tuesday, 27 April	Draft Annual Plan Water Conservation Town Belt Legislation Review Terms of Reference
Monday, 21 June	District Plan Review

	<p>Environmental Performance Measures (session 1)</p> <p>Engaging households and businesses on sustainability (session 1)</p> <p>Annual Plan Update</p>
Tuesday, 17 August	<p>Waste Minimisation and Management Plan</p> <p>Engaging households and businesses on sustainability (session 2)</p> <p>Capital Spaces Strategy Review</p> <p>Carbon Management Policy</p>
Monday, 11 October	<p>Environmental Performance Measures (session 2)</p> <p>Bus priority, walking and cycling implementation</p> <p>Wellington 2040</p> <p>Wellington Airport Master Plan</p> <p>Annual Report</p>
Monday, 22 November	<p>Briefing incoming Council</p> <p>Annual Report Back</p> <p>LTCCP 2012/22 Development</p> <p>Climate impacts studies - community engagement</p>