

**Environmental Reference Group Meeting Minutes  
26 November 2012, Committee Room 2, Wellington City Council**

***Present***

Howard Markland (Co-Chair)  
Sarah Free (Co-Chair)  
Bev Abbott  
Sophie Mormede  
Peter Gilbert  
Claire Graeme  
Hamish Allardice  
Jane O'Loughlin  
James Wall-Manning  
Matt Barclay  
Nick Crocker  
Charles Barrie

Phil Hancock  
Sea Rotman  
Alina Siegfried

***City Councillors***

Helene Ritchie

***WCC Liaison Officer***

Sandra Crews

***Public***

Lawyers from Russell McVeagh

**1. Adoption of Minutes from last meeting and other business**

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 October were adopted. No new conflicts of interest were raised.

- 2. Sarah Free, Co-Chair - What has ERG has achieved?** – Sarah continued the discussion on achievements which will contribute to drafting the ERG Annual Report – due March 2013.

**Action 1:** Sandra to prepare a draft Annual Report for the ERG, including a request for formal feedback from Council on ERG performance.

- 3. Howard Markland - ERG Work Priorities** - Howard continued the discussion, from the October meeting, on the ERG key areas of interest from the Council forward programme .

**Action 2:** ERG work priorities to be included in the Annual Report (due to be submitted to Strategy & Policy Committee April, 2013 ).

- 4. Howard Markland – how should ERG operate?** - There was general discussion about how we want the ERG to operate, and to ensure that we have an effective working relationship with the Council. This covered the following:
- A. Although our ToR focus on policy and planning, the ERG may also comment on operational issues relevant to environmental outcomes.
  - B. The ERG will seek consensus on issues where possible. Where a position is not supported by more than 2/3 of members, the ERG will report the diversity of views raised.
  - C. Where the ERG does not have time to consider items during the meeting, it may set up a workgroup to do further work and report back (if there is

insufficient time, the workgroup may be empowered to report on behalf of the ERG). Where a workgroup seeks comment from ERG members, please respect the efforts of workgroup members and provide feedback where you can. The ERG should maintain a record of advice provided to Council, which will be presented in the ERG annual report.

- D. The ERG may make formal submissions to Council where a position is supported by more than 2/3 of members. This does not preclude individual members from making independent submissions in their own name.
- E. Members should consider a Wellington-wide perspective where appropriate, although this should not prevent them raising issues that affect a specific part of the district.
- F. We will focus on the 'key areas of interest' identified by the group, but may also consider other relevant items raised by either the Council or ERG members.
- G. We have been quite reactive in recent times, with little time to consider significant Council proposals. We can operate more strategically when given early notice of plans and proposals. Council should seek early engagement with the ERG, particularly for 'ERG work priorities'.
- H. Members may raise any items of relevance to the ERG during the 'any other business' agenda item.
- I. Although it was accepted that six 2-hour meetings limits the input we are able to provide, Council funding is not available to support further input. However, the ERG has the option to set up workgroups to give more detailed consideration to issues (though this will not be funded by Council).
- J. Meetings last for 2 hours, and we aim to cover all scheduled agenda items in this time. Items that are not dealt with will be postponed to the subsequent meeting, or dealt with by setting-up an ERG workgroup.
- K. There was some discussion about the relevance of the Terms of Reference (which were last reviewed early 2010). Further discussion was postponed until the Terms of Reference come up for their scheduled review after the Council election in October 2013.
- L. Minutes of ERG meetings will record key points of discussion and agreement.
- M. The ERG requests that Council provide formal feedback about the performance of the ERG, to provide assurance that we are playing a valid role, that the input we provide is being given due consideration, and that relevant parts of the Council are aware of the ERG.

**Action 3:** Note in the ERG annual report that six 2-hour meetings per year is limiting, given the level of Council activity requiring ERG attention.

**Action 4:** Council Officers will approach ERG for early engagement and will provide peer review/feedback to ERG on their advice.

**Action 5:** The Council liaison officer will maintain a record of outputs including submissions and advice to Council.

5. **Google Drive** – group discussion on using Google Drive as a platform for collaborative work e.g. submissions, drafting ERG Annual Report. Some commented that this sort of thing had been tried before and that it was not entirely successful.

**Action6:** It was agreed that Google Drive would be set up, as a trial, for those who were interested. Charles and Sandra offered support to those unfamiliar with Google Drive.

6. **Town Belt Management Plan, Bev Abbott and Helene Ritchie** presented on for the Plan, the consultation, its meaning and significant issues for the group to consider.

**Action 7:** Sarah, Bev, Sophie, Alina, Charles formed a workgroup to prepare a submission on behalf of the ERG.

7. **Thanks to Sea Rotmann and Hamish Allardice** - ERG thanked and acknowledged the time, effort and service provided by Sea and Hamish Co-Chairs of the ERG for four years each. They both continue as ERG members with Hamish leaving in February.

## **8. Next Meeting**

Monday, 18 February 2013