

**Environmental Reference Group Meeting Minutes
18 February 2013, Committee Room 2, Wellington City Council**

Present

Sarah Free (Co-Chair)
Bev Abbott
Sophie Mormede
Peter Gilbert
Claire Graeme
Hamish Allardice
Matt Barclay
Nick Crocker
Charles Barrie
Phil Hancock

Apologies

Jane O'Loughlin
Howard Markland (Co-Chair)
Alina Siegfried
Sea Rottman

City Councillors

Helene Ritchie (early departure)

WCC Liaison Officer

Sandra Crews

1. Adoption of Minutes from last meeting and other business

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 November were adopted. The group completed new conflict of interest forms.

The group agreed to keep an attendance record for members and Councillors. The group emphasised the importance of Councillor representation at all meetings.

Action 1: Helene Ritchie agreed to invite another Councillor if she was not able to attend future meetings.

Action 2: The group agreed that any new conflicts of interest would be raised with the liaison officer.

2. "Our Living City" work programme, Amber Bill and Catherine Leining, Council Officers

Amber Bill and Catherine Leining provided an update on Our Living City at the ERG meeting held on 18 February at the WCC.

The presentation identified the 3 main streams of work, early milestones, showcase projects, research partnerships, the communications and engagement strategy, and three questions for discussion.

Some of the main points raised in discussion were:

- a) The general response was very positive. The group acknowledged the progress since last year. A positive example is how Parks and Reserves is really empowering people.

- b) The group raised the Healthy Home Index at the School of Medicine as a useful contact.
- c) On Blue Belt, think beyond the harbour to include the coastline.
- d) Identify fruit and nut tree and vegetable planting opportunities on road reserve pockets and walkways. Invite local residents to become involved and facilitate their action. It may not be appropriate to plant edibles in areas of heavy traffic.
- e) Need more of the “living” in Our Living City, meaning this still sounds too government-focused and detached from the community. It needs to involve more community/grassroots engagement. Think about suburbs as opposed to the “city,” and how they differ from each other. Think about ethnic diversity. Engage with youth in any way possible (e.g. youth presentations to Councillors). Consider a series of neighbourhood fora in addition to issue fora. Communities need to set the agenda.
- f) The Council should get diverse people and communities in the room and learn about the complexities and to build on common ground and aspirational energy. Use the capabilities of the people in the system, not present a series of recommendations for their consideration.
- g) The first Environment Forum is a valuable experience to learn from. Longer discussion was needed (half day versus two hours).
- h) Give people a mandate to make decisions. Don’t educate them – they know what to do.
- i) There was a brief discussion of Green Wellington, storm water and pest control.

Attachment 1: the presentation “Our Living City - Work Programme”

3. Sea Level Rise

Catherine noted that Chris had presented a paper to SPC on adaptation to sea level rise, and that he will present to ERG on the associated engagement process in April. Any thoughts are welcome before then by email.

The report and a written update was tabled.

4. Transport update

A written update on transport projects by Geoff Swainson was tabled. The group agreed that they would like regular updates by email or at meetings. They would also give Geoff feedback directly.

The group also asked for regular feedback from Paul Barker on the process of the cycle lane from Island Bay to City and other transport work.

Action 3: Sandra to contact Geoff to action regular updates.

Action 4: Sandra to contact Paul Barker to action regular updates

5. 2012 draft ERG Annual Report

Prior to the meeting members of the group reviewed the draft report and agreed to endorse it to go to Strategy & Policy Committee in April.

Action 5: It was suggested that either Sarah, Howard or Peter would present the report to SPC in April.

6. Draft Town Belt Management Plan update - Bev Abbott

Bev reported back on the written advice the working group had prepared for Council on the Draft Town Belt Management Plan. The advice covered:

- Additions of land to Town Belt
- Council's responsibilities as a good neighbour
- Elite sport
- Diversity of sporting and recreational opportunities
- Fish passage
- Descriptions of streams
- Enhancement planting
- Reinstatement policy
- Partnership with Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust

She also offered some suggestions about ways of streamlining future working group activity, including:

- Staff like receiving suggested changes to wording backed with a reason. It's not necessary to 'sweat' the wording.
- Short comments in an e-mail can be turned into valuable contributions
- Consider preparing a short project plan rather than relying on an iterative process
- Short out communication channels, particularly when time frames are tight, e.g. meetings, sharing home and e-mail addresses, sharing telephone numbers.

Action 4: The group agreed to endorse the Town Belt Management Plan submission as an official ERG submission. It was written by Bev and reviewed by some members.

7. Recruitment for new members - The group agreed that go ahead to two new members should be recruited. Some suggested tapping into existing

community leaders (who can have ongoing dialogue with particular communities), Zed Energy, WCC partner groups, community groups, residents associations, urban planning/architecture students.

Action 5: Sarah offered to produce a matrix exploring the diversity of the group including environmental, professional and geographical representation to identify gaps.

8. **Farewell to Hamish Allardice** - ERG thanked and acknowledged the time, effort and service by Hamish as Co-Chair and member of the ERG over the past four years.

9. **Next Meeting**

Monday, 8th April 2013