

Environmental Reference Group Minutes

Monday 7 September 2015, 5:30-7:30 pm

Wellington City Council, 101 Wakefield St, Committee Room 2

Yvonne Legarth in the Chair

Present

Members: Howard Markland, Sophie Mormede, Paula Warren, Stu Farrant, Graeme Sawyer, Phil Hancock, Mark Fenwick, Martin Payne
Yvonne Legarth

Councillors: Crs Ritchie, Lee and Free

Officers: Helen Walker and Kate Irvine (Liaison officer)

Guests: Moana Mackey, Tom Pettit, Alison Newbald

Apologies: Kate Mitcalfe, Cr Pannett

1. Introduction and conflicts of Interest

Yvonne welcomed everyone and introduced Kate Irvine the new Senior Advisor Consultation and Engagement. Kate introduced herself and outlined her past roles and her new role. She also explained how another new staff member would be taking responsibility for the governance of the group including agendas, minutes and acting as a contact person for the group. Kate's role will be focussed on stakeholder engagement and a strategic overview of the advisory and reference groups.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cr Pannett and Kate Mitcalfe. Crs Ritchie, Lee and Free apologised for leaving early.

3. Climate Change Action Plan – Moana Mackey and Tom Pettit

Moana Mackey and Tom Pettit noted that the climate change action plan project is still in its research phase and benefitted from the discussion in June with the ERG. The current Climate Change Action Plan is on track and is unusual for a local authority to develop an action plan not only for its own operations but also for the city. Achieving Council's emission reduction targets is however dependent on central government action and initiatives. The next CCAP will look different noting co-benefits and will most likely be structured differently to the existing action plan. The project team is looking to commence early engagement with stakeholders towards the end of the year.

Moana said the project team are keen to ensure a connection between interventions and targets. They are looking at the levers that are available and want to build an interactive tool so that people can investigate the impact on greenhouse emissions of differential use of levers.

There was some discussion around the airport and infrastructure projects, noting that the carbon footprint is often not assessed for different options when carrying out options analysis, and whether the airport emissions may have peaked. The Chief Resilience Officer will start soon and will lead some work on adaptation which obviously includes mitigating further greenhouse gas increases.

There are many practical opportunities to make a difference including the school gen programme which also educates children and other Smart Energy Capital fund initiatives.

Members suggested that Council could consider supporting greater water harvesting, standard designs that get automatic consents and options for sewage sludge.

WCC is looking to use CEMARS this year to measure and monitor g/h emissions and will update the g/h emission inventory.

ERG can help with:

- Identifying what Council could target – for example no unnecessary carbon and initiatives that benefits for carbon.
- Not only focussing on greenhouse emissions but also considering land use, congestion etc
- Design of the early engagement including the potential tools

4. Natural Resource Plan Submission

Alison Newbald briefed the group on the Council's submission to Greater Wellington on the Natural Resource Plan. A key concern is the lack of focus on the urban environment. The council is seeking more recognition of beneficial use in the urban environment. Alison noted that piping streams is a non-compliant activity with no distinction between significant rivers and small streams in areas of high urban growth. The group supported that position however the Council is seeking some change.

The Council is raising its concern about the catchment management and offsetting. There is an inconsistency between the south and west coasts.

Other issues being raised include asking for some changes to the bird protection areas.

5. Minutes of last meeting

Paula moved that the minutes of the last meeting be accepted as true and correct record. Mark seconded the motion and it was passed.

6. Matters arising

Paula tabled two draft letters – one to the CEO and one to Councillor Woolf. After some brief discussion it was agreed that members could amend or edit the letters on Drop Box or instigate a discussion on Loomio. Paula noted that the letter to the CE was more time critical as it related to recruitment of staff and it was agreed that comments should be made by 14 September. Kate reminded the group appointments had been made.

Comments on the letter to Councillor Woolf should be made by 21 September.

Portfolio Updates

Biodiversity: Stu had spoken to Myfanwy and will keep in regular contact with her.

7. Other Business

Forward Programme

The ERG work programme discussion was deferred.

Recruitment

There are five vacancies on the ERG. It was agreed that Helen will instigate the recruitment process by arranging some communications about the vacancies. Once signed off by Mark, Yvonne and Sophie those comms will be released through Council channels and distributed to ERG members to share with their networks.

Applications will be open for about three weeks, Mark Yvonne and Sophie with a Council officer will shortlist and arrange interviews.

There was some discussion about targeting Gen Zero, whether there were other target groups and ways of approaching or reaching those groups. A conversation could be initiated on Loomio. This action was not assigned.

Kate asked about induction, the group advised that they can attend the Council induction days and need an induction pack.

October meeting

- Next meeting is Monday 5 October.
- Mark will chair.
- Nicci Wood to discuss waste. Martin suggested the meeting have a waste theme and potentially invite Megan Miller
- Medium density residential housing – are there plans for more and if so can that be discussed.
- Forward Programme / ERG work programme to be discussed.

8. Action Summary

1. Members to provide comment on Paula's draft letters – by the 14 September for the letter to the CEO and by 21 September for the letter to Cr Woolf.
2. Helen to initiate recruitment process by arranging communications about the vacancies.
3. Perhaps initiate a discussion on Loomio about recruitment
4. Howard will discuss water modelling questions with Jetesh and invite someone from Wellington Water to discuss these issues at a subsequent meeting.
5. Helen and Iona will identify Council contacts for each of the topic groups and will advise the group lead of contact details (in train)
6. Paula to draft a letter to the CEO (agreed at meeting of 6 July)