

Environmental Reference Group Meeting Minutes
27 April 2010, Committee Room 2, Wellington City Council

Present:

Hamish Allardice (Co-chair)
Peter Gilbert
Marc Slade
Phil Hancock
Sarah Free
Tushara Kodikara
Nick Potter
Philip Mladenov
Claire Graeme
Bev Abbott
Councillor Wade-Brown
Councillor Pannett
Councillor Ahipene-Mercer

Apologies

Sea Rotmann (Co-chair)
Nigel Smith (Youth Council)
Kathryn Maxwell
Mel Cutler

WCC Officers:

Zach Rissel (Policy)
Chris Cameron (Policy)
Paul Glennie (Capacity)

Guests:

Jens Hoff (Victoria University)

Agenda

1. 2010/11 Draft Annual Plan presentation
2. Draft Climate Change Action Plan
3. Water Conservation Plan
4. Other business:
 - a. Town Belt Management Plan review
 - b. Review of Terms of Reference
 - c. Lincolnshire Farm development
 - d. Agenda items for next meeting.

2010/11 Draft Annual Plan – Committee Room 1

Councillor Wade-Brown and Councillor Pannett made a joint presentation to the ERG and Disability Reference Group (DRG) on the key components of the 2010/11 Draft Annual Plan (DAP). Key aspects of the 2010/11 DAP include:

- Funding for actions related to the 2011 Rugby World Cup
- The Community Facilities Policy, which outlines the Council's investment in pools, libraries and recreation centers over the next ten years
- The 2010 Climate Change Action Plan.

Hamish requested that the Council look to provide greater funding support to the Sustainable Business Network as a way of promoting businesses to reduce resource consumption.

Some minor comments relating to the Community Facilities Policy and accessibility issues.

Draft 2010 Climate Change Action Plan

The ERG relocated to Committee Room 2 to discuss the remaining agenda items.

Zach Rissel made a presentation that discussed the key features of the draft 2010 Climate Change Action Plan and how they aligned with the ERG's priorities and feedback provided in October 2009.

Some additional comments on the draft 2010 Climate Change Plan included:

Nick Potter

- Need to be much more specific about how the 30% target will be achieved (sector by sector). Where are the reductions going to come from?
- There should be a stronger emphasis on walking and cycling measures in the Plan.

Peter Gilbert

- The forestry is disappointing in that it doesn't make a strong enough case for promoting 'native' forest sinks. Exotic, pine plantations go against the city's biodiversity goals.
- Wellington's strengths lie in its renewable energy capabilities and these should be highlighted and pursued.

Tushara Kudikara

- How does the recycling review fit in with the work on climate change?
- eMission will be different to what it was in 2008/09 and this should be highlighted in the Plan.

Bev Abbott

- Concerns with the forestry sector. Hard to get coherent picture about the Council's investment in this area.
- Interested in survival rates of the Council's planting programme.

Claire Graeme

- Supportive of the work relating to pest management (good bang for buck in terms of promoting forestry and biodiversity).
- Need to ensure that the District Plan is backing up what we are saying in Council strategies so that reserves on private land are protected.

Phil Hancock

- Possibly greater resources towards investigating micro-energy (e.g. placing turbines in stormwater or water pipes).

- If airport grows, land transport will grow as well because mode share of passengers is dominated by private cars and taxis. Need to address this long-term issue.

Hamish Allardice

- Airport runway should be expanded so it can take more modern, efficient planes.
- Need to think about the effects of sea level rise and how we protect the city.

Marc Slade

- Nowhere is there mention of the Peak Oil issue in the document. This should be an important issue.

Bev Abbott

- How are the climate impact issues (e.g. stormwater plans) going to be explained to the community. This needs more consideration.

Water Conservation Plan

Paul Glennie made a presentation on the status of the Water Conservation Plan identifying how summarised the status of the Water Conservation Plan development and briefly discussed actions being considered to defer the construction of a new dam:

- network metering
- rain water collection tanks
- low-flow shower heads and low-flush toilets
- leak detection
- summer water conservation programmes.

Paul the asked the ERG members for their feedback on where the Council should focus its efforts with regards to water conservation. Feedback included:

Claire Graeme

- Concerned about the affect of building a dam in a valley with established native bush. Has there been analysis of the predicted biodiversity loss and is this being taken into consideration.
- Need to improve education relating to how much water we use with everyday activities (e.g. toilets, showers, brushing teeth, washing clothes, etc) and what water efficiency measures will do to improve this.

Sarah Free

- Real need to promote the use of water tanks.
- City Council has a core function of fixing pipes and effort should go into this area.

Marc Slade

- Water metering is the only way to go.

Nick Potter

- Understands water metering can be ineffective (i.e. Melbourne experience).

Phil Hancock

- Why is the proposed dam so far away? Needs to be better communication with the public about the rationale for the proposed dam site.

Bev Abbott

- Some councils provide plumbers on their staff who help residents with water efficiency improvements (e.g. Kapiti)

Hamish Allardice

- Supports Sarah on the water tank issues.
- Need to advocate to Government hard as this isn't just a city or regional issue, it's a national issue.
- Water efficiency scheme – be careful to replicate work already completed by MfE and others.

Other items

Zach explained:

- the reason for the delays in the Town Belt Management Plan review and that it would be added to the forward programme when scoping issues were clarified
- the status of the Terms of Reference review and how Aroha Rangi would be updating the ERG by email on the latest developments
- the agenda items for next meeting

Peter Gilbert gave a 10 minute presentation regarding his concerns on some of the development in the northern suburbs, particularly regarding the Lincolnshire Farm development.

The key concern was that the Council was not following through on the stated objectives in the Northern Growth Management Framework to protect native bush and stream. Examples cited included:

- Council giving consent to a commercial development that would have seen bush removed
- the Lincolnshire Farm development, where some drainage work has resulted in the siltation in the stream.

Peter requested greater effort to ensure that implementation of development in the northern suburbs adhered to the objectives to protect biodiversity and streams.