

Environmental Reference Group Meeting Minutes
11th June 2012, Committee Room 2, Wellington City Council

Present:

Sea Rotmann (Co-chair)
Bev Abbott
Sophie Mormede
Howard Markland
Sarah Free
Peter Gilberd
Claire Graeme

Apologies

James Wall-Manning
Charles Barrie
Hamish Allardice (Co-Chair)
Jane O'Loughlin

WCC Officers:

Graeme Shimmin (Consultation & Engagement Advisor)
Sandra Crews(Consultation & Engagement Advisor)
Allan Prangnell (Strategy & International Relations)
Paul Glennie (Capacity Infrastructure Services)

1. **Adoption of Minutes from last meeting**
The minutes of the meeting held on 16 April were adopted.
2. **Conflict of Interests** – No new conflicts of interest were raised.
3. **Possible Regional Amalgamation - Opportunities for environmental management?** – Allan Prangnell

Allan delivered two powerpoint presentations:

- **Local Government Act (LGA) Amendment Bill Summary** is outlined in powerpoint 1 (attached).
 - LG select committee reports back to Government by October.
Government wants to pass the bill by the end of 2012 in time for local government elections in 2013.
 - The bill allows for local government elections to be postponed by 1 year.
 - See Powerpoint for further details and focus of the Bill.

- The Bill will give Government a range of powers to intervene in how local government is run if ministers feel there is a breach of duties. Ministers will be allowed to get involved in council business from sitting around the council table to making council decisions.
- **Options for Governance Reform** in Wellington is outlined in powerpoint 2 (attached)
 - Government looking at roles and responsibilities of Local Government
 - Wellington City Council has put 4 options out for public discussion and submissions. Council is open to hearing about other proposed options.
 - Officers have to report back to councillors end of August with an analysis of where council should go and why.

ERG discussed the two topics with Allan. Some initial thoughts included dropping the super city tag for option four, and instead talking about an inclusive Wellington/Wairarapa option?

While not necessarily supportive of option four there was concern that any model that split the region into a number of unitary authorities would need to think carefully about the management of the environment as well as other areas, like transport, that cut across the region. It was suggested that there could be ways to improve or merge the boundaries of Territorial Local Authorities while keeping the GWRC in place to manage these cross regional services etc.

As a way forward it was agreed that ERG would submit on the regional reform in Wellington by focusing on the possible impact on environmental management in the region. They may also contribute to the Council's submission on the LGA Amendment Bill.

- For the submission on possible reform in Wellington it was agreed that the ERG would:
 - work with council to provide advice on possible amalgamation but won't be constrained by questions.
 - give advice on environmental concerns or opportunities, to Allan (for councillors), that would need to be looked at if there was amalgamation
 - look at outcomes that need to be addressed under structures
- For the Council's submission on the LGA Amendment Act the ERG will:
 - focus on the new purpose statement for Local Government and what

rates capping might mean for the environment if there is less discretionary spending

- capping rates – Bev suggested some discussion with LG NZ entity to set benchmarks on debt level rate rises.

Action point - ERG to forward key environmental issues to Allan in July so he can present key issues to councillors

Action point – Howard asked everyone to provide top of mind points to him and he will develop a framework of key points for people to populate. This will form the ERG submission (due 29 June)

Action point – Graeme/Howard to look at an online common space for ERG

4. **Water Conservation & Efficiency Plan Update** – Paul Glennie

Paul Glennie gave an update of the water conservation and efficiency plan 2011
The plan can be found here:

<http://www.wellington.govt.nz/plans/policies/waterconservation/pdfs/waterconservation.pdf>

There were many submissions including 130 from the Wellington council area which were mostly supportive of the plan.

Paul covered a range of activities Capacity Infrastructure Services are working on with an aim to achieve water conservation and efficiency without adding to the budget. They offer cheap long term water conservation solutions such as :

- leak reporting to council via text with stickers in public places
- installing rainwater tanks
- water restrictions inside and outside.

Paul noted that when the plan was introduced the pressure to build a dam within four years was mounting but water conservation changes since have pushed the need out to 10 years.

5. **Feedback from ERG Draft LTP & ECO-City Submissions** – Bev/Peter

Councillors begin Long-term Plan deliberations between 12-14 June where they will be deciding whether to make any changes to the proposals that went out for consultation. They will review submissions from 2,600 individuals and groups, including over 1,600 on options for the future governance of Zealandia and other environmental attractions

Officers have put forward key recommendations on proposals in the draft Long-term Plan and an Eco City partnership model which is being recommended for Zealandia.

Action point – Due to meeting time constraints ERG will discuss Eco City recommendations via email.

Action point - Graeme to circulate key recommendations.

6. **Wellington Airport Noise Insulation/Energy Efficiencies?** – Sea

Sea asked the liaison officer to follow up with the council member of the Air Noise Management Committee to explore whether insulation solutions will resolve noise issues and be energy efficient – particularly in older houses.

Action point – Sandra to follow up with Julia Forsyth.

7. **Any other business**

Forward Programme

Action point - Sandra to send out the forward programme before the next meeting

Co-chair role

Sea will be away for the next four months and therefore Hamish & Sea will step down as co-chairs at the August meeting. There would be a vote for new co-chair roles.

Action point – A vote would happen on 6 August for new co-chairs Sarah/Howard have put forward their names.

Agenda

Action point – Sandra to ensure that members receive the Agenda at least 5 days in advance.

Membership of ERG

It was noted by members that attendance is down and they would like someone to contact members to see whether they would be attending in future.

Action point – Hamish to phone all members with low attendance.

Council Liaison Officer

Sea thanked and acknowledged Graeme Shimmin for his excellent service and

work for ERG. Sea welcomed Sandra Crews who will replace Graeme when he heads to work for the Auckland Council next week.

8. Next Meeting

Monday 6th August 2012