

Environmental Reference Group

Minutes

Date: Monday, 13 June 2022

Time: 5:00pm – 7:00pm

Venue: Ngake (16.09), Level 16 Tahiwī, 113 The Terrace, Wellington

Purpose

- Advise Council on the best ways to improve Wellingtonian's quality of life environmentally, socially, culturally and economically by protecting and enhancing the local environment.
- Bring knowledge and insight into Council around the environment, including water, energy, waste, biodiversity, urban design, climate change, heritage and transport management, in the context of Council's roles and priorities.

Attendance

Chairperson:	Michelle Rush
Members:	Mike Britton (via audiovisual link), Lynn Cadenhead (Co-chair), Sally Faisandier (via audiovisual link), George Hobson, Clare Stringer (via audiovisual link), Chris Watson, Arran Whiteford (via audiovisual link)
Liaison Councillors:	
WCC Staff:	Siobhan Procter (Chief Infrastructure Officer), Moana Mackey (Chief Advisor to the CIO and CPO), Hedi Mueller (Senior Democracy Advisor)

Meeting Procedures

The meeting opened at 5:10pm.

1. Apologies were received from the following members:
 - Steven Almond , Councillor Paul and Councillor Foon – for absence.No issues were raised with the minutes of the previous meeting.
2. No conflicts of interest were declared.

Items

3. Members shared the following updates with the group:
 - Arran: Judicial review of Newtown Cycleway – support Council in continuing cycleway. Suggestions for ERG include letter to Mayor, letter to the editor of Dominion Post and article on Scoop. Any letter should be balanced and not criticise the judicial process.
 - Chris: Notice of motion against airport expansion was not passed at Committee. Effectiveness of declaration of climate and biodiversity emergency discussed, as well as landing fee for all passengers – discussion that it would be better to decrease emissions rather than offset them.
 - Stephen (via email): submission on landfill extension, consultation in 3-4 weeks on Waste Management and Minimisation Plan Action Plan that Stephen will circulate. Siobhan to follow up on possibility of WCC website resource, to list specialised waste drop off points (for items such as batteries, tetrapaks etc).
 - Lynn: Suggest that ERG write submission to central government in support of Three Waters
 - Sally: Interested in portfolio reshuffle with new members. Article in the news about insurance difficulty against climate change and earthquakes.
 - Michelle: Recruitment on track, new members should be in place by induction evening on 30 June and group intends to reshuffle portfolios at the July meeting.
 - George: Exposure drafts now available on National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management, National Environmental Standards for Freshwater and National Policy Statement on Indigenous Biodiversity. Concerns about wetlands and mining.
 - Clare is (in principle) happy to take on Heritage portfolio after talking to Lynne.
4. Open Spaces Review brainstorm session, *presented by Michelle Rush*.
 - Members split into two groups to brainstorm the following points:
 - i. Crime prevention
 - Quality design, health and safety
 - ii. Climate change and biodiversity

iii. Equity in recreation opportunities

- Pocket parks, street calming, too much emphasis on density without access to recreational areas, volume of land in CBD that is dedicated to parking only, greening existing asphalt, creating space for trees on wider roads, incorporating green space into transport improvements, maintenance (not taken over by weeds).

5. Farewell to Chris, Lynn and David:

- Thanks to David for his contributions, his huge effort in Draft District Plan submission, his knowledge of planning policy and how policies are developed, and wishing him all the best.
- Thanks to Chris - his desire for climate action can't be questioned! Thanks for always pushing for more and faster action from WCC. While there wasn't always unanimous agreement, there was always strong support for the desire for climate action, which was hugely appreciated by younger ERG members in face of climate crisis. Chris's passion for climate action will continue to be channelled by other members.
- Thanks to Lynn: for supporting in Michelle taking on chairing, Lynn's input to the group and help in writing all the submissions over the last six years will be missed. Thanks for her leadership, hard work, dedication, and helping new members get up to speed with ERG. Thanks for her support and all the explanations over long phone calls, and written work and all the tracked changes, the submissions, and leadership; for all the oral submissions to councillors, her energy and commitment - personal and professional thanks. For her oversight, work on recruitment, her frequent updates on Tyers Stream. For finding a middle way between all the personalities, and being the glue that has held the group together.

The meeting concluded at 7:05pm.

Information

Next meeting date: 11/07/2022

Actions from previous meetings:

1. Arran to write letter of support on behalf of ERG to Liam Hodgetts regarding the Newtown Cycleway.
2. Sally to write letter about airport emissions, Chris and Mike to assist.
3. Michelle to write submission on Three Waters prior to 20th July, based around ERG Principals.
4. George to work on submissions on NPS-FM and NES-F.
5. Leteicha to reschedule Economic Wellbeing Strategy presentation.
6. Leteicha to circulate invite to Induction Evening.

Portfolio / Working Groups

To be reworked at next meeting.