

REPORT 4  
(1215/52/IM)

---

## CRITERIA AND PRINCIPLES FOR PAYMENT OF ADVISORY GROUPS AND COMMUNITY LIAISON GROUPS

---

### 1. Purpose of Report

On 27 June 2008, the Council considered a request from members of the Moa Point Wastewater Treatment Plant Community Liaison Group to receive payment for their work. The group cited payment offered to the Environment Reference Group as part of their request.

This report responds to the Council's request for a paper reviewing the contribution made by advisory groups, including the issues of payment and the Moa Point Wastewater Treatment Plant Community Liaison Group's request for remuneration.

### 2. Executive Summary

Advisory groups and community liaison groups provide community input on Council activities. The groups have been set up for different purposes and these differences need to be recognised.

This paper distinguishes the Council's **advisory groups** (established on a case-by-case basis to provide advice to the Council on a broad range of issues from the perspective of a particular community) from **community liaison groups** that satisfy a resource consent requirement placed on the Council.

The paper recommends:

- a) criteria and principles to guide future decisions and determine whether groups established by the Council should receive payment.
- b) that community liaison group members do not receive payment for their work but can receive support for reasonable expenditure if they meet the proposed criteria.
- c) a case-by-case approach is maintained to determine any future establishment, review or payment for groups that provide advice to the Council.
- d) payment is made to a maximum of five volunteer run community groups included in the Safe and Sustainable Transport Reference Group to ensure some equity in compensation across all attending members.
- e) the Youth Council's terms of reference (including the payment of members' allowance) is included on the forward programme to be reviewed in September 2010.

Funding for payments recommended in this paper will be made from within current budgets and included in future budgets. No retrospective payments will be made.

### **3. Recommendations**

Officers recommend that the Committee:

1. *Receive the information.*
2. *Recommend that Council:*
  - a) *Agree to the criteria and principles contained in Section 5.1 of this report, to determine whether an advisory group should receive payment.*
  - b) *Agree that a case-by-case approach is used to determine any future establishment, review or payment for groups that provide advice to the Council.*
  - c) *Agree that community liaison group members will not receive payment but can receive support for reasonable expenditure incurred as part of the liaison group's work if they meet the proposed criteria listed in Section 5.3 of this report.*
  - d) *Note that as the Moa Point Wastewater Treatment Plant Community Liaison Group meets the proposed criteria it is recommended that the group be offered up to a maximum of \$200 in June 2010 to cover expenditure incurred in the 2009/2010 financial year and that this funding be available each year if they meet the proposed criteria.*
  - e) *Agree that an annual payment of up to \$440 per organisation is made to a maximum of five volunteer run community groups included in the current Safe and Sustainable Transport Reference Group to ensure some equity in compensation across all attending members and that payments commence from 2010/11.*
  - f) *Note that [if recommendation 6 is agreed] the terms of reference for the Safe and Sustainable Transport Reference Group will need to be amended.*
  - g) *Agree that a review of the Youth Council's terms of reference, including the payment of members' allowances, is scheduled for September 2010 on the forward programme.*
  - h) *Note that funding for the recommended payments will be made from within current budgets and included in future budgets. No retrospective payments will be made.*

## **4. Background**

### **4.1 Advisory Groups**

To date, advisory groups have been established on a case-by-case basis to provide advice to the Council on a broad range of issues from the perspective of a particular community. They provide preliminary feedback on Council projects and/or policy development. Members act as conduits for information from and to specific communities.

Council currently has five advisory groups:

- Environment Reference Group (ERG)
- Pacific Advisory Group (PAG)
- Disability Reference Group (DRG)
- Youth Council
- Safe and Sustainable Transport Reference Group (SASTRG – formerly known as the Road Safety Reference Group).

#### **4.1.1 Payment to Advisory Groups**

Members of the ERG, PAG, and DRG receive payment of \$110 per meeting. Chairs of each group are paid \$150 per meeting. Youth Council members receive coaching/personal development training and are paid a meeting allowance of \$20 per meeting.

All payments to ERG, PAG and DRG advisory group members are subject to income or withholding tax. Members of the SASTRG are not currently paid.

### **4.2 Community Liaison Groups (CLG)**

Community Liaison Groups (CLG) are sometimes established as a requirement under the Resource Management Act 1991, to ensure consent holders or operators continue to liaise with potentially affected communities throughout the implementation and operation of the activities authorised by the particular resource consent, designation or district plan provision.

Members of CLG work with consent holders/operators to avoid or mitigate any adverse effects to their local community. They are not provided with any payment for attending meetings, associated work or for meeting expenses.

At present the Council has involvement in five<sup>1</sup> community liaison groups. The Council is only directly responsible for two of these: Moa Point Wastewater Treatment Plant CLG and the Southern Landfill (Carey's Gully) CLG. An

---

<sup>1</sup> Other community liaison groups include the Airport Noise Committee established as part of setting the District Plan rules affecting the Wellington International Airport Ltd, Project West Wind CLG for the Meridian resource consent for Project Westwind, and the League Park CLG required by the resource consent conditions imposed on the Wellington Rugby Football Union.

additional CLG is proposed for the Western Wastewater Treatment Plant and will be formally set up once the consent appeals against the plant are resolved.

## **5. Discussion**

The Council has a range of relationships with organisations and individuals who provide advice and input on Council activities (sometimes regularly or on an issues basis). The general expectation is that these groups or individuals will not be paid however there will be some occasions where financial and/or practical support may be required.

Advisory groups and community liaison groups are formally defined groups that provide feedback on the Council's work, however the groups have been set up for different purposes and these differences need to be recognised.

A case-by-case approach has been used in the past to establish, review and determine payment for groups that provide advice to the Council. It is recommended that this approach be maintained using the following criteria to support decision making.

### **5.1 Criteria to define and determine payment for Advisory Groups**

The following criteria have been used in the past<sup>2</sup> to define advisory groups.

#### **5.1.1 Criteria used to define advisory groups**

The group:

- is established by Council resolution
- has a primary purpose to provide advice to the Council, but does not have any delegated authority to make decisions
- has members that are either representative of a community/sector group or able to fairly represent the range of views in that community/sector group
- includes an elected member that is appointed to the group<sup>3</sup>.

#### **5.1.2 Principles for payment of advisory groups**

Council has agreed on a case-by-case basis to payment through the groups' terms of reference. Whilst parameters differ across advisory groups on the matter of payment, we have identified some common principles across the existing five groups:

- members have specialist knowledge, skills and/or experience required to support the work of the Council (including project and policy development).
- members are expected to attend regular meetings, be committed to the group for a long-term and/or undertake work outside of official meetings

---

<sup>2</sup> These criteria were used to define advisory groups in the 7 June 07 SPC paper 'Advisory Groups Review: Stage 1'

<sup>3</sup> ERG – Cr Celia Wade-Brown, PAG – Cr Ian McKinnon, DRG – Cr Iona Pannett, Youth Council and SASTRG – Cr Hayley Wain.

- payment is required to address barriers to participation
- members acting in their paid employment capacity will not be offered payment.

It is recommended that the above criteria and principles continue to be used in the future to determine if a group qualifies as an advisory group and if the group should be paid.

## **5.2 Payments to current advisory groups**

Members of the Disability Reference Group (DRG), Environment Reference Group (ERG) and Pacific Advisory Group (PAG) are paid to support their participation and input of specialist knowledge and experience to the Council's work. It is recommended that voluntary and not-for-profit groups participating in the Safe and Sustainable Transport Reference Group are offered payment to support their members' attendance. More information on this recommendation is provided in section 5.2.1 below.

It is also recommended that the meeting allowance provided to Youth Council members be examined at the next review of the Youth Council's terms of reference and that this review is scheduled in September 2010 on the forward programme. The proposed review will occur after the already agreed DRG and ERG reviews in June 2010.

### ***5.2.1 The Safe and Sustainable Transport Reference Group (SASTRG) – payments for members from volunteer or not-for-profit groups***

In February 2009 SPC agreed new terms of reference for SASTRG. The supporting report noted a disparity between SASTRG members who attend meetings in a paid capacity, as representatives of their respective agencies, and representatives of volunteer or not-for-profit organisations who are not paid for their contribution. The report stated that payment for these members would be considered as part of this paper reviewing payment of advisory groups.

There are currently three volunteer-run organisations (Living Streets Wellington, Cycle Aware Wellington and the Motorcycle advocacy group) and two not-for-profit organisations (Plunket and Aged Concern) that provide volunteers to participate in SASTRG's meetings.

It is recommended that these groups are provided with payment of up to \$440 per group/per annum to support the participation of their members. Payments made to groups will cover all meetings required in a year (up to six SASTRG plus potential community liaison meetings). Payments can be less than the suggested \$440 per annum if a group cannot attend the majority of meetings.

If this recommendation is agreed then the SASTRG's terms of reference will need to be amended and scheduled in the forward programme.

### **5.2.2 Youth Council**

A \$20 meeting allowance was introduced at the beginning of 2009 for all Youth Council members. Members receive benefits such as access to training and coaching. The allowance supports members' participation, but should be assessed at the next review of the Youth Council to ensure payment adequately compensates members for costs associated with attending meetings and ensures the attraction and retention of participants that represent a wide range of youth perspectives.

It is recommended that the Youth Council's terms of reference are scheduled for review in September 2010 on the forward programme alongside the committed review of the Council's DRG and ERG.

### **5.3 Criteria to determine support for Community Liaison Groups (CLG)**

Members of Community Liaison Groups (CLG) established under Council's resource consent requirements will not be paid.

However a CLG can request up to \$200 per annum for reasonable expenditure if the consent or operation to which the CLG relates:

- a) is the direct responsibility of the Council (i.e. not the responsibility of another consent holder such as Meridian, Wellington International Airport Ltd, the Wellington Rugby Football Union etc) and
- b) necessitates an active and significant workload and the CLG has incurred costs associated with this work.

If the CLG meets both criteria, they can request limited financial support from the Council to cover costs associated with their work.

#### **5.3.1 Process for payments**

Support must be requested by the Community Liaison Group and expenses deemed reasonable and agreed by the CLG facilitator and appropriate business unit manager.

Any payment will be made at the end of the financial year to cover expenditure incurred in the previous financial year.

#### **5.3.2 Moa Point Wastewater Treatment Plant Community Liaison Group**

The Moa Point Wastewater Treatment Plant Community Liaison Group was established under the conditions of the Council's designation for the wastewater treatment plant, following appeals to the Environment Court.

Membership of the group is based on those who appealed to the Environment Court in the late 1980s and representatives of local residents associations – as representatives of the ‘interests of those affected by the treatment plant’<sup>4</sup>.

Many of the current members<sup>5</sup> have served on the group for a significant amount of time (some members for over 15 years). Most of the work and input from the CLG occurs outside of formal meetings, which are only arranged on an as-required basis to help resolve issues as they arise.

Since the plant was commissioned the workload of the CLG has fluctuated depending on events at the plant. In late 2007 new consent applications were sought (and acquired) to enable continued operation of the plant beyond the initial 10 year consents obtained for the plant. The CLG participated fully in this process including the pre-application consultation, the application and Greater Wellington Regional Council hearing and the Environment Court mediation.

The Council has given the CLG financial support for expert assistance from time to time over the life of the project.

The group requested payment in April 2008 in recognition of their time and expenses incurred. It is recommended that up to \$200 per annum be offered to provide for reasonable expenses of the Moa Point Wastewater Treatment Plant CLG. Payment should be made to the group in June 2010 to cover the previous financial year (2009/2010). Current Council support for expert advice for the Moa Point Treatment Plant CLG should continue, at the Council’s discretion, when required.

#### **5.4 Consultation and Engagement**

Officers have liaised with the Facilitator of the Moa Point Wastewater Treatment Plant Community Liaison Group and Council officers that work with the Youth Council and Safe and Sustainable Transport Reference Group mentioned in this report.

Engagement with specific advisory groups will be undertaken later in 2010 as part of reviews of the terms of reference for the ERG, DRG and Youth Council if agreed as recommended in the report.

#### **5.5 Financial considerations**

Payment of the Moa Point Wastewater Treatment Plant Community Liaison Group expenditure up to \$200 per annum will be made from the existing C087 budget in June 2010 for the 2009/10 financial year and in following years after this if the CLG meets the proposed criteria outlined in section 5.3 of this report.

---

<sup>4</sup> Membership was initially made up of Mr and Mrs Cornish, the Sewage Action Committee of the Strathmore Park Progressive and Beautifying Association Inc. and Mrs Hoang.

<sup>5</sup> The four key community representatives on the CLG are now Stan Andis, Marlene Mulholland, Martyn Howells and Lawrie Cornish.

An annual payment of up to \$440 per organisation to a maximum of five volunteer-run community groups of the Safe and Sustainable Transport Reference Group (SASTRG) will require annual funding of \$2200 to be sourced from existing budgets (C450 and C653) from 2010/11.

The benefits of including any additional volunteer-run organisations in SASTRG should be assessed before an invitation is made to any new group.

No retrospective payments will be made.

## **5.6 Climate change impacts and considerations**

There are no direct climate change considerations in the payment of advisory and/or community liaison groups.

## **5.7 Long-term Council Community Plan considerations**

As described in section 5.5 above, funding for payments recommended in this paper will be made from within current budgets (C087 for payments to the Moa Point Wastewater Treatment Plant CLG in June 2010 for the 2009/10 financial year and C450 and C653 for SASTRG from 2010/11) and included in future budgets.

## **6. Conclusion**

This paper distinguishes Council's advisory groups from community liaison groups and proposes criteria and principles to guide decisions and determine whether groups established by the Council should receive payment.

Contact Officer: *Aroha Rangi, Senior Policy Advisor*

## **Supporting Information**

### **1) Strategic Fit / Strategic Outcome**

Advisory groups contribute to the Council's Governance Strategy – particularly the following desired outcomes: More actively engaged – Wellington will operate an open and honest decision-making process that generates confidence and trust in the democratic system and Information required by citizens and groups will be easily accessible to enable participation in the community.

### **2) LTCCP/Annual Plan reference and long term financial impact**

Funding for recommended payments will be made from within current budgets and included in future budgets. Payment of the Moa Point Wastewater Treatment Plant Community Liaison will be made from the existing C087 budget. Payment for the SASTRG will be made from the existing budgets of C450 and C653 from 20010/11.

### **3) Treaty of Waitangi considerations**

This report does not have any Treaty of Waitangi implications.

### **4) Decision-Making**

This report does not involve a significant decision.

### **5) Consultation**

#### **a) General Consultation**

The proposed changes have been discussed with officers who coordinate the affected advisory groups and community liaison group.

#### **b) Consultation with Maori**

Maori have not been consulted about this paper.

### **6) Legal Implications**

There are no legal implications.

### **7) Consistency with existing policy**

This report is consistent with other Council policies.