

Environmental Reference Group Minutes

Monday, 1 December 2014, 5:30-7:45 pm

Wellington City Council, 101 Wakefield St, Committee Room 2

Bev Abbott in the Chair

Present

Members: Bev Abbott (Co-Chair), Peter Gilberd, Phil Hancock, Stu Farrant, Yvonne Legarth, Kate Mitcalfe, Mark Fenwick, Martin Payne, Sea Rotmann

Officers: Simon Wright (Consultation & Engagement), Shanan Smith, (Planning & Reporting), Brian Hannah (Director, Strategy & External Relations), Mark Jones (Policy), Tim Park (Environmental Partnerships Leader)

Apologies

Howard Markland, Paula Warren, Nick Crocker, Janet Young, Graeme Sawyer.

1. Conflicts of Interest:

No conflicts of interest were declared at the beginning of the meeting. Mark declared a conflict of interest in an unanticipated discussion on the airport runway extension proposal towards the end of the meeting.

2. ERG work programme

A letter from WCC was tabled proposing the ERG work programme over the next 6-12 months. The Co-Chairs recommended accepting the proposed work programme.

Brian Hannah told members that the letter represented the results of a new joint approach to developing the ERG's work programme. The approach aimed to align the ERG's work with Council priorities and enable the ERG to be included earlier in WCC decision processes. Having a formalised work programme does not preclude members initiating other work.

It was noted that climate change impacts on just about every item on the work programme. Brian said that the WCC's climate change action plan needs to be updated. It currently has over 30 actions so some prioritisation is needed. Three tranches of work are proposed to inform this: (1) developing a hydraulic model to better understand the impacts of rising sea level, (2) work on the WCC's planning/zoning rules and (3) work on the most appropriate ways of mitigating adverse impacts.

Another theme that cuts across the work programme is the natural environment.

ERG should also consider working with Greater Wellington Regional Council on its regional natural hazards plan.

[Note, the work programme agenda item was revisited towards the end of the meeting after Cr Pannett joined the meeting. See 'Other Business']

Actions:

- Council liaison officer to arrange for officers responsible for items on the work programme to meet with ERG at appropriate times, e.g. before decisions are made, during implementation.

3. Performance measures

Members split into 2 groups to workshop the WCC's outcome performance measures for the environment and for urban development. Once the results have been transcribed, members will have until the New Year to provide further comment.

Actions:

- Simon to have the performance measures worksheets transcribed
- Simon to circulate the transcribed performance measures worksheets to members for further comment.

4. Apologies

Apologies were received from Howard Markland, Nick Crocker, Sophie Mormede, Paula Warren, Graeme Sawyer and Janet Young. Cr Ritchie apologised for leaving early and Cr Pannett for arriving late.

5. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting were accepted as true and correct.

6. Matters arising

Response to ERG letter to Transport and Urban Development Committee

The Chair of the WCC's Transport and Urban Development Committee (TUDC), Cr Foster, responded promptly and positively to the ERG's letter of 12 November by offering to come to an ERG meeting early in the New Year and by having the letter circulated to all members of the TUDC.

Results of poll on meeting day

Following a poll of member preferences, ERG meetings will continue to be on the first Monday of the month. During the first week of any month, this was the only day that all members were available. The next best day would have been Thursdays however three members would have been unavailable on this day.

Chairing ERG

The ERG will need new Co-Chairs from March as Bev Abbott's term on the ERG ends in February and Howard Markland's work commitments are too great for him to continue in this role. Given that no members have expressed interest in becoming a Chair, it was decided that members will take turns as Chair and Deputy Chair. Bev will Chair the February meeting with Phil as the Deputy. Phil will Chair the March meeting with another member acting as Deputy Chair, This

approach will enable knowledge about leading the group and about the issues to be shared across the group, with the Chair effectively 'coaching' the Deputy Chair. This pattern will continue until ERG decides otherwise.

Actions:

- Bev to Chair the February meeting with Phil as the Deputy, Phil to Chair the March meeting with another member as Deputy. This pattern to continue until ERG decides otherwise.

Letter to Colin Crampton, Wellington Water

A note has been sent to Colin Crampton to thank him for presenting to the ERG and to offer the ERG's assistance with issues facing Wellington Water.

7. Other Business

Significance and Engagement Policy

The WCC has approved a new Significance and Engagement Policy which makes the following public commitment:

Listen first and seek to understand

We will collect and reflect on what we hear from the community, including, for example, council advisory groups and community boards, before we develop and engage on any proposal.

Annual Report

A draft ERG Annual Report was circulated for comment. Members agreed that Bev and Howard should complete the report, which Howard will present to the Environment Committee at its meeting on 17 December. Simon is to put the Annual Report on the Committee's agenda.

Actions:

- Bev and Howard to complete the ERG's Annual Report
- Howard to present the ERG's Annual Report to the Environment Committee at its meeting on 17 December
- Simon to put the ERG's Annual Report on the Environment Committee's agenda for 17 December.

Revisiting the ERG's work programme

Cr Pannett noted that she had not signed off the work programme (which was item 2 on the agenda) even though the ERG's Terms of Reference require that the annual work programme be determined jointly between the ERG, Council officers, the Chair of the appropriate Committee and the Councillor representative. Cr Pannett is both a Committee Chair and a Councillor representative.

Cr Pannett stated that she would like the ERG to be involved in the WCC's strategic projects and decisions, and that she would like the work programme to include the airport runway extension and other key Long-term Plan (LTP) projects. Cr Pannett will take up these issues of work programme process and content with the appropriate Council officer.

It was noted that the addition of LTP projects to the work programme would strain the capacity of the ERG to do good work on all the items on the work programme.

The ERG aims to ratify its work programme at its February 2015 meeting.

Actions:

- Cr Pannett to take up issues of the ERG work programme process and content with the appropriate Council officer
- Simon to find out the key dates for the LTP process, especially for the airport runway extension.

Action Summary

- Council liaison officer to arrange for officers responsible for items on the work programme to meet with ERG
- Simon to have the performance measures worksheets transcribed
- Simon to circulate the transcribed performance measures worksheets to members for further comment
- Bev to Chair the February meeting with Phil as the Deputy, Phil to Chair the March meeting with another member as Deputy. This pattern to continue until ERG decide otherwise
- Bev and Howard to complete the ERG's Annual Report
- Howard to the ERG's Annual Report to the Environment Committee at its meeting on 17 December
- Simon to put the ERG's Annual Report on the Environment Committee's agenda for 17 December
- Cr Pannett to take up issues of the ERG work programme process and content with the appropriate Council officer
- Simon to find out the key dates for the LTP process, especially for the airport runway extension.