

## Environmental Reference Group Minutes

Monday, 7<sup>th</sup> March 2016 | 5.30pm – 7.30pm

Wellington City Council, 1010 Wakefield St, Committee Room 2

**Co-Chairpersons:** Mark Fenwick, Sophie Mormede and Kate Mitcalfe

**Members:** Phil Hancock (co-chair), Sophie Mormede (co-chair), Paula Warren, Stu Farrant, Yvonne Legarth, Graeme Sawyer, Kate Mitcalfe (co-chair), Mark Fenwick, Martin Payne, Mark Higham, Daniela Biaggio, Hamish McGillivray, Chris Watson, Lynn Cadenhead, Shenagh Gleisner

**Councillors:** Iona Pannett, Helene Ritchie

**Staff:** James Mather, Joel De Boer, Jessica Clarke

1.	<b>Overview</b>	5.30pm
2.	<b>Conflicts of Interest</b>  Graeme declared he has an ongoing conflict (on-going contract to wellington water   Stormwater).	5.35pm
3.	<b>Apologies</b>  Yvonne Legarth Mark Fenwick  <b>No apologies and absent</b> Cr Helene Ritchie Phil Hancock	5.40pm
4.	<b>Confirmation of last meetings minutes</b>  Minutes are confirmed (Carried)	5.45pm
5.	<b>Animal Bylaw   Jessica Clarke</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Consultation documents going to be presented to Environmental Committee on March 16<sup>th</sup></li><li>- Consultation runs from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 1<sup>st</sup> May</li><li>- Review of Policy and Bylaw has been undertaken</li></ul>	5.50pm

Dog Exercise Areas:

- Issues around fencing in Dog Exercise Areas
- Conflict between Dogs and Wildlife is largely limited in designated areas
- Clarity around dog prohibition areas is needed
- Hard to connect areas with access between dog prohibition areas
- Dog owners are interested in fenced areas, this would be beneficial to all parties (wildlife, children etc.)
- Surveys done showed 50% of people had dogs off leashes in non-designated areas
- WCC is looking at making areas safer, funding has been designated in the LTP for 3 new fenced areas
- Places that aren't safe to be bought up to standard
- Areas that have no exercise spaces will be looked into
- There are criteria to determine these changes in the policy
- Group highlighted that some current prohibition measures (faeces and having the dogs of leash) do not work
- Group suggested that culture and education of dog owners needs to change
- From a wildlife perspective, dogs less of an issue than cats
- If the public know that dogs have to be on leashes, and have a number to ring, then compliance could be looked into
- No point in having a policy if there is no ability to enforce it
- Having dog walking tracks would allow diversity in exercise choice

Cats:

- How to make cat owners aware that they need to be tracked
- Idea of live trapping in parks and reserves, if chipped being returned but not euthanised.
- Being able to tell what is a feral cat vs a domestic would be a huge step in the right direction
- SPCA catching cats, sterilising them, then releasing them into the wild isn't best practice
- Group noted that live trapping is very expensive

- Biodiversity is increasing, a bold approach is needed
- WCC can live trap on reserves and euthanise if unclaimed after a certain period
- WCC unsure about how curfews would work within current culture. There is no limit to cat ownership, also operational issues for Animal Services.
- Group asserted that the concept of a curfew raises the issue that a curfew implies that cats are safe in the day (which they are not – safe in the day fallacy).
- Creating a culture of responsibility for cat owners is important – good for wildlife and cat welfare
- A similar conversation about cat ownership needs to be had like that had, or is ongoing with, dog ownership.
- Noticing increases in mice and rats needs to be accounted for in the policy if cat numbers drop
- “Responsible Cat Owner” charges concept floated
- Group is pro cat ownership limit – 3 (same for dogs)
- Amnesty period on microchipping proposed by group
- Education programme is essential

#### Pidgeon’s and non-native Birds

- Research showed that some vulnerable people were getting their social interaction from feeding Pidgeon’s
- Ducks shouldn’t be fed – bad for ducks and leads to increases in ducks which impacts water quality
- Humane strategies to deal with Pidgeon’s and their excessive numbers
- Pidgeon’s have rapid breeding cycles
- Feeding Pidgeon’s encourages population growth
- Pidgeon are most complained about non-native bird
- Regional Council manage most pest control

#### Chickens and Roosters

- Minimum distance for Roosters from boundary should be required
- A maximum number of chickens/roosters proposed

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No barriers to chicken ownership currently, nor number limits</li> <li>- Disease is a huge issues, noise is a problem but not the priority</li> <li>- “Adequate care” is currently determined by officers</li> <li>- Having considerations on the website/best practice would be helpful for the public</li> </ul> <p>Working Group formed to write a submission (Daniella, Lynn &amp; Graeme) - Loomio group to be formed</p> <p>Commentary on submissions that come in also proposed.</p>	
<p><b>6.</b></p>	<p><b>Joel De Boer   Open Space Access Plan</b></p> <p>Minor Review  Implementation plan is almost complete, ideal time to go back and review what has been done and address new issues  E-Bikes are being looked into</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Anything under 300watts is considered a bicycle</li> <li>- Some areas currently do not allow E-Bikes</li> <li>- Looking at updating maps, not just showing lines on papers but being more descriptive</li> <li>- Looking at taking some of the initiative in the plan, and identifying</li> <li>- WCC have found that users of E-Bikes often need them for accessibility reasons (injuries, impairments)</li> <li>- Review is going to Environment Committee on the 28<sup>th</sup> of April for Public Consultation</li> <li>- Some tracks have been nominated for prioritisation for Mountain Bikers</li> <li>- European standard on E-Bikes is 250watts maximum (this is similar to what a fit biker could achieve)</li> <li>- 70% of E-bike sales are for commuting use (based on Joel’s research)</li> <li>- Issues have been noted with more powerful bikes being used on trails and doing damage (400watts)</li> </ul>	<p><b>6.35pm</b></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Group raised the issue of separation of bikes and pedestrians in reserves, more important if E-Bikes are to become more prevalent</li> <li>- Tackling the issue on the premise of speed may be a better way of solving the conflict between bikers and walkers</li> <li>- Some tracks can accommodate overtaking</li> <li>- Width of tracks has to be considered, but in conjunction with other factors such as sightlines</li> <li>- Preserving peoples experience in parks is important, not being disrupted during designated use (bikers impacting walkers etc.)</li> <li>- Commuter routes are increasingly being used by mixed modes of transport, often through parks to public transport</li> <li>- Feedback WCC sought currently shows that bikers wish to stay to their road networks</li> <li>- Currently the approach is to have shared networking where possible. Dividing tracks into areas may not work for some pedestrians but will for others</li> <li>- Group proposes sitting down with map to determine gaps and order prioritisation</li> <li>- Group highlighted that advertising of routes via various means of transport (off-road, walking, biking) is currently inadequate</li> <li>- WCC currently looking at a CBD-out approach, but will consider a suburb-to-CBD approach</li> <li>- Designation of “uphill” and “downhill” tracks is important for safety reasons</li> <li>- Issues on shared spaces, too much difference in speed between cyclists and pedestrians (especially on commuter routes)</li> <li>- Currently signage could be more consistent and user-friendly</li> <li>- May be a conflict between “pure mountain bikers” and E-bikers</li> <li>- Group encouraged more criteria when determining track placement</li> <li>- Group highlighted that track building initiatives are hard to undertake through the correct channels</li> </ul> <p>Group to form a working group to feedback into this review – to be updated at following meeting.</p>	
<b>7.</b>	<b>Other Business</b>	<b>7.10pm</b>

8.	<p><b>Councillor Update</b></p> <p>St Gerard's land swap (monastery overlooking the city) is underway – 2 competing environmental</p> <p>Airport Extension to be looked into by James and Iona</p> <p>Local Government Commission has put the amalgamation on hold temporarily. Number of CCO's considered to be put under regional management. Assets possibly taken from council and put under CCO's. Emphasis on shared services</p>	7.25pm
9.	<p><b>Portfolio Group Updates</b></p> <p><b>Urban Development</b> – targeted urban intensification. Some rules not being implemented as envisioned To meet quotas there are density issues <b>(James to get updates on intensification policy)</b></p> <p><b>Transport –</b> James to provide updates on Hutt Road Parking day is this Wednesday (9/3/2016)</p>	7.30pm

#### Action Points

1. James to provide Hutt Cycleway updates
2. James to find updated on intensification policy
3. Portfolio groups to begin Loomio discussions regarding climate change and the urban regeneration agency once James provides documentation]
4. James to begin pulling together previous minutes to form Annual Report foundation

Working group	ERG lead	Council officer
Transport	Paula Warren	Elise Webster, Principal Advisor Transport Strategy
Climate Change	Yvonne Legarth	Moana Mackey, Programme Manager Sustainability
Waste	Martin Payne	Adrian Mitchell, Waste Operations Manager
Urban Growth	Graeme Sawyer	Trudy Whitlow , Urban Design & Heritage Manager
Water	Paula Warren (interim)	Yon Cheong Manager, Regional Strategy and Policy Wgtn Water
Biodiversity	Stu Farrant	Myfanwy Emeny, Team Leader Biodiversity & Urban Ecology

Meeting adjourned at 7.30pm