

WELLINGTON CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Pacific Advisory Group Meeting on 18 February 2009

Present:

1. Ida Faiumu-Isa'ako (Chairperson - Samoa)
2. Kolovula Murphy (Deputy – Tonga)
3. Martha Ahmed (Tokelau)
4. Mafi Katoa (Tonga)
5. Danny Kauraka (Cook Islands)
6. Titia Vaerua (Cook Islands)
7. Malakai Jiko (Fiji)
8. Brenda Cottingham (Niue)
9. Avia Liai (Tuvalu)
10. Ana To'o (Samoa)
11. Mailigi Hetutu (Niue)

12. Deputy Mayor Ian McKinnon
13. Councillor Iona Pannett
14. Marie Retimanu-Pule
15. Phoebe Velova'a
16. Billie Tait-Jones
17. Aroha Rangi
18. Trudy Jenkins

Welcome:

- Warm pacific greetings and welcome from the Chairperson.

Opening Prayer:

- Brenda Cottingham

Apologies:

- Tina McNicholas, Councillor Leonie Gill, Jennifer Rains

CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES

- Ida Faiumu Isa'ako asked if the members were in a position to move the Minutes from the meeting on 14 December 2008. The Minutes were moved as a correct record by Ana To'o and seconded by Malakai Jiko.
- The Minutes from the meeting on 21 January 2009 were also moved as a correct record by Danny Kauraka and seconded by Martha Ahmed.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

- Marie Retimanu-Pule said in regard to the Minutes from the meeting held on 21 January 2009 regarding the Pasifika Festival, Jenny Rains and Marie Retimanu-Pule have had a discussion and have decided to have a separate meeting to have a debrief on the Pasifika Festival as there will be a lot to discuss. Ida Faiumu-Isa'ako asked if this special meeting will be a paid meeting. Marie Retimanu-Pule said that this meeting would be a paid meeting.
- There were no matters arising from the Minutes of either of the previous meetings.

GENERAL MATTERS

- Ida Faiumu-Isa'ako tabled and read out two letters of appreciation received from Hon Luamanuvao Winnie Laban, MP for Mana and the Wellington Indian Association with regard to the Pasifika Festival. She said that it was good to have this sort of acknowledgement from members of the community.
- Ida Faiumu-Isa'ako then asked the PAG members if they agreed to attend a special meeting to debrief on the Pasifika Festival. The members all agreed to this.
- Marie Retimanu-Pule handed round a booklet and CD containing photos taken of the Pasifika Festival. She asked if any of the PAG members would like a particular photo or a copy of the CD could they please let her know as it is important for these photos to go out to the communities.

LTCCP

- Aroha Rangi handed out copies of the LTCCP consultation booklet. She said that this time Council were consulting with the public before writing the draft LTCCP to help the public learn more about how Council develop this plan and get their thoughts on the proposals. Council have stalls at festivals, a Councillor hotline for the public to ring in and they have been going out to the different community groups. There is a short time frame to do this in and the LTCCP team have to provide a feedback report by 27 February.
- Ida Faiumu-Isa'ako asked what we need to discuss with our communities as the timeframe is short and we will not be able to have community meetings before 27 February.
- Aroha Rangi said that the general areas of strategy for consultation will remain the same when the draft LTCCP is written. She said that this process is encouraging for people to know that they can have their say about how Council plans and be part of the planning process. Ida Faiumu-Isa'ako said

that engagement to her means that the concept has been given out to the community and her part will be to make them understand.

- Aroha Rangi drew attention to the pie chart in the booklet that shows the breakdown of the operational budget for Council. She said that people have found this confusing but they are presenting it this way because this is the way that Council plans. She asked if there were any particular strategic areas of specific interest to the Pacific people as it would be good to have this feedback. If any of the PAG members do have any feedback in this regard could they please get back to her either via email or phone.
- Vula Murphy asked whether the cut off time frame could be extended. Aroha Rangi said that the community can still respond formally on the draft LTCCP between April and May but we cannot extend the time for the pre-engagement work because we need to write our report. There is the opportunity now to let people know that between 16 April and 16 May the formal consultation process will take place. At this time the public will be given the opportunity to make any oral submissions to the draft plan. She also noted that Council can come out to groups to talk about the draft plan.
- Ida Faiumu-Isa'ako said that in terms of ethnic groups wanting halls, where does this fall within the strategic area as from a Pacific view point this should be part of the cultural and wellbeing. Aroha Rangi said that the booklet has a breakdown of the spending in the strategic areas. The cultural and wellbeing strategic area is where arts support comes from. She noted that this year Council have decided to reduce spending across the board instead of completely cutting services and Council needs to hear your views on what you think is important.
- Ida Faiumu-Isa'ako said that if you are asking for Pacific input for her it is not about how Council are saving on money but she is more interested in what Council are doing for the Pacific people. She then asked about the strategic area of Governance with Maori engagement and what this meant. Aroha Rangi said that Council have a formal relationship and MOU with Mana Whenua and in terms of operational expenditure this is what 'Maori engagement' means. Although Council Officers work with the wider Maori community, a formal relationship between Council and Taura Here Maori has not been established yet.
- Aroha Rangi noted that PAG members would have views as Pacific people but their views as ratepayers (on roads, water management, etc) are also valid and interesting. Council would like to hear these views.
- Ida Faiumu-Isa'ako said that there was an issue in the eastern suburbs that could be addressed in the LTCCP with there not being enough bus stops and people are not attending health appointments. Parking is very expensive at the airport and this is also an issue for Pacific people.

LTCCP PRESENTATION – Deputy Mayor Ian McKinnon

- Deputy Mayor Ian McKinnon thanked the PAG members for attending these meetings and for their input into Council. What is important is to say is that these are the things we want to take back to Council. We want you to share in this major task facing Council. Council are currently compiling their LTCCP as Council are required by legislation to have a 10 year plan. Legislation also requires that Council's plan for the first three years should be in considerable detail. Then after three years Council need to do another 10 year plan. At this time Council really needs to reflect on what it is doing. In the legislation that governs Council we have to take responsibility to protect the wellbeing of the City so our 10 year plan has to really be driven by social wellbeing, environmental wellbeing, cultural wellbeing and economic wellbeing and must be proven during the plan. Council are very proud of the way we are doing this. Council normally produce a draft and then this goes out for consultation and then members and rate payers can consult. This time we are having a two stage approach, the engagement stage before the officers draw up the draft plan so you can let us know what you want in your community. Then the draft plan will go into the consultation phase. Residents will have two chances to comment on the plan. We need to ask people what they want to see in Wellington.
- **How Council are Getting your Feedback** – Council are holding hotlines so that you can speak to Councillors, road shows, workshops, public round tables and all the Advisory groups are being asked for their feedback. We have a facebook page, and you can access information through the Council website. There is also a budget simulator showing you what impact you will have on your rates by taking and adding services/events.
- At the end of the engagement period Council will write a draft plan, Councillors will vote on this plan, the plan goes into the consultation process and then Councillors vote again.
- **Council's Approach to Decision Making** – Maintain Wellington's vibrancy; not a 'back to basics' approach; target rates increase of not more than 4%; maintain essential infrastructure; reduce services rather than stop them; look at ways we can lower costs by reducing demand, ie, water use; leverage external funding, eg, from Central Government. We are saying that the moral of a city also depends on having fun. Council need to make sure all spending is spent wisely and efficiently but there may have to be some sacrifices. We need to ask if there are things we can cut back on. One way is to look at library hours and we must be prepared to make some sacrifices.
- Deputy Mayor Ian McKinnon then explained the various strategic areas of Council spending and when through the possible ways that Council could look at saving money.
- **Governance** – this includes the Call Centre; information, consultation and decision making; Maori engagement and elections.

Do you think we should – continue to review spending in this area; reduce the printed quality of some of our publications; explore more cost effective ways to engage with the public.

- **Environment** – this includes wastewater and stormwater; waste reduction and energy conservation; environmental conservation attractions; gardens and beaches and green open spaces and supports the zoo and Karori Sanctuary.

Do you think we should – spend on water demand management to help defer dam construction; spend less on mowing, garden maintenance and planting by reprioritising maintenance; defer construction of new walking tracks but maintain existing ones; defer upgrades of parks and beach facilities for the next three years.

- **Cultural Wellbeing** – this includes community arts and cultural support, arts partnerships, galleries and museums, heritage.

Do you think we should – charge out-of-town visitors a fee for galleries/museums; keep funding for cultural festivals and grants at 08/09 levels; reduce spending on public art; establish an arts hub within Toi Poneke; be more discerning about what City Archives accepts.

- **Social and Recreation** – this includes recreation facilities and programmes; community support; public health and safety, housing, libraries.

Do you think we should – proceed with Indoor Sports Centre; reduce nights the libraries open and close; maintain safety and graffiti removal programmes; slow down the recreational facility, public toilet and pavilions upgrade programme; redevelop Khandallah Town Hall.

- **Transport** – this includes transport planning and policy, parking and transport networks.

Do you think we should – spread project work over a longer timeframe; reduce funds from footpath renewal and reallocate funds; do earthquake strengthening work on the Karori Tunnel; maintain parking fees at existing levels.

- **Economic Development** – this includes city promotion, events and attractions; business support.

Do you think we should – continue to plan our support for the Rugby World Cup; reduce spending on the Move to Wellington website; explore options for a regional amenities levy.

- **Urban Development** – this includes building control and facilitation; urban planning and policy; development control and facilitation, earthquake risk mitigation; public space development.

Do you think we should – Explore opportunities for a region-wide building consents service; phase the upgrade programme for parks and public spaces; dispense with the heritage buildings grants scheme.

- If you believe that we have to try and keep the rates at 4% but do not believe we should cut off all existing things Wellington does then Council Officers have to make sure things are done efficiently but we will still have to make sacrifices.
- Aroha Rangi said that if anyone had any questions then they could get in touch with her. Deputy Mayor Ian McKinnon said that Council will be happy to receive emails or you can always telephone Council Officers.
- Ida Faiumu-Isa'ako thanked Deputy Mayor Ian McKinnon for his presentation and noted that the PAG members have a responsibility to respond. PAG members have the mandate from their communities but they must go back to the community for consultation. In this regard it would be good to have a copy of the presentation to take out to the communities. Deputy Mayor Ian McKinnon said that PAG members should consult with their communities about the 4% rates increase and how Council can get there.
- Danny Kauraka said that he cannot understand why saving water will save money. Deputy Mayor Ian McKinnon said that Council pay \$15million for water that we pay the Regional Council. We pay for the upkeep, maintenance, etc of the pipes. Council needs to take into account that as the population grows we will need to provide more pipes.
- Deputy Mayor Ian McKinnon said that the water is more of an educational issue. Library hours; beaches; not supporting events as much; sports centre – these are things you may wish to think about. The baseline is that if we do something new it increases the rates – if we take something away it decreases the rates. Whatever you want will have an effect on the things that Council does. Council must be careful in times of recession that we do not burden ratepayers but still maintain a vibrant city.
- Deputy Mayor Ian McKinnon said that he has had nothing but outstanding reports about the Pasifika Festival and he noted that people do not realise the amount of work that is put into the festival. We must not lose the Festival because having a Pacific presence is part of the City's vibrancy.
- Vula Murphy said that their community has set a meeting for 4 March and would like someone to come along and talk about the LTCCP.
- The question was asked whether the population for Wellington is increasing. Deputy Mayor Ian McKinnon said that it is and will increase by about 20,000 and most people will be living in the CBD.
- The question was then asked if this will mean a further rates increase with the population growing. Deputy Mayor Ian McKinnon said that rates income is a set figure. Vula Murphy asked if the rates increased by 5% previously.

Deputy Mayor Ian McKinnon said that the rates increased by 5.2% last year and a little more the year before because we have to maintain infrastructure overall.

- Danny Kauraka asked if Wellington City had one of the cheaper rates. Deputy Mayor Ian McKinnon said that we have lower rates in property values than other cities closer by. But the question needs to be asked if the rates are too low is that Council doing what it is supposed to be doing to maintain services. Ida Faiumu-Isa'ako said that members should promote the fact that infrastructure is important when talking about the Council's LTCCP.
- The question was asked if Council had a say about the land at Shelley Bay now that it has been sold. Deputy Mayor Ian McKinnon said that the Tenth's Trust are now the owners of this land and they have a commitment to listen to Council, the Regional Council and the people who live in this area.
- Deputy Mayor Ian McKinnon said that expectations should not be raised too high for what Council can do in the LTCCP as these may not occur because of technical, legal or economic implications. All submissions/suggestions will be noted but Council may not be able to do everything.
- Vula Murphy said that last year their community had tabled a proposal for a Pan Pacific Centre and she asked whether this has been considered. Councillor Iona Pannett said that this would have to be considered as part of the Community Facilities Review and the only money available for this type of proposal at the moment is for the Khandallah Town Hall upgrade. She said that if people feel strongly about this then to make a submission through the LTCCP. Aroha Rangi said that she would look into this and get back to Vula Murphy.
- Ida Faiumu-Isa'ako asked Council to give a couple of scenarios of things that would not come to fruition, ie, if she said that she would like hibiscus flowers grown in a certain area would this be something that could be looked at. Aroha Rangi said that would be up to Councillors to decide and that Council are looking at ways to save money but there may be special cases that could be looked at. Deputy Mayor Ian McKinnon explained that as well as budget constraints there may also be environmental constraints to some ideas, ie, are there places in Wellington where hibiscus will grow easily? It is important to have a talk to your communities about the high level strategies as well. Ida Faiumu-Isa'ako said that Pacific expectations are not high but may have a big impact for the Pacific people. Aroha Rangi said that it would be good for the group to talk with your communities and encourage them to say what you feel as this is the way people get to have a say and come up with different ideas. Once Council has heard the ideas, officers could then say whether it is possible or not or could be looked at. Themes from feedback we receive as part of the consultation will be written into the feedback report and will be looked at by Council.
- Titia Vaerua said that if there are more people in the city then this should mean that we should pay less in rates. Deputy Mayor Ian McKinnon said that

Council work this differently and need to determine what we want to spend first. In a normal business sense a business looks at how much income they receive and how they want to spend the money but Council determine what we want to spend and then determine the rates payments. A rise in the population is factored in when Council sets the rates. Councillor Iona Pannett also noted that if we have more people in the city then Council may need to spend more as there will be a greater load on services and it depends on how Council manage this.

- Titia Vaerua said that they have put initiatives forward in the past and feel that they have not been heard and have found this very disappointing. Deputy Mayor Ian McKinnon said that people should put their ideas forward and should not think that they will not be heard and listened to and a good example of this is the funding that has been allocated for the Pasifika Festival. He also said that this Council will never promise what it cannot deliver.
- Titia Vaerua said that the Pacific people have been wanting a Pacific representative in Council for a long time. Deputy Mayor Ian McKinnon said that this is something that would have to be worked through in a cultural debate as everyone needs to be elected to Council and the question would be asked how do we chose a representative from only one nation. He said that he thought this would be part of a big debate.
- Billie Tait-Jones said that their Maori Huis on the LTCCP have been very successful. She also said how much the Maori community enjoyed the Pasifika Festival and said that they will be attending and requesting stalls for future festivals with a reciprocal agreement for Waitangi Day for the Pacific People.
- Ana To'o said that she thought it was important for the PAG members to go into their communities to talk about and draw people's attention to the LTCCP consultation process.
- Malakai Jiko said that he would be putting through a submission via email.
- Ida Faiumu-Isa'ako thanked the speakers and Councillors for attending this meeting.

Closing Prayer:

- Ida Faiumu-Isa'ako

Next Meeting: 18 March 2009

Meeting Closed: 7:55pm