

Environmental Reference Group Minutes

Monday, 3 August 2015, 5:30-7:30 pm

Wellington City Council, 101 Wakefield St, Committee Room 2

Mark Fenwick in the Chair

Present

Members: Howard Markland, Sophie Mormede, Paula Warren, Stu Farrant, Graeme Sawyer, Kate Mitcalfe, Mark Fenwick, Martin Payne
Yvonne Legarth

Councillors: Cr Pannett

Officers: Helen Walker (Liaison officer) and Myfanwy Emeny (Biodiversity and Urban Eco)

Guests: Jetesh Bhula and Iqbal Idris (Wellington Water)

Apologies: Cr Ritchie, Phil Hancock and Janet Young

1. Introduction and conflicts of interest

Mark welcomed everyone

Martin and Stu declared a possible conflict of interest from working with Wellington Water.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cr Ritchie and Phil Hancock.

Janet Young advised that she had resigned. Howard will write to Janet thanking her for her contribution.

3. “Our Natural Capital” – Wellington biodiversity strategy and action plan

Myfanwy Emeny presented the adopted biodiversity strategy and thanked the group for its contribution to the strategy. About \$320k per annum has been attached to the action plan in this year’s Long Term Plan. That funding will be spent on initiatives such as pest control, Te Kopahou Reserve; cat awareness resources and monitoring freshwater invertebrates. Myfanwy appreciated the input from the group and considered that biodiversity issues were more embedded in Council. ERG congratulated her on her process and noted how much more meaningful the contribution can be when there is early engagement with groups such as ERG. (Myfanwy left the meeting.)

A challenge will be ensuring the strategy is embedded in council decision making. It was suggested that WCC should require that all Plimmer Trust grants are consistent with the strategy. Helen to check if WCC can amend criteria and advise the group.

4. Wellington Water modelling

Jetesh and Iqbal spoke to the ERG about the hydraulic model development programme being carried out by Wellington Water for the wastewater and stormwater networks. The goal is to build high quality models to analyse and evaluate options for the system. The models will also measure the impact of climate change and system performance. They are a key strategic planning tool and are used for understanding system performance. Wellington Water are keen to progress the models as quickly as possible with the goal of an integrated Wellington Catchment Plan for 5 catchments to be completed by 3/2018. Scoping studies for CBD, Miramar and Island Bay have been completed. Stormwater modelling is concerned with rainfall events and not network flow monitoring.

There were a number of questions from the group concerned with cost effectiveness, capability, the business case for the modelling option that was selected, the value proposition, how the product will be used outside Wellington water, how good the base data is, the impact on the fish and data on water harvesting.

Howard will discuss issues with Jetesh and identify an appropriate person to discuss these issues at a subsequent meeting.

5. Minutes of last meeting

Howard moved that the minutes be accepted as true and correct. Sophie seconded the motion and it was passed.

6. Matters arising

Helen to ask Nicci Wood to attend the next meeting to discuss waste.

Rotating Chair

After some discussion it was agreed that Mark, Yvonne and Sophie will share the chairing of the meetings.

Six topic areas have been identified and a member will take the lead on those topics. They are:

- Transport Paula
- Climate Change Kate
- Waste Martin
- Urban Growth Graeme
- Water Howard
- Biodiversity Stu

Helen and Iona will identify Council contacts for each of these topics and advise the lead of their contact details.

7. Other Business

Timing of Meetings

There was discussion about changing the day or time of the ERG meetings to enable Cr Ritchie to attend meetings. However there was no other suitable day or time and it was agreed that the meeting time should remain the same.

Mediation workshop

Paula and Sophie reported back on the mediation workshop held by John Sturrock QC a noted Scottish mediator. The workshop was organised by Cr Woolf. They noted that a key theme was the relationship between council and the community. This led to discussion on the Council's relationship and engagement with the community. ERG consider that the Council does not engage well, do not have a commitment to engagement and parts of Council do not listen to each other. Engaging early is much preferred as people then have some influence rather than being presented with a fait accompli. It was suggested it should be a measurable item in the annual plan.

It was agreed that Paula would write to Cr Woolf (as engagement portfolio lead).

Forward Programme

The ERG work programme discussion was deferred. It was agreed that after the Governance Finance and Performance Committee have considered the forward programme, it should be posted on Drop Box in advance of the September meeting.

Stormwater Consultation Committee

Some discussion around the terms of reference for the Stormwater Consultation Committee and that it is looking to do more advocacy. There may be an increasing overlap or duplication with the role of the ERG. Members that are on both groups will monitor this.

September meeting

- Next meeting is Monday 7 September.
- Yvonne will chair.
- Stu will report on biodiversity work.
- Nicci Wood to discuss waste.
- Forward Programme / ERG work programme to be discussed.
- If WCC is making a submission on the National Resource Plan – Helen to invite the person doing the submission to attend the next ERG meeting.

8. Action Summary

1. Howard to write to Janet thanking her for her contribution to the ERG

2. Helen to check if WCC can amend criteria (to include a requirement for consistency with the biodiversity strategy) for the Plimmer Trust and advise the group.
3. Howard will discuss water modelling questions with Jetesh and invite someone from Wellington Water to discuss these issues at a subsequent meeting.
4. Helen to invite Nicci Wood to the next meeting to discuss waste
5. Helen and Iona will identify Council contacts for each of the topic groups and will advise the group lead of contact details
6. Paula to write to Cr Woolf on engagement and consultation
7. Helen to post the forward programme on Drop Box after it has been considered by GFP in advance of the September meeting.
8. Helen to invite the person doing the National Resource Plan submission to attend the next ERG meeting
9. Paula to draft a letter to the CEO (agreed at meeting of 6 July)