

Environmental Reference Group

Minutes

Date: Monday, 13 September 2021

Time: 5:00pm – 7:00pm

Venue: Zoom

Purpose

- Advise Council on the best ways to improve Wellingtonian’s quality of life environmentally, socially, culturally, and economically by protecting and enhancing the local environment.
- Bring knowledge and insight into Council around the environment, including water, energy, waste, biodiversity, urban design, climate change, heritage, and transport management, in the context of Council’s roles and priorities.

Membership

Chairperson:	Lynn Cadenhead
Members:	Steven Almond, Mike Britton, Sally Faisandier, George Hobson, Clare Stringer, Chris Watson, David Batchelor, Arran Whiteford, Arron Cox
Liaison Councillors:	Cr Tamatha Paul, Cr Laurie Foon
WCC Staff:	Mike Mendonca (Chief Infrastructure Officer), Moana Mackey (Chief Advisor to the CIO and CPO), Jenny Rains (Community Services Manager), Sehai Orgad (Manager Government Relations and Special Projects), Hedi Mueller (Senior Democracy Advisor), Claire Barlow (Democracy Advisor)

Meeting Procedures

The meeting opened at 5:05pm

Apologies were received from the following members:

- David Batchelor – for the previous meeting
- Isla Day and Michelle Rush– for absence.
- No issues were raised with the minutes of the previous meeting.

Apologies and minutes carried **SF/CS**

No conflicts of interest were declared.

Items

Pōneke Promise, Presented by Sehai Orgad and Jenny Rains

Sehai and Jenny co-presented on the current progress of this initiative. The programme is set up to harness the drive of the community, in response to safety concerns in and around Courtney Place. They introduced the new website, which goes live on 20 September and shows visually what is being done to make our city safer. Sehai indicated that she would distribute a copy of the paper that had recently gone to Council.

Members shared their insights into minority groups who may not yet have been heard from and suggested that data collected might be able to be coordinated with the FIXit app.

Lyn facilitated a round of introductions for the benefit of Arran Whiteford, a new member to the group.

Councillor Updates, Cr Paul and Cr Foon

Cr Paul briefed members on the progress of the District Plan and preparations for public consultation. She also talked about a recent submission to the Select Committee on the exposure draft of the Natural and Built Environments Act and her attendance at the Regional Climate Change Committee meeting the week before. She highlighted some of the work that Council had been doing since the last meeting, including approving the Dog Policy and Animal Report, conversations about the Tracks Network Plan, recent developments with the Three Waters proposal, the Cycleway Master Plan, and a recent hui which younger Council members participated in.

Cr Foon spoke briefly about emissions and increasing costs and WCC's aspirations to reduce these. She also updated the group on the following papers coming to Council:

- Funding paper for Sludge Removal
- Strategic Waste Review – how will we deal with our residual waste (due to Council 14 October)
- Te Atakura paper

General Discussion

There was brief discussion around Three Waters reforms and the emphasis being more on pipes than environmental outcomes.

Mike Mendonca spoke about the two Waste papers and agreed to provide some information to members for feedback.

Portfolio Discussion

Members were updated to changes on portfolio leads as follows:

- George will take the lead on Biodiversity
- David will lead Heritage
- Sally will replace Eleanor as the Urban Design lead.
- Arron Cox will be resigning from the group after this meeting.
- The Fresh Water portfolio is now vacant.

It was suggested that the wording in the portfolio general information be updated to “recognise, respect, and apply principles of Te Tiriti”.

Lyn thanked both Arron and Eleanor for their contributions to the group.

Work Plan/Annual Report

Lynn provided an update on the group’s Annual Report and then discussed the Workplan and asked for feedback.

Member Updates

George: Biodiversity - continues to meet with the Urban Ecology Manager and has also met with Vida Christeller to provide some feedback into the Green Networks Plan.

Sally: Urban Design – gave a heads-up that staff will present the Green Networks Plan to Councillors in October and then they will present to ERG in November. Staff are keen to hear the group’s views.

David: Heritage - Wellington Heritage Week is coming up on 25 October. Lyn, Sally and David met with Mark Lindsay to discuss the Draft Heritage Policy.

Steve: Waste - was going to mention the Strategic Waste Review but will wait for Mike Mendonça to send through the information.

Lyn: presented Clare’s submission on Trading and Events in Public Places Policy at a Council hearing.

Staff Updates

Mike Mendonca: Talked briefly about resilience, both flooding and stormwater as well as seismic resilience. The District Plan is a once in a lifetime opportunity to build this into the city’s future.

Moana Mackey: Highlighted that October is a very busy month with the Draft District Plan, Let’s Get Wellington Moving, the Cycleway Master Plan and the Landfill Extension.

She pointed out the impact of Covid-19 restrictions on public consultation and the tight time constraints around this work which mean it can't be delayed.

David and Clare thanked Lynn and Sally for their work on the Annual Report/Workplan

The meeting closed at 6:52pm

Information

Next meeting date: 11/10/2021

Actions from this meeting:

1. Sehai to distribute paper that went to Council about Pōneke Promise.
2. Cr Foon to provide an update on Te Atakura paper after it has been to Committee.
3. Mike Mendonca to send Strategic Waste and Waste Review information to the group.
4. Sally to send updated wording for portfolio information to Lyn.