
Environment Committee

Komiti Taiao

OPEN MINUTES

Minutes of a meeting of the Environment Committee held in Council Chamber and Audio Visual link, Municipal Building, Garden Place, Hamilton on Tuesday 22 February 2022 at 1.05pm.

PRESENT

Chairperson Cr M Gallagher (exclusively via audio visual link)

Heamana

Deputy Chairperson Cr S Thomson (exclusively via audio visual link)

Heamana Tuarua

Members

Mayor P Southgate

Cr A O'Leary (exclusively via audio visual link)

Cr K Naidoo-Rauf (exclusively via audio visual link)

Cr D Macpherson

Cr M Donovan

Maangai N Hill (exclusively via audio visual link)

In Attendance

Cr van Oosten (exclusively via audio visual link)

Cr Wilson (exclusively via audio visual link)

Sean Hickey – General Manager Strategy and Communication

Blair Bowcott – General Manager Growth

Poppy Barran – Sustainability and Climate Change Advisor

Jamie Sirl – Team Leader City Planning

Alistair McCullough – Planning Lead, Biodiversity and Parks

Governance Team

Amy Viggers – Governance Lead

Carmen Fortin and Tyler Gaukrodger – Governance Advisors

Maangai Hill opened the meeting with a karakia.

1. Apologies – *Tono aroha*

Resolved: (Cr Thomson/Cr Gallagher)

That the apology for lateness from Cr O'Leary is accepted.

2. Confirmation of Agenda – *Whakatau raarangi take*

Resolved: (Cr Thomson/Cr Donovan)

That the agenda is confirmed.

3. Declarations of Interest - *Tauaakii whaipaaanga*

No members of the Council declared a Conflict of Interest.

4. Public Forum – Aatea koorero

Hannah Huggan spoke to item 7 (Update on the 2021/22 Climate Change Action Plan) stating that drastic systemic changes which recognise the social impacts of climate change are needed. She noted that over her three years of presenting to Council her message has been consistent in the obligation of Council to reduce emissions and mitigate the warming which has already occurred. She noted extreme climate events and the impact these have on the environment, support from the community for Council to do more in the climate and environment space, her support for the work of staff while simultaneously suggesting that Council needs to do more, and she suggested that there was a need for urgency and more ambitious goals to result in real action. She responded to questions from Members concerning Central Government funding limitations for public transportation projects.

Cr O'Leary joined the meeting (1.14pm) during discussion of the above item.

5. Confirmation of the Open Environment Committee Minutes – 30 November 2021

Resolved: (Cr Macpherson/Maangai Hill)

That the Environment Committee confirm the Open Minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on 30 November 2021 as a true and correct record.

6. Chair's Report

The Deputy Chair took the report as read, noting the Elected Member feedback on the urban tree strategy. The Chair noted the correspondence from Tui2000 (**Appendix 1**), and applauded the organisation for their ongoing work and the contribution to the city.

Resolved: (Cr Thomson/Cr Gallagher)

That the Environment Committee receives the report.

7. Update on 2021/22 Climate Change Action Plan

The Sustainability and Climate Change Advisor took the report as read, noting the purpose of the report was to provide an update on the Climate Change Action Plan. She noted that this report was the second update to the Climate Change Action Plan with the first being in November 2021, outlined changes to the reporting and actions, inclusion of the biogenic emissions in reporting, actions to reduce emissions, projects planned in regard to behaviour change and Council emissions, and changes to the planned staff Climathon event due to Covid restrictions.

She responded to questions from Members concerning long-term strategy to employ AC charging around the city, delay to the Municipal Building's centralised air-conditioning project and other energy initiatives, strategy for phasing out natural gas, utilisation of renewable energy sources at Council facilities, management and hierarchy of energy choices, schools' cycling education programme, coordinating strategies with partners including mana whenua, next steps for waste minimisation including tyre waste, sustainability scorecard and action plan reporting, rainwater and greywater initiatives, wellbeing indicator report measures, and strategy inclusion within the action plan.

Resolved: (Cr Donovan/Cr Macpherson)

That the Environment Committee receives the report.

8. Waikato Bat Alliance and Waikato Regional Bat Strategy

The Team Leader City Planning noted the process in developing the Waikato Regional Bat Strategy and the range of views represented in the strategy relevant to the protection of bat habitats and the preservation of the presence of bats in the city. He noted that the next step was to bring the Strategy to a hui in late March following endorsement from various government entities. Staff responded to questions from Members concerning the maatauranga Maaori components of the strategy, preservation of mature trees, predator prevention, volunteer groups, and intent of community involvement and education.

Resolved: (Maangai Hill/Cr Naidoo-Rauf)

That the Environment Committee:

- a) receives the report;
- b) endorses the Waikato Regional Bat Strategy (**Attachment 1**, page 3); and
- c) notes continued staff participation in the Waikato Bat Alliance, with the objective of working collaboratively towards the vision of the Waikato Regional Bat Strategy.

9. General Manager's Report

The General Manager took the report as read. He responded to questions from Members concerning the workplace travel plan including the proposed timeline.

Resolved: (Cr Thomson/Maangai Hill)

That the Environment Committee receives the report.

Cr Macpherson dissenting.

Maangai Hill closed the meeting with a karakia.

The meeting was declared Closed at 2.21pm.

Appendix 1

Cr Martin Gallagher
Chairperson
Environment Committee
Hamilton City Council
Email: natureinthecity@hcc.govt.nz

Dear Martin

NATURE IN THE CITY

On behalf of Tui 2000 Inc members, I wish to pass on our congratulations on the adoption of the Nature in the City strategy “to shape a healthy, vibrant and green city that future generations can protect and enjoy”.

From our experience, your targets for the next 30 years are both very worthwhile and achievable and we strongly support the Council’s commitment of \$29 Million for the 2021-2031 Long Term Plan.

Tui 2000 has worked in the environmental area for over 30 years and we are under no illusions about the time and resources needed to achieve your targets.

For the past fifteen years or so Tui’s main focus has been on the Waiwhakareke Natural Heritage Park (WNHP). While we will continue with voluntary work in the Park we are delighted that the Council is now picking up and greatly expanding on the roles we have carried out through the incorporation of the Park’s management under the Zoo and some very strong appointments of fulltime staff for WNHP. Tui’s roles at the Park - and more - have been incorporated into the job descriptions of those new positions. Naturally, members are delighted and relieved with the transfer of the responsibility to raise the funding and organise the planting programme for the Park.

It has been noted that HCC has started work on extending the City’s Significant Natural Areas. Tui 2000 is keen to support the goal of 10% urban area in natural vegetation but we fear there will be opposition to the extensions of SNAs since some will see them as an infringement of property rights and because the Council’s regulations around SNAs are still in development - as are the programs that will support gully owners. We think it would help if there was extensive education and publicity as to what an SNA is and how the city is going to manage them.

In addition, we suggest a strong focus on developing a program to develop natural areas both public and private and to embed that firmly in the 10-year plan. As a part of that the Gully Reserves Management Plan needs to be reviewed including naming the gullies accurately and mapping their extents accurately.

Amongst our members, we have experienced volunteers who work in gullies across the city and would be available to share their knowledge with the Committee, Staff and property owners. We participate in the Kirikiriroa Gully Restoration Group with Go Eco working with HCC staff and sharing experiences with new volunteers.

We are also delighted to see that the Zoo management is currently advocating for the employment of a Volunteer Coordinator. This in association with the online volunteer registration form, lets hope HCC can reach the 1000 volunteers target.

As I said, Tui 2000 Inc wants to help, please let us know if the Committee can suggest a role for us to assist the Council achieve the goals set out in its Nature in the City strategy.

Yours sincerely

Lynne Garnham
Chairperson Tui 2000 Inc
0211714749