

Whangarei District Council Environment meeting - 11th May 2011

[LINK to appropriate Agenda](#)

[LINK to Supplementary Agenda Item No 4](#)

Chair Cr Shelley Deeming wishes a good morning to all those present at 1030hrs.

Cr Deeming announced that there would be an Extra-ordinary meeting to be held at 1130hrs today, either after this meeting, or an adjournment could be arranged if needed and they could continue this if required before lunch.

An apology was received for Mayor Morris Cutforth.

Item No 1 - The minutes for the previous meeting were accepted but Cr John Williamson was not happy with him being listed in the last minutes as absent but also in one item. He quoted the appropriate ruling under the Local Government Act. A qualification was given to him by staff but John wanted an apology. This was duly noted.

With the time at 1032hrs it was on to The Environment Group Monthly Report April 2011, Item No 2 and Environment Group Manager Paul Dell was asked by the chair to speak to the report.

Cr Sharon Morgan queried if they were looking for someone for Urban Design following a resignation.

Paul Dell replied 'yes'

Sharon also queried if building Inspectors were being deployed to other areas if their departments were quiet.

Paul Dell confirmed they were on other projects.

Cr Kahu Sutherland questioned about a sign in the Port Road area. He claimed it was derogatory to council and wanted it addressed. [Could it be this sign?](#)

Mr Dell said he would check into it.

Cr Merv Williams queried the timelines on page 9 and what were they telling us.

Cr John Williamson wished for an update on Plan Change 93 (page 13)

Policy and Monitoring Manager Paul Waanders gave fairly comprehensive details of the situation. *Paul always appears capable to produce the evidence, when asked, and does so in a professional manner.*

It must have been a touch too much, as Cr Brian McLachlan was seen to be napping at 1043hrs

Cr Kahu Sutherland, in reference to page 24, questioned if the abatement notice in regards to signage was the same as earlier mentioned or Could it be this sign?
Mr Dell again said he would check.

With the time at 1044hrs it was on to Item No 3 - Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) Performance Report - July 2010 to March 2011.

Paul Dell explained it was a follow up report after an audit and it was a good report. Cr Sharon Morgan had concerns regarding Noise Complaints. Was the 90% target achievable or did we need to work closer with police to try to change it.

Paul Dell explained that OSH (Occupational Safety & Health) had regulations and Council didn't wish to place staff or contractors in dangerous situations.

Cr Kahu Sutherland said there were times when people need the support and police must respond.

Paul Dell confirmed the reality is sometimes police only have 2 cars patrolling and limited resources.

Cr Merv Williams claimed he had sometimes been very critical of these reports but he wanted to complement the staff and acknowledged the KPI's (Key Performance Indicators) do mean something.

Cr Shelley Deeming suggested, to Merv, that the criticism has been well rewarded.

Cr Crichton Christie claimed he was applying for a building consent soon, *to put the performance measures to a test*, but added he would wear a wig when applying.

Item No. 4 (now 1051hrs) State of the Environment Report on Biodiversity. This item has a 165 page document for reference.

Paul Dell states that this government has been driving a National Policy Statement making for better policy and law making in New Zealand.

Cr John Williamson wanted to acknowledge the teams work; it was a pretty comprehensive document and putting a stake in the ground. It was not a living document. They had been beaten about what they don't do about biodiversity but this report gives the detail about what they can do.

This item must also be a little tiring, as Cr Syers has nodded off at 1055hrs and I was not the only one to notice.

John continued that they needed less restrictive policies but he went on to comment on the great work a couple had done a great job for the environment. He added also that the Whangarei Heads Landscape group had also done a great job protecting kiwis in this highly diverse environment.

Paul Dell commented that they had tried to get the Coastal Country Environment Review sorted, they were going down a journey but the journey had stalled for various reasons.

Cr Brian McLachlan (*oh, you are awake Brian*) mentioned that the report was good, the staff had done a great job and an example was there was a complete page on snails. There was also information on some species returning.

Cr Sue Glen claimed it was an interesting presentation, a whole new learning curve and understanding the terminology was like was it written by a doctor? It took her some time to work out why the airport was threatened. She added it needed wording for an everyday person and who else was going to read it anyway?

Paul Dell explained it was a technical report that was to stand the challenge at a professional level. It should be taken, interpreted and get the simple messages from it.

Cr Sue Glen asked who are the technical people, that read it. *Was this Sue's way of asking to bring it down to councilor level?*

Cr Shelley Deeming confirmed the terminology was set nationally.

Paul Dell substantiated that they must report in certain formats and must be consistent.

Cr Jeroen Jongejans (*oh he's been quiet but not asleep*) said the biggest value was in setting a base line.

Cr Crichton Christie referring to the second paragraph on page 116 'A range of statutory and non statutory methods are currently in place, as outlined in chapter 7, but are not proving effective in achieving statutory objectives regarding biodiversity'.

Paul Dell helped to clarify by saying 'If it's not working what value does it have'

Cr Merv Williams applauded them for this document and continued that they were scared of stating point of view as you can end up with a blunt instrument.

Cr Shelley Deeming suggested that they treat this document as background research.

Paul Dell ratified that they look at what's working and what is not working.

Cr Shelley Deeming substantiated that it is factual research and not opinion.

Cr Phil Halse had concerns that Regional Council had an over-claim.

Paul Dell confirmed Central government had a RPS (Regional Policy Statement) and it was up to the regional Council to get involved with groups.

Cr Phil Halse stated he was concerned at the move to protect natural waterways.

Someone should ask Phil why? Cr Edwards, that's one for you, you have been very quiet today.

Cr Sharon Morgan claimed there were some very encouraging developments happening in the community by some groups.

Cr Shelley Deeming thanked Lisa Honnor for the work on the document. *Yes Lisa, I haven't read it yet but it certainly looks like you have been extremely dedicated to this task, so let's endorse Shelley's comment.*

The meeting concluded at 1113hrs with Cr Deeming thanking all for attending so it was a little wait till the 1130 Extra-ordinary meeting.