

8.5 Working Groups of Council

Council report

Date of meeting	16 April 2020
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Purpose

- To consider the establishment of two working groups of Council which will provide recommendations to Council on
 - a. Public visibility of Council business, including community engagement, the democratic processes, and community participation in democratic decision making; and
 - b. A proposal for a region-wide ecological planting and native regeneration project for inclusion in the next Long-Term Plan.
- To consider the terms under which these, and any subsequent working groups, will operate.

Recommendations

That the Council

1. **agrees to the establishment of, in the first instance, two groups of Council to make recommendations to Council on issues related to:**
 - 1.1. **Public visibility**
 - 1.2. **Planting and regeneration**
2. **agrees the Guidelines for each of the working groups**
3. **appoints the following Councillors to each working group:**
 - 3.1 **Public Visibility Working Group - Councillors: Marshall (Chair), Hands, Southworth, Apanui, Clearwater and Chair Hughey ex-officio**
 - 3.2 **Planting and Regeneration Working Group – Councillors: Pauling (Chair), Pham, Marshall, Mackenzie, Southworth, Edge and Chair Hughey ex-officio.**
4. **agrees that the working groups' Chairs may co-opt people from outside Environment Canterbury to provide expertise, or community views related to the issues covered by the two groups**

- 5. agrees that the Chairs of the working groups will report back as a standing item on Council meeting agendas, and that the notes and actions from the groups will be made publicly available.**
- 6. Notes that the working groups do not make decisions for Council.**

Background

- Environment Canterbury structures its work and activities into six portfolios. This allows the Council and its staff to focus on achieving progress in areas of relevance and importance to the community. The Local Government Act 2002 requires Councils to group activities for the purpose of developing and reporting on a Long-Term Plan. Environment Canterbury uses the portfolio structure to meet this requirement.
- While the portfolio structure effectively provides a framework to engage with communities and stakeholders and to align related activities and policies for maximum effectiveness, there are some projects and/or issues which either do not fit neatly into an existing portfolio, or span across several or all portfolios. These projects and issues may be of a short-term or long-term nature.
- There are some issues where Councillors may wish to engage community members and/or external experts to bring a different perspective, specific knowledge or fresh ideas to the table. The establishment of working groups will enable input of external parties on specific topics.
- Notes and actions from the working groups will make visible to the community the work undertaken in each of the groups.

Proposed structure and reporting

- These working groups do not make decisions for Council, therefore they will not be established as formal committees of Council.
- Guidelines for the working groups have been developed for Council's consideration and agreement. Individual working groups will have the general terms and may have specific terms relating to membership and/or duration and scope of the topic/project for which they have been formed.
- Chairs of each group will report back as a standing item at Council meetings.

Public Visibility Working Group

Purpose

- To make recommendations to Council on public visibility of Council business, including community engagement, democratic processes, and community participation in democratic decision making.
- It is anticipated that work will include the development of innovative solutions designed to break down the distance between Council and our community, making community participation in local governance more accessible, inclusive and effective.
- Guidelines for the working group are attached in Appendix One.

Planting and Regeneration Working Group

Purpose

- To scope and design an ambitious region-wide planting and native regeneration proposal for consideration in the Council's next Long-Term Plan.
- This should bring together existing Council initiatives (rivers planting, forest management, the Soil Conservation and Revegetation programme and others), seek alignment with existing non-Council initiatives, and seek benefits across a range of Council priorities (climate change, freshwater quality, biodiversity, carbon offsets).
- In designing the proposal, the working group should explore external funding and partnership avenues, and seek opportunities to support COVID19 recovery, including identifying and preparing short term 'shovel ready' projects.
- Guidelines for the working group are attached in Appendix Two.

Timeframes

- Both these two initial working groups have a specific focus, to meet agreed objectives stated in the Guidelines. They are therefore likely to have a finite lifetime. The groups themselves will determine how long they need to operate before their objectives are reached and work is folded back into the usual operations of the portfolio(s) or Council.

Attachments

Appendix One Guidelines – Public Visibility Working Group

Appendix Two Guidelines – Planting and Regeneration Working Group

Legal review	Catherine Schache, General Counsel
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Appendix One

Guidelines for the Public Visibility Working Group of Canterbury Regional Council

As agreed by the Council on xxxxxx

Purpose

The purpose of the Public Visibility Working Group (the Working Group) is to make recommendations to Council on public visibility of Council business, including community engagement, democratic processes, and community participation in democratic decision making.

Background

Environment Canterbury structures its work and activities into six portfolios. This allows the Council and its staff to focus on achieving progress in areas of relevance and importance to the community. The Local Government Act 2002 requires Councils to group activities for the purpose of developing and reporting on a Long-Term Plan. Environment Canterbury uses the portfolio structure to meet this requirement.

While the portfolio structure effectively provides a framework to engage with communities and stakeholders and to align related activities and policies for maximum effectiveness, there are some projects and/or issues which either do not fit neatly into an existing portfolio, or span across several or all portfolios. These projects and issues may be of a short-term or long-term nature. A working group structure and process is best placed to address these issues.

Scope

The Public Visibility Working Group's consideration will include:

- Understanding existing and planned public engagement and public visibility activities currently undertaken by Council
- Identifying any gaps and opportunities where increased public engagement and visibility could increase participation of the community in democratic processes across both the urban and rural regions of Canterbury
- Consider innovative solutions to address these gaps and opportunities
- Make recommendations to full Council for signoff, to initiate a work programme to implement solutions.

Duration

The Public Visibility Working Group will meet until such time as it is able to bring a recommendation to full Council.

It is anticipated that this will align with the development of the Long-Term Plan 2021-31, concluding on or before the approval of the draft Long-Term Plan 2021-31 in early 2021.

Membership and operation of the Working Group

The Working Group is chaired by a Councillor appointed by the Chair of the Canterbury Regional Council.

Chair Hughey is ex-officio on the working group. Other members include five appointed Councillors: Marshall (Chair), Hands, Southworth, Apanui, Clearwater; the Director, Communications and Engagement and the Director, Strategy and Planning or their delegates and key staff from across the Council.

The Working Group may co-opt external advisors, or members of the community to 'test' ideas and solutions. Reasonable costs of attendance at working group sessions for these external members will be agreed in advance and met by Council.

The Working Group will meet at least monthly.

The Chair of the Working Group will report monthly to full Council at Council meetings.

Notes and actions of the Working Group will be made public.

Support for the Working Group will be provided by the staff of the Council's Governance team.

Decision Making

The Working Group has no decision-making authority. It will bring recommendations to Council for Council consideration. Expenditure undertaken by the Working Group over and above normal Council business must be agreed by Council.

Changes to the Guidelines

The Working Group may recommend changes to these Guidelines to the Council for consideration and agreement.

Appendix Two

Guidelines

Planting and Regeneration Working Group of Canterbury Regional Council

As agreed by the Council on xxxxxx

Purpose

The purpose of the Planting and Regeneration Working Group (the Working Group) is to develop a proposal for a region-wide ecological planting and native regeneration programme for inclusion in the next Long-Term Plan.

Background

Environment Canterbury structures its work and activities into six portfolios. This allows the Council and its staff to focus on achieving progress in areas of relevance and importance to the community. The Local Government Act 2002 requires Councils to group activities for the purpose of developing and reporting on a Long-Term Plan. Environment Canterbury uses the portfolio structure to meet this requirement.

While the portfolio structure effectively provides a framework to engage with communities and stakeholders and to align related activities and policies for maximum effectiveness, there are some projects and/or issues which either do not fit neatly into an existing portfolio, or span across several or all portfolios. These projects and issues may be of a short-term or long-term nature. A working group structure and process is best placed to address these issues.

Scope

Matters subject to the Working Group's consideration will include:

- Scoping and designing a long-term Council-led proposal including capacity and capability requirements
- Bringing together existing and planned Council and non-Council initiatives (rivers planting, forest management, the Soil Conservation and Revegetation programme and others), seek alignment with existing non-Council initiatives, and seek benefits across a range of Council priorities (climate change, freshwater quality, biodiversity, carbon offsets).
- Exploring external funding and partnership avenues, and seek opportunities to support COVID-19 recovery, including identifying and preparing short term 'shovel ready' projects.

Duration

The Planting and Regeneration Working Group will meet until such time as it is able to bring a proposal to full Council.

It is anticipated that this will align with the development of the Long-Term Plan 2021-31, concluding on or before the approval of the draft Long-Term Plan 2021-31 in early 2021.

Membership and operation of the Working Group

The Working Group is chaired by a Councillor appointed by the Chair of the Canterbury Regional Council.

Chair Hughey is ex-officio on the Working Group. Other members include six appointed Councillors: Pauling (Chair), Pham, Marshall, Mackenzie, Southworth and Edge; the Chief Operating Officer or their delegate, and key staff from across the Council.

The Working Group may co-opt expert advisors, or members of the community to 'test' ideas and solutions. Reasonable costs of attendance at working group sessions for these external members will be agreed in advance and met by Council.

The Working Group should meet at least monthly.

The Chair of the Working Group will report monthly to full Council at Council meetings.

Notes and actions of the Working Group will be made public.

Support for the Working Group will be provided by the staff of the Council's Governance team.

Decision Making

The Working Group has no decision-making authority. It brings recommendations to Council for Council consideration. Expenditure undertaken by the Working Group over and above normal Council business must be agreed by Council.

Changes to the Guidelines

The Working Group may recommend changes to the Guidelines to the Council for consideration and agreement.