

## WELLINGTON CITY COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Pacific Advisory Group Meeting on 15 October 2008

#### **Present**

Ida Faiumu-Isa'ako (Chairperson - Samoa)  
Kolovula Murphy (Deputy – Tonga)  
Martha Ahmed (Tokelau)  
Malakai Jiko (Fiji)  
Ana To'o (Samoa)  
Danny Kauraka (Cook Islands)  
Mailigi Hetutu (Niue)  
Mafi Katoa (Tonga)  
Brenda Cottingham (Niue)  
Kelisiana Alefaio (Tokelau)  
Tina McNicholas (Fiji)  
Avia Liai (Tuvalu)  
Titia Vaerua (Cook Islands)  
Councillor Gill  
Councillor Pannett  
Vasi Siohane  
Marie Retimanu-Pule  
Jennifer Rains  
Alice Cowan  
Varie Parker  
Trudy Jenkins

#### **Welcome**

Warm pacific greetings and welcome from the Chairperson who thanked everyone for attending this meeting.

#### **Opening Prayer**

Ida Faiumu-Isa'ako

#### **Apologies**

Pisa Alaifea, Lopati Tefoto, Harry Tauafiafi, Phoebe Velova'a

#### **Special Welcome**

Ida Faiumu-Isa'ako welcomed Jennifer Rains, the new Acting Manager of City Communities and Varie Parker, Business Development Advisor to the meeting.

Jennifer Rains then gave a brief introduction and said she was looking forward to attending future PAG meetings.

### **Confirmation of the Minutes**

The Minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed by Ana To'o and seconded by Mailigi Hetutu.

### **Matters Arising from the Minutes**

Martha Ahmed said that the funeral issue brought up at the last meeting had been looked into by Council Officers who have said that this is not an issue that Council can deal with and the family need to take this issue to the Human Rights Commission. Councillor Gill said that she would talk to this issue later in the meeting.

There were no other matters arising from the minutes.

### **Presentation – Byron Roff, City Housing**

Vasi Siohane said that as PAG members had requested an update from City Housing she had invited Bryon Roff and Vicki McLaren to attend this meeting to give an update on the City Housing Project.

Byron Roff said that they have conducted about 45 meetings with the community and he talked about what information has been provided to tenants and said that tenants have been given some background information about what this will mean for them. He noted that this will be a 20 year project.

His presentation included information about the type of housing and what they will be looking at including fire safety, insulation which in turn will make these units cheaper to live in, earthquake strengthening, there will be an upgrade of the bathrooms and kitchens, units will be reconfigured and security and outdoor areas will be improved. They hope to achieve more social cohesion, community spirit and wellbeing and pride among the tenants. The Te Arouhu flats will be the first units to be upgraded. The process for this will include the emptying of buildings and then tenants will be relocated and transferred from one block to the other. Tenants will have options when moving back into the units, ie, back into their original unit, another unit or into a different location. There will be a structured work programme and they will only work in one area at a time. One of the questions raised by tenants is how this upgrade will affect their rent. Tenants have been informed that the same variables that set their rent previously will still apply.

Brenda Cottingham said that she had noted that there were no plans to upgrade Council units in Tawa. Byron Roff said that they are only working on complexes within the City.

Danny Kauraka asked what the criteria was to get a Council flat and what the waiting list was like. Vicki McLaren said that the first threshold was based on income and then

special needs, ie, disability, refugee, migrants. She said that the waiting list was sitting around 200 at the moment. She said that they would be carrying out a policy review by 2010 in line with rental tenancy management practices. An important part of this process is looking at the physical upgrade of the buildings but community action is an important part as well.

Vicki McLaren said that they are working closely with the Community Action Plan Team and tenant committees. They are part of the Housing Forum which also includes WELCOSS. They are looking at a range of activities with community development including community gardens and community computer rooms. They have recognised the need for tenant support and the Community Action Plan Team are operating out of the Eco house. They are also looking at ways on how to use the Eco house space and welcome any ideas. Ida Faiumu Isa'ako suggested that Rosie Gallen from the Community Action Plan Team could come and give a presentation to the PAG.

Tina McNicholas asked how many case managers there were for older people. Vicki McLaren said that they only have one but there is a link between the tenancy managers and agencies. Byron Roff said that they are not case managers as such dealing with individuals on a case by case basis but want to link the tenants into appropriate agencies and make sure they get the appropriate communications established. They will make sure any tenants with special needs will be looked after during the upgrade.

Vula Murphy said that there is an immediate concern with tenants having problems in their units with dampness and painting – what can they do about these problems now. Vicki McLaren said that they should escalate their request and it would be looked into on a case by case basis and funding.

Ida Faiumu-Isa'ako said that as PAG were an advisory group we would like to be able to advise your team and made a request that the Housing Team meet with PAG bi-monthly to discuss specific issues.

Tina McNicholas asked what the fixed rentals for people who are 80+ are based on and why this was not at retirement age. Byron Roff said that this would be looked at as part of the review. Councillor Gill said that this was a Councillor decision made in 1998. Vicki McLaren did note that there is a cap on rentals.

The question was asked with regard to the upgrading of these properties how this will be looked at as far as the increasing population was concerned. Byron Roff said that Council have given a commitment to the Government to remain in social housing even though this is expensive for Council to run. Council will be willing to look into the criteria for housing. Vicki McLaren said that as part of the Affordable Housing Bill Council will look at current and future demands for housing.

Danny Kauraka said that this group represent each Island group and asked where Housing sees this group fitting into the plan as we need to know where the upgrading is happening so that we can advise the community.

Malakai Jiko asked if PAG could have the statistics on the Pacific tenants in the housing complexes. Vasi Siohane has this information and will send this out to the group.

Byron Roff said that groups like PAG are critical for giving feedback to Housing as they need to know whether they are getting this right or not.

## **Action Points**

Vasi Siohane went through the action points from the previous meeting and asked if there was any feedback if it could be sent to her.

Councillor Gill said that with regard to the payment of funerals issue brought up at the last meeting, she has talked to the Human Rights Commission who said that this had come about because of affordability issues. She said that it would be appropriate to have a meeting with the manager of Wilsons Funeral Home and asked whether Martha Ahmed would be willing to attend this meeting to talk about the issues raised. She said that she would be willing to facilitate this meeting and said that she felt that a meeting did need to be held because there does not seem to be a formal policy in place. Martha Ahmed said that she would be willing to attend a meeting as it was important that people are informed but would like Ida Faiumu Isa'ako to attend this meeting as well. Ida Faiumu Isa'ako said that it would be a good idea for Martha Ahmed to take this back to the Tokelau community for sanctioning before a meeting was arranged.

Danny Kauraka suggested that it may be a good idea to get brochures from different funeral homes to compare costs. Brenda Cottingham said that she thought the family should have been notified of the conditions up front.

**November Meeting** – Vasi Siohane said that there will not be a meeting in November because of the forum. She also noted that PAG members attending the forum would be paid. The next PAG meeting will be held on the third Wednesday in December – i.e. 17 December 2008.

**Councillor's Comments** – Councillor Gill noted that she had attended a presentation on upgrading to the Golden Mile and she handed out a copy of the power point presentation. An issue raised by PAG about the speed of traffic in this area will be one of things that will be looked at. Vasi Siohane will arrange for copies of the presentation to be distributed to PAG members.

Councillor Pannett commented on the Community Facilities Review. There has been a workshop looking at where we want further work to be done and a paper will be coming out. The review is looking at all facilities with the focus looking at community centres. The issues looked at include how we meet the needs of growing communities and how we resource particular communities as there needs to be equity between communities. Councillor Pannett said that she will make sure that PAG are kept informed on progress with this review and when PAG are able to make submissions. This review has also looked at non Council owned properties with the possibility of working in partnership. The paper should be coming out in November.

Brenda Cottingham said that the Niue, Cook Islands and Tuvalu communities have got together in Porirua and put a submission through to get a building so that they have a combined centre for early childhood. She said that it would be good to support this. It was decided that it would be a good idea for Brenda Cottingham to write a letter of support to present at the next meeting for a similar centre for Wellington. Mailigi

Hetutu said that the centre in Porirua has already been opened but it would be good to talk about having something similar in Wellington.

## **Chairperson's Report**

Ida Faiumu-Isa'ako had no report to present at this time.

## **Pacific Forum**

Vasi Siohane said that at the last meeting PAG were informed that there would be a forum in November and had been asked for their suggestions for a theme for the forum. Due to time constraints a theme has already been decided on and this will be "Celebrating Pacific Success". She then tabled a draft agenda for the evening. The forum will be held at Te Papa and four guest speakers have been chosen. Unfortunately there was not enough time in the evening to fit in seven guest speakers to represent all the nations but this will only give a glimpse of what we have in Wellington City. There will also be a presentation from the Mayor on the LTCCP. Questions will be generated from the Pacific people about the LTCCP.

What we are asking from the PAG is for members to promote the forum because we want people to attend. The way that the programme has been worked is so that there is a buy in from each of the seven Pacific communities. The prayers will be from the Island communities that are not represented by speakers so that the forum will be inclusive. Attendance has not been good in the past so we want everyone to promote it as much as possible. Vasi Siohane will arrange for posters and invitations to come out as soon as possible.

Marie Retimanu-Pule said that this time we would like to see more community members attending rather than Council Officers and Councillors to ensure that the community get to say what they would like at future forums.

Ida Faiumu Isa'ako asked what other promotion the Council had been doing for the forum. Vasi Siohane said that due to time constraints there had not been much time to promote the forum. Marie Retimanu-Pule said that the forum had been advertised on Samoan Capital Radio. Vasi Siohane said that she would look at arranging for advertising on NiuFM.

Tina McNicholas asked what the budget for the forum was. Vasi Siohane said that it was about \$6,500. Tina McNicholas said that the forum needs to be made attractive if we want people to attend. Vasi Siohane said that the budget was a constraint and that we get a free venue at Te Papa but the speakers and church groups would get paid. Tina McNicholas said that we need to be realistic and ask ourselves the question "what is the forum going to deliver for me". A good idea would be to offer spot prizes like shopping vouchers. Offering spot prizes has worked for the Fijian community meetings. Vasi Siohane said that this does come down to PAG working together to make the forums work. Marie Retimanu-Pule said that she thought the idea of offering spot prizes was a good idea but we would need to get approval first to make sure this would be appropriate and would work into the communications plan.

Vula Murphy said that she thought it was good that all the Island groups would be represented at the forum. Ida Faiumu Isa'ako said that if all the members of PAG bring five people then we will have a good representation.

Ida Faiumu Isa'ako asked if it could be suggested to Council that we only have one forum per year. Marie Retimanu-Pule said that this was something that could be presented to the new Manager of City Communities. Ida Faiumu Isa'ako asked if the PAG members were in agreement with this suggestion. All members agreed to have only one forum per year.

Vula Murphy noted that sometimes the posters come out too late to promote the forum and the poster size is awkward as well. Vasi Siohane said that she will cut down on the number of posters and will send out the posters to everyone on time.

Councillor Gill said that she has carried out targeting mailing before and has a data base of Pacific Island people in the Eastern Suburbs. She said that she would write to these people to invite them to the forum and asked if anyone had any objections to her doing this. All members said they were happy for Councillor Gill to do this.

Councillor Pannett said that she thought the forum should be welcoming for children to attend as well.

It was noted that the Laughing Samoans will be entertaining at the forum and this could be used to promote the forum and to encourage people to attend.

## **Festival Report**

Danny Kauraka tabled the Minutes from the subcommittee meeting held last week with six people in attendance.

It was noted that not all the applications forms had been received and that the subcommittee cannot carry out any more work on the programme and layout until all these forms have been received. The forms from Samoa are the only ones missing at present. These forms need to be in by the end of the week so that the subcommittee can start planning at their 5 November meeting.

Vasi Siohane noted that NiuFM will be helping with the promotion of the Festival. This is part of a communication plan organised with City Events and NiuFM in a promoter partnership. Marie Retimanu-Pule noted that this partnership is worth \$35,000 and advertising for the Festival will come out of City Event's budget as part of this contract.

Danny Kauraka said we need to be asking now where to from here? He said that he was concerned that there would be no PAG meeting in November and there would not be enough time to get agreement for approval of the programme and layout. Tina McNicholas suggested that if anyone had any concerns they could communicate via email in the interim. Marie Retimanu-Pule said that she would be happy to talk to the Manager of City Communities to ask for another paid meeting for November for the organising of the Festival. Vula Murphy pointed out that in the TOR there is approval for holding extra paid meetings. Danny Kauraka said that he would like to see the Festival succeed and he would be willing to come along for an extra meeting even if he

was not paid. He said that the extra meeting in November should be for Festival planning only and not general PAG business.

Members agreed to another meeting to be set for 26 November for Festival discussions only. Vasi Siohane will send out a confirmation email.

## **Community Reports**

There was no report available from Samoa.

Vula Murphy tabled her report from the Tongan Community about the multi cultural centre. Councillor Pannett asked whether the Tongan Community would want this proposal to be presented to Council Officers. Vula Murphy said that they would do so. She also noted that it would make their application stronger if the other Island Groups wrote letters of support to add to this application. Danny Kauraka noted that a centre like this would be very expensive and we need to be realistic in what we ask for. Councillor Gill suggested that this issue could be brought up at the forum as this will need to come through the LTCCP. Councillor Pannett said that the application would need some community input as well. Vula Murphy said that the centre could be used for a variety of purposes.

Danny Kauraka said that the Cook Islands Community have been on the ACCESS radio advertising what they have been doing.

Mailigi Hetutu said that the Niuean Community has been advertising the Festival and they had a meeting last Saturday. They will present a report from their next meeting. Brenda Cottingham said that she had asked the community for any feedback on any issues.

Avia Liai said that the Tuvaluan Community have not had a meeting lately.

Malakai Jiko said that the Fijian Community have been organising their community for the Festival. It was noted that they have had four workshops this year.

Martha Ahmed said that the Tokelau Community had been busy organising their community for the Festival.

## **Closing Prayer**

Danny Kauraka

**Next Meeting:** 26 November 2008

**Meeting Closed:** 8:05pm