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## **COMMUNITIES FOR CLIMATE PROTECTION FORUM, HAMILTON, 2 APRIL 2008**

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### **1. Purpose of Report**

To report on the attendance of the Mayor and Councillors' Ahipene-Mercer and Wade-Brown at the 'Communities for Climate Change Protection' Forum in Hamilton on 2 April 2008.

### **2. Recommendations**

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. *Receive the information.*

### **3. Background**

The Communities for Climate Protection New Zealand (CCP–NZ) programme aims to empower local Councils to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from their operations and communities. CCP–NZ is supported by the International Council for Local Environment Initiatives (ICLEI) and is part of the international Cities for Climate Protection campaign. Since CCP–NZ was launched in 2004, Councils representing over 80% of the country's population, including Wellington City Council, have joined the programme.

The second national Forum for Communities for Climate Protection was hosted by Hamilton City Council on Wednesday 2 April 2008 at Le Grand Hotel Conference Centre. Mayor Bob Simcock opened the Forum, which was attended by over 100 delegates including representatives from 30 New Zealand councils<sup>1</sup>.

### **4. Discussion**

The Forum was broken into five sessions:

- Global view
- New Zealand carbon neutrality

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<sup>1</sup> *CCP–NZ Participant councils:* Auckland City, Auckland Regional, Carterton District, Christchurch City, Dunedin City, Environment Canterbury, Environment Waikato Regional, Franklin District, Greater Wellington Regional, Hamilton City, Hawke's Bay Regional, Kapiti Coast District, Manukau City, Masterton District, Nelson City, New Plymouth District Council, North Shore City, Papakura District, Porirua City, Rodney District, Rotorua District, South Waikato District, Waipa District, Waitakere City, Wellington City

*Other councils:* Environment Bay of Plenty, Hutt City, Otorohanga District, Taupo District, Tauranga City, Western Bay of Plenty District  
(not currently CCP–NZ)

- Parallel interactive workshops
- Big picture approaches
- Plenary sessions.

Mayor Prendergast was invited by CCP-NZ to lead the discussions on carbon neutrality – translating policy into reality. Other topics covered during the forum included:

- ‘Climate change is accelerating: is Local Government keeping pace?’
- Local Government and Carbon Trading
- Implications of policies and opportunities – panel discussion plus questions & answers
- Economic analysis of the value of local government involvement.

#### **4.1 Panel Sessions**

Leaders included Mayors Kerry Prendergast - Wellington City, Bob Harvey - Waitakere City, Deputy Mayor Barbara Woods – Kaikoura and Rex McIntyre – Chairman for Hawke’s Bay Regional Council.

The first panel session was intended to be on carbon neutrality aspirations and plans from Councils. Unfortunately miscommunication and poor scheduling led to time constraints, meant the Mayors were unable to share all that they had prepared, and opportunities for detailed examination of issues, and for more participant interaction, were lost.

Mayor Bob Harvey described the eco-city vision from Waitakere as being consistent throughout the last fifteen years. The Councillors were first viewed as “Westie tree-huggers” but are now viewed as smart people doing smart things, especially since the water crisis. He believes there is a tidal wave of pressure - from households, schools and businesses - generated by global trends regarding action and Climate Change.

Mayor Prendergast spoke about our goals to stabilise emissions and how the Wellington City Council approach was to get our “corporate” house in order first and then work with the community on citywide targets. She spoke of how the Council is driving the development of Wellington's climate change response and is committed to the city taking a leading role amongst other local authorities throughout the country, as befits its status as the capital city. This response is manifested, not just through the expression of the carbon neutral vision for the city, but through the significant behavioural change that the Council is promoting in its own actions and those of the Community.

Barbara Woods emphasised the importance of Kaikoura’s sustainable image for its tourism industry and the connections with Zero Waste. Trees for Travellers is an example of a programme that is working well there. Rex McIntyre noted that Hawke’s Bay thought they would be in credit “due to all their trees” but got a shock when they found they were far from being carbon neutral due to pastoral farming and the transport of goods generating more emissions than they had

expected. Accordingly the Regional Council is looking at the purchase of marginal farmland for revegetation. Many small communities have effluent disposal problems that could be solved with a combination of the tree planting and effluent fertiliser application, especially with the cost of oil-based fertiliser going up.

## **4.2 Speakers**

4.2.1 Mr Jim Norris, former Mayor of Mount Alexander Shire, Australia, was the keynote speaker, on how local government can help communities make changes and attract sustainable business initiatives. He outlined and promoted partnering with communities and thereby 'distributing leadership', enabling communities to initiate and innovate. The council has set a target of cutting the Shire's emissions by 30% by 2010. More than 300 homes in the town, or roughly one in 10, are halfway through a two-year trial aimed at reducing emissions. Major employers in Castlemaine are also investigating ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and become more energy efficient. Jim's view is that local government's role in Climate Protection is to:

- lead by example
- set benchmarks
- walk the talk with demonstration projects
- communicate issues and solutions
- influence movers and shakers
- distribute leadership:
  - allow others to take initiatives, innovate and gain kudos
  - network to tell their stories not just the Council's story.

4.2.2 Martin Brennan and Patti Wenn, ICLEI Oceania, spoke about the breadth of ICLEI involvement and leadership globally. It is worth looking at [www.iclei.org](http://www.iclei.org) to see local government initiatives for water, waste and biodiversity, as well as climate change. Martin emphasised that much could be achieved at the local level irrespective of central government positioning but that the change in Australian commitment to the Kyoto protocol was useful. Patti described how the post-Kyoto framework was continuing to be developed and how the draft NZ Emissions Trading Scheme would allow the various sectors to be included. Given that Councils are responsible for the downstream management of waste, she suggested that income from the sale of offsets could become a revolving financial instrument to fund further reduction projects. This approach is incorporated in Wellington City Council's draft Climate Change Action Plan. While market based mechanisms are one way of reducing emissions, a wider ethical framework seeks more equitable outcomes. She also suggested local authority priority actions should include:

- local sustainable living expos
- considering the planning requirements for energy efficient buildings (although there is difficulty in using the RMA processes to go beyond the Building Code)
- building consent fees being waived for improved sustainability outcomes
- enhancing walking and cycling networks.

Both speakers urged local authorities to move with some urgency. While NZ and Australia make a small contribution to worldwide greenhouse gases as a whole, our per capita emissions are amongst the highest in the world and our role in leading other countries' engagement requires demonstrable action.

CCP-NZ is developing a Carbon Neutral Charter. This could be very useful in developing an internationally agreed standard given the range of interpretation of "carbon neutral".

4.2.3 Murray Ward, Principal, Global Climate Change Consultancy (GTripleC), made a presentation that was quite challenging in its comparative analysis of trading schemes versus carbon tax. He believes that local governments would be better off with a tax. It is wrong to think of Kyoto compliance as an emissions reduction target. It's more a responsibility target – we must get back to 1990 levels or "take responsibility" for exceeding them. As we lower emissions, we need fewer "extra units". The NZ ETS devolves compliance responsibility to entities. He described the sectors and the dates for their entry into the scheme – as previously described in the Wellington City Council submission to the New Zealand Emissions Trading Scheme.

4.2.4 Gerri Ward, from the New Zealand Ministry for the Environment, spoke about the six lead government agencies aiming for carbon neutrality by 2012. The carbon footprint will be verified by an international agency. A key task involves determining which emissions should be included, especially from 'indirect' sources such as staff travel-to-work journeys. The agencies' priorities are to make real reductions first, followed by domestic offsets through a partnership with the Department of Conservation on marginal land.

4.2.5 Peter Neilson, Chief Executive Officer of New Zealand Business Council for Sustainability talked about reasons for the business community to become more sustainable. He encouraged local government to adopt sustainable procurement to support business change. To reduce the large footprint caused by air travel and transport, he encouraged a major move to video conferencing. An interesting example of other recommendations was day time office cleaning rather than night time cleaning. This can give a better service, more humane hours and far less energy wastage from lights being left on.

There is now an Energy Efficiency Community Network for the providers of energy efficiency services in New Zealand. Some members also have wider sustainability interests. The Wellington Sustainability Trust is a member, along with Waitakere Eco Matters Trust, Hamilton Energy Efficiency services, Better Homes Taranaki and others. A 70% transfer rate from phone advice to action illustrates the benefits from the energy advice hotline.

4.2.6 Mr Howard Fancy, Secretary for the Environment, identified many areas where central government and local government could work more closely on climate change reduction activities.

4.2.7 Melanie Thornton, Programme Coordinator, CCP–NZ, stressed the importance of communicating values to the Community, particularly ‘leadership’, in line with global and government policy. Effective engagement within our community is important. Visual representations of causes and effects need to be creatively portrayed to get messages across. For instance; what does 1 ton of CO<sub>2</sub> look like? Answer: 6 x double decker buses! Other potential initiatives for how we could engage with our community included:

- Making sure web pages are current, work easily and are not buried within search engines.
- Ensuring abatement projects are outlined in a way which builds confidence in the council and encourages community support and participation.
- Holding action days – for instance, utilising World Environment Day, submitting projects for Green Ribbon Awards, rewarding community actions, and
- Developing awards for suburbs and schools

#### **4.3 *Thoughts for following up***

A number of initiatives emerged from the day’s discussion as meriting further consideration. These included:

- sustainable procurement – alignment with the Gov3 approach
- opportunities to work with the 6 Government agencies aiming for carbon neutrality
- continued support for The Sustainability Trust, especially for the Healthy Homes programme
- a “Free” inner city circular bus route
- opportunities for partnership with high schools, businesses and tertiary organisations for Carbon Neutral approaches, and/or
- integration of carbon measurement with other initiatives such as biodiversity and wastewater.

The full conference programme is attached at Appendix 1 to this report.

## **5. Conclusion**

This report provides information on the attendance of the Mayor and Councillors Ahipene-Mercer and Wade-Brown at the CCP-NZ Climate Change Forum in Hamilton on 2 April 2008.

Contact: *Mayor Prendergast*  
*Councillor Ahipene-Mercer*  
*Councillor Wade-Brown*

## Supporting Information

### **1) Strategic Fit / Strategic Outcome**

*This report relates to several long-term outcomes from the Council's overall strategic direction, as reflected in the LTCCP, including:*

*More Sustainable  
More Compact  
Safer  
Healthier  
More Competitive  
More Prosperous.*

*This report also relates to several three-year priorities from the LTCCP, including:*

*Energy efficiency and conservation, energy security, renewable energy, and leadership in this area  
'Growth spine' planning  
Travel demand management  
Bus priority measures  
Strengthening the city's status as a centre of creativity and innovation.*

### **2) LTCCP/Annual Plan reference and long term financial impact**

*This report has no financial implications.*

### **3) Treaty of Waitangi considerations**

*This report has no Treaty implications.*

### **4) Decision-Making**

*This report does not require a significant decision to be made.*

### **5) Consultation**

#### **a) General Consultation**

*Consultation is not required for this report.*

#### **b) Consultation with Maori**

*Consultation is not required for this report.*

### **6) Legal Implications**

*There are no legal implications from this report.*

### **7) Consistency with existing policy**

*This report is consistent with the outcomes and priorities for climate change as reflected in the LTCCP.*