
REPORT 3
(1215/52/IM)

CARTER OBSERVATORY REDEVELOPMENT ADVISORY GROUP

1. Purpose of Report

To recommend the establishment of, and terms of reference for, an Advisory Group to guide the redevelopment of the Carter Observatory.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

- 1. Receive the information.*
- 2. Recommend to Council that it agree to establish an Advisory Group to help guide the redevelopment of the Carter Observatory, according to the terms of reference attached as Appendix 1 to this report.*

3. Background

On 19 December 2007, Council agreed to offer to take over the redevelopment of the Carter Observatory. In the course of its discussion on the issue, Councillors indicated a desire to establish an advisory group to advise officers on the redevelopment.

Officers have in the meantime prepared a draft management agreement to be signed between the Carter Observatory Board, Wellington City Council and the Crown (the Ministry of Research, Science and Technology) to formally record the handing over of responsibilities from the Carter Board to the Council. The agreement is required because, under the Carter Act, the Board cannot entirely abrogate its governance responsibilities and thus a management agreement is required.

Once the management agreement is signed, the Carter Board's role will officially become a passive one, while some of its members will be invited to join the proposed Advisory Group for the redevelopment.

It is intended that Council will finish the redevelopment and see through the early stages of the opening of the new Observatory before formally considering and, if required, consulting on the appropriate longer-term governance and management arrangements for the facility.

4. Discussion

The proposed terms of reference for the Advisory Group are attached as Appendix One to this report. The following sections outline the key issues for the Committee to consider

4.1 *Role of the Advisory Group*

The proposed terms of reference suggest that the Advisory Group's role is initially time-limited – that is, to advise the Council on the redevelopment of the Observatory and advise on the project until the opening of the new facility. A review of the role of the Group would be undertaken just prior to the opening.

There are key facets that officers would like advice on from the proposed group:

- The exhibition content
- The operating model – i.e. the nature of the services, the financial model, skills and expertise required going forward etc.

Advisory Group members would also be required to communicate with the interest group they represent, and implement processes for bringing their issues to the Advisory Group and for regularly reporting back to that interest group on how issues have been addressed.

The Advisory Group would be a good sounding board and support mechanism for the newly-appointed Director of the Carter Observatory. The other point to note is that the group will have an advisory role, not a decision-making or governance one (those remain with the Council).

4.2 *Membership of the Group*

Officers recommend that the Advisory Group consists of six to eight members, which is generally considered a good number to function well as a group. Selection of members would be undertaken by officers, in accordance with the criteria/guidelines for representation outlined below:

- 2 - 3 representatives of the Carter Board - nominated by the Carter Board
- a representative of the Wellington Museums Trust - nominated by the Wellington Museums Trust
- a representative of Positively Wellington Tourism - nominated by Positively Wellington Tourism
- expertise in space science/astronomy – selected by Council officers, in consultation with members of the astronomy community and Victoria University

- experience and knowledge of education and learning (in respect of helping make the Observatory attractive to people of all ages interested in learning about space science/astronomy) - selected by Council officers

There may be some overlap between the various skills, expertise and perspectives being sought, for example one member of the Carter Board is a staff member of Victoria University and has expertise in space science/astronomy.

It is recommended that a Councillor is not appointed to the Advisory Group, in order to maintain clarity in respect of the advisory nature of the group and the governance role of Councillors.¹

4.3 Consultation with Maori

Officers propose to consult with the Tenth's and Ngati Toa directly, rather than via representation on the Advisory Group. Officers have met recently with representatives of the Tenth's Trust, who have decided that they would like to remain generally uninvolved with the Observatory redevelopment but are open to discussing matters on an ad hoc basis.

A member of Ngati Toa was on the Carter Board, but we understand that he has recently resigned from the Board.

4.4 Maori Astronomy Content

A significant part of the new Observatory offering will be bringing the story and perspective of Maori and Pacific Island astronomy and astronavigation to the public. This is intended to be a key area of interest for both domestic and international visitors, and a key point of difference from other observatories in New Zealand and around the world.

For that reason, it is proposed to directly commission a person with the appropriate skills and knowledge of Maori astronomy and astronavigation to provide the expert input into the development of the exhibition content, rather than adopt this person onto the Advisory Group. The time commitment and role required of this person would be measurably different than that of Advisory Group members.

4.5 Carter Board

Officers have consulted with the Carter Board in respect of the establishment of the proposed Advisory Group. The Board has endorsed the establishment of such a group, and the terms of reference. The Board was keen that advisory group members are able to consult widely with members of various

¹ Cr Coughlan is a member of the Carter Board and the Carter Trust, and Cr Wain is a trustee on the Wellington Museums Trust.

communities (which officers support) ; and that Maori interests are represented. Once officers outlined proposals to approach Ngati Toa and the Tenth Trust directly - i.e. outside of the advisory group function – and that a person with Maori astronomical knowledge would be directly commissioned for involvement in the exhibition content, the Board was satisfied that Maori interests were sufficiently represented.

5. Conclusion

The establishment of an Advisory Group to guide the redevelopment of the Carter Observatory is proposed, according to the terms of reference attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

The membership of the group is intended to represent key parties, interests and expertise that will support Council officers to complete the Carter redevelopment.

Contact Officer: *Allan Prangnell, Manager Council Controlled Organisations*

Supporting Information

1) Strategic Fit / Strategic Outcome

The policy supports Council's overall vision of Creative Wellington – Innovation Capital.

Carter will support the following strategic areas:

- *Economic development*
- *Cultural Wellbeing*
- *Social and Recreation*

It will also contribute to meeting the Council outcomes specifically:

- *Stronger sense of place*
- *More eventful*
- *More prosperous*

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

The project is contained in the Council Plan C659.

3) Treaty of Waitangi considerations

There are no Treaty of Waitangi issues.

4) Decision-Making

This is not a significant decision.

5) Consultation

a) General Consultation

Officers have discussed the proposed Terms of Reference with the Carter Board. Its view are outlined in this report.

b) Consultation with Maori

Officers have discussed the project with the Tenth Trust and the level of involvement it desires. The Tenth Trust wishes to remain largely uninvolved in the redevelopment at this stage, but has offered its advice on a case by case basis when approached by Council. Officers propose to approach both Ngati Toa and the Tenth outside of the advisory group function.

6) Legal Implications

There are no legal implications in establishing this Advisory Group. A Management Agreement between the Crown (MoRST), Wellington City Council and the Carter Board and Trust is being worked on to formalise the handover of responsibility for the Carter redevelopment from the Carter Board to Wellington City Council.

7) Consistency with existing policy

This report is consistent with existing WCC policy.