

HUTT CITY COUNCILPOLICY AND REGULATORY COMMITTEE

Report of a meeting held in the Council Chambers, 2nd Floor, 30 Laings Road, Lower  
Hutt on

Tuesday 21 November 2017 commencing at 5.30pm

---

**PRESENT:**

Cr M Cousins (Chair)	Cr C Barry
Deputy Mayor D Bassett	Cr L Bridson
Cr J Briggs	Cr S Edwards (Deputy Chair)
Cr T Lewis	Cr M Lulich
Cr L Sutton	Mayor WR Wallace

**APOLOGIES:** An apology was received from Cr Milne.

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Cr G Barratt  
 Mr T Stallinger, Chief Executive  
 Mr B Kibblewhite, General Manager, Governance and  
 Regulatory  
 Mr M Reid, General Manager, City and Community Services  
 Mr B Hodgins, Divisional Manager, Parks and Gardens  
 Ms S Simcox, Acting Divisional Manager Communications and  
 Marketing

PUBLIC BUSINESS1. **APOLOGIES**

**RESOLVED:** (Cr Cousins/Mayor Wallace)

**Minute No. PRC 17501**

*"That the apology received from Cr Milne be accepted and leave of absence be granted."*

2. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Comments are recorded under the item to which they relate.

3. **CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS**

Deputy Mayor Bassett declared a conflict of interest in relation to item 4 a) Bell Park and took no part in discussion or voting on the matter.

#### 4. RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL - 12 December 2017

##### a) **Bell Park (17/1672)**

Deputy Mayor Bassett declared a conflict of interest and took no part in discussion or voting on the matter.

Speaking under public comment, **Ms A Shaw** said that she and her neighbours knew each other and have a safe park where they can kick balls. The Bell Park decision would impact families and children in a community which supported and cared for each other.

In response to a question from a member, Ms Shaw said that the proposal to develop the park and close a thoroughfare into it would affect her personally and her submission reflected this.

Speaking under public comment, **Ms D Arcus** said that she believed Bell park had been donated to Council for sports activities. When her children were young, families would meet at the park on Sundays and finish with a barbeque. She said that the park was neglected, the grass was long and very wet. Since the Mandel Mews development there had been more flooding in the area. She requested that Council keep the park for future generations and not use it for housing.

In response to questions from members, Ms Arcus said that she did not support any housing development on the park. She said people would use the park more if it was in better condition or had play areas for the children. The flooding had been bad in the past 3-4 years and would get worse if there was more housing.

Speaking under public comment, **Ms L Scott** said that she was seven years old, lived on Bell Road and went to Gracefield School. The park was behind her house and they liked to play on it, however, the grass had been long and in winter it was also muddy so they had not been able to use it. They practice touch rugby and play tag at the park. She was looking forward to summer when they would have picnics and water balloons at the park.

In response to questions from members, Ms Shaw said that she did not let her daughter cross the road and the only park she used was Bell park. If Council was to consider the Gracefield School playground as a park for children to use, then Council should contribute to the upkeep of the playground equipment.

Speaking under public comment, **Mr PJ Bramley** said that in 2012, Council adopted a strategy called "Go Outside and Play". It provided for a range of spaces for socialising at parks that would be appealing and fun, however, there was no mention of Bell Park in the document. Council had not kept the park fit for purpose. The park had been too wet to play football on. Bell Park Square would not be safe to use as a recreation area because it did not have pedestrian access, it was not fenced and was surrounded by busy roads. It was not possible to play sport on the Waiwhetu Stream corridor.

He requested that Council make Bell Park fit-for-purpose so that residents would use it more.

In response to questions from neighbours, Mr Bramley said that if Ignite Sports was to develop the park, he would like to be able to use the park at all times. He further said that he did not support the use of artificial turf.

Speaking under public comment, **Ms P Hanna and Ms K Yung, representing Petone Community Board**, said that they had door-knocked the affected residents. One of their main concerns was the lack of drainage in the area and that more housing would add to the problem. The park was being used by residents, there was no graffiti, and it was safe for children and dog walkers, and many of the residents had gates from their properties onto the park.

In response to a question from a member, Ms Hanna said that home owners already had the issue of stormwater run-off listed on their Land Information Memorandums and additional housing would add to the flood problems.

In response to a question from a member, Ms Yung said that the residents around Bell Park connected and engaged with one another which was a community strength.

Speaking under public comment, **Ms P Whittington** said that the proposal would impact on houses which back onto Bell Park. She would lose sun in her back yard. In the past year the park had been in a poor state and it was only mown once a fortnight. She added that green spaces in a neighbourhood were important for good mental health.

In response to a question from a member, Ms Whittington said that children used the park as a throughfare from Douglas Street.

Speaking under public comment, **Mr M Shierlaw** said that the 2012 review of reserves on the valley floor described the park as a large green space that was well used. Therefore, the reserve should be retained. Selling the land would require a strong mandate from the community, and the proposal for the park did not follow the correct consultation process.

In response from questions from a member, Mr Shierlaw said that the proposal was for two thirds of the land to become housing and one third to remain as a park. He added that the reserve was not maintained to a satisfactory standard and the lawns were seldom mowed. The reserve was not a dog exercise area, however, there were no signs erected to reflect this.

Speaking under public comment, **Mr K Goldsbury representing Ignite Sport Trust** (the Trust), said that the Trust was a charity which provided opportunities for young people to play sport. If it purchased the club rooms at the park it would deliver workshops, be a hub for the community, make its resources available to the community, retain the green space, develop a hard court surface, provide a bookable multi-use, multi-purpose area,

provide holiday programmes and after school facilities.

In response to questions from members, Mr Goldsbury said that if the park flooded, the repairs would be Council's responsibility. He further said that if the Trust bought the club rooms, it would need substantial investment because the building was run down. The Trust would prefer to have all of the park to use and the proposal to sell some of it for housing would constrain its sporting activities.

Speaking under public comment, **Mr A Lee** said that disposing of the reserve was short-sighted because it would result in intensive housing with a smaller amount of green space. The proposal would add to the existing flooding problem in the area. Bell Square would be unsuitable for recreation because it was bounded by roads on all sides.

Speaking under public comment, **Ms M Butland** said that her family use the park to socialise, exercise, play soccer and fly kites. The park was safe because houses looked out over it. She would help with any working bees to maintain the park. She had seen the park used by the emergency helicopter.

Speaking under public comment, **Mr N Williamson** said that he lived on Riverside Drive and his house backed onto the park. Flooding had been an issue for the previous football club at the park and the area was recorded on Flood Hazard Information Sheet by Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) in 2010. Intensifying the housing would increase the amount of surface water in the area. He added that if the Ignite Sport Trust bought the club building it would have room to grow if the park was retained.

Speaking under public comment, **Ms M Merrett representing Friends of Waiwhetu Stream** said that covering the land with impervious surfaces caused flooding and three quarters of Lower Hutt stormwater went into Waiwhetu Stream. She said that some properties in Lower Hutt had virtually no permeable surfaces. Furthermore, Bell Park could be used to alleviate flooding.

Speaking under public comment, **Mr H Steele** said that he had lived in the area prior to the 2004 floods. He espoused the importance of ground water because it filtered slowly through the ground unlike surface run-off which went unfiltered to Waiwhetu Stream. Ground water also reduced peak flows in the streams. Any development should have hydraulic neutrality and Hutt City needed to become a water sensitive City.

Speaking under public comment, **Ms C Smith** showed a photo of her backyard under water. She said that her backyard had been underwater twice this year, and her front yard had also been affected. She also had flooding underneath her house.

In response to questions from members, Ms Smith said that the flooding

problem had been there for 40 years, however, it was now worse.

Cr Cousins asked Ms Smith to report her floods to Council.

Speaking under public comment, **Ms L Green** said that the World Health Organisation said that green urban areas facilitated physical activity, relaxation, were important to mental health, and were an aid in the treatment of mental stress. If Ignite Sport Trust purchased the club building it would require more green space than the proposed amount of green space. She asked Council for improvements to the Park and the community would take a fundraiser role to protect the Park's future.

Speaking under public comment, **Mr T Williams** emphasised that Council should not do anything to the Park, but to leave it the way it was and not install artificial turf. He implored Council to clean it up and look after the lawns.

In response to a question from a member, Mr Williams said the Park reflected 'kiwiana' and that it should be for the community and the children to enjoy.

The Divisional Manager Parks and Gardens elaborated on the report. He said that the previous winter had been one of the worst winters for a long time and Bell Park was a wet park. The stormwater for the area fed into Awamutu Stream, however, the advice of Wellington Water was that the easiest medium-term solution for the Park would be to feed it into the Waiwhetu Stream. He added that some dog walkers who used the Park did not pick up the dog droppings. The title was held by the Crown, however Council would be entitled to either all or 50% of the proceeds of the sale of the land.

In response to questions from members, the Divisional Manager Parks and Gardens said that Awamutu Stream was near its full capacity and Wellington Water preferred that stormwater from the Park went to the Waiwhetu Stream. He said that he did not know whether a resource consent would be required from Greater Wellington Regional Council for stormwater consent, and Tangata Whenua had not been consulted. He added that it could be feasible to put houses on Bell Square. He further said that the Park was a recreation ground and not a sports park. Operational protocols stipulated that recreation grounds were mown fortnightly and sports grounds were mown every 3-4 days.

Members noted that proposed Plan Change 43 for Residential Intensification had not included Petone, Moera or Eastbourne because of the effects of climate change, and Bell Park was in this area.

MOVED: (Mayor Wallace/Cr Bridson)

That the Committee recommends that Council:

- (i) notes the community feedback received on the future of Bell Park;

- (ii) retains Bell Park in full as a reserve; and
- (iii) requests officers to work with the local community and the Ignite Sport Trust, should the Trust decide to purchase the building on the Park from the Lower Hutt Football Club, to develop a proposal for the development of the Park.

The Chair said that residents needed to understand that the Park maintenance was prioritised for use as a recreation ground, therefore it would be maintained as such, and not as a sports ground.

Cr Bridson said that houses in Eastbourne were starting to face difficulties insuring their properties. Adding more housing on a hazard area would not be a correct decision. She queried whether parts of the Park could be used for stormwater overflow.

Mayor Wallace queried whether the Park could be used for wetland development. He further said that Council had a challenge to provide housing for young families. The Park provided green space and Council had the opportunity to enhance the land. There was a flooding risk in the area and more housing could make the flooding worse.

Cr Lulich said that it would be important to retain the whole Park for the community. He opposed the proposal to sell part of the Park for housing.

Cr Briggs said that Council was in need of housing, however, the proposed area was inappropriate for housing. Council also needed to retain and enhance the Park's green space for the benefit of the community and the City.

Cr Barry said that Bell Park was a hidden gem and the proposal by Ignite Sport Trust had potential which would provide an asset that would be special for the community.

**RESOLVED:** (Mayor Wallace/Cr Bridson)

**Minute No. PRC 17502**

*"That the Committee notes the community feedback received on the future of Bell Park"*

**RECOMMENDED:** (BY DIVISION)

**Minute No. PRC 17503**

*"That the Committee recommends that Council:*

- (i) retains Bell Park in full as a reserve; and
- (ii) requests officers to work with the local community and the Ignite Sport Trust, should the Trust decide to purchase the building on the Park from the Lower Hutt Football Club, to develop a proposal for the improvement of the Park."

**For**

**Against**

Cr Bridson  
Cr Barry  
Cr Briggs  
Cr Cousins  
Cr Edwards  
Cr Lewis

Cr Lulich  
Cr Sutton  
Mayor Wallace

Total: 9

Total: -

**RESOLVED:** (Cr Cousins/Mayor Wallace)

**Minute No. PRC 17504**

*"That the Committee asks officers to work with Wellington Water Limited to improve the stormwater infrastructure."*

**b) Molesworth Street Reserve (17/1673)**

The Divisional Manager Parks and Gardens elaborated on the report. He added that people had to cross private land when using the reserve to cut between streets.

Members considered that the reserve land was not being used for recreation and it would be best used for additional housing which would lift the population and support the school.

**RECOMMENDED:** (Cr Cousins/Deputy Mayor Bassett) **Minute No. PRC 17505**

*"That the Committee recommends that Council:*

- (i) notes the results of the community consultation on the Molesworth Street Reserve; and*
- (ii) agrees to publicly notify a proposal to revoke the reserve status of the Molesworth Street Reserve and make the property available for housing, for the following reasons;*
  - (a) the reserve has a low reserves value as independently assessed, with poor visibility and drainage and low use;*
  - (b) there are other reserves in the immediate vicinity that help meet local recreation need; and*
  - (c) the proceeds of the sale of the property will enable other Council reserve priorities to be undertaken, such as those identified in the Valley Floor Review Implementation Plan."*

**5. QUESTIONS**

There were no questions.

There being no further business the Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.00 pm.

Cr MJ Cousins  
**CHAIR**

**CONFIRMED as a true and correct record**  
**Dated this 12th day of December 2017**