

Council

**Wednesday, 30 September 2009
Commencing at 5.30 pm**

REPORT OF THE MAYOR

**SUPPLEMENT TO THE AGENDA FOR A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL TO BE HELD IN
THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AT WAITAKERE CENTRAL, 6 HENDERSON VALLEY
ROAD, HENDERSON, WAITAKERE, ON WEDNESDAY, 30 SEPTEMBER 2009,
COMMENCING AT 5.30 PM**

6 REPORT OF THE MAYOR

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council resolve to:

Receive the Report of the Mayor.

It's Worse Than We Thought

Many of us around this table have children and grandchildren. They mean the world to us. The last thing any of us want is to see them come to harm.

But they are in grave danger.

The threat is climate change and it is happening faster than we thought. Those of us over 60 have a massive mission before us if we are to pass on an inhabitable world to future generations.

You may have noticed that I've been glum since I've come back from the Australia-New Zealand Climate Change and Business Conference in Melbourne. It's not like me, but the truths revealed there weigh heavily on me. They cannot be ignored.

The defining moment came in a dinner speech by former climate change sceptic, Gareth Morgan. Over the last few years, the millionaire former businessman has been touring the world on his impressive Harley Davidson motorbike. While he's been burning carbon, he has employed some of the world's best minds to investigate the reality of climate change.

His conclusion is that the world is heating and will probably reach two degrees warming by 2100. The effect of that, particularly on our Pacific Island neighbours, would be shocking. Gareth's book *Poles Apart: Beyond the shouting who is right about climate change?* is an excellent read. Here is a man who has committed a large part of his recent life to working through the issues and actually doing something about them. He is an excellent speaker and he's using his energy and passion to talk knowledgably about climate change.

Remember, he is at the conservative end of the spectrum. Others feel we could be in for three degrees warming by 2020. Most climatologists are playing it safe and citing 2030 as the time climate change really starts kicking in. I think disaster will come quickly unless we take radical action, right now.

I urge everyone to read a just released book by Lester Brown called *Plan B 3.0: Mobilizing to Save Civilisation*. Its message is simply this: unless we act 'at wartime speed' to save our planet our future is bleak. We must not fall into the trap of thinking our actions don't matter in New Zealand. They do.

M1-M2

A climate change conference of major importance will take place in Copenhagen in December (see attachments M1-M2). New Zealand will be represented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Tim Groser and the Minister for the Environment, Nick Smith. I



cannot imagine a more important job. Believe me; the world's future hangs in the balance. This conference will decide the kind of world our children will inherit. It may decide whether they will have a world to inherit at all.

In local government, I believe it is our job to urge central government to take a brave stance on cutting carbon emissions. This country cannot simply play follow-the-leader with Australia. Our cousins across the ditch are courting a Chinese government that opens coal fired energy plant every two weeks. Australia, which is determined to hold onto its Chinese market, demands that we go along with its pitiful carbon cutting targets.

M3-M4

Businesses too must not neglect the environment in pursuit of profit. The short term push for bigger dividends must not come at the cost of our planet (see attachments M3-M4).

We must show leadership. We must live out our clean, green brand before we lose it. We must stay at the cutting edge of environmental policy.

Last Saturday, a knock at the door revealed two lovely locals from the Jehovah's Witnesses. They come about once a month, generally when I'm in the shower, to sell me a copy of their magazine 'Awake'. It's one of those publications that is so earnest it's very hard to consider even skim reading. But this time the front cover had a very fine design and the title 'Global warming: Is Planet Earth in Peril?'. I was immediately hooked.

Here is a magazine with an average printing run of 35,754,000 published in 81 languages and they're prepared to devote 10 pages to the environment. It opens with a 73-year-old villager in Tuvalu who does not need scientific reports to tell him the sea is rising. The beaches of his childhood have already vanished and the crops that used to feed his family have been poisoned by salt water. Tuvalu of course is not more than 4m above sea level. For the first time in my life I found 'Awake' magazine riveting and I hope the millions that read it will share my view.

But it's worth giving balance even in these desperate times. I want to credit physics genius, Freeman Dyson, from the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton. This brilliant thinker has been a balancing point for the intellectual right for over 50 years. His contention is that man will adapt and invent technology to overcome any circumstances thrown at them, including global warming. He is not afraid to say that greenies are often people who never have to worry about their grocery bills. He could be a lonely prophet, or, as he himself acknowledges, he could be dead wrong. But Dyson is a good scientist, says the New York Times Magazine. He asks the hard questions.

If you're interested in this great mind I urge you to pick up a copy of *The Origins of Life*, which puts the theory that life on this planet 'began twice'. A fascinating read.

Below is the opinion piece I wrote after the Melbourne conference.

A better world for Isla

My granddaughter Isla was christened recently.

I stood by as she was blessed with prayers for her future, knowing her parents' mix of pride and hope.



Instead I felt fear.

Fear for the world she would inherit. Fear she would never enjoy the opportunities I had. Fear her life may even be cut short.

The days before the christening had been spent at the Australia-New Zealand Climate Change and Business Conference. Speaker after speaker took the podium with the news all is not well and, even more depressing, it's not going to be.

Their message was clear: Without enormous cultural and social change the world we leave for our grandchildren will be governed by climate change on a destructive scale never seen before.

I don't envy governments, including ours, who are now locked into setting standards for carbon emissions. It's a complex balancing act. But I'm starting to feel it's just too little, too late.

M5-M6

Doomsday scenarios are now being forecast by believers and sceptics alike. Acclaimed scientific journal, *New Scientist*, is predicting at least one metre sea level rise by 2100. Even the sceptics are saying we are looking at a two degrees global warming by the turn of the century. That is considered conservative by the brilliant futurist and commentator George Monbiot, who sees four degrees of warming and a three metre sea level rise (see attachments M5-M6).

Consensus is emerging and it is painting a grim picture. Our future world will be one of rising seas, dying reefs and diminishing food sources. And it is coming sooner than any of us predicted.

In that catastrophic setting, there will be \$600 billion worth of property destroyed and 100 million people displaced. As many as three billion people will suffer water shortages. It is global chaos at a level only the worst horror films depict. The 'lifeboat' states for displaced people will be Great Britain, Australia and yes, New Zealand.

Our country is likely to be colonised by a flood of climate refugees. They could one day come from anywhere in the world. But the immediate issue is right on our doorstep.

I will soon ask the Auckland Mayoral Forum to define areas for resettlement of Pacific Island nations. The science is now showing many of our low lying Pacific neighbour states will be underwater by the turn of the century at best, or within 30 years at worst. The Cook Islands network of atolls may be inundated. Larger states such as Samoa will be suffering shortages of food and fresh water and the regular battering of cyclones and storm surges. Both have a close relationship with New Zealand and easy access under our immigration laws.

We have to get real about the impending influx of displaced migrants from these countries. Cities cannot turn a blind eye to the massive population that will soon be knocking at our doors. They will need access to food and healthcare. They will need places to live.

Many are in denial even as this future becomes a reality. I've seen first hand the bile that spews out after even small attempts to save the environment. When my city, Waitakere, announced a goal of going plastic shopping bag free in September, I got at least 20 abusive phone calls to my home. Some said climate change is a myth. Most were just angry they would have to pay 5c a plastic bag.



It's easy to feel like losing hope in the face of such small minded opposition. But this country can't afford to let climate change catch us unawares the way the global economic meltdown did. If we wash our hands of our responsibility to stop climate change, it too will hit us in an unstoppable tsunami of chaos.

I have asked the Local Government New Zealand Metro Sector to hold a day long climate change workshop in May. We will be inviting the successful businessman, author and former climate change sceptic Gareth Morgan to address us. He was a keynote speaker at the Melbourne conference and is now in no doubt about the imminent challenges ahead. My aim is that he will stir the leaders of New Zealand's major cities to drastic action.

It could be that we simply need a reality check. Maybe the films showing the destruction our cities - London, New York – have been so fantastical and so unreal we believe only Peter Jackson could deliver that kind of disaster. The movie we should be watching is The Age of Stupid. Its account of how ignorance and selfishness are speeding us toward an apocalyptic future is frighteningly believable.

The climate change disaster is real and it is unfolding before our eyes. Saying it is not will only intensify its impact. But throwing our hands up and saying it is too hard to stop will only make its direst possible outcomes a definite reality. It may be too late but if we give up we will lose any chance we have of averting disaster.

So I say there is still hope. Our choices are still important and we have many left to make.

There is still every reason to recycle, to conserve power, to bike to work, to grow your own garden and to say no to a plastic bag at the supermarket.

It's about saving the seaside bach that may be underwater in two generations, still heading to the mountain for winter skiing trips, stopping flooding in your basement or preserving the beautiful shoreline where you take an evening stroll.

As for me, I just want a better world for Isla.

A Great Idea

I've talked about saving the world for our grandchildren. But our grandchildren can help the cause.

Kathryn Williams of our web team recently alerted me to a company which is turning disposable nappies into compost. Its efforts give me hope. Environmentally friendly technology needs to go mainstream if we are to stop climate change. These nappies would otherwise have gone to fill our landfills and pollute our streams and rivers. Now they are creating fertile soil and contributing to the carbon cycle.

This council should get behind technologies like this. Stopping climate change starts with companies like HotRot composting services.

It also starts with people like Kathryn. She is walking the eco-city talk. Though she has a toddler, she has only used three disposable nappies in her life.

Now that's commitment.



The Problem with Plastic

As you walk up the steps with your groceries this week you will be carrying about six grams of crude oil, coal and gas in the form of a plastic bag.

It doesn't seem like much until you realise there are about three billion others doing the same thing. All carrying the same amount of crude oil, coal and gas. Every week. Every month. Every year.

That's a big problem.

I've known the harm caused by plastic shopping bags since I volunteered to clean up Waitakere's waterways with Project Twin Streams. I found myself pulling hundreds of bags out of what should have been pristine water. Most of them came straight from shopping trolleys. Many escaped my efforts and went on to pollute the Waitemata Harbour. From there they would have been carried into the ocean to wrap around the necks of baby albatrosses, the flippers of baby whales and the beaks of young dolphins, slowly strangling them to death. Those that didn't, floated to the world's biggest landfill – the Great Pacific Garbage Patch. That swirling mass of plastic waste is now twice the size of Texas. It is poisoning the water. Fish are dying. Sea birds are choking on plastic.

No single person is to blame for this. We all are.

In this city we are doing something about it.

Our 'Bags Not' campaign launched on September 5.

It is us saying we will work together to eliminate plastic bags from Waitakere. We want to change the attitudes of everyone from teenagers to multinational retailers. Our message is that a decision as simple as using a reusable shopping bag can make a world of difference.

Each plastic bag takes 1000 years to degrade. About a trillion of them are dumped over the world every year. New Zealand accounts for a billion. Of that 8000 tonnes goes straight to rot in our city streets, carparks and dumps. More washes into our streams.

Waitakere going plastic shopping bag free may be a small step, but it is a vital part of the big picture. Change can start with a city of 200,000 taking a stand.

We have already seen it happen. People laughed when Waitakere declared itself New Zealand's first eco-city in 1992. But for 17 years, we have carried a vision of environmental sustainability. Now we are seeing our ideas take hold nationally and internationally. 'Bags Not' is adding another colour to the eco-city canvas. It too could have a far reaching impact. We don't want this campaign to simply stay here. A sustainable identity is vital to the whole region.

It's a stand that makes financial sense.

There's a reason New Zealand's clean and green brand is worth millions every year. People invest in environmentally sound products. They want to make principled choices when they spend their dollars. 'Bags Not' should be welcomed with open arms by the new Auckland Council as a marketable point of difference for the region. The Auckland Council should take it to the rest of New Zealand and then on to the world. A



commitment by three billion people to rid ourselves of plastic bags would be a global consumer decision no government could match.

On any Wellington street, the stormwater drain will have a little symbol: a fish with a funnel in its mouth. Without words it says that what we put in our drains goes straight to our fish. The same goes when we put plastic in our streams and rivers. I cannot think of a worse way to die than strangulation by plastic bag. Our dolphins, fish and seal pups will thank us if in five years we are walking up the steps with our groceries in a reusable bag, not a plastic one.

Lighting the Peace Flame

A peace flame has been burning in Hiroshima since the horrific bombing of the city in 1945.

Last month, I lit two torches from its embers to take back to New Zealand.

Those torches were lit again, along with three others made by the West Auckland Woodturners Guild on September 17.

The ceremony in front of media, MP Chris Carter and a full assembly of Glen Eden Intermediate School was a magnificent event that signalled the start a global peace movement.

The torches we lit will be carried by thousands in 90 countries on the World March for Peace and Non-violence. From Waitakere, the flame went to Auckland and the Chatham Islands and will be received by the Prime Minister in Wellington on October 2. Over the next 90 days, it will travel to every continent before finally being presented to the United Nations.

The goal of the march is to work for a “world without wars”. It is about ridding the world of nuclear weapons, renouncing war as a way of ending disputes and reducing military spending.

Quite a challenge, but one I believe the world is ready for.

Waitakere was the perfect place to start the movement.

We have a proud record of peace that stretches back more than 20 years when Mayor Tim Shadbolt declared Waitemata an anti-nuclear city. Since my election, I have flown the flag of peace outside the council buildings to show our commitment to global peace.

I thought it was important to hold the ceremony at Glen Eden Intermediate School.

Our homes and neighbourhoods are responsible for passing on a peaceful culture but our children are responsible for living it. Our future world is in their hands. Their decisions are critical.

This is one of the key issues of our time. We have to address the spread of nuclear weapons to create a better society for future generations.

As Nobel Peace Prize winner Willy Brandt said:

“Peace is not everything but without peace everything else is nothing.”



Mayors Making a Difference

I was invited to visit our sister city Kakogawa and attend the anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August.

M7-M13 In Nagasaki I was elected Vice President of Mayors for Peace (see attachments M7-M13).

M14-M17 The international organisation has more than 3000 member cities from every continent. It is aimed at putting an end to the politics of fear and intimidation practiced by nuclear-armed countries. We are sick of rogue states like North Korea holding the world to ransom. Our agenda is to rid the world of nuclear weapons by 2020 (see attachments M14-M17). If that is achieved, our ambition is to celebrate by holding the Olympic Games in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

M18 I was also asked to chair two meetings at its Annual Conference and to work on a charter which sets out a timetable for global change (see attachments M18).

My opening speech addressed the global threat posed by nuclear arms.

An opening address

I was two years old when the nuclear bomb dropped on Hiroshima.

By the time flames and radiation had taken their toll, 140,000 people were dead.

Three days later, here in Nagasaki, 80,000 more were killed.

Most were civilians, people like you and me, killed in a few seconds of heat and force.

In that wave of unparalleled destruction the world I was to grow up in changed forever.

Our conflicts came with more catastrophic consequences than ever before.

War was no longer the curse of mankind, but of all the earth as well.

At our fingertips was not just the power to destroy each other, but the whole planet.

My life has been forged around trying to stave off the destruction of war.

For years I have protested and lobbied against the use of nuclear weapons.

In the 1980s I was behind Prime Minister David Lange and the New Zealand government as it took a bold nuclear free stance.

Ours was the very first country in the world to declare that it would not even allow nuclear-powered ships to enter its waters.

For that our government earned the longstanding wrath of the United States.

As a mayor I have tried to build my city Waitakere on a foundation of peace.

We have declared ourselves a nuclear free city, an eco-city and a City for Peace.



In doing so we have built a community that doesn't just talk about peace, but lives it out.

Ours are the people that band together in their hundreds to clean streams.

The families that march in their thousands to say no to family violence and say yes to rebuilding their children into young leaders.

Ours are the communities that join with local Muslims to plant olive trees in our cemetery.

I know as cities we cannot do everything. The role of nuclear disarmament ultimately belongs to central governments.

But change doesn't start with governments. It starts with people. It starts in communities. It starts in cities.

Change happens when people start opening their minds to the impossible and stepping out in unity.

It is in our communities that we mayors can make a real difference: One lounge at a time. One house. One street. One neighbourhood. One town. And from each city we can unite a country in peace.

That kind of change has power.

Nations will not dismantle their nuclear weapons if they are not built on the foundation of peaceful communities.

The transformation of the world starts with grassroots leadership from people like you and me.

Soon I go to Melbourne to see the christening of my granddaughter.

I do so with the knowledge that her world – like mine – is still haunted by the spectre of nuclear weapons.

She will live with the threat of rogue regimes or terrorists gaining control of those weapons.

She may have to deal with division between people and nations over their development.

She may even face the devastation that comes with their use.

We need to give hope to my granddaughter and the hundreds of millions of other children growing up in this world.

Hope that tough measures to prevent nuclear materials being sold and produced will be deployed.

Hope that the world will enact indefinite bans on nuclear tests.

Hope that it will act against those that attempt to betray the principles of peace.



That hope should not be based on wishful thinking, but thoughtful planning.

It should not ignore, but overcome obstacles.

It should not alienate, but convince opponents.

We need hope that my granddaughter will one day live in a nuclear free world.

There are those who say a nuclear free world is impossible.

They argue the spread of weapons cannot be stopped, cannot be checked, that we are destined to live in a world where more nations and more people possess the ultimate tools of destruction.

We know where that road leads. When nations define each other by differences, they emphasise fear.

We know where the path leads when we choose fear over the hard work of hope. That's how wars begin. That's where human progress ends.

I'll tell you what I thought impossible. Nelson Mandela coming out of prison. The Berlin Wall coming down. A black man becoming president of the United States.

The impossible can change if enough people ignore the voices telling them it can't.

Today we are ignoring the voices telling us the world cannot change.

Gathered in this room we have all the ingredients we need to make change happen.

Already we are more than 3000 mayors from 134 countries.

We come from all corners of the globe, bringing with us a diverse array of cultural, social and political practices.

Yet in this diversity we are united.

We are not defined by what divides us, but a common belief in a better world.

Earlier this week I was honoured to view a massive solid bronze Peace Bell being forged for Waitakere by the city of Kakogawa.

It is a symbol for all those who hear of a world without nuclear weapons and wonder if it's still worth seeking after a goal that seems impossible.

It is a message that rings out from cities and towns.

Here today, we too are a message that must ring out to all the people in our towns and cities.

We must make sure the voice of peace and security is heard in our houses, our streets.

We must make this city that was once devastated by nuclear attack the place where we envision a new future without nuclear weapons.

Together we can ring the bell of peace.



Staff on stage

Congratulations to Rewi Spraggon on winning the APRA Silver Scroll Maioha Award. Rewi is our Maori Relationships Project Officer, but his talents regularly take him to stages and TV sets.

His winning song, Tapapakanga, was co-written with Riki Bennett for the group Te Aratoi. Their combination of ancient and modern music is winning acclaim throughout New Zealand. It blends the Taonga Puora - flutes, conches, shells, trumpets and gourds – with vocals to recreate the sound of the birds and forests of Aotearoa.

Milestones

Avondale resident and renowned ceramic historian, Richard Quinn, has died after a long illness. Quinn was the champion of the restoration of Lime Burners Bay and other ceramic and pottery sites in the West. He was also the curator of Crown Lynn's technical and industrial ceramic collection, which now rests in the ownership of the Portage Ceramics Trust.

All funding has been confirmed for the \$300 million New Lynn Transit Oriented Development. It will revive New Lynn's town centre and revolutionise its transport systems. Congratulations to the staff who have worked long and hard to propel this massive project forward. Its public transport centred approach is a victory for Waitakere's eco-city principles.

The project is on track to be completed by October next year – on budget and on time.

I would like to welcome Kohu Road Ice Cream to Waitakere. Theirs is an extraordinary success story. The business started from a Sunday stall in the Titirangi Market. Founder Greg Hall exported his designer ice cream out of his house on Kohu Road, Titirangi. From those beginnings the company has grown into the brand of choice for ice cream connoisseurs and New Zealand's rich list. The company has now bought a third of the Astley Tanneries in New Lynn. I'd like to welcome this fantastic business back to their roots - in Waitakere.

Tomorrow, October 1, we will be starting the diggers on New Zealand's largest public-private partnership in Hobsonville. The development will help relieve the pressure on our urban limits and open up kilometres of harbour waterfront. Waitakere is again showing that local government is miles ahead of central government when it comes to planning and executing this kind of project.

The first major works on SH16 in more than 50 years were announced on 16 September. It is good to see the dreaded Te Atatu intersection get a much needed upgrade, but I greet the news with a touch of sadness. More than 80 houses will have to be demolished to get the upgrade done. My heart goes out to the owners and residents who will have to move.

New World opened in New Lynn last night. This is a major boost to the area's economy and a victory for shoppers.

My only plea is that the centre's owners and manager take a bold stand and get behind our 'Bags Not' campaign.