



Open Briefing: Lower Hutt's key emission sources and options for achieving reductions

10 May 2023 – 5.40pm

Attendees

Elected Members: Mayor Barry (until 5.54pm), Cr Briggs, Cr Dyer, Cr Edwards, Cr Mitchell, Cr Morgan (via audio-visual link), Cr Parkin, K Yung (Petone Community Board), B Spedding (Eastbourne Community Board, via audio-visual link) and S Freeman (Petone Community Board, via audio-visual link).

Staff: J Livschitz, Group Chief Financial Officer, J Griffiths, Director Strategy and Engagement; K Puketapu-Dentice, Director Economy and Development, A Geddes, Director Environment and Sustainability, N Geard, Policy Planning Manager, D Kerite, Head of Regulatory Services, H Bell, Elected Member Support Coordinator, D Cornille, Graduate Advisor Waste Minimisation; G Muller, Advisor Waste Minimisation; A Saker, Senior Advisor Waste Minimisation; G Roberts, Manager Waste Minimisation; T Biggin, Project Manager RiverLink, B Cato, Chief Legal Officer and J Randall, Democracy Advisor.

Apologies

Cr Shaw, Cr Barratt, Deputy Mayor Lewis, Cr Stallinger, Cr Tupou, M Fisher (Petone Community Board), M Henderson (Petone Community Board) and T Harker (Wainuiomata Community Board).

Absent

Cr Brown

Presenter

J Scherzer, Head of Climate and Solid Waste.

Introduction and key objectives of the briefing

The purpose of the briefing was to provide an update on Lower Hutt's emissions footprint, its Climate Action Pathway and key opportunities in each sector.

Presentation by the Head of Climate Change and Solid Waste

Slide 1 (Header)

Slide 2 – What I will cover.

Slide 3 – Title page - Lower Hutt's footprint and climate action pathway.

Slide 4 – What we would like to avoid: The impacts of climate change – 2 metres of sea level rise affecting Lower Hutt.

Slide 5 – Lower Hutt's 'community' footprint: Lower Hutt's production-based footprint includes transport, heating, power, waste and industry. Lower Hutt's consumption-based footprint includes products consumed in Lower Hutt but produced elsewhere.

Slide 6 – Choices affect the rate of decarbonisation: Council has a long way to go to reduce emissions to Zero by 2050. The Wellington Region 2050 Emissions Calculator allows councils to model changes in order to forecast future emissions and predict which changes would create the biggest emissions reductions.

Slide 7 – Te Ara Whakamua o Te Awa Kairangi ki Tai (Lower Hutt Climate Action Pathway): The Climate Action Pathway sets a direction for Council to reduce emissions and outlines the actions that need to be taken to reach a net zero target by 2050.

Slide 8 – Title page – Transport.

Slide 9 – Some factors to facilitate emissions reductions: A range of factors can facilitate emissions reductions, but electrifying transport is key to reducing emissions.

Slide 10 – What’s already happening: Council’s Integrated Transport Strategy guides transport decision making and Council’s Long Term Plan sets out the projects. Council’s Carbon Reduction Plan and the Lower Hutt Climate Action Pathway state the key actions. Working jointly with government and other players is key to creating change in the sector.

Slide 11 – Title page – A closer look at electrifying transport.

Slide 12 – The electric vehicle (EV) market share is increasing: Over the last 18-24 months the uptake of EVs has increased dramatically. The increase is highest in cities.

Slide 13 – Disruption: Sales of EVs in Norway have increased to over 90% of vehicle sales since 2011 when EVs were only 2% of vehicle sales. Hyundai have stopped selling fuel driven cars. This demonstrates that transitions can happen quickly when there is determination to make change happen. New Zealand is about seven years behind the change curve.

Slide 14 – Disruption: Horses vs. motorcars: Visual images of New York 1900 – 1913, showing how fast a transition can happen.

Slide 15 – Light vehicles in Lower Hutt: The current market share for EVs in Lower Hutt is 2%. It will take a few years for this to change. An increasing market share will help reduce emissions.

Slide 16 – Title page – So what may be needed.

Slide 17 – What’s needed to fix the dial – Climate Commission advice: Ways to support and incentivise change – the market share for EVs is still small. The capacity of electricity distribution lines along with smart charging to minimise peaks need addressing.

Slide 18 – To affect emissions in Lower Hutt: Urban renewals, network improvements, working with contractors and use of the Low Carbon Acceleration Fund are some ways to accelerate transport electrification in Lower Hutt. More EV chargers and EV car sharing will help.

Slide 19 – Title page – Stationary energy.

Slide 20 – Some factors to facilitate emission reductions: A connected city where it is attractive to walk, or cycle will help. Electrifying transport is important.

Slide 21 – What’s already happening: Council’s Integrated Transport Strategy guides decision making while the Lower Hutt Climate Action Pathway and Council’s Carbon Reduction Plan outline key actions. Council needs to continue to work alongside other government organisations to create change.

Slide 22 – Title page – A closer look at electrifying homes.

Slide 23 – Types of heating used in Lower Hutt.

Slide 24 – Fossil gas has a high carbon footprint: The HEEP study provides a useful comparison of the carbon footprint of gas and electricity in Wellington dwellings.

Slide 25 – Growth in gas use will increase emissions: Based on the growth of new developments, the continued use of fossil gas will increase emissions across Lower Hutt exponentially over the next 30 years compared with if alternative low carbon energy sources are used.

Slide 26 – Electricity is viable and cost-effective: Electricity is a key alternative energy source to fossil gas in Lower Hutt. Heat pumps are very energy efficient and their whole-of-life cost is low.

Slide 27 – Why not hydrogen?: The use of hydrogen as a source of energy has many limitations, costs and challenges. Investing in hydrogen as an alternative source of energy will not enable Lower Hutt to halve its emissions by 2030.

Slide 28 – Title page - So what may be needed.

Slide 29 – What’s needed to shift the dial – Climate Commission advice: More renewable energy, more efficient energy and avoiding energy load peaks are needed. The capacity of electricity distribution lines needs addressing, more smart charging, no new gas connections and support to replace gas connections.

Slide 30 – To affect emissions in Lower Hutt: For the city to reduce emissions, alternative energy sources such as solar power and low carbon heating need consideration. Council can also use urban form, work with key suppliers, provide support with the Low Carbon Acceleration Fund and allow no new gas connections.

Slide 31 – Title page - Waste.

Slide 32 – What’s needed to shift the dial: Climate Commission advice: Avoid waste at source, more resource recovery, best practice waste treatment, incentivise gas capture and use waste levy increases.

Slide 33 – What’s already happening: Council is taking action on a number of fronts and is working regionally to manage and reduce waste.

Slide 34 – Final reflections: A whole of community approach is needed for emissions reduction. Council is only beginning its carbon reduction journey but is already creating a shift. If Council delays making uncomfortable carbon reduction decisions it will make it harder to

achieve its goal of zero emissions by 2050. Change can happen quickly if decisive action is taken.

Questions and discussion points

- If gas use is reduced there is a risk fixed costs will increase, and consumers could lose their investments.
- Council has a role to play in communicating when there is an intention to phase out gas. It is difficult to communicate this message when there is competing messaging from gas companies promoting hydrogen.
- Emission levels from wood burners depend on how cleanly they burn. Emissions are also produced from transporting wood. Woodburners are not as efficient as heat pumps but still have a role to play in heating homes.
- Officers are willing to report back to Council on options for phasing out new gas connections if Councillors would like more information.
- The key officer work for Council's District Plan and the next Long Term Plan is:
 - Improving systems for food organics and the waste sector.
 - Looking at the future of the Silverstream transfer centre, the resource recovery park and construction demolition waste.
 - Working on a solar PV business case for council facilities.
 - Influencing the transport system in a limited way by providing cycleways and the infrastructure to create modal shifts. Also enabling charging stations to encourage more EV uptake.

These are areas Council can influence. Council has less control over fossil gas and coal. If Councillors want to know more about the options for gas and coal, officers can report back.

- Wellington City Council has been leading education on transport modal shifts and ways to encourage change. Hutt City Council is using the same messaging to provide consistent messages.
- It is difficult to change behaviour. System-wide changes that make it easier and cheaper to do the right thing, such as the government's Clean Car Standard, are more effective than relying on education and messaging.

Next steps

More discussion on proposed changes will take place during the Long Term Plan process. An open briefing on waste minimisation will take place on 14 June 2023. These and other briefings will provide further information on carbon reduction measures.

Briefing materials

Attachment 1 – Presentation: Lower Hutt's key emission sources and measures to reduce them.

The briefing closed at 6.20pm