



The SOLGM Planning Working Party (FWP) met on 4 December – its last meeting for 2015. In this edition:

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2015 LTPs - Fit For Purpose?

The answer is a resounding “yes!” Ninety-five percent of the LTP project managers told us their LTP was a success. Almost all respondents asked for no legislative change for 2018.

The project managers told us they most wanted guidance on LTP communications and engagement, aligning the LTP and other plans and asset planning (including the infrastructure strategies). That’s helpful guidance that we’ll take on board in the coming year.

We reviewed and approved a short report *Fit For Purpose?* That sets out the findings from the survey, SOLGM will release this early in the new year.

SOLGM Commences Review of Performance Management Guide

SOLGM will be moving to put the review and development of the LTP guidance back ‘in sync’ with the planning cycle. As a result, and only 157 days after the last LTPs were due, we’ve started the review of LTP guidance with the guide that was left ‘as was’ in 2015.

Currently entitled Performance Management: Your Side of the Deal, the first cab off the rank covers strategies, levels of service, measures and targets and performance culture. The Productivity Commission describes the guide as clear and practical, something we want to keep for 2018.

If you are interested in participating in this project then contact the SOLGM lead Shivani Makwana at Shivani.makwana@solgm.org.nz.

Review of Urban Planning – SOLGM “In the Loop”

The Productivity Commission is conducting what is described as a first principles review of urban planning law in New Zealand. The Government has specifically asked the Commission to consult SOLGM.

Rather than waiting for them to come to us, we've decided to convene a workshop of urban planning experts from within the sector to meet with the Commission and discuss the issues. Three members of PWP, and two other invited representatives will take part.

There is room for a couple more, if you are interested in participating then please contact Raymond Horan raymond.horan@solgm.org.nz. Note: preference will be given to SOLGM members.

RMA Reform

The Resource Law Amendment Bill received its first reading on 3 December and has been referred to the Local Government and Environment Committee for submissions. There is no word as yet on the deadline for submissions – we're picking it will be around the end of January.

Finance and Infrastructure Strategies: A Pass Mark

In preparing for the review of this guide ourselves and the Financial Working Party undertook a review of a sample of financial strategies and infrastructure strategies. We reviewed the same report that FWP has and broadly agree with their assessment of its recommendation.

A joint working group of FWP/PWP and asset managers will be formed to look at guidance on integrating the two documents. We are looking for helpers – if you are interested please contact Raymond Horan at raymond.horan@solgm.org.nz

2016 Community Plan Conference – Dates and City

The 2016 SOLGM Community Plan Conference will be held on 15 and 16 August in Auckland. By the way, we were pleased to see an exceptionally high audience rating for last August's event.

Some Other Interesting Snippets

OAG's report on the 2015 LTPs was released on 3 December. You can find it at <http://www.oag.govt.nz/2015/ltps>

For those who haven't seen it yet, the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment has released a very readable and useful report on sea level rise. You can find this at <http://www.pce.parliament.nz/media/1390/preparing-nz-for-rising-seas-web-small.pdf>

Those of you who missed any of the webinars on CDs, Service Delivery reviews or the Annual Plan – don't forget that the recordings are available. Contact Elisabeth McCardle at SOLGM – note if your council didn't register for the live session there will be a fee.

Seasons Greetings

From all of us on FWP: Christine, Andrew, David,, Steve, Julie, Michael , Michelle Nedine, Svea and myself – seasons greetings and best wishes for 2016.

Chris Ingle
Chair, SOLGM Planning Working Party
7 December 2015