



Report 06.252
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Committee Ara Tahi
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Wellington Regional Strategy - Update June 2006

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide Ara Tahi with an update on the Wellington Regional Strategy (WRS), to ask for Ara Tahi's final views on how iwi should be represented in the draft of the WRS document and to examine what options lie ahead for continued engagement between iwi and the WRS.

2. Significance of the decision

The matters for decision in this report **do not** trigger the significance policy of the Council or otherwise trigger section 76(3) (b) of the Local Government Act 2002.

3. Background

Over the last month the Wellington region's local government Chief Executives have had a series of workshop sessions exploring ideas and options for the WRS and around achieving a more 'regionalised' approach to governance, service delivery and funding, based on identified WRS concepts. These discussions have drawn on the variety of inputs, ranging from the workstream teams' background work, direct input from some WRS Project Executive Group (PEG) members and input from our Strategic Partners Forum, through to propositions deriving from processes such as the Ministry of Social Development / Department of Labour *Labour Market Strategy* work.

The Chief Executive's discussions resulted in a range of proposals being put to WRS Forum workshops on 3 May and 25 May. These include some potentially very significant proposals, a number of which have been agreed to 'in principle' to go out for public consultation mid year.

A range of strategic action points have been agreed upon for inclusion in the WRS draft. Still to be resolved are the action plan details which require agreements as to what level of investment / cost and timeframes the WRS Forum is comfortable to recommend through to the member councils. Indicative costs and timetables have been developed and provided to the WRS Forum for consideration.

There is 'in principle' agreement to use Greater Wellington's Regional Policy Statement as a key vehicle for urban / spatial land use management for the 'Quality Regional Form & Systems' aspects of the WRS. This would be supported by Memorandums of Understanding and / or a Triennial Agreement to foster continued shared understanding and expectations around the WRS QRFS thinking.

In terms of funding, a key matter under discussion is a proposal for Greater Wellington Regional Council to collect a regional rate to address many aspects of WRS requirements. This requires clear processes and commitments around the Triennial Agreement and may also necessitate Memoranda of Understanding on certain aspects. The majority of councils are indicating support. However, this is to be tested with their individual councils over the next month.

Associated with the above are a range of ideas for how the Economic Development Agency, Regional Tourism Operator and even a Land Development Agency (for those councils who would wish to utilise and contribute to such a tool) functions within the region would connect to the WRS 'keeper of the strategy' and be funded.

In light of the significance of a number of the matters being grappled with, the WRS Forum has sought additional time to work these through. This includes seeking other stakeholders input.

At its workshop last Thursday evening the WRS Forum agreed to add a further 4 weeks to the WRS process. This means we are now looking at a mid August rather than mid July date for releasing the WRS document for public consultation. Final signoff moves from end of September 2006 to end of October. This timing still enables connection with LTCCP processes for any necessary budgeting changes.

4. Comment

Given the timeframes around the release of the WRS document for public consultation, it is important that we are clear about how iwi want to be represented in the WRS document. Outstanding issues include the Maori name for the WRS, whether to include iwi logos and whether “supporting kainga-a-tikanga” is the right phrase for the WRS document. These issues were discussed at the WRS – Ara Tahi workshop on 27 April and notes were sent out to Ara Tahi for comment and direction.

The WRS seeks to continue communication with iwi in the region and there is a question around whether Ara Tahi is the right vehicle for that process. Ara Tahi has provided excellent insight for WRS with regard to iwi issues in the region. However, it has been suggested that a different forum could be set up for specific interaction between the WRS and iwi.

5. Communication

Overall communication is being managed through the WRS process.

6. Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. *Receives the report.*
2. *Notes the content of the report.*

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