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Committee Wellington Regional Strategy
Author Graham Spargo, Wellington Regional Strategy

EMA Incorporated (Central), MSD and Wellington Regional Strategy Joint Implementation Project

1. Purpose

To update the committee on the public / private partnership between the Employers and Manufacturers (Central) Incorporated, Ministry of Social Development (MSD) and Wellington Regional Strategy project.

The initiative is to assist with the implementation of WRS and is a significant and positive step in promoting private / public sector collaboration around achieving WRS objectives.

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

During development of the Wellington Regional Strategy (WRS) it was recognised by the WRS Forum (the precursor to the WRS Committee) that ongoing officer support arrangements were needed to successfully implement the WRS.

Essentially this is to embed the activity of the previous WRS Project Office (established for the period of developing the WRS) within local government structures. Two full time officer positions have been established.

For the implementation phase of the WRS work of the office includes:

- High level project management and co-ordination activity across all elements of the WRS. There is a particular emphasis on the council-led 'good regional form' aspects, Genuine Progress Indicators, and also a need to co-ordinate in several WRS areas with REDA and other stakeholders (e.g. the Wellington Regional Labour Market Strategy);

- Officer support for the WRS Committee for its operation (reports, advice, gathering of information, and addressing requests);
- Liaison and co-ordination over WRS related programs with central government officials, private sector entities and N.G.O.s.;
- Stakeholder engagement processes and communication.

Through the Greater Wellington LTCCP amendment process to adopt the WRS, the arrangement settled on to deliver the WRS Office implementation was as follows:

Greater Wellington Regional Council (on behalf of the councils of the region) has allocated \$100,000 per annum towards the 'WRS Office' function. A contribution of \$300,000 from central government sources is identified as being sought to fully fund the balance WRS Office requirements.

3.1 Funding Partnership Confirmed For 2007 / 2008

For the period 1 October 2007 to 31 September 2008 a funding agreement has been confirmed between the Ministry of Social Development, and a partnership of EMA (Central) Incorporated and Greater Wellington Regional Council.

The agreement is for one year and is an agreement for provision of grant funding under MSD's enterprising communities programme.

The parties jointly recognise the need for support arrangements to progress the implementation phase of the Wellington Regional Strategy (WRS).

The basis for delivering these support arrangements is on the basis of a detailed 'WRS Implementation Project (WRS Office) Business Plan'. These cover the bullet points set out in the preceding section for the areas of activity for the WRS Office.

These have been agreed between EMA Incorporated (Central) and GWRC, and included in the terms of the MSD Agreement.

The essential aspects of the agreement are that:

- It provides for engagement of 2 officer positions to carry out the project management, report development, stakeholder engagement and related WRS requirements for the 12 month period.
- MSD is providing \$300,000 (including GST) to the EMA / GWRC partnership to deliver the WRS office implementation function.
- EMA (Central) Incorporated's involvement significantly assists with development of leadership, alignment and championing for and around WRS related private sector initiatives.

- GWRC is housing the WRS office and providing day to day senior management and other operational needs.

EMA (Central) CEO Paul Winter is leading the project in collaboration and regular consultation with Jane Davis representing GWRC.

Greater Wellington Regional Council has agreed to provide the logistical support and day to day operational management to enable WRS Implementation Project (WRS Office) Business Plan objectives to be delivered.

MSD has agreed to involvement given the Wellington Regional Strategy aims to promote sustainable prosperity for all the people of the Wellington region. The set of principles in the WRS informing how this is to be achieved (June 2006 version, page 56) are seen to dovetail strongly with aspects of the MSD mandate. These include concepts of:

- ‘shared benefit’;
- supporting local communities and social cohesion;
- fostering community resilience and preparedness to change; and,
- providing equitable access for all sectors of the community to employment and economic opportunities.

There is a high degree of alignment and inter-connection between these and the six key outcome areas in MSD’s 2007/2008 statement of intent, namely;

- leading social development;
- children and young people;
- working-age people;
- older people;
- families / Whanau; and,
- communities / hapu and iwi.

MSD see good potential in the WRS actions given they span a broad spectrum from land use ‘spatial’ planning and investment, through to people based aspects.

This includes matters such as skills development and retention, business support networks and systems to foster and develop commercial ideas. Inherent in these are the role of participation, skills development, addressing labour shortages, and recognising and addressing the need for inclusive communities.

Through establishing an implementation team the following elements will be put in place: linkages between private / public and NGO stakeholders; work programming alignment between parties; information gathering, sharing and monitoring, and provision of advice across all elements of the WRS.

The WRS Implementation Project Officers will foster the WRS goals and recognise the inter relationship between business, economic growth and social cohesion. In doing so this integrates and aligns with objectives of the

Wellington Region's Social Development Plan 2007 / 2008, and Wellington Regional Labour Market Strategy and Implementation Action Plan.

3.2 Long Term WRS Office Funding Requirements

For the 2008 / 2009 year consideration is needed as to the ongoing source of funding for the WRS Office function.

Greater Wellington Regional Council's \$100,000 per annum via its LTCCP allocation is anticipated to continue. For the balance of funding needed (of the order of \$300,000 per annum) the originally anticipated source of long term central government funding support has been confirmed as being largely unavailable for ongoing WRS Office purposes.

New Zealand Trade & Enterprise funding support to regions of up to \$750,000 over 3 years had previously been identified by the WRS Project Director as a candidate for ongoing support of the WRS Office function. This was based on the scope of purpose to which NZTE funding had been available during the WRS development phase.

The review of NZTE funding announced earlier in 2006 has made clear that this funding is available for specific WRS projects. The ongoing WRS officer support functions are not seen as qualifying. The NZTE funding appears to primarily lend itself to REDA initiatives.

The MSD funding support for the 2007 / 2008 year can only be for a 'one off' which the current 'WRS implementation development phase' satisfies.

As a consequence consideration is required as to the long term source of WRS Office funding.

4. Communication

No specific media communications are required now. At the point of successful delivery of the WRS Implementation Project goals via the private / public partnership in September 2008 then media releases would be appropriate.

5. Recommendations

That the Committee:

- 1. **Receives** the report.*
- 2. **Notes** the contents of the report.*
- 3. **Acknowledges** the valuable support, involvement and leadership being provided by the Ministry of Social Development, and Employers and Manufacturers Incorporated (Central) around WRS implementation.*
- 4. **Requests** the preparation of a letter to be sent to the Ministry of Social Development and Employers and Manufacturers Incorporated (Central)*

on the Committee's behalf acknowledging their involvement and leadership with the WRS project.

5. **Requests** that the local government chief executive group (CEG) investigates and reports back options for the long term funding of the WRS Office.

Report prepared by:

Report approved by:

Report Approved by:

Graham Spargo
Project Director, Wellington
Regional Strategy

Jane Davis
Divisional Manager,
Wellington Regional Strategy

David Benham
Chief Executive Officer