



Report 09.1
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Committee Council
Author Fran Wilde, Deputy Chair, WRS Committee
Jane Davis Divisional Manager

Report on the Wellington Regional Strategy Committee meeting held on 10 December 2008

1. Purpose

To inform Council about the meeting of the Wellington Regional Strategy Committee that took place on 10 December 2008.

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. Report

3.1 Grow Wellington Funding 2009/10

The Committee considered a report from the Chief Executives recommending that Greater Wellington budgets to fund Grow Wellington \$4.5 million (excl GST) for the 2009/10 financial year. After some discussion the recommendation was agreed unanimously by the Committee.

3.2 Broadband Update and Regional Broadband Plan

The Committee received an update on the Broadband Investment Fund process from Paul Desborough (project leader, on behalf of the WRS Senior Officers Resource Team) and Paul Swain (consultant assisting on the project). With the change in government the Broadband Investment Fund process has been suspended, while the new government reviews its broadband policy and announces the future of the fund.

The region's Expression of Interest for funding, lodged in September 2008, was successful. Officers have previously been working towards the previous target date of February 2009 to submit a full application. While officers

indicated to the Committee they are confident the fund will continue in some form, no advice could be given on the changes to the funding rules likely to eventuate. Officers told the Committee they will continue working on the broadband project, focusing on Resource Management Act and infrastructure deployment issues, and will respond to any Broadband Investment Fund policy announcements as soon as they are made.

The Committee approved a Regional Broadband Plan. The plan sets out the region's desires for broadband, articulating the importance of broadband to the region and the role of local government. The document will provide a framework for community engagement on broadband issues.

3.3 Submission on “Building Sustainable Urban Communities”

The Committee approved a submission supporting the Department of Internal Affairs' discussion document outlining opportunities for strengthening the ability of existing organisations to achieve positive urban development outcomes. The options in the discussion document complement the sustainable urban development principles in the Wellington Regional Strategy.

Options covered in the document, and supported by the submission include:

- Strengthening existing tools and ways of working
- The role of government in sustainable development
- Increased co-ordination and integration
- Funding
- Streamlining planning processes
- Land assembly
- Housing supply, choice and affordability.

3.4 Refugee and Migrant Recruitment and Self-Employment Project

The WRS Refugee and Migrant Recruitment and Self-Employment Project is one of the strategic actions aligned to three base strategy documents. These are: the Wellington Regional Strategy, the Wellington Regional Settlement Strategy and the Wellington Regional Labour Market Strategy (WRLMS). The primary strategy is the WRLMS, jointly developed by the Ministry of Social Development and the Department of Labour.

This initiative builds on the 2006/08 *Wellington Regional Action Plan for Refugee Health and Well-being* for refugees living and settling in the Wellington region that included Hutt City Council, Porirua City Council, Upper Hutt City Council and Wellington City Council as partners “to improve access to information and services that lead to financial independence, appropriate employment and small business opportunities.” The aim of the project is to place migrants and refugees into vacant Council positions.

The WRS office is hosting this project as a partnership arrangement with the Ministry of Social Development. It is being funded by the Ministry.

The Committee received the six-month update on progress with the project. Officers reported a high level of support and co-operation from the region's councils. A large number of candidates are now on the project's database, with many being put forward as candidates for vacant positions within councils.

This is a pilot project and is due to conclude in April 2009.

3.5 Wellington Regional Strategy Office Update

Melanie Thornton, the WRS Office Project Leader, provided a general update to the Committee on activities of the office. Highlights for the period included the very successful WRS Summit held on the 14th November and progress with the Genuine Progress Index project. Melanie also confirmed that the office and Grow Wellington officers are available to present updates on WRS activities to councils around the region, with some councils already taking up this offer.

3.6 Retirement of Diana Crossan

The non-local government members on the Committee have been appointed for terms that provide for one member to resign from the Committee each year, enabling a "rolling" turnover of the membership. The first member to retire is Diana Crossan, who is due to retire in January 2009. The Committee agreed on a process to replace Ms Crossan, with a person to be recommended to the Council in April 2009.

The Committee Chair, Sir John Anderson, acknowledged Ms Crossan's contribution to the Wellington Regional Strategy and thanked her on behalf of the Committee.

4. Recommendations

That the Council

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

Report prepared by:

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Fran Wilde
Chair, Greater Wellington

Jane Davis
Divisional Manager, Regional Strategy

Attachment 1: Unconfirmed Public Minutes