



Report 06.444
Date 1 September 2006
File RPM/10/03/01

Committee Interim Wellington Regional Strategy
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Draft Wellington Regional Strategy

1. Purpose

To seek the Committee's approval of the draft Wellington Regional Strategy, to be recommended to Greater Wellington for public consultation.

2. Significance of the decision

The matters for decision in this report do trigger the significance policy of the Council and section 76(3)(b) of the Local Government Act 2002. A special consultative process is outlined in a separate report to the Committee, entitled "Consultation Plan".

3. Background

The Wellington Regional Strategy (WRS) project was initiated in 2004 as a voluntary collaborative exercise on behalf of all of local government in the Wellington region.

Membership of the WRS governance body (the joint standing committee known as the WRS Forum) has comprised the Mayors of the region and the Greater Wellington Chairman, plus an alternate for each member. Ara Tahiri and Positively Wellington Business have been observers on the Forum.

Funding for the WRS project was provided via a funding allocation model agreed as part of the WRS Project Plan. In addition to local government funding contributions, support was obtained via New Zealand Trade & Enterprise contributions.

The WRS goal is a sustainable economic development and spatial management strategy for the region. The WRS seeks to make Wellington an internationally competitive region.

The strategy has a long term (50 year) outlook, with actions identified and prioritised for 10-20 years.

The strategy identifies three overarching areas of focus:

- Effective leadership and partnerships.
- Investment in growing our economy – especially exports.
- Investment in good regional form.

A key success factor is to achieve engagement with, ownership by, and action across all stakeholder groups in the region (private sector, public sector and voluntary / non-government organisations).

Strategy development has been through the Wellington Regional Strategy Forum (WRSF), with advice provided by the Chief Executives Group (CEG).

The advice was underpinned by an extensive array of technical advice from external experts and local government officers.

A Strategic Partners Forum of over 50 of the larger businesses and institutions in the region has also been involved with the development of the WRS. This has enabled testing of concepts and ideas as thinking has progressed.

In addition, a range of stakeholder organisations have directly facilitated or contributed to specific aspects of the strategy development process and thinking. For example, the Ministry of Social Development and Department of Labour have facilitated a regional labour market strategy process involving some 69 organisations and agencies, working in conjunction with the WRS. The Wellington Regional Chamber of Commerce has convened a range of sector specific workshops addressing matters relevant to the WRS, such as feedback from freight forwarders reinforcing proposals for supporting long haul initiatives.

Feedback was sought in August 2005 on the initial WRS concepts via a public consultation document and surveys. Responses to these processes (a combined total of 1997) were used to shape the detail of the WRS document currently before the WRS Committee.

4. Comments

4.1 Draft WRS

A copy of the draft WRS is in **Attachment 1**. It has previously been considered and endorsed in principle through the WRS Forum workshop and meeting process.

The draft WRS provides a high level overview of key challenges and opportunities facing the region in relation to sustainable prosperity and quality of life.

It provides three strategic ‘focus areas’ or strategic platforms for action as described in the preceding section of this report. Each focus area identifies further detail as to specific actions or commitments to ‘make a difference’.

Set out below are some of the main items under each focus area.

Effective leadership and partnerships

- A formal ‘keeper of the strategy’ committee to oversee the WRS
- Non-local government representation on this committee
- Funding gathered via a regional rate
- A more regionalised approach to economic development agency activities.

Investment in growing our economy – especially exports

- Strengthening of commercialisation and sector development initiatives via a whole of value chain approach termed ‘centres of excellence’
- Strengthening connections within and external to the region, with particular attention to international long-haul, broadband and land transport systems.
- Addressing key economy inputs including human and social capital components.

Investment in good regional form

- Identifying ‘change areas’ for priority attention, as unlocking the opportunities within these will significantly affect regional prosperity.
- Aligning urban and rural land use management through use of the Regional Policy Statement and collaborative studies.
- Mechanisms for strengthening alignment of investment in transport, infrastructure and land use.

4.2 Public Consultation Process

A full public consultation process is required for the draft WRS. A consultation plan has been prepared, and is to be considered by the Committee in a separate report. The consultation on the draft WRS will be run concurrently with consultation on the Statement of Proposal for the governance, implementation and funding of the WRS.

5. Communication

A press statement will be prepared in relation to the WRS process steps being undertaken following consideration of the Committee’s recommendation by Greater Wellington on the 12th September.

6. Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. **Receives** the report.
2. **Notes** the content of the report.
3. **Recommends** to the Council that the draft WRS, as shown in Attachment 1, be approved for public consultation.

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**Attachment 1: Draft Wellington Regional Strategy: *Internationally Competitive Wellington*
– *A sustainable economic growth strategy for our region***