



Report **06.587**

Date 12 October 2006
File WRS/07/01/02

Committee **Interim Wellington Regional Strategy**
Author **Jane Davis, Divisional Manager, Transport
Policy and Strategy**

Establishment of a Hearings Subcommittee

1. Purpose

To establish a subcommittee of the Interim Wellington Regional Strategy (WRS) Committee to hear and report on submissions lodged on the Wellington Regional Strategy and the proposal for its governance and funding.

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. See Section 4 below.

3. Background

3.1 Wellington Regional Strategy Consultation

At its meeting on the 11th September 2006 the Interim WRS Committee agreed to recommend to Greater Wellington the approval for consultation of the Wellington Regional Strategy and a Statement of Proposal for its governance and funding. The latter was in the form of an amendment to the Greater Wellington Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP). On the 12th September Greater Wellington Regional Council approved the release of the two proposals for consultation.

The consultation process follows the special consultative procedures of the Local Government Act. Three documents have been prepared for this consultation:

- The Wellington Regional Strategy document
- The Statement of Proposal (Amendment to the Greater Wellington LTCCP) document

- A summary document for the two proposals.

Submissions have been invited on the two proposals. Submissions close on the 30th of October. All people making submissions have the opportunity to be heard in support of their submissions. Originally three days in November (13th – 15th) were set aside for the hearing of submissions. These are under review, with alternative dates 4th, 5th, 6th December, with 11th December as reserve, being considered.

The Committee's Terms of Reference provide the following delegation:

6. Delegations

- (b) *The Committee is authorised to appoint a subcommittee of its members to hear any submissions made on the proposals notified under the special consultative procedure and to either (i) hear and report on the submissions to the Committee, or (ii) hear, evaluate and report on the submissions and make recommendations to the Committee, as determined by the Committee.*

4. Comment

4.1 Need to Establish a Hearings Subcommittee

Hearings subcommittees are an efficient option for hearing and considering submissions where there are high numbers of submitters wishing to be heard. While the final number of submitters on the WRS proposals is not yet known, the nature and importance of the WRS suggests that there will be a large number of submissions.

A hearings subcommittee in this case is therefore appropriate.

4.2 Terms of Reference

The recommended Terms of Reference for the Subcommittee are in **Attachment 1**.

Scope of the Subcommittee's Role

Under its delegations the Committee is authorised to establish the subcommittee to either: hear and report on submissions; or hear, evaluate and report on submissions and make recommendations to the Committee.

It is likely that the submissions received on the proposals will be complex and detailed in many cases. It is also anticipated that there will be high numbers of submissions. The subcommittee will have had the opportunity to ask questions of submitters and have matters clarified where necessary. The Subcommittee will also spend some time discussing the submissions and deliberating on the matters raised. This will give it the ability to consider the submissions in some depth.

To assist the Committee to fully consider the submissions and decide on the appropriate responses the subcommittee should evaluate and report on the

submissions and make a recommendation to the Committee, based on its full knowledge of the matters raised. The recommendations will then be considered by the full Committee in December.

Subcommittee Membership

All members of the Interim WRS Committee are eligible for appointment to a hearings subcommittee. It is consistent with best practice and the requirements of Section 83(1) of the Local Government Act (special consultative procedures) that members hearing submissions must be present for the duration of the hearing of the oral submissions. The only constraint, therefore, is the availability to sit through the anticipated three days of hearings and be available for deliberations.

It is recommended that four committee members be appointed to the subcommittee. Those members of the Interim WRS Committee not appointed to the subcommittee are able to attend the hearing.

As well as subcommittee members a chair will need to be appointed.

Quorum and Standing Orders

It is proposed that the Wellington Regional Council Standing Orders apply to the subcommittee. This is provided for in the attached Terms of Reference.

When deciding on a quorum it is important to consider the risks that illness or other unanticipated commitments may prevent a committee member from attending part of the hearings.

In this case three days are likely to be required for the hearings. The timeline being followed for the WRS project provides limited opportunity to reschedule the hearings. Therefore to manage the risks of delay a quorum of one less than the total membership is recommended. A quorum of three is therefore recommended.

5. Communication

On-going communications about the WRS will continue, including communicating the establishment of the subcommittee.

6. Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. **Receives** the report.
2. **Notes** the content of the report.
3. **Resolves** to establish a subcommittee to hear, evaluate and report on the submissions to the WRS and the Statement of Proposal for its governance and funding and make recommendations to the Committee in accordance with the Terms of Reference in Attachment 1.

4. ***Resolves*** to appoint the following four Committee members (including a chair) to the WRS Hearing Subcommittee:

-
-
-
-

Report prepared by:

Report approved by:

Jane Davis

Divisional Manager,
Transport Policy and Strategy

David Benham

Chief Executive Officer

Attachment 1: Terms of Reference for Hearing Subcommittee