



Report 08.326
Date 12 May 2008
File SP/03/09/05

Committee Annual Plan Hearings Committee
Author Julia White, Corporate Strategic Planner

Summary of submissions received on the Proposed 2008/09 Annual Plan

1. Purpose

To provide an overview and highlight trends in the submissions Greater Wellington received on the Proposed 2008/09 Annual Plan.

2. Significance of the decision

The matters for decision in this report are part of the special consultative procedure as required by section 83 of the Local Government Act 2002.

3. Background

The consultation period on the Proposed 2008/09 Annual Plan ran from 3 April to 5 May 2008. 124 submissions were received and copies are being circulated to councillors for consideration (together with printouts from our submissions database which includes submission summaries and Divisional Manager's responses). A few late submissions were also accepted and processed. 40 submitters asked to be heard.

The Committee must consider all written and oral submissions and make recommendations for any proposed changes to the Proposed Annual Plan resulting from the submissions process, for consideration at the Council's meeting on 10 June 2008. Officers will also report to that meeting on matters identified by the Committee as requiring clarification or further information.

4. Comment

4.1 Origin of submissions

Below is the numbers of submissions grouped according to organisations, local authorities, government departments and individuals.

Organisations (including community groups)	27
Local Government	3
Central Government	1
Individuals	93

4.2 Submitters' responses to key issues

An Annual Plan summary newspaper was sent to most households in the region. This identified key projects proposed for 2008/09 and key changes from the 2006-16 Ten Year Plan (LTCCP), categorised by seven activity groups. The summary document also provided 2008/09 rating information and details of a proposed increase to the hourly charge for processing and monitoring resource consents. Key themes in submitters' responses are set out, according to topic, below.

4.2.1 Transport

The majority of submissions were directed at the proposed passenger transport fare increase, making the argument that by raising the fares, public transport becomes a less attractive alternative to private transport.

Submitters also commented on transport infrastructure, particularly rail infrastructure and generally support Greater Wellington's investment in this area.

4.2.2 Environment

A number of submitters wrote to Greater Wellington both against and in favour of the proposed RMA charge increase. Those against the increase are concerned that it will discourage development. Those in favour recognise the increased costs involved in effectively monitoring resource consents.

4.2.3 Water Supply

Greater Wellington received a number of submissions on water supply, the majority of which welcomed the development of a regional water strategy. Some of these suggested that incentives are provided for domestic and commercial water storage, such as rain collection tanks.

4.2.4 Parks

A large number of the submissions were made in relation to our regional parks. These concerned a number of issues. A small proportion of these were in regard to the need for funding for pest management along the Waikanae River. Submissions in this area also included opinions on the transfer of Whitireia Park.

4.2.5 Flood Protection

Greater Wellington received a number of submissions on the subject of flood protection, largely in support of the flood protection work carried out by the Council. Some of these submitters also advocated employment of methods such as flax swamps and sediment capture to improve flood protection rather than hard-engineered solutions.

4.2.6 Land Management

Roughly ten submitters commented on biosecurity. Some voiced concerns about the toxic effect of 1080 on wildlife and submitted that other methods (such as trapping) could be more effective in reducing opossum numbers.

A number of these submitters supported Greater Wellington maintaining current funding levels for bovine TB control, with one in particular advocating an increase in the allocated funds.

4.2.7 Wellington Regional Strategy

A small number of submitters voiced their opinion in this area. Some took exception to both the naming and the role of “Grow Wellington”. Some were concerned that the name doesn’t incorporate the whole of the Wellington region. Other submitters were worried that as an economic development agency, it would take the focus away from key issues such as sustainability.

4.2.8 Other

Several submitters supported the development of a renewable energy strategy. Two submitters opposed the costs of renewable energy initiatives coming out of the Parks budget.

Five submitters commented on communications. In regards to the proposed Annual Plan, concerns were raised regarding the cost of production and insufficient consultation.

Three submitters commented on consultation processes: with one asking why provision was made for appointment of iwi representatives on Council committees without prior public consultation.

Three submitters commented on e-democracy. Overall there was a concern that e-democracy initiatives should not supplant conventional forms of democratic participation.

4.2.9 Rates

A small number of submissions concerned Greater Wellington's rates, some of which objected to Greater Wellington raising rates at a level higher than that of inflation. Some also objected to the apparent disparity between rates paid by the community and businesses and the services provided by the Council in return.

5. Recommendations

That the Committee:

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

Report prepared by:

Report approved by:

Julia White
Corporate Strategic Planner

Jane Bradbury
Divisional Manager,
Corporate and Strategy