



Report 07.243
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Committee Council
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Chairman's Report to 2 May 2007

Another interesting and very busy period of Greater Wellington, with a great deal of time getting the WRS finalised, working through RPS development, attending to international visitors and working through annual programmes with the large number of catchment and river scheme advisory committees.

1. WRS

Preparation for, and attendance at, the WRS mediation process initiated by the two Hutt Cities has occupied a considerable amount of my time. The outcome of this process is the maintenance of the central integrity of the governance and funding proposal adopted by Greater Wellington in February following public consultation through our LTCCP amendment. The changes recommended from the mediation will help to strengthen the implementation process and provide greater certainty and security for our local government partners. Adoption of these recommendations by Greater Wellington on 8 May will allow all councils to finalise annual plan provisions related to WRS funding. A long and thorough development process for the WRS is now ending, making way for implementation that will have the full support of all the partners involved from both the public and private sector. Many commentators have felt that this was not possible; I think this region has collectively proved them wrong. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge Upper Hutt City Mayor Wayne Guppy and Hutt City Mayor David Ogden for the spirit in which the mediation was entered and the real desire to achieve an outcome that allowed for the Strategy to proceed. Likewise, the other local authority mayors in accepting the merits of the process changes coming out of the mediation. Perhaps the greatest influence on this whole process has been the approach of the largest stakeholder, Wellington City, through Mayor Kerry Prendergast, and the acceptance of the compromises necessary to achieve the long-term outcomes contained in the WRS vision.

2. RPS development

The series of RPS workshops over recent weeks has placed a lot of demands on councillors' time and I would like to thank councillors and appointed Wairarapa committee members for their commitment in making these

challenging workshops go so well. Officers responsible for pulling the Policy Statement together have a big task now in assembling the input from all sources and bringing back the next cut draft for council consideration and stakeholder consultation. There is still a lot of work to do to produce an RPS by September that effectively guides the next generation of regional and district planning for this region. From the way this is developing, I am confident that Greater Wellington will again lead the country with our RPS, as we did first time around in the mid 1990s.

3. Waiwhetu stream remediation

This has hit somewhat of a snag in recent weeks with MfE limiting the central government contribution to 40% of the \$6 million cost over three years. Hutt City Mayor David Ogden and myself met with the Minister for the Environment, David Benson-Pope, to seek additional special funding. His message was to go away and consider the level of local share that was available (we had applied to MfE for 100% funding). Hutt City, through the Mayor, has indicated that 20-25% (\$1.2 - \$1.5 million) would be available from them. It is now intended that we jointly re-apply to the MfE fund for an increase in allocation above the original 40%. If the full amount required is not forthcoming, further discussions will be required to determine how any outstanding balance can be funded. It has been our consistent approach to date that contaminated site remediation is the responsibility of the local authority, together with any identifiable contributors and central government. Greater Wellington will have a significant role in any flood mitigation delivery under our normal funding policy. Obviously, still some way to go with this issue.

4. Wairarapa matters

During the past month I have attended 14 catchment and river scheme meetings and Cr Long has attended considerably more, as I have not always been available. These have all been very successful in affirming this partnership approach with our rural communities, providing a very solid base for future development of a total catchment approach to sustainable land and water management. National level policy development for both flood risk management and water management proceeds apace and councillors have been kept up with this through the Bulletin.

On the transport front, community concern resulted in the retention of Matarawa Station in the Wairarapa network, with platform construction to fit the new trains arriving in May, soon to get underway. At the risk of being slightly parochial, I think this is a very good outcome for local people and for Greater Wellington's network responsibilities.

5. Commonwealth Local Government Forum

Prior to the Commonwealth Local Government Forum in Auckland, many councils around the country hosted delegates to the conference for 2-3 days. In our case, we hosted Mayor Nirmala and her husband from Mumbai, India and Gevo Mabone from the Department for Local Government in Papua New Guinea. During the two days the group were briefed on and visited harbours

facilities, transport facilities, land management activities in the Wairarapa and regional parks. I accompanied the visitors for much of this time. Language barriers, particularly with the Indian contingent, made catering and communication a challenge but the visit was worthwhile in showcasing much of our work and was greatly appreciated by the visitors.

6. Meetings attended other than Greater Wellington

John Terris – WRS promotion
Eugene Bowen – LGNZ
Nigel Gould (2)
Dominion Funds – Johnsonville redevelopment
Sue Kedgely – PT matters
Tim Brown – Infratil
Kara Puketapu – relationship issues
LGNZ – National Council
Peter Leslie – Lifelines
OECD environmental performance report launch
Wairarapa Councils – combined meeting
Shona Mainwaring – consultant, Water Forum review
Upper Hutt City – annual plan
Wellington City - annual plan
National party regional economic development group
Local Government Insurance Company – board briefing
Zone 4, LGNZ
Wellington Conservation Board – Lake Wairarapa
Farm environment awards presentation.

7. LGNZ Conference 2007

This is to be held in Dunedin from 16-18 July with the usual pre-conference RAC tour on the preceding weekend. Our usual practice is for the Chairman and one other councillor to attend.

I have noted that one of our senior councillors has not previously had the privilege of attending an LGNZ Conference and have therefore asked Cr Laidlaw if he would be available.

8. Recommendations

That the Council:

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

3. *Agrees that the Council Chairman and Cr Laidlaw represent Greater Wellington at the 2007 LGNZ Conference.*

Report prepared by:

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Chairman