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Committee Te Upoko Taiao - Natural Resource Plan Committee
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Project Plan for the Plan review process

1. Purpose

This paper outlines the scope of work required to manage the investigations, debates and decision making involved in the review of Greater Wellington's Natural Resource Management plan, over the next three years.

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. Background

Throughout 2010 Te Upoko Taiao – Natural Resource Plan Committee has directed a number of work streams as part of the review of the Natural Resource Management Plan. These work streams include the establishment and operation of the committee itself, consideration of a range of technical information and scientific analysis, which have been covered in a series of topic reports, a number of fact finding trips and a round of community engagement. It is anticipated that from early 2011 a series of further work streams will flow from the past year's work, culminating in the release of a proposed Natural Resource Management plan in mid 2013 or early 2014.

The work undertaken to date can be usefully characterised as the 1st stage of the plan review process. This first stage has focused on learning about the technical dimensions of a range of issues, the current practices and policies of the existing plans, and community needs and concerns. In short, an information collation and issue identification stage in the plan review process.

The next stage of the plan review, which flows directly from this earlier work, can be usefully thought of as answering the question the 'how do we solve the problems identified'. In this second stage of the plan review council staff and decision makers will need to focus on how the issues and community concerns identified, and any new issues identified, are to be addressed by the Natural Resource Plan.

This development of the plan review project necessitates a specific work programme. It is one which must be able to accommodate the demands of debating the advantages and disadvantages of a range of alternatives, and/or combinations of alternatives, within council, with communities and stakeholders, with experts and other interested parties. This work will also need to meet the committee members needs, confirm an overall time-frame for the plan review and match resourcing requirements with information gaps and community priorities, to ensure the timely development of the Natural Resource Plan.

To do this efficiently it is necessary to clearly structure a work programme, to schedule debates and decision making point in a timeline and to define responsibilities for specific projects. In short, an updated comprehensive project plan is required to allow the debate that will lead to policy decisions.

4. **Comment**

The Natural Resource Plan review is made up of three clear stages of work, these are:

- Stage 1: information collation and issue identification
- Stage 2: response development and deliberation
- Stage 3: technical drafting and proposal.

It is worth noting that these three stages may run in parallel from time to time. Generally, however, work will progress from issues identification through a discussion of what is to be done to address the issues, and finally to the technical drafting stage where the decisions of the committee are codified (see **Figure 1** below). During the coming years the majority of effort will involve discussion of what is to be done about issues, in conjunction with specific request for more information where gaps exists. The technical drafting and publication stage is expected to take about 6 months at the most and it is anticipated this would start in early 2013.

In order to get through the large amount of work, across the various statutory and non-statutory options available for addressing the range of issues covered in Natural Resource Plan review, it is necessary to plan out how this will be achieved. To this end the project plan must record:

- how to organise/structure responsibilities, schedule priorities and decision making
- the risks which may delay the timely completion of the review
- the recommended risk mitigation strategies to be used
- possible short falls in information or the lack of policy tools to address issues

- an estimate of additional resources needed to address new issues and gap information.



Figure 1. Stages and timing for the Natural Resource Management Plan review

The Stage 2 project plan is an evolution of the past years work. The early focus of this work has been formulated to provide background information including a the description of the range of issues which will need to be considered, the Councils responsibilities under the RMA, the direction provided by the Proposed Regional Policy Statement and other statutory instruments, such as National Environmental Standards or National Policy Statements. Additional to this information will be the insights provided by the community through the first round of engagement programme started in July and information derived from wider council programmes, such the state of the region monitoring, research investigations, land management programmes and consent monitoring.

In considering the work already undertaken and the large amount which is still required it is essential that efforts to planning future work the input of the Te Upoko Taiao – Natural Resource Plan Committee is obtained. An efficient way of tackling this complex planning task while meeting the committee’s needs is to establish a small working group to the Te Upoko Taiao – Natural Resource Plan Committee (Fran Wilde, Chris Laidlaw, Te Waari Carkeek and Rawiri Faulkner), which will work closely with staff to develop a draft project plan of work for the committee to consider in early 2011.

Other work streams which are a priority are:

- Staff prepares a set of guiding principles for use in decision making in relation to the plan review
- By January 2011: complete analysis of the 1st round of community engagement and consultation
- By March 2011: establishing what might be the structure and administrative arrangements for the plan, including is it to be web based, a single document including non-statutory and statutory mechanisms, a catchment based structure (drainage catchments), based on communities of interest etc
- By March 2011: presenting models of how new incentives measures for more sustainable resource use could be established
- By March 2011: reporting on provisions in the current plans which are for all intention purposes able to be carried forward into the new Natural Resource Plan.

These three work streams are in addition to the continued work currently being undertaken.

5. Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. ***Receives the report.***
2. ***Establishes a working group to work closely with staff for the purpose of finalising a detailed project plan for the review of the Natural Resource Plan.***

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