



caring about you & your environment

Report 01.728

21 September 2001

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Report to the Policy and Finance Committee
from Councillors Ian Buchanan and Rick Long

Farm Environment Awards

1. Purpose

To seek approval for the Council to be involved in running a Wellington region Farm Environment Award as part of a proposed national arrangement.

2. Background

A Farm Environment Award has been operating in the Waikato region for some years. Due to the success of this initiative, the organising Trust is now keen to expand this concept into a series of regional awards across the country leading to a national final.

Representatives of the trust that organises the Waikato Awards gave a presentation on the proposal to the Rural Services and Wairarapa Committee on 31 July. Committee members were supportive of the concept of a Wellington regional Award and requested us (as Chairs of the Environment and Rural Services & Wairarapa Committees) to discuss the proposal with officers and report back to the Policy and Finance Committee.

Background material on the proposal from the Waikato based trust is attached.

3. Comment

Following the presentation to the Rural Services & Wairarapa Committee and subsequent discussions with the Wairarapa and Environment Divisional Managers, we have concluded that it would be beneficial to have a Farm

Environment Award in the Wellington region and for this Council to be involved in the running of it.

Our main reason for this view is that these Awards are all about supporting and encouraging sustainable use of resources. This is totally consistent with the Council's theme of Local Agenda 21 and sustainable development. Farmed land comprises a large majority of our region's land area and these Awards are a visible way of promoting sustainability with farmers in a positive and educational manner. In addition, the proposals involve working in close partnership with other groups – a trend that the Council is keen to develop.

It is possible to run the Awards in this region during this financial year and such a move would be very much welcomed by the Waikato people and the main sponsors. A likely timetable is - calling of entries October 2001, entries closing November 2001, judging December 2001 to January 2002, Regional Awards function March 2002.

We support the Council being involved this year as a nucleus of regional councils is required to be involved now if these Awards are to expand across the country.

Our discussions and the attached information indicate that the likely costs to the Council would be just under \$20,000 after allowing for receipt of \$9,000 from the sponsors through the national committee. We propose that the Policy and Finance Committee recommend that the incoming Council formally approve this expenditure at the six months review in February.

4. Recommendations

- (1) *That the Council be involved in organising a Farm Environment Award in the Wellington region beginning in the current financial year, as set out in this report.*
- (2) *That expenditure of up to \$20,000 for these Awards be recommended for approval at the six months review.*



CR I M BUCHANAN
Chairperson
Environment Committee



CR F R LONG
Chairperson
Rural Services & Wairarapa Committee