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Committee       Environment Committee  
Author           Tami Woods   Project Manager - Regional Policy  
                    Statement Review

## Regional Policy Statement Review

### 1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of progress around the review of the Regional Policy Statement.

### 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

The Resource Management Act 1991 required Greater Wellington to commence a review, ten years after the Regional Policy Statement for the Wellington Region (RPS) became operative, in May 1995. Greater Wellington started the review with its second State of the Environment Report "*Measuring up, 2005*". This reported on whether the objectives in the RPS had been achieved.

The second stage of the review process was an assessment by staff of the effectiveness of the provisions (objectives, policies and methods) in the RPS. The next was a discussion document "*Our region – their future*". The discussion document reported on the success of the RPS, what had changed and the current resource management issues. It also posed questions about whether things should be done differently in the next regional policy statement.

We received 92 submissions in response to "*Our region – their future*" and the accompanying community newspaper advertisement.

Greater Wellington staff are now preparing draft provisions (issues, objectives, policies and methods) for inclusion in the proposed RPS.

These provisions will be discussed with Council in March 2007. The key changes and implications will then be discussed with territorial authority elected representatives, the Regional Land Transport Committee and other interested parties in April 2007. Staff will then revise provisions, have further discussion with Council in July, then seek approval, in September 2007, to release the proposed RPS.

#### **4. Communication and Consultation Plan**

An important element of the development of a proposed RPS is communication and consultation. The Resource Management Act 1991, requires during the preparation of a proposed RPS that consultation shall occur with:

- The Ministry for the Environment
- Ministers of the crown that may be affected
- Local authorities
- Tangata whenua of the area through iwi authorities
- Anyone else.

Staff have developed a “*Consultation and Communication Plan*” that outlines how communication will occur during the development of the proposed RPS and who Greater Wellington will consult with. A summary follows.

##### **4.1 Who we will consult and communicate with**

The Plan identifies the following groups and/or forums as important during the preparation of the proposed RPS:

- Iwi authorities in the region
- Territorial authority staff and elected representatives
- Wellington Regional Strategy
- Regional Land Transport Committee
- Key stakeholders (including the Ministry for the Environment and ministers of the crown that may be affected)
- The general public.

## **4.2 Consultation and Communication Objectives**

The objectives for communication and consultation are:

- To fulfil the statutory obligations to consult in accordance with the Resource Management Act 1991
- To work with iwi authorities in the region to identify resource management issues of significance to them and the provisions in response to those issues
- To work with territorial authorities and assess the most appropriate and effective provisions
- To provide an opportunity for key stakeholders to contribute and express views
- To take into account the views of all parties and provide feedback as to how their views have been considered and responded to
- To inform interested parties and the general public about the development of the proposed RPS.

## **4.3 The Actions**

A summary follows outlining how communication and consultation will occur with the groups identified in section 4.1.

### **4.3.1 Iwi Authorities in the region**

Greater Wellington has a number of statutory responsibilities, relating to iwi authorities in the region, when preparing the proposed RPS. These include recognising the relationship of Maori with their culture, traditions and ancestral land; kaitiakitanga; and the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi. The proposed RPS must also state the resource management issues of significance to iwi authorities in the region.

Communication and consultation, with the seven iwi authorities in the region, will occur with individual iwi and through the inter-iwi representative group, Ara Tahi.

Two workshops have been held with Ara Tahi on the review of the RPS. The draft report “*Resource Management Issues of Significant to Iwi Authorities in the Region*” was prepared following a workshop on resource management issues.

A workshop between Council and Ara Tahi is scheduled for 22 November. The purpose of this workshop is for Council and Ara Tahi to discuss the RPS review and the resource management issues of significance for iwi authorities. Staff will continue to work with Ara Tahi on the development of provisions in the proposed RPS.

#### 4.3.2 Territorial Authorities

Territorial authorities are required to give effect to the next RPS through their district plans. It is therefore important that they are able to be involved in the development of provisions and provide feedback on implications.

It is also important to confirm how communication and consultation will occur with each Council. An amendment to the Resource Management Act in 2005 now states that the consultation process, as the proposed RPS is being prepared, be included in the triennial agreement entered into under the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA). Our legal advice is that this does not take effect until the next triennium. The LGA does, however, enable the existing triennial agreement to be amended. Greater Wellington will outline the proposed approach to communication and consultation through a letter to each Council.

The level of involvement of staff from each territorial authority has been discussed with each council in the region. All, but Hutt City Council, have provided feedback on the topic areas of interest and level of involvement they would like to have. Greater Wellington staff are now starting to involve territorial staff, at the levels requested. Territorial staff will continue to be involved throughout the development process.

In April 2007, Greater Wellington will hold workshops with each Council’s elected representatives to discuss the draft provisions and implications.

#### 4.3.3 Wellington Regional Strategy

Integration with the Wellington Regional Strategy (WRS) is an important part of the RPS review. In order to achieve this integration and assess how best to reflect the vision, issues and actions from the WRS in the proposed RPS a specific group of representatives (from each Council in the region) has been established.

This group will assess how the WRS vision, issues and actions should/could be reflected in the RPS. This assessment will be reported to the Chief Executive Group, then to the WRS Committee. The results of the assessment and consultation will then be reported to Greater Wellington Regional Council.

#### 4.3.4 Regional Land Transport Committee

The Regional Land Transport Strategy has a statutory requirement to be not inconsistent with a regional policy statement. Integration with the Regional Land Transport Strategy and discussion about implications is also an important part of the development of the proposed RPS.

Greater Wellington staff involved in the development of the Regional Land Transport Strategy will also be kept informed during the development of the proposed RPS.

In April 2007, at the time of consulting with territorial authority elected representatives, a workshop on the key changes and implications will also occur with the Regional Land Transportation Committee.

#### 4.3.5 Key Stakeholders

A number of organisations with an interest in the content of the proposed RPS have been identified by staff. This also includes the Ministry for the Environment and ministers of the crown who may be affected by the statement. These organisations are being contacted to determine how they would like to be involved as the proposed RPS is prepared. Staff will then respond by involving them at the levels requested.

#### 4.3.6 General public

The general public include all other organisations and individuals not identified above. The discussion document "*Our region – their future*" released in May and the advertising in the community newspapers was the first opportunity for the general public to contribute ideas to the development of the proposed RPS.

The general public will be kept informed as the proposed RPS is developed through:

- Information on the website
- Direct emails to those who have expressed an interest
- Media releases.

## 5. Communication

A copy of this Report is being provided to each territorial authority in the region to inform them of progress around the review of the RPS. Other matters relating to communication will follow the “*Consultation and Communication Plan*” discussed in this report.

## 6. Recommendations

*It is recommended that the Committee:*

1. ***Receives the report; and***
2. ***Notes the content.***

Report prepared by:

Report approved by:

Report approved by:

**Tami Woods**  
Project Manager - Regional  
Policy Statement Review

**Murray McLea**  
Acting Manager,  
Environmental Policy

**Nigel Corry**  
Divisional Manager,  
Environment Management