

Report 10.210
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Committee Wellington Regional Strategy Committee
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WRS Office Update

1. Purpose

This report is to provide the Committee with an update on activities of the WRS Office since February 2010.

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. Work Programme

Since February 2010 the WRS Office has had its major focus on:

- Completing the final draft of the GPI report and discussing it in a workshop with the Committee.
- Socialising the report to organisations such as the region's district health boards.
- Hosting and participating in the regional Broadband Operational Group (BOG) meetings (a separate Broadband update is on the Committee's agenda)
- Facilitating the regional open space working group and finalising the Wellington Region Open Space Strategy
- Facilitating the regional urban design working group and continuing to progress the work outlined in the Wellington Region Urban Design Action Plan and Stocktake
- Assisting with progressing the regional industrial land project.

4. SORT workstreams 2010

The SORT team determined that its on-going work for the coming year will be to continue driving the five key projects of the strategy. These are: broadband, open spaces, industrial land, urban design and the GPI. In addition it will develop work on rural residential development guidelines.

SORT members had previously agreed that it will be valuable for council officers to discuss and share information about district plans and any other long-term strategies around the region. This will help to inform members about any matters of regional significance. Accordingly, SORT has held regular workshops at which particular councils' District Plan reviews have been discussed.

In relation to this, the recommendations emerging from the two projects "Centres" and "Intensification" prompted the SORT team to propose that a group of senior staff working primarily on district plan matters be established as a sub-group of SORT. This group would meet at least every three months and would monitor the relationships between the various councils' district plans, the Regional Policy Statement and its implementation and monitoring processes, and regional plans developed by Greater Wellington. This would enable the SORT team to be provided with any information that is of regional significance to the wider group for consideration.

Gael Ferguson from KCDC agreed to champion this group on behalf of SORT. The Chief Executives agreed to the establishment and resourcing (through staff time) of this group.

5. Genuine Progress Index Report

A draft GPI report was discussed with the Committee at a workshop in February. The Committee agreed that the WRS Office engage with relevant organisations that have an interest in the GPI and its potential use for the region. Accordingly, the WRS office has had meetings with representatives from the School of Medicine, the Ministry of Social Development, and the Hutt Valley and Capital Coast District Health Boards. All organisations consulted so far have shown considerable interest in the GPI. In particular the Chief Executive of the Capital and Coast DHB advised that he would use the GPI in his District Strategic Plan. He was also interested in the WRS Office giving a presentation on the GPI to the hospital's senior doctors - a group of approximately one hundred staff. He was happy to dedicate a staff member to join our GPI Working Group. The Chief Executive of the Hutt Valley DHB was also interested in using information from the GPI work to inform the District Strategic Plan and other documents measuring health outcomes.

Discussions have also taken place with Kapiti Coast District Council in order to explore developing a case study of how the region's councils may utilise the information in the document. Prior to the development of the regional GPI, KCDC had discussed the idea of developing its own local GPI. Talks with KCDC have been based around discussing their list of indicators, the milestones towards achieving them, and assessing the benefits the regional GPI could have on the potential development of its local GPI. This will provide

other councils in the region with an outline of the potential benefits of the regional GPI for their own community outcomes monitoring processes.

A table of indicators is being developed which will provide comparisons of data gathered at local and regional levels. A list of indicators that could be used for the Regional Foundations community outcome is currently being established. This will be discussed with the GPI Working Group at its meeting on 30 March.

6. Open Spaces

At a previous WRS Committee meeting Sir Ngatata Love requested additional wording in the Wellington Region Open Spaces Strategy to incorporate the status of the Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust as an owner and co-manager of public open space. This wording has now been incorporated into the document. Additional information from Hutt City Council has been requested to enable the completion of the maps. Once we have received this information a final draft will be circulated to Committee members.

A workshop of open space providers/managers was held in February. Outcomes of the workshop included developing sub-groups to drive five major issues related to improving open spaces in the region. These are:

- information sharing (between open space providers and for the public). This workstream has begun.
- biodiversity (identifying sites for protection and monitoring/consistency of measurement tools)
- motorised access in open spaces (developing stocktake of regional rules and existing tracks)
- private land into public estate (exploring mechanisms to incentivising more private landowners to protect high quality lands)

Porirua City Council has recently adopted its own Open Spaces Plan Change which is helpful for the regional work.

7. Urban Design

A register of urban design practitioners is now available to councils throughout the region. This register provides consultants' contact details, a brief description of their experience and examples of projects they have worked on for local authorities throughout New Zealand.

For 2010 the major focuses for the Urban Design working group will include:

- Information-sharing. This is taking place through the WRS website. An urban design Information Hub has been developed on the WRS website. This hub provides useful links to regional, national and international urban design related websites. There are also links to urban design related courses being held both within New Zealand and in Australia.
- Developing training initiatives. This includes holding regular ‘walk and talk’ sessions at councils around the region. At these sessions council officers are to discuss key urban design issues experienced at their council and any examples of best practice.
- WRS Urban Design Symposium. This symposium will be held in conjunction with the the Ministry for the Environment’s symposium on the New Zealand Urban Design Protocol which is to be held later this year.

8. Communication

Communication on matters relating to the workstreams above will happen as relevant information is identified.

9. Recommendations

That the Committee:

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

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