

Report 12.8
Date 8 February 2012
File WRS/09/01/01

Committee Wellington Regional Strategy Committee
Author Melanie Thornton, Project Leader

The Wellington Regional Strategy Committee role and membership

1. Purpose

To outline the role of the Wellington Regional Strategy (WRS) Committee and confirm its future composition.

2. The decision-making process and significance

The matters requiring decision in this report have been considered by officers against the requirements of Part 6 of the Local Government Act 2002.

Officers have considered the significance of the matter, taking the Council's significance policy and decision-making guidelines into account. Officers recommend that the matter be considered to have low significance in accordance with the definition of "significance" in the Local Government Act 2002. Irrespective of its "significance" this is an important decision.

Officers do not consider that a formal record outlining consideration of the decision-making process is required in this instance.

3. Role of the WRS Committee

In November the WRS Committee considered its role and function (Report 11.576) but requested that further detail be provided for consideration.

Clarifying the role of the WRS Committee is needed to reflect the findings of the independent review of the WRS, to help define the on-going operation of the Committee. It will also assist in determining the makeup of the committee, in particular the issue of having non-local government members.

The independent review of the WRS concluded that "*while we do not believe the WRS processes and governance arrangements are fundamentally flawed, there is a clear case for change in how implementation of the Strategy is happening in practice*".

It stated that “*a more active WRS Committee is critical if the aims of the Strategy are to be realised. The Committee should take on a regional leadership role in a way that avoids duplication with existing structures and is consistent with its lack of statutory powers. Where the Committee is not the legal decision maker it should make recommendations to the formal decision maker*”.

The following outlines the proposed key functions of the WRS Committee.

Overseeing implementation of the WRS

The primary role of the Committee is to oversee the implementation of the Strategy. This includes overseeing the work of Grow Wellington and ensuring the monitoring processes are robust and provide relevant information about the progress of all Strategy outcomes. The following summarises the key tasks of the Committee:

- Monitoring the outcomes expected in the focus areas:
 - Commercialisation of innovation
 - Investment mechanisms for growth
 - Building world class economic infrastructure
 - Attracting business, investment and talent to the region
 - Education and workforce development to service regional economy needs
 - Open for business
- Assessing what further action may be required as a result of the monitoring
- Providing an annual letter of expectation to the Board of Grow Wellington
- Considering Grow Wellington’s draft Statements of Intent and providing feedback to the company as appropriate
- Considering Grow Wellington’s Annual Report and Six-monthly Report
- Considering other matters as reported to the Committee

Ensuring the Strategy continues to be relevant

The important task of refreshing the WRS will ensure it is a relevant and achievable strategy that will enhance the region’s economic performance. The key tasks are:

- Setting the direction of the strategy refresh
- Reviewing economic trends and analysis of changes in the economic environment
- Investigating opportunities for promoting economic growth
- Agreeing changes to the WRS as required to respond to issues and changes in the regional economy
- Engaging with the community, especially key stakeholders, on the strategy.

Providing regional leadership and partnerships

Influencing other decision-making agencies as well as establishing strong networks to ensure the strategy is effective, will be a major role for the Committee. The key tasks include:

- Engaging with key Government agencies (especially the Ministry of Science and Innovation, Ministry of Economic Development and New Zealand Trade and Enterprise), and other agencies involved in economic development e.g. Chambers of Commerce.
- Hosting forums with sectors
- Acting as a forum for councils to share information about local economic development activities
- Acting as a forum to share information and identify opportunities for collaboration with other agencies
- Identifying opportunities for advocacy e.g., science and technology teaching in schools and tertiary institutions.

4. Membership of the WRS Committee

The Committee previously considered its membership but did not make any final decisions (Report 11.576). There are three primary options and these are outlined below.

Option 1	Discussion
Status quo – 7 council representatives plus 5 non-local government members	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not all councils represented• Non-local government members lack clarity about their role
Option 2	
9 council representatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All councils are represented• No non-local government members to contribute wider perspectives
Option 3	
9 council representatives plus five non-local government members	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All councils represented plus input from a range of skilled non-local government members• Large committee• Role of non-local government members needs to be clarified

If Option 3 is selected there are considerations to be made about the type of non-local government members to be on the Committee.

The Terms of Reference for the current WRS Committee outline the makeup of the non-local government members under the current arrangements as:

- (a) *“Five Non-Local Government Members ... appointed on the basis of skills, experience, standing and networks in the regional community relevant to the goals of the Wellington Regional Strategy.*
- (b) *One of the five Non-Local Government Members must be a suitable person to represent interests of Maori.”*

Alternatively, or in addition to these criteria, the non-local government members could be selected on the basis of their connection to established networks in the region, e.g. chambers of commerce, Federated Farmers, etc.

The recommendation in this report is for Option 3. As the Committee has previously noted, it is important that each council is directly linked to the WRS through the committee.

A new Terms of Reference may be required for the new Committee. If so it will need to be confirmed at the 22 June meeting. Officers will bring a draft Terms of Reference to that meeting.

5. Role of Grow Wellington Board

In having clarity around the role of the WRS Committee it is also important to consider the role of the Grow Wellington Board.

The role of the Board is to lead the implementation of the economic growth elements of the Strategy. This will mean, primarily leading the implementation of the focus areas identified, namely;

- Commercialisation of innovation
- Investment mechanisms for growth
- Attracting business, investment and talent to the region
- Education and workforce development to service regional economy needs

The detail of what the Board does will be outlined in its annual Statement of Intent. Board members would be expected to have significant knowledge and experience relevant to the focus areas.

6. Chair of the WRS Committee

The Terms of Reference for the current WRS Committee outline the requirements for the Chair as:

“Chairperson: Appointment of the Chairperson and deputy to be determined by the full Committee when all 12 members have been appointed. The chairperson must be a Non-Local Government member.”

Option 1	Discussion
Status quo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-local government chair would avoid any concerns about any one council dominating the WRS

	activity
Option 2	
One council chairs the Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seen as councils demonstrating leadership • However, could be seen as one council dominating the WRS activity • Potential for conflicts between individual council priorities and the priorities of the WRS Committee

The recommendation is for Option 1.

7. Process for appointing the WRS Committee

Given that the WRS activity is ceasing on 30 June 2012, the Committee will need to be formally re-established.

Each council will need to nominate its own representative and an alternate. Greater Wellington will then formally appoint those people.

If the decision is made to appoint non-local government members, the Committee will need to go through a process to find suitable people. This can take place concurrently with the Strategy refresh process when the Committee will be engaging with key stakeholder groups. A decision on appointments can be made by the Committee on 22 June 2012, with the formal appointments made by Greater Wellington prior to the Committee's first meeting in the second half of the calendar year.

8. Communication

No communications are planned resulting from this report. Communication on matters relating to the WRS work will happen as relevant information is identified.

9. Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. ***Receives the report.***
2. ***Notes the content of the report.***
3. ***Agrees that the membership of the WRS Committee will be a representative from each of the nine councils and five non-local government members.***
4. ***Agrees that the Chair of the WRS Committee will be a non-local government member of the Committee.***

5. *Agrees to ask Greater Wellington to invite each council to nominate a representative and an alternate.*
6. *Agrees to initiate a process to identify potential non-local government members for appointment to the Committee, for consideration at the June Committee meeting.*

Report prepared by:

Report approved by:

Report approved by:

Melanie Thornton
Project Leader

Jane Davis
General Manager, Strategy &
Community Engagement

Tony Stallinger
Chair, CEO Forum