

Report 2014.294
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Committee Council
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Hearing Committee

Report of the Annual Plan 2014/15 Hearing Committee

1. Purpose

This report outlines the recommendations of the Annual Plan 2014/15 Hearing Committee (the Committee) on the draft Annual Plan 2014/15 (the draft Plan) and the proposal for the integrated delivery of water services arising from the consideration of written and oral submissions and other relevant information.

The Committee also heard submissions on the draft Regional Public Transport Plan and this report sets out the proposed next steps in relation to that process.

2. Background

The Annual Plan 2014/15 Hearings Committee met on 27 May 2014 to hear oral submissions and consider all written and oral submissions received on the:

- Draft Annual Plan 2014/15
- Integrated Delivery of Water Services Proposal.

In total 85 written submissions were received. The number of submissions grouped by type of organisation is as follows:

Organisations (including community groups)	38
Local government	3
Individuals	<u>44</u>
Total	85

The Committee accepted two late submissions.

A summary of the written submissions was prepared for consideration by the Committee, along with comments and recommendations from officers (Attachment 1 to Report 2014.257).

34 submitters presented their submissions to the Committee.

Six of these submitters also talked to their Draft Public Transport Plan 2014 submissions.

3. Deliberations

3.1 Draft Annual Plan 2014/15

The Committee reviewed and considered all the written submissions, the matters raised by oral submissions, and the additional information provided. Consideration was given to each separate topic identified in the summary of submissions, along with the officers' recommendations.

The Committee agreed with the officers' advice, except in the matters outlined below.

Public transport fare revenue

The Draft Annual Plan proposed some fare increases to cover increased costs, in line with the Council's policy of small annual fare increases. The policy aims at avoiding the need for larger periodic increases to cover the increasing costs of operating the network.

During the period of the consultation on the Draft Annual Plan, Councillors had requested officers to review the need for fare increases, in response to more favourable financial results over the December and March quarters. Officers reported to the Hearing Committee the outcome of that review and told the Committee that reduced costs and better than expected passenger numbers meant a fare revenue increase was no longer needed in 2014/15.

Councillors made the decision to recommend that there be no public transport fare increases in 2014/15.

Rimutaka Summit

The Committee agreed to correct a minor error relating to the development of the Rimutaka Summit site. Whilst included in the draft Annual Plan as an activity, it is now expected that the development of the Rimutaka Summit site will be largely complete by 30 June 2014.

Wellington Regional Recreation Initiatives Group

Sport Wellington in its submission asked the Council to support the development of a regional sports strategy, through collaborating with the various agencies, including councils, who deliver sports in the region. The Committee agreed that such a strategy would be of value to the region and agreed to recommend the Plan be amended to reference GWRC's continuing participation in the Wellington Regional Recreation Initiatives Group.

Enviroschools Foundation funding

The Council contributes funding to the Enviroschools Foundation to provide environmental education programmes in schools. The Foundation requested an additional \$30,000 funding in 2014/15 to enable training, specialist support and expanded capacity. The Committee agreed to recommend this additional funding, with a requirement that the Council will receive regular reports through the year on progress on the achievement of agreed KPIs. The Committee were advised by officers that the Foundation will use the additional funding to:

- Develop an up to date database of all schools in the region with an indication of their environmental sustainability activities.
- Implement phase one of structural changes to the Enviroschools Wellington team and establish, trial and evaluate at least one specialist responsibility role within the Enviroschools Wellington team (Secondary, Early childhood or Maori perspectives)
- Establish, trial and evaluate at least two content area champion responsibilities within the Enviroschools Wellington team (biodiversity, water conservation, sustainable travel, waste and energy champions)
- Produce an evaluation report and prepare a strategy for further expanding the specialist / champion roles within the Wellington team.

3.2 Integrated Delivery of Water Services

The Committee also reviewed and considered written submissions and matters raised by oral submissions relating to the proposal to integrate the delivery of water services in the Wellington metropolitan area.

They noted in particular the submission from Upper Hutt City Council that the proposed Water Committee should be a joint committee of the shareholding local authorities. The Committee also noted that each of the local authorities with a shareholding in Capacity Infrastructure Limited is currently considering their position in relation to the proposal, and that their position will be taken into account by Council when making a final decision on the proposal.

The Committee resolved to recommend to Council that the proposal should be agreed in principle, but that any further changes proposed by councils with a shareholding in Capacity Infrastructure Limited would need to be considered by the Council once these became known.

4. Draft Regional Public Transport Plan 2014

On 28 and 29 May 2014 the Committee considered the submissions on the Draft Regional Public Transport Plan 2014. Due to the large number of submissions, and the matters raised in those submissions, it was not possible for the Committee to undertake and complete its deliberations prior to the Council meeting on 12 June. The Committee is scheduled to reconvene on 12 June to undertake its deliberations, and it is proposed that the report on the

outcome of the hearing of submissions and deliberations on the Draft Regional Public Transport Plan 2014 be reported to the Council on 26 June 2014. This will enable the Council to adopt the Regional Public Transport plan at its meeting on 26 June 2014.

5. **Communication**

The final Annual Plan 2014/15 will be considered for adoption by Council on 26 June 2014, and following adoption will be made publicly available. A media release will be issued.

All submitters who made submissions on the draft Annual Plan and matters of concurrent consultation will, subsequent to Council adopting the final Annual Plan and other matters, receive a response outlining the decisions of the Council.

6. **The decision-making process and significance**

Officers have considered the need to take account of the community's views and preferences in relation to these matters. The Local Government Act 2002 requires the use of the special consultative procedure. This report details the results of part of that consultation process.

The subject matter of this report is part of a decision-making process that will lead to the Council making a decision of high significance within the meaning of the Local Government Act 2002. The decision-making process is explicitly prescribed for by the Local Government Act 2002 and includes the use of the special consultative procedure.

7. **Recommendations**

That the Council:

1. **Receives** the report.
2. **Notes** the content of the report.
3. **Agrees** to finalise the Annual Plan 2014/15 with the following amendments:
 - a. no public transport fare increase in 2014/15
 - b. amendment of an error relating to the development of the Rimutaka Summit site
 - c. reference to GWRC's continuing participation in the Wellington Regional Recreation Initiatives Group
 - d. \$30,000 additional funding for Enviroschools in 2014/15, with reports-back on progress against the KPIs expected through the year.

4. ***Agrees** in principle to the proposal for the integrated delivery of water services set out in the Statement of Proposal, subject to resolving any issues of detail with shareholding councils.*
5. ***Notes** that the Committee has yet to undertake and complete its deliberations on the Draft Regional Public Transport Plan 2014 and **agrees** to the Committee reporting its recommendations to the Council meeting on 26 June 2014.*

Report approved by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Barbara Donaldson', written in a cursive style.

Cr Barbara Donaldson
Chair, Annual Plan 2014/15 Hearing Committee