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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 June 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 June 2010 the WRS Office has had its major focus on:

- Refining indicators for the GPI report.

- Hosting and participating in the regional Broadband Operational Group (BOG).

- Facilitating the regional open space working group and sub-groups, and organising and hosting the Wellington Regional Open Spaces Forum on 27 July.

- Facilitating the regional urban design working group and continuing to progress the work outlined in the Wellington Region Urban Design Action Plan and Stocktake. In conjunction with the New Zealand Urban Design Protocol (and the Ministry for the Environment), the WRS Office hosted the Urban Design Symposium, which was held on 19 August.

- Assisting Hutt City Council to progress the regional industrial land project and hosting a workshop, which was held on 17 June. Attendees included people from the business community who are directly linked with industrial activities, including Centreport, Paraparaumu Airport and

Colliers, and representatives from the region's councils, universities, BERL and the Regional Chamber of Commerce.

- Working with the Chief Executives on the WRS review process.

4. Broadband Operational Group

The Broadband Operating Group (BOG) developed the submission on the Ministry of Economic Development's Deployment Standards Initiative, and is currently responding to the Telecommunications Carriers Forum's "Principles for Telecommunications Infrastructure for New Subdivisions". The following workstreams are on-going.

4.1 Rural

Two meetings have been held with Chorus to discuss their rural plans. One was with the three rural areas in the region, Wairarapa, Makara and Kapiti and a further meeting was held with just Wairarapa representatives.

4.2 Region-wide policy for access to local government assets

The first piece of work from this workstream was a stocktake and analysis of councils' policies on access to their assets. The BOG is now exploring the feasibility of developing a common approach to accessing council assets by way of a common policy across councils.

Local Fibre Company (LFC) candidates were invited to meetings to discuss their potential needs for access to council assets. Early indications have been that there is not a great need for access to council assets, and a new set of meetings are to be held in early September to confirm this. At these meetings we will discuss whether there is any urgent need to progress the development of common policies across councils. A report to the region's Chief Executives is due by the end of September.

4.3 Coordination of road openings

This workstream is focussed on determining how road openings could be better coordinated around the region. This will reduce the compliance costs for the operators and enable greater cooperation between the councils in the region. The project aims to provide councils with an outline of the implications for them of a significant increase in the number of road openings as a result of the fibre rollout. It will also provide an analysis of what is needed across the region to provide better road opening coordination. A report to the region's Chief Executives is due by the end of September.

4.4 Trenching technologies

This workstream continues to explore the potential for new (i.e. shallow and micro) trenching technologies to reduce the cost and disruption of new fibre installation. This was to be achieved by identifying common approved technologies across all the region's councils to reduce transaction cost and complexity for any local fibre company or utility.

Since the work was planned, the Ministry of Economic Development has launched the Deployment Standards Initiative. This work will include pilot investigations to test new fibre installation techniques as well as the development of the standards themselves. Because of this work, we will not need to proceed with some of the deliverables listed in the project brief.

A report to the region's Chief Executives is due by mid-October.

5. Open Spaces

The Wellington Regional Open Spaces Forum was held on 27 July at Te Rauparaha Arena in Porirua. It was a half day event aimed to enable further sharing of information about key projects that are happening in the region. This was a very successful event with about seventy attendees from across the region, including open space practitioners, rangers, managers and consultants. Kate presented at the forum, speaking about the development and implementation of the Wellington Regional Open Spaces Strategy and Action Plan. Other presentations included talks from representatives from Regional Public Health, Parks Forum, Wairarapa Combined Councils, and various other councils from across the region. Feedback from the Forum has been positive.

As stated previously, a workshop of open space providers/managers was held in February. Sub-groups have been established to drive the four major areas of work identified at the workshop. These are:

- Walking tracks information portal: this sub-group has been researching what information is already available and how we could display this information in a user-friendly way for the public.

- Biodiversity: this sub-group is identifying the top biodiversity sites in the region (those with good access and high biodiversity values). An information portal for these sites will be established, and will include the name of the site, a location map, photos, opening hours and entrance fee (if applicable), web site, description, habitats, activities, highlights/special features, and other attributes. This portal will be available on the WRS website, with links from other council websites.

- Motorised access and conflicting uses in open spaces: this sub-group has developed a stocktake of regional rules and existing tracks with a view to potentially aligning them.

- Sports fields: this sub-group is meeting with the Regional Sportsfields Managers Group in September to ensure there is no duplication of work programmes.

6. Urban Design

In conjunction with the New Zealand Urban Design Protocol (and the Ministry for the Environment), the WRS Office hosted the Urban Design Symposium on 19 August at Circa Theatre, Wellington. This was a national symposium, with

over 120 attendees from across the country. The symposium was focussed on urban design approaches in the UK and Australia, followed by more technical sessions discussing specific tools for achieving successful urban design. The WRS Office, Upper Hutt City Council, Hutt City Council, Kapiti Coast District Council and Wellington City Council discussed urban design initiatives in their respective areas. Melanie gave a presentation at the symposium, speaking about the regional work carried out on centres planning, intensification and subdivision design guides. She also spoke about continuing work including training initiatives and the establishment of the District Plan Review Group.

The Urban Design working group is working on two information sharing initiatives:

- The urban design information hub on the WRS website is being regularly updated to provide useful links to regional, national and international urban design-related websites, courses and documents.

- The first 'walk and talk' session was held in Porirua in June and the next session will be held in Wellington in September. At these events council officers discuss key urban design issues and examples of best practice. They are open to practitioners, urban design champions and councillors from across the region.

7.   Communication

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

8.   Recommendations

That the Committee:

1.   **Receives** the report.

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

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