



Report **04.600**
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File E/06/02/06

Committee **Council**
Author **Wayne Hastie Council Secretary**

Committee Arrangements

1. Purpose

To enable to Council to consider the establishment of Committees to assist with the efficient transaction of Council business.

2. Background

The Local Government Act 2002 empowers the Council to appoint the committees, subcommittees and other subordinate decision-making bodies that it considers appropriate. The Council may also appoint joint committees with other local authorities. Non elected members can be appointed to a committee or subcommittee.

The Council is required to have a Regional Land Transport Committee and be part of a Civil Defence Emergency Management Group, which is a joint committee. The Council has agreed to be part of the Wellington Regional Strategy Forum, a joint committee of six local authorities in the western Region. There is also an ongoing requirement in the Wellington Region Constitution Order 1989 for the Council to maintain a Wairarapa Committee.

At its meeting on 13 July the former Council agreed that the committee structure in place at that time was appropriate and that the proper time to undertake a full review was when the Council adopted its new Long Term Council Community Plan in 2006.

The former Council had the following committees in place:

- Policy, Finance and Strategy Committee
- Policy, Finance and Strategy Sub-committee
- Environment Committee
- Landcare Committee
- Passenger Transport Committee
- Regional Land Transport Committee
- Rural Services and Wairarapa Committee
- Utility Services Committee

In addition, the Hutt River Advisory Committee was a sub-committee of the Landcare Committee with membership from Greater Wellington, Hutt City Council, Upper Hutt City Council and local Iwi.

3. Terms of reference

The former Council reviewed the Terms of Reference for its principal committees and recommended that the revised Terms of Reference be referred to the in-coming Council. A copy of the revised Terms of Reference is included as **Attachment 1** to this Report.

4. Considerations

The committee structures put in place by previous Councils, supported by appropriate delegations, has provided an effective and efficient mechanism to transact Council business. All agendas are supplied to all Councillors and any Councillor may attend any committee meeting.

The former Council adopted a remuneration regime which recognised the roles of committee chairpersons. The total remuneration pool available to the Council is set by the Remuneration Authority and is a factor when considering how many committees the Council establishes.

In considering the committee structure and Terms of Reference, the former Council raised a number of matters to be examined.

1. Does the Council need a communications and marketing committee that extends across all of the Council's functions? Should this be a committee or sub-committee of the whole?

Comment

Because communications and marketing activities extend across the whole Council and have a highly visible interface with the community, it is appropriate that all Councillors be involved in any discussions and decisions on these matters. Rather than establish a new committee or sub-committee, communications and marketing activities could become a specific function of the Policy, Finance and Strategy Committee. If necessary, specific matters could be referred to the Policy, Finance and Strategy Sub-committee.

2. Should the committee Terms of Reference specify the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi?

Comment

The Charter of Understanding between Te Tangata Whenua o Te Upoko o te Ika a Maui and Greater Wellington Regional Council sets out Treaty principles of primary importance to our relationship with Iwi of the Region. These principles are:

- The “Essential Bargain”
- The Partnership/Mutually Beneficial Relationship
- Shared Decision Making
- Active Protection
- Tribal Self Regulation

A short description of each of these principles is contained in the Charter. Rather than repeating the principles in the Terms of Reference, the reference to the principles could be expanded by the addition of the words “as outlined in the Charter of Understanding between Te Tangata Whenua o Te Upoko o te Ika a Maui and Greater Wellington Regional Council”.

3. Should there be specific reference to the timing of the Long Term Council Community Plan?

Comment

An additional section could be added to the Preface in the Terms of Reference to state that there will be a comprehensive review of the committee structure and Terms of Reference when the new Long Term Council Community Plan is adopted in 2006.

4. Does the Passenger Transport Committee have competing interests?

Comment

The Passenger Transport Committee will have to make decisions in the context of the Regional Land Transport Strategy which should guide its decision-making. Any perceived competing interests will have to be resolved by consideration of what decisions will serve to best implement the Regional Land Transport Strategy.

5. Should all committees be committees of the whole?

Comment

Committee arrangements have worked well in the past. All Councillors are kept informed of committee business and are able to attend meetings. There does not appear to be a reason for changing from the status quo.

6. Is there an on-going need to have outside appointees for single member constituencies?

Comment

This requirement arose from a desire by the former Council to have a representative from each constituency on each Standing Committee. Given that Members’ primary objective must be to serve in the best interests of the region as a whole it does not seem necessary to maintain this requirement. However, each Committee should consider whether it

could function more effectively by the appointment of members from outside of the Council.

7. Are the accountabilities of the Passenger Transport Committee, the Regional Land Transport Committee and the Council sufficiently clear in relation to transport matters?

Comment

The review of the Terms of Reference by the previous Council attempted to clarify the relationships of the Council and Committees in relation to transport matters. An additional opportunity for clarification will occur when the Council formally delegates powers to its committees.

5. Ara Tahi

Ara Tahi is an advisory group of representatives from Iwi authorities in the region and the Council. It is not a committee of the Council. Ara Tahi is working well and it is not recommended that any changes be made at this time. However, there has been recent discussion about Ara Tahi Iwi representatives being invited to sit on Council committees and this is an issue that will need to be worked through over the coming months.

6. Communication

There are no communication matters arising from this Report.

7. Recommendations

(1) That the Council **establish** the following committees:

- Policy, Finance and Strategy Committee
- Policy, Finance and Strategy Sub-committee
- Environment Committee
- Landcare Committee
- Passenger Transport Committee
- Regional Land Transport Committee
- Rural Services and Wairarapa Committee
- Utility Services Committee.

(2) That the proposed Landcare Committee be asked to **review** the on-going need for the Hutt River Advisory Committee.

(3) That the Council comprehensively **reviews** its committee arrangements when it adopts a new Long Term Council Community Plan in 2006.

- (4) *That the Terms of Reference for Council and Standing Committees contained in Attachment 1 be **adopted** subject to the following changes:*
- ***add** the following specific responsibility to the Policy, Finance and Strategy Committee “Considering and making recommendations on the Council’s communication and marketing activities”*
 - ***amend** clause 4.3 to read “Take into account the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi as outlined in the Charter of Understanding between Te Tangata Whenua o Te Upoko o te Ika a Maui and Greater Wellington Regional Council and facilitate participation of Maori in Council decision-making processes”*
 - ***adding** the following to the Preface “The Council will comprehensively reviews its committee arrangements when is adopts a new Long Term Council Community Plan in 2006”*
 - ***removing** all requirements to appoint outside members where the member of a single member constituency is not a member of the Committee, and replace this with a requirement that each Committee consider whether it could function more effectively by the appointment of members from outside of the Council.*
- (5) *That Ara Tahi **continue** in its present form.*
- (6) *That the Council **note** that the issue of Ara Tahi Iwi representation on Council Committees is a topic that will be discussed over the coming months.*
- (7) *That the Council **note** that it will need to formally delegate powers to its Committees.*

Report prepared by:

Report approved by:

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Attachment 1: Terms of Reference for Council and Standing Committees