



Report 07.326
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Committee Environment Committee
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Resource Management Charging Policy update

1. Purpose

To report and update the Committee on the outcome of the Resource Management Charges Subcommittee Hearing.

The Subcommittee was setup to hear and consider any submissions on the draft Resource Management Charging Policy, clarify any technical issues and recommend any amendments to the draft Policy to the Committee.

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. Background

Since the Environment Committee meeting of the 3 April 2007 the draft policy has been revised:

- Colour maps of the areas which attract a “State of the Environment” charge have been embedded into the draft Policy to assist all users to identify catchments and areas, which are subject to these charges, easily.
- The definition of a “stressed” catchment or zone has been defined as one in which the water resource allocation is above a certain point. Where this “trigger level” occurs the consent user attracts a state of the environment charge. The draft Policy identified some new areas which are considered stressed, in accordance with the Freshwater Plan, and these areas are clearly marked on the embedded maps.
- A statement about the annual review mechanism for the policy has been added to the policy:

“We intend to introduce an annual review of our Resource Management Charging Policy and this will ensure any future increases will be gradual. An annual review of the charging policy will be included as part of the annual plan and LTCCP processes and you will be consulted on any proposed change”.

- Section 3.2.9. This section covers applications for multiple or a suite of consents – e.g. a major notified consent. The draft Policy proposed to charge additional consent application fees to an applicant considered to have a poor credit record. We have deleted any reference covering an applicant’s creditworthiness and the section now reads:

“3.2.9 Reductions for multiple consent applications

Often major projects have a number of resource consents included in one application document. Greater Wellington, in these instances, has a discretion and may request the payment of a single application charge (i.e. \$4,250) instead of requesting for separate payments of \$4,250 for each consent application. Greater Wellington’s decision to waive additional application fees will be based on the likely costs of processing the consent.”

- Section 2.5 (of Part 2: Schedules) has been expanded to recognise that there may be particular situations where a non-standard charge is appropriate:

“There may be special circumstances in which a non-standard charge applies. We can advise you when this is likely to occur for your consent”.

4. The Special Consultative Procedure

The consultation period on the draft Resource Management Charging Policy ran from 20 April to 21 May 2007. No submissions were received on the proposed changes to the draft Policy.

The review of the draft Resource Management Charging Policy was advertised extensively in the region. A newsletter was sent to all consent holders to advise them of the review and of their right to submit. The daily newspapers carried advertisements advising people of the hearing dates. In addition, copies of the newsletter and the draft Policy were posted on our website.

A news release was prepared which covered both the review of the charging policy and the Council’s performance as measured by the three yearly MFE survey. In May, the Petone Herald and the Hutt News (circulation around 42,000) chose to report the item and were the only newspapers to do so.

Subsequent to the newsletter being sent to all consent holders, some major consent holders that will be affected most by the proposed changes were contacted directly e.g. Kapiti Coast District Council and the Council’s Water Supply, Parks & Forests Division. Such consent holders have accepted the proposed changes without raising any issues or concerns.

As we did not receive any submissions we do not need to report to anyone specifically of the outcome of the process. The special consultation procedure is now concluded.

5. Resource Management Charges Subcommittee Hearing

On 11 June 2007, the Resource Management Charges Subcommittee met and recommended that the Environment Committee accept the draft Resource Management Charging Policy in its entirety after making the changes listed in Section 3.

Report 07.376 (**Attachment 1**) sets out the Resource Management Charges Subcommittee's recommendations regarding the draft Resource Management Charging Policy.

6. Communication

No communications are necessary at this time. However, once the Resource Management Charging Policy is adopted by the Council the Policy will be publicly notified. In addition, our supporting documentation (e.g. application forms and brochures) will be updated and we will communicate with our major consent holders on these directly.

7. Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. ***Receives the report;***
2. ***Recommends to the Council that the Resource Management Charging Policy is adopted in its entirety, subject to any amendments made by the Committee; and***
3. ***Notes that the Resource Management Charging Policy is to be published subject to any minor editorial amendments, which should be approved by the Divisional Manager, Environment Management.***

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Attachment 1: Draft minutes of the Resource Management Charges Subcommittee