

Ruamāhanga Whaitua (catchment) Committee – Terms of Reference



‘Whaitua’ is a traditional Te Reo Māori term for a designated area.

The Regional Plan utilises the word ‘whaitua’ to describe a catchment or sub-catchment (zone) managed as an integrated system.

Purpose and function

The purpose of the Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee is to facilitate community and stakeholder engagement in the development of a Whaitua Implementation Programme (WIP). A WIP is a non-statutory report to Greater Wellington Regional Council (the Council) which will contain recommendations for specific plan provisions and work programmes for the integrated management of land and water resources within the whaitua boundary. The WIP may contain both regulatory and non-regulatory proposals.

The Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee will operate in partnership with tangata whenua and develop recommendations guided by the five principles created as part of the Regional Plan Review process:

Ki uta ki tai – interconnectedness

Wairuatanga – identity

Kaitiakitanga – guardianship

To matou whakapono – judgement based on knowledge

Mahitahi – partnership (co-operative)

Status of the Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee

The Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee is an advisory body established by the Council. The Committee is not a subordinate decision-making body of the Council and is not a committee under the Local Government Act 2002.

Specific responsibilities

1. The Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee is responsible for developing a Whaitua Implementation Programme (WIP) that will outline regulatory and non-regulatory proposals for integrated land and water management within their whaitua boundary, including measures to implement the National Policy statement for Freshwater Management.
2. The WIP developed will include:
 - (a) An assessment of region wide objectives contained in the draft/proposed or operative regional plan, as they relate to the whaitua
 - (b) Specific whaitua or catchment objectives and targets for water quality and quantity outcomes, including setting timeframes and priorities for achieving whaitua or catchment objectives and targets

- (c) A review of the region wide values held for water quality and quantity and prioritisation of these values as they relate to the whitua
 - (d) Water quality limits, including nutrient load and contamination limits for freshwater and coastal waters if appropriate
 - (e) An assessment of, and recommendations to alter, existing water allocation limits, to achieve identified objectives and targets for the whitua or catchment
 - (f) Programmes or activities that will support or contribute to the achievement of the established objectives and targets for water quality and quantity outcomes, including such tools as environmental accords and post-settlement arrangements, and the prioritisation of these programmes or activities and,
 - (g) Opportunities for the active integration of existing programmes and plans to achieve the objectives and targets for water quality and quantity outcomes.
3. In developing the WIP the following matters will also be considered:
- (a) Identification of the land and water opportunities for the whitua, supported by the best available information sources
 - (b) Identification of a vision of the future of land and water management for the whitua
 - (c) The management of rivers for flood hazard mitigation
 - (d) Priority water allocation (domestic, stock, irrigation uses) and secondary allocation
 - (e) Demand and supply management for all uses and their implications
 - (f) Significant water use projects, such as irrigation and electricity generation.
4. In developing objectives, targets, limits and activity programmes the members of the Ruamāhanga Whitua Committee must work within the ambit of the following:
- (a) The Resource Management Act 1991
 - (b) The New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement 2010
 - (c) The National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2011
 - (d) The Regional Policy Statement 2013
 - (e) The National Environmental Standards for Sources of Human Drinking Water 2007
 - (f) The Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1941

- (g) Any other document referred to the Whaitua Committee by Te Upoko Taiao – Natural Resource Management Committee or the General Manager, Environment Management.
5. The Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee shall recommend to the Council that regulatory proposals within the WIP be referred to Te Upoko Taiao – Natural Resource Management Committee for incorporation into the Regional Plan through a plan change process.
6. The Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee shall recommend to the Council that the non-regulatory proposals within the WIP will be further developed within Greater Wellington Regional Council and in conjunction with relevant external organisations. They will also be considered in the development of the next Long Term Plan.

Council consideration of proposals in the WIP

The Council is responsible for the review and approval of the regulatory proposals in the Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee WIP, including ensuring consistency with relevant statutory requirements. Non-regulatory options put forward in the WIP will be considered by the Council in conjunction with relevant external organisations, including local and iwi authorities.

The Council will give weight to the recommendations in the WIP agreed to through the collaborative process. If the WIP, or any part of it, is inconsistent with the Council's view or statutory requirements, these elements will be referred back to the Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee for further consideration.

Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee membership and operation

Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee membership

The Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee will be appointed by the Council and will have the following membership:

1. One elected and one appointed member of Te Upoko Taiao – Natural Resource Management Committee representing the interest of Greater Wellington Regional Council and acting as a voice of Te Upoko Taiao – Natural Resource Management Committee
2. One member nominated from each iwi authority whose rohe falls entirely or partly within the whaitua boundary, representing the interest of that tangata whenua group
3. One member nominated by each territorial authority operating within the whaitua boundary.
4. Up to seven members from the community with a range of backgrounds and interests related to land and water management within the community. The Council may approve additional members if it determines their necessity to ensure appropriate balance.

In determining the composition of the community members of the Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee, consideration shall be given to balancing the following land and water management values:

- Agricultural interests
- Indigenous biodiversity/environmental groups
- Tangata whenua values (hapū)
- Recreational users
- Wider economic development interests
- Urban interests
- General community interests
- Incorporating existing structures/programmes and how they will be represented.

To be eligible to be considered for appointment to a Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee, a community nominee must either live in, or be able to demonstrate a close connection with, the whaitua.

Each community member must also reflect the interests of a wider group within the community and have the skills, experience and knowledge to relay information between the Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee and different sectors within the community.

Staff eligibility

Greater Wellington Regional Council officers will not be eligible to apply for membership of the Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee.

Chairperson

The Chairperson position is to be determined by the full Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee when all members have been appointed. The Chairperson position must be filled by a member of the Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee.

Quorum

A majority of the membership of the Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee shall be present to form a quorum.

Alternate members

No alternates/proxies shall take the place of Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee members.

Committee meetings and workshops

The Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee will meet at least 4 times per annum (once a quarter) and with workshops and additional meetings as required.

Meetings will be advertised and will be open to the public.

Reporting

The Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee will provide updates, at least quarterly, on work undertaken to both the Environment Committee and the Te Upoko Taiao - Natural Resource Management Committee.

Consensus

The Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee will decide upon the recommendations proposed within their WIP by consensus.

Remuneration

Each council shall be responsible for remunerating its nominee appointed by Council on the Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee for the cost of that person's participation on the Committee.

All other members of the Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee will be eligible to receive standard mileage allowances or reimbursement of travel expenses as determined by Council and shall be eligible to receive the following taxable honorarium:

- Appointed members (excluding the Chairperson): \$7,500 per annum each
- Chairperson: \$12,000 per annum. This is only payable in the event that the Chairperson is a non-Councillor member of the Committee.

Duration of the Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee

The Ruamāhanga Whaitua Committee shall exist for the duration of the development and completion of a WIP (Whaitua Implementation Programme) document, and shall cease to exist when the Council has made decisions on regulatory proposals within the WIP.