

Report 16.536
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Committee Council
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Report on the Wellington Regional Strategy Committee meeting of 13 December 2016

1. Purpose

To inform Council of the Wellington Regional Strategy Committee meeting of 13 December 2016.

2. Election of the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the Wellington Regional Strategy Committee

The Committee elected Mayor Lester as Chairperson and Councillor Blakeley as Deputy Chairperson of the Wellington Regional Strategy Committee.

3. Reports

3.1 WREDA Annual Report 2015/16 and First Quarter Report 2016/17

Chris Whelan, Chief Executive, WREDA, presented the Wellington Regional Economic Development Agency (WREDA) Annual Report 2015/16 and first quarter 2016/17 report.

WREDA is funded by WCC and other partners to market Wellington as a visitor destination particularly for Australian visitors. In 2015/16 a number of marketing campaigns were run including *It's never just a weekend in Wellington* and *Inspired by Wellington* for the Australian market. The success of these and other campaigns were demonstrated by a strong year in the visitor economy.

In the first quarter report for 2016/17 it was noted that international student visa applications were up 3% in Wellington compared with decreases in other centres. The Singapore-Canberra-Wellington route commenced in September, and a number of activities were undertaken to promote the new service. Domestic visitor spend is up by 3.4% and Australian visitor spend is up by 8.4%.

The Committee requested more specific reporting against the outcomes in the SOI and the WRS.

3.2 Letter of Expectation – WREDA

The Committee considered and approved the Letter of Expectation (with a number of amendments) to WREDA, to be taken into account by WREDA in developing its draft Statement of Intent for 2017/18.

The Letter of Expectation states that the Committee expects a greater emphasis on delivering activities and programmes that have a direct impact of the outcomes sought by the Wellington Regional Strategy. WREDA is expected to play a primary facilitation role in driving collective action with business, the tertiary sector, government agencies, councils in the region and the investment community. The Letter of Expectation also sets out a series of specific expectations in relation to each of the areas of WREDA's responsibility: economic development, tourism, and major events and venues management.

3.3 Wellington Regional Strategy Office – First Quarter 2016/17 Update

The Committee received a briefing on the work of the Wellington Regional Strategy Office (WRS Office), how the office works in conjunction with the Wellington Regional Economic Development Agency (WREDA), and was provided with an update on WRS Office activities.

The WRS Office programme is conducted under the three broad headings of strategic leadership (research based); project management and facilitation; and economic data, reporting and information. It also maintains operational relationships with WREDA and the councils.

The Committee was also given an update on the current strategic and research projects being undertaken by the WRS Office. The WRS Office will be monitoring and reporting on the progress of WREDA to the Committee.

3.4 Public excluded report

The Committee went into public excluded business to receive a report on a WREDA Board reappointment.

4. The decision-making process and significance

No decision is being sought in this report.

4.1 Engagement

Engagement on this matter is unnecessary.

5. Recommendations

That the Council:

- 1. Receives the report.*
- 2. Notes the content of the report.*

Report prepared by:

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