

Report 17.41
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Committee: Council
Author: Cr Chris Laidlaw, Chair

Establishment of a Wairarapa Committee

1. Purpose

To establish a Wairarapa Committee that will consider matters of relevance to the Wairarapa.

2. Background

Greater Wellington Regional Council has a history of having a committee focused on Wairarapa matters. The Local Government (Wellington Region) Reorganisation Order 1989 provided for the establishment of a Wairarapa Committee. The Committee had a broad mandate to consider and make recommendations on matters affecting the Wairarapa area. A committee with a focus on Wairarapa matters remained in place until 2007.

During the process of engaging with the three Wairarapa territorial authorities and the Local Government Commission (LGC) on options for future local governance in the Wairarapa, it has become clear that the re-establishment by the Council of a Wairarapa Committee would be worthwhile to enable a local perspective to be placed on regional decisions and to assist in building improved relationships with the territorial authorities.

The Wairarapa Constituency has a number of unique characteristics in the context of the Wellington Region that warrant it having a committee charged with considering local issues:

- The Wairarapa Constituency comprises 74% of the land area of the Wellington Region, yet is only able to be represented by one member.
- The significant amount of Greater Wellington Regional Council work undertaken in the Wairarapa Constituency, together with the increased focus on water quality, land management and flood protection issues.
- The unique characteristics of the Wairarapa in terms of its physical landform and environment, its economy and communities.

3. Establishment of the Wairarapa Committee

It is proposed that the Council establish a Wairarapa Committee with the mandate of considering and making recommendations on matters affecting the Wairarapa area.

The terms of reference (**Attachment 1**) would provide for the Committee to consider all matters of importance to the Wairarapa and to make recommendations to Council on these issues.

In keeping with the Council's decision to conduct a mid-term review of its committee arrangements, the Wairarapa Committee will be reviewed at the same time.

Officers have undertaken an assessment of all reports considered by Council and its committees in the previous triennium that would have been likely to have been brought to a Wairarapa Committee. Based on this I have concluded that it would be appropriate for the Wairarapa Committee to meet on a quarterly basis. This frequency can always be reviewed at a later date based on the functioning of the Committee over time.

3.1 Membership

It is proposed that the Wairarapa Committee be made up of the following membership:

- Three Greater Wellington Regional Council Councillors, including the member for the Wairarapa Constituency
- One member, being an elected member of Carterton District Council appointed by the Council on nomination by Carterton District Council.
- One member, being an elected member of Masterton District Council appointed by the Council on nomination by Masterton District Council.
- One member, being an elected member of South Wairarapa District Council appointed by the Council on nomination by South Wairarapa District Council.
- One member appointed by Council on the nomination of Kahungunu ki Wairarapa for their skills, knowledge or experience to assist the Committee.
- One member appointed by Council on the nomination of Rangitāne ō Wairarapa for their skills, knowledge or experience to assist the Committee.

Each territorial authority will have the right to nominate one person as an alternate member of the Committee. GWRC will be able to appoint a pool of up to three alternates.

3.2 Councillor Appointments

Given the importance of this Committee to both the Council and the Wairarapa local authorities I propose that the Council's initial membership of the

Committee comprise the Wairarapa Constituency member, and the Council Chair and Deputy Chair, as follows:

- Cr Staples, as Committee Chair
- Cr Donaldson, as Deputy Committee Chair
- Cr Laidlaw.

Also, I propose that at this time the Council appoint one alternate, Cr Kedgley.

3.3 Resourcing issues

It is noted that the establishment of this Committee will entail additional servicing requirements. This includes the mechanics of the Committee itself (meetings, agendas, and minutes) and the preparation and presentation of reports to the Committee by officers. Officers (and Committee members) will be required to attend meetings in the Wairarapa. It is expected that this additional workload can be managed from existing resources; however, the Chief Executive will advise Council if additional resources become necessary.

3.4 Decisions by Council

To build a trusted relationship it is important that the process by which Council considers the recommendations of the Committee is transparent. It is therefore proposed that officers report back to each Committee meeting on how any recommendations from the Committee have been considered and actioned. Where there are differences between the recommendations of the Committee and the decisions of the Council the reasons for this will be explained.

3.5 Local Government Commission

The Local Government Commission (LGC) recently released a draft proposal for amalgamation of the three Wairarapa territorial authorities. A Wairarapa Committee of GWRC forms part of the draft proposal. This has been agreed by GWRC and the three Wairarapa territorial authorities and mirrors the terms of reference proposed for the Committee in this report. Given the length of the formal LGC process, it is unlikely that under that process a Committee could be established before 2018/19.

The establishment of the Wairarapa Committee as recommended in this report allows an early start to the process of working more closely together with the territorial authorities. It will also enable the effectiveness of the Committee to be trialled and any possible improvements to be identified in advance of any final LGC proposal.

4. Wairarapa councils' support

The Wairarapa councils have expressed support for the establishment of the committee.

5. **Communication**

This Committee will be of considerable interest to the local community in Wairarapa. It is proposed that the decision of Council be communicated through a variety of channels and that once established the date, location and agenda of meetings be publicly notified in the local media.

6. **The decision-making process and significance**

The matter requiring decision in this report has been considered by officers against the requirements of Part 6 of the Local Government Act 2002.

6.1 **Significance of the decision**

Officers have considered the significance of the matter, taking into account the Council's significance and engagement policy and decision-making guidelines. Due to the procedural nature of this decision officers recommend that the matter be considered to have low significance.

Officers do not consider that a formal record outlining consideration of the decision-making process is required in this instance.

6.2 **Engagement**

Due to its procedural nature and low significance, engagement on this matter has been restricted to the relevant territorial authorities.

7. **Recommendations**

That the Council:

1. ***Receives** the report.*
2. ***Notes** the content of the report.*
3. ***Establishes** the Wairarapa Committee.*
4. ***Adopts** the Terms of Reference for the Wairarapa Committee as set out in Attachment 1.*
5. ***Appoints** Crs Staples, Donaldson, and Laidlaw to the Wairarapa Committee.*
6. ***Appoints** Cr Staples as Chair, and Cr Donaldson as Deputy Chair, of the Wairarapa Committee.*
7. ***Appoints** Cr Kedgley as an alternate member of the Committee.*

Report prepared by:

Cr Chris Laidlaw
Council Chair

Attachment 1: Draft terms of reference for the Wairarapa Committee