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Committee Council  
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## Report on the Wellington Regional Strategy Committee meeting of 28 March 2017

### 1. Purpose

To inform Council of the Wellington Regional Strategy Committee meeting of 28 March 2017.

### 2. Reports

#### 2.1 Economic Update

Colin Drew, Project Leader, Wellington Regional Strategy Office, presented an update on the region's economic performance for 2016 based on Infometrics data.

The national economy is undergoing a period of strong growth that is forecast to continue out to 2020. Such growth is attributed to factors including high net migration, construction activity and tourism numbers, from which Wellington has also benefited. Growth in some areas has been slower in the Wellington Region than the national average although coming from a higher base.

Gross Domestic Product growth was most evident in Finance, Central Government, Professional Scientific Technical Services (PSTS), and property related services. The 2016 growth rate mirrors that for the period 2011-2016.

Although house values have increased significantly, particularly in the last 18 months, Wellington remains relatively affordable compared to other centres.

#### 2.2 WREDA Half Year Report 2016/17

Colin Drew, Project Leader, Wellington Regional Strategy Office, and Chris Whelan, Chief Executive WREDA, updated the Committee on the Wellington Regional Economic Development Agency (WREDA) Half Year Report.

WREDA has continued on its path of consolidation following the appointment of a new management team, integrating its operational systems and planning for co-location in late March.

Progress has been made in all the broad areas of activity that WREDA has committed to undertake. It is acknowledged however that the 14 November earthquake and subsequent disruption to business in Wellington meant that some WREDA staff were reassigned to support business recovery efforts.

Performance measures have been met or exceeded in 13 activities, not met or begun in two, and on track but with annual measures in 14 activities. Those not met were in the Regional Business Partner Programme and Utilisation of Venues. Some specific activity areas were noted where there hasn't been a focus by WREDA. The financial position appears sound. Operational costs are reported as being under control for the first half of the financial year. As a result, project related expenditure is forecast to be higher in the second half than that stated in the SOI.

### **2.3 Wellington Regional Economic Development Agency Draft Statement of Intent 2017-20**

Chris Whelan, Chief Executive WREDA, updated the Committee on the Wellington Regional Economic Development Agency's (WREDA) draft Statement of Intent (SOI) for 2017-2020.

The draft 2017-20 SOI is a simpler, more easily understood document than previous SOIs and this helps provide focus.

It responds to the Letter of Expectation which outlined the stakeholders' expectations. While SOIs generally focus more on the "What" and less on the "How", there were a number of instances where the Letter of Expectation did request specific actions, including:

- Growing the visitor economy
- What actions need to be taken to put in place a programme of inward investment, particularly in tourism.
- Growing science, technology, innovation companies.
- Actions that contribute to a "step change" in skilled migrants, particularly in the tech sector.
- Actions to address skills shortages through skills and workforce development.

## **3. The decision-making process and significance**

No decision is being sought in this report.

### **3.1 Engagement**

Engagement on this matter is unnecessary.

## **4. Recommendations**

*That the Council:*

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

Report prepared by:

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