

Report 08.614
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Committee Council
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Report on the Wellington Regional Strategy Committee Meeting held on 13 August 2008

1. Purpose

To inform Council about the meeting of the Wellington Regional Strategy Committee that took place on 13 August 2008.

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. Report

3.1 Connecting the Region

The Committee considered three items relating to connecting the region: regional freight transport, the proposed development of Paraparaumu Airport and broadband.

3.1.1 Regional Freight Transport

The committee considered a report outlining the Government's recently released sea freight policy "Sea Change". Liz Ward, Chief Executive of CentrePort gave a presentation to the committee about the port's activities. She talked about the changes in the shipping industry internationally and in shipping routes. Shipping companies are responding to increases in oil prices through fewer, larger ships and slower journey times. The larger ships is likely to have some implications for Wellington harbour, which will need to be dredged to 14m.

Liz told the committee CentrePort's aim is to be the preferred port for central New Zealand. There is a significant amount of freight aggregation occurring, and this will give Wellington some opportunities.

In response to question she talked about the cruise liner market and outlined the significant growth that has occurred in cruise ship visits to Wellington in recent years, and the even higher numbers predicted in the future.

Liz commented on the collaboration that is occurring with Grow Wellington in relation to freight and with tourism interests with regard to cruise ship visits.

3.1.2 Paraparaumu Airport Development

Noel Robinson, Director of Paraparaumu Airport Holdings Ltd made a presentation to the committee on his company's vision and plans for the development of the Paraparaumu Airport. He talked about Air New Zealand's plans to fly out of the airport directly to Auckland and the benefits for the region of this, and other connections that will result from the development of the airport. He confirmed that the airport would complement rather than compete with Wellington International Airport.

Noel gave the committee details of his Highbrook development in Auckland which is to be the model for Paraparaumu Airport. Eventually the development in Kapiti will include a mix of commercial accommodation and services for community groups in addition to 120,000 passenger movements through the airport annually. He outlined the economic and community benefits of the development and the infrastructure investment that will be made.

3.1.3 Broadband

Paul Desborough, leader of the officer group undertaking work on broadband, updated the committee on the broadband work. He also outlined progress on developing a regional application to the government's Broadband Investment Fund.

The committee agreed that the region should be making a regional bid, on the basis that a regional bid is likely to be more successful and would be more attractive to potential private sector partners.

3.2 Regional Labour Market

3.2.1 Wellington Regional Labour Market Strategy Governance

The committee considered a report on the governance and implementation of the Wellington Regional Labour Market Strategy (WRLMS). It agreed the advocate for the establishment of a central government senior officials steering group for WRLMS to ensure ongoing engagement and ownership of the WRLMS. It confirmed its role is to receive WRLMS information and offer support, leadership and advocacy where appropriate.

3.2.2 Labour Market In-Depth Regional Report

The Committee considered the Department of Labour recently published Annual in-depth Regional Report for the Wellington region. The report provides labour market information at a regional level. The 2008 report is only

the second Annual Report produced by the Department. It has a youth theme, and presents a significant amount of data about youth in the Wellington labour market.

Mike Styles, Labour Market Knowledge Manager with the Department of Labour, presented the report to the Committee.

3.3 Economic Growth

The committee agreed to support an application by Grow Wellington for funding from NZ Trade and Enterprise to develop the Centres of Excellence programme. This programme is one of the key initiatives in the Wellington Regional Strategy.

3.4 WRS Projects Update

The committee considered a report on the various project activities occurring under the WRS. The committee was particularly interested in the regional form projects. In response to questions it was confirmed that the Grow Wellington Annual Report will be presented to the committee at its October meeting. This report will provide details of the projects and expenditure of the company over the 2007/08 year.

4. Minutes

The minutes of the Committee's meeting are attached at **Attachment 1**.

5. Recommendations

That the Committee:

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

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Attachment 1: Public Minutes