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Committee Wellington Regional Strategy
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Refugee and Migrant Recruitment and Self-Employment Project

1. Purpose

To provide a six-month progress report about the Wellington Regional Strategy (WRS) Refugee and Migrant Recruitment and Self-Employment Project

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. Background

The WRS Refugee and Migrant Recruitment and Self-Employment Project is one of the strategic actions in response to three base strategy documents. These are: the Wellington Regional Strategy (WRS), the Wellington Regional Settlement Strategy and the Wellington Regional Labour Market Strategy (WRLMS). The primary strategy is the WRLMS that was jointly developed by the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) and the Department of Labour (DOL).

This initiative builds on the 2006/08 *Wellington Regional Action Plan for Refugee Health and Well-being* for refugees living and settling in the Wellington region that included Hutt City Council, Porirua City Council, Upper Hutt City Council and Wellington City Council as partners “to improve access to information and services that lead to financial independence, appropriate employment and small business opportunities.”

The WRS office is hosting this project as a partnership arrangement with MSD. It is being funded by the Ministry.

4. Project Update

4.1 Databases Review

There are a number of databases in existence that are of relevance to the project. Greater Wellington has entered into an agreement with the Change Makers Refugee Forum to provide support for the project in the management and review of current databases. The outcomes being sought from relation with Change Makers include:

- The development (and review) of existing databases, of employment status, skills, and qualifications to build an understanding and to track progress over time
- The co-ordination of stakeholders in relation to existing databases that may exist, for example with Grow Wellington, Department of Labour (Settlement), local councils and other service providers
- Refugee communities are more informed about employment/self-employment opportunities and income entitlements (such as Working for Families/Childcare Assistance that maybe available from Work and Income)
- Understanding within Work and Income is strengthened, as are the relationships and networks between communities and government agencies (Work and Income, local councils, Career Services etc)
- A pathways to employment scheme is developed ensuring all new arrivals are part of the programme which identifies their skills, experience, qualifications and aspirations and maps out a pathway to economic independence and importantly assigned a mentor to “travel” with them
- Employment or businesses related projects/programmes are identified and initiated (via the Refugee Health and Wellbeing Action Plan) that contribute significantly to the long term economic health and independence of former refugees, with a strong focus on community development engagement and action

Two key deliverables of this new partnership with the Change Makers Refugee Forum is the development of a refugee community engagement plan taking into account the 13 refugee communities/settings/cultural practices within Change Makers and the development of a refugee skills inventory database.

4.2 Regional Plan of Action for Recruitment and Retention of Refugees and Migrants

One of the project’s deliverables is to develop a recruitment and retention strategy for refugee and migrants. As previously reported, the project office developed and circulated a draft regional plan of action for the recruitment and retention of refugees and migrants. A copy of the plan of action is attached.

Contributors to the plan, including Human Resource, Settlement Support and Community Development council officers, were invited from around the greater Wellington region to attend the first project workshop held on 10 July 2008.

The plan of action identifies three development areas: Data Intelligence, Human Resources, and Communications each with specific target measures.

The three development areas have specific targets with the rationale that by working through the plan we would establish a local government space for newcomer recruitment and retention. The project workshop findings in July 2008 showed significant ad hoc approaches around the region currently. Each action is commented on below.

4.2.1 Regional Plan of Action Development Area 1 : Data Intelligence

Development Areas	Actions	Participating Agencies	Timeframes/ Key Milestones	Target Measures
Data Intelligence	Collate Wellington region local government data intelligence for Refugee and Migrant Ethnicity Population Data Develop a refugee and migrant skills inventory database	Lead: Greater Wellington Regional Council Contributing: Wellington City Council Hutt City Council Upper Hutt City Council Porirua City Council Kapiti Coast District City Council Masterton District Council Carterton District Council South Wairarapa District Council Ministry of Social Development (Work and Income) Department of Labour	Stocktake Report of existing activities completed by 31 July 2008 Circulate Stocktake Report to HR group Refugee and Migrant Ethnicity Data Profile per each council is completed by 31 July 2008	Councils produce regular Refugee and Migrant Staff Ethnicity Data Profiles Establish a refugee and migrant skills inventory database

(a) Baseline Council Ethnicity Data

So far the project has collated staff ethnicity data from Greater Wellington Regional Council, Wellington City Council, Porirua City Council and Hutt City Council. Data analysis from to the other remaining councils is still to be completed. This data is to be used as a baseline for future changes in ethnicity.

Figure 1 shows over half of Wellington City Council staff identify as European at 62% (n=1311). The next largest ethnic group identify as “other” at 19%

(n=409). Asian and Maori have similar percentages of 7% (n=138) and 8% (n=164) respectively. The smallest group identify as Pacific with 4% (n=88).

Figure 1: Wellington City Council Staff by Ethnicity (30 June 2008)

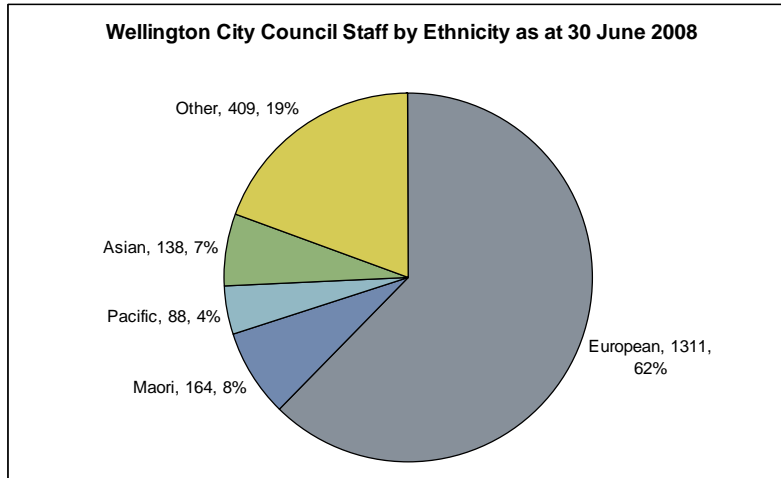


Figure 2 shows almost half of Porirua City Council identify as NZ European at 47% (n=159). The second largest ethnic group identify as Polynesian at 14% (n=48) with similar cluster of figures identifying “other” at 13% (n=43) and Maori at 12% (n=41).

Figure 2: Porirua City Council Staff by Ethnicity (1 April 2008)

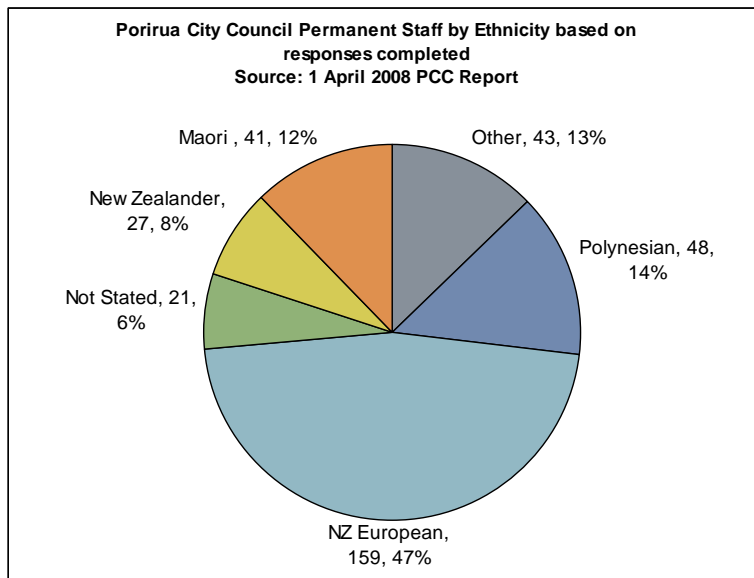


Figure 3 shows that Greater Wellington permanent staff show the largest percentage as Unknown at 80% (n=313) either due to staff not identifying their ethnicity or historical data not being loaded into the database. The next largest recorded ethnic group identify as Caucasian at 18% (n=69). A small cluster of percentages show Asian, Pacific Islander and Maori as the smallest numbers.

Figure 3: Greater Wellington Regional Council Staff by Ethnicity (18 November 2008)

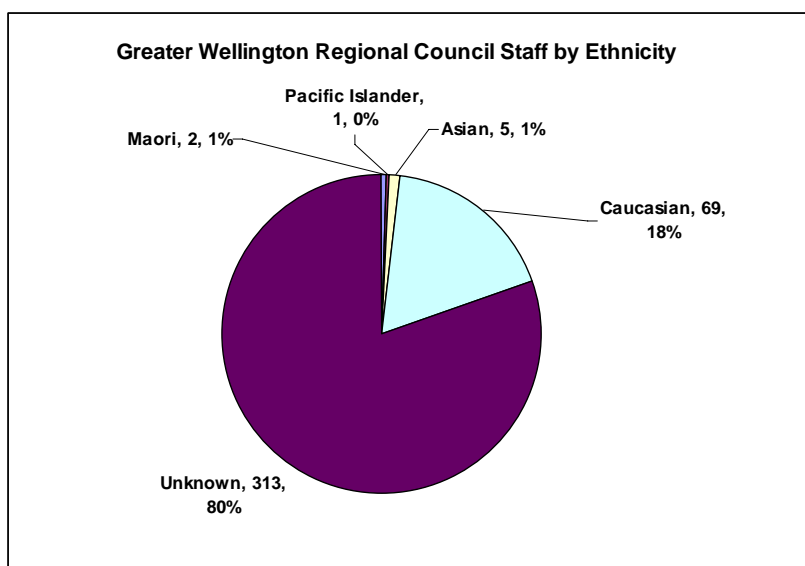


Table 4: Hutt City Council Staff by Ethnicity

Hutt City Council collects ethnicity data under several categories so staff identify under a variety of ethnic categories. Table 4 shows over half of its staff identify as European at 68% (n=329). The table also indicates a cluster of small percentages of other remaining ethnic groups.

Hutt City Council Staff by Ethnicity

NZ European	329
Non-NZ European	27
NZ Maori	27
New Zealander	18
Pacific Island	8
Chinese	6
Asian	6
Australian	1
Dutch	1
Ethnic Minority	3
Indian	7
NZ Euro & Chinese	1
NZ Euro/Pak & Ethnic Min	1
NZ Euro/Pak & Non NZ Eur	2
NZ Euro/Pak & Pacific Is	3
NZ Maori & Ethnic Min.	1
NZ Maori & European	19
PHILIPINO	5
NZ Maori & Pacific Is	5
Samoan	11
Sri Lankan	2
TOTAL	483

Note: 483 responses from 550 staff

(b) Refugee Database

With the Change Makers Refugee Forum we have commenced the establishment of the refugee skills inventory database.

Essentially focussed on employment outcomes, the data held will help service providers quantify where refugee individuals are on the un/employment continuum that would include a record of candidates' learning and skills.

Much is unknown about the employment pathway of many refugees following settlement in the region, so the database would also assist with maintaining contact with database candidates that would relate to employment up-skilling opportunities.

Feedback from the recent refugee community meeting generally supports the development and endorses that data is made available to recruitment agencies based on appropriate data sharing protocols.

4.3 Regional Plan of Action Development Area 2 : Human Resources

Development Areas	Actions	Participating Agencies	Timeframes/ Key Milestones	Target Measures
Human Resources	<p>Explore Diversity Management practices</p> <p>Reflect Diversity Management principles in organisation HR policy documents</p> <p>Develop Manager Support Programmes and Initiatives</p> <p>Develop Staff Support Programmes and Initiatives</p>	<p>Lead: Greater Wellington Regional Council</p> <p>Contributing: Wellington City Council</p> <p>Hutt City Council</p> <p>Upper Hutt City Council</p> <p>Porirua City Council</p> <p>Kapiti District City Council</p> <p>Masterton District Council</p> <p>Carterton District Council</p> <p>South Wairarapa District Council</p> <p>Ministry of Social Development (Work and Income)</p> <p>Department of Labour</p>	<p>Stocktake Report of existing activities completed by 31 July 2008</p> <p>Circulate Stocktake Report to HR group</p> <p>Develop delivery tools to support project key initiatives: HR Vacancy List, Coaching System, Mentoring System, Manager Support Workshops, Staff Support Workshops, Staff Induction</p>	<p>Diversity/Cross cultural training is included as core manager and staff orientation</p> <p>Diversity Support Services are available for managers and staff</p>

So far the project has progressed to initial steps in the development of diversity/cross-cultural training. As a first step the project team itself has undertaken Intercultural Awareness and Communication (IAC) training.

The IAC training programme is a practical initiative to help agencies and communities respond in a positive way to New Zealand's increasing ethnic and cultural diversity i.e. focusing on the 'how to' of ethnic diversity.

While IAC training is primarily designed and offered for public servants (i.e. central government), training can also be offered to city and regional councils, NGOs and communities. The Office of Ethnic Affairs designs sessions according to agencies' specific needs. Shorter workshops and presentations for not-for-profit organisations and community groups are available, dependent on availability of staff from the Intercultural team.

4.4 Regional Plan of Action Development Area 3 : Communications and Marketing

Development Areas	Actions	Participating Agencies	Timeframes/ Key Milestones	Target Measures
Communications and Marketing	<p>Develop a regional communication plan to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Raise the profile of Diversity Management practices -Raise the local government profile of Refugee and Migrant Employer Support Programmes and Initiatives -Raise the local government profile of Refugee and Migrant Employee Support Programmes and Initiatives -Raise the local government profile of Refugee and Migrant Self-Employment Support Programmes and Initiatives 	<p>Lead: Greater Wellington Regional Council</p> <p>Contributing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wellington City Council Hutt City Council Upper Hutt City Council Porirua City Council Kapiti District Council Masterton District Council Carterton District Council South Wairarapa District Council Ministry of Social Development (Work and Income) Department of Labour 	<p>Stocktake Report of existing activities completed by 31 July 2008</p> <p>Circulate Stocktake Report to HR group</p> <p>Develop marketing material : website presence, newsletters,</p> <p>Conduct staff surveys to measure staff awareness of diversity support programmes</p>	<p>Internal - Staff surveys show high percentage of awareness of Diversity support programmes available</p> <p>External – A regional local government communication plan is in place for the project</p>

A regional workshop involving councils in the region was run in July to carry out a stocktake of existing refugee and migrant recruitment/retention

programmes. There was generally goodwill expressed by workshop participants about the project and this has continued throughout the project.

A regional meeting of Human Resource managers and advisors, and the MSD Work and Income Regional Labour Market Manager has been organised for 2 December 2008. At this meeting discussion will cover feedback from each council on the project approach to date and to identify alternative strategies for the project going forward.

Communication personnel of all project partners have worked together to develop the project communication plan, and is currently incorporating additional communication perspectives from its new project partner the Change Makers Refugee Forum.

The project has developed new 'brand' names for the two programmes of the project. 'Job Connect' for the council recruitment program and 'Business Connect' for the self-employment programme. The project has so far produced two newsletters to cover highlights during the project that are distributed to project stakeholders for their information.

The project co-ordinator has been invited to present and attend the following groups:

- Victoria University of Wellington Communication in the Workplace for Skilled Migrants
- Refugee Health and Wellbeing Action Plan Working Group
- Hutt Settlement Support NZ Local Network
- Upper Hutt Settlement Support NZ Local Network
- Porirua Settlement Support NZ Local Network
 - Change Makers Refugee Forum
 - Wellington Regional Settlement Strategy Working Group

A recent mid-point update and network event was held and involved local and regional council human resource and communication departments representatives, and others involved in the project's development, including representatives from the Ministry of Social Development (Work and Income). In addition, project candidates also attended. The event was hosted at a small business owned and operated by newcomers who were supported through the MSD Enterprising Community Allowance.

Since the last report, the project coordinator has also become a member of the Wellington Regional Settlement Strategy working group. This group is lead by the Settlement Division at Department of Labour.

Since the previous report the project has also met with chief executives/HR/operational managers of local organisations that include the

New Zealand Institute of Sport (NZIS), Hutt Valley District Health Board (HVDHB), Chaffers New World, Datacom and Simply Security. All these organisations have expressed their support for the pilot initiative, as well as agreeing to future engagement to extend the pool of vacancies and referral sources for the programme.

4.5 General Comments

There has been a high level of support and co-operation from councils committed to further partnership building. Porirua City Council offered two places on its 2-day staff induction programme (17 and 18 Nov) for project candidates to attend as an information gathering activity of council activities. Support is also evident from the range of referrals received from long standing newcomer service providers like MCLASS, the Job mentoring Service, Career Services and Settlement Support NZ.

The project database has 79 project candidates who have been referred from service providers as well as self-referred though word-of-mouth. Of these 35 project candidates have been assisted with CV development, English language assessment and application cover letter writing. To date only one participant has been shortlisted for an interview. In this case the individual had to decline the interview due to a job offer from a central government department. On the basis of these results, and with the project timeframe remaining, the project runs a highly likely risk of not achieving the target of 50 placements in local councils.

In addition to the Council recruitment processes, 2 refugee male candidates have been employed by Simply Security and are reported to be settling in well. Two candidates have been employed by Chaffers New World. One candidate has been employed by Assure Quality as a Food Quality reception technician.

The project database comprises of a range of qualifications of those who have submitted applications to council vacancies. A large percentage of project participants do not have local work experience due to their newcomer status. Consistent with the literature in this area it is likely that the lack of New Zealand experience is a disadvantage and probably a barrier to getting an interview. Current work under the Wellington Regional Settlement Strategy to develop local council internship schemes would provide that step to assist a project of this nature.

The project has focused resource on the council placement programme. The self-employment programme has received less attention to date. One small business owned and operated by newcomers that has previously been developed through MSD Enterprise Allowance, has been supported. Highlighted through this work is a need for a business network of similar businesses to be developed.

5. **Communication**

The project will continue to be communicated as provided for in the Communications Action Plan.

6. **Recommendations**

That the Committee:

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

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Report approved by:

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Attachment 1: Regional Workshop Findings