



Report 06.133
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Committee Policy, Finance and Strategy Committee
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Regional Policy Statement review - discussion document

1. Purpose

To seek endorsement from the Committee to release *Our region – their future*, a discussion document on the review of the Regional Policy Statement for the Wellington region for public consultation.

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 Resource Management Act 1991 requires that Greater Wellington commence a review within ten years of a regional policy statement becoming operative. The Regional Policy Statement for the Wellington region became operative in May 1995.

Once a review has been undertaken the Act then requires a changed, or unchanged policy statement to proceed through the first schedule process of public notification, submissions, further submissions, hearings, and appeals (if necessary).

Greater Wellington commenced the review process with its second State of the Environment Report *Measuring up 2005* (see report 05.693 on 15 December, 2005). *Measuring up 2005* reported on whether the objectives in the Regional Policy Statement had been achieved.

Since releasing *Measuring up 2005* staff have evaluated the efficiency and effectiveness of each of the provisions in the Regional Policy Statement. The findings and key themes arising from the evaluation were presented to councillors at two workshops on 22 March and 4 April.

The key messages about how successful the Policy Statement has been, what's changed, the current resource management issues, and questions about whether things need to be done differently form the basis for *Our region – their future*, a discussion document on the review of the Regional Policy Statement for the Wellington region.

The next step, after receiving feedback on the matters covered in the discussion document, will be to release a draft Regional Policy Statement in February 2007. The draft will introduce changes to the existing policy statement and seek further feedback before publicly notifying the proposed Regional Policy Statement in September 2007.

4. Our Region - their future

Our region – their future is the first phase of consultation with the community on the review of the Regional Policy Statement for the Wellington region.

The document provides background material on the purpose of a regional policy statement, its role, and effect, and why it must be reviewed. It then looks at each of the 11 topic chapters and the topic of climate change, and comments on how successful the Regional Policy Statement has been, what's changed, and Greater Wellington's assessment of the issues now and in the future. A number of questions are then posed on aspects Greater Wellington would like feedback on. Lastly the document presents ideas about how the next policy statement could look, or operate, differently and seeks feedback on these ideas.

The document provides the opportunity for territorial authorities, key stakeholders, iwi and the community to comment on the review of the Regional Policy Statement and provide feedback on the questions posed. The feedback received will assist with drafting of provisions in the new Regional Policy Statement.

On 19 April a workshop was held with councillors to discuss the draft text of *Our region – their future*. The changes requested were subsequently made and a revised copy distributed. A copy of the final text in the document will be tabled at the Committee meeting.

Our region - their future will be publicly released in mid to late May. Between now and then, the document will be designed and formatted according to the Greater Wellington style guide.

5. Communication

Staff have prepared a communication plan that covers the distribution of *Our region – their future* to key stakeholders, the community, Greater Wellington staff, and its promotion in the media.

Key messages about the review process and the content of *Our region – their future* will also be advertised in community newspapers across the region. The newspaper spread and Discussion Document will also be available on Greater Wellington’s website and an opportunity will be provided for comments to be made via the web.

6. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. **Receive** the report;
2. **Note** the contents; and
3. **Approve** the release of *Our region – their future* for public consultation, subject to minor editorial amendments and appropriate design.

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