

Waikato Mayoral Forum and Councils Collaboration Projects: Progress Report #7: May 2014

Introduction

This report is to provide an update on the six work streams being carried out under the auspices of the Waikato Mayoral Forum, which consists of the region's mayors and the chairperson of the regional council.

The work streams – covering roading, water and wastewater services, planning and the spatial plan, economic development, regulatory by-laws and policies, and governance – are an integrated package designed to help get the best out of the regional economy and deliver multi-million dollar cost savings for ratepayers. Each workstream has a small governance group of three or four mayors/chairperson and support from an assigned council executive officer.

Besides forum members, this report is also for councillors, stakeholders and the general community on progress. The projects are due to continue to provide updates on the workstreams on a regular basis.

The latest report follows on from a meeting in March 2014 when the Mayoral Forum made a presentation to councillors from local authorities in the Waikato region to update them on progress to date. The information presented then is available at www.mpdc.govt.nz/waikatomayoralforum. The governance groups are:

Roading

Mayors: Allan Sanson, Brian Hanna, John Tregidga.
Executive Officer: Don McLeod.

Waters

Mayors/Chairperson: Jim Mylchreest, Allan Sanson, Paula Southgate.
Executive Officer: David Hall.

Planning

Mayors/Chairperson: Paula Southgate, Julie Hardaker, Neil Sinclair, Jan Barnes.
Executive Officer: Garry Dyet, Gavin Ion.

Economic Development

Mayors/Chairperson: Paula Southgate, Julie Hardaker, David Trewavas, John Tregidga.
Executive Officer: Langley Cavers.

Regulatory By-laws and Policies

Mayors/Chairperson: Allan Sanson, Neil Sinclair, Jan Barnes
Executive Officer: Craig Hobbs.

Governance

Mayors/Chairperson: Jan Barnes, Paula Southgate, Julie Hardaker.
Executive Officer: Gavin Ion.

Workstream: Roding

Purpose

This report provides an update to the Mayoral Forum on the progress of implementing the Centre of Excellence for Roding Asset Management in the Waikato (Road Asset Technical Alliance – RATA).

Progress on Key Milestones

During the second quarter of 2014 the following milestones have been progressed:

1. A Business Plan for RATA is nearing completion.
2. A report template has been prepared for each Roding Manager to present to their Council seeking a resolution of a commitment in principle to RATA, and a delegation for officers to enter into a multi-party funding agreement for RATA.
3. A draft multi-party funding agreement is being prepared.
4. Work on the technical specifications for RATA projects planned in 2014/15 is also underway.

Next Steps

The RATA Business Plan will be approved by the RATA Governance Group in June 2014. Once this is approved, the multi-party funding agreement will be submitted to all Chief Executives for their approval. It is anticipated that this will be completed in July 2014.

RATA's costs are anticipated to be approximately \$1M in year one for all resources (secondments of existing staff wherever possible and associated data collection and project costs). The adopted cost allocation methodology is based on an even allocation of overhead costs, with data collection and project costs allocated on a combination of percentage of sealed road length in each Council's road network (compared with the length surveyed) and an opt-in basis for some activities.

The allocation methodology adopted is based on an expectation that an application for a \$250,000 grant to the NZ Transport Agency, to support the collaboration initiative, is successful. Initial indications are that this application will be approved. The grant conditions will contain a requirement to track all identifiable savings achieved by the funding partners as a result of participating in RATA. If at the end of three years the sum of the savings does not exceed \$250,000, then the participating local authorities will be required to return any unspent funds or the difference between the grant sum and the savings achieved.

The RATA Project Director role is a secondment from Waipa District Council (with costs recovered from LASS). As not all Councils have yet completed the requirement to have a commitment in principle to participate in RATA, the Governance Group have approved an extension to the secondment through to 30 September 2014. It is anticipated that once a commitment has been resolved by each participant, the secondment will be further extended to 30 June 2016 to allow RATA to complete the first two year's projects successfully.

Workstream: Waters

Purpose

This workstream is progressing investigations into the benefits and challenges that either a regional or sub-regional management of the water and wastewater utility activities would provide to the Waikato.

Progress on Key Milestones

The second report from this work stream was presented to the Mayoral Forum at their meeting held at Karapiro on 28 April 2014. The report made the following recommendations:

- 1) That the case for a sub-regional waters CCO be accepted in principle and the proposal be subjected to detailed business case analysis before the matter is considered further.

- 2) That a 'Centre of Excellence' be incorporated in the sub-regional waters CCO concept as a vehicle to promote regional water initiatives and to support all Waikato Councils. The exact tasks of the Centre of Excellence and the priority of tasks will be determined by participating councils but could include:
 - a. • regional procurement;
 - b. • project management services for capital works;
 - c. • asset valuation coordination;
 - d. • training & development;
 - e. • regional coordination of consent applications.

The report and associated recommendations have been presented at workshop meetings of Hamilton City, Waikato District and Waipa District Councils, with at least one further workshop planned.

Next Steps

It is intended that a formal report will be presented to each of the three Councils involved in the proposed sub-regional CCO in late June / July, depending upon each Council's meeting schedule.

Workstream: Spatial Plan

Purpose

This report provides an update on the progress of phase one of the Waikato Spatial Plan project.

Progress on Key Milestones

The key steps towards developing the Waikato Spatial Plan as set out in the diagram below. We are currently at Stage One of this process – developing a common evidence base, which is now substantially complete.

The table below reports on progress of key tasks associated with the project.

| We are here Task | Progress |
|---|--|
| 1. Technical reports covering economic, social, cultural and environmental wellbeing that summarise the existing evidence base for the opportunities, strengths and challenges the Waikato region will face in the coming 30-years. | Complete |
| 2. Technical Paper – Population and Demographic trends | Complete |
| 3. An assessment of critical infrastructure that supports the region, and available data on committed and forecasted investment. | Complete |
| 4. Discussion document on how to develop, adopt and implement a spatial plan with existing legislative toolkit | Complete |
| 5. Waikato Spatial Plan Summary Report | Complete and received February 2014 |
| 6. Project plan, budget and scope for the next project stage. | Draft in discussion To be ratified by Joint Committee |