



Report **06.7**
Date 31 January 2006
File E/06/01/05

Committee **Council**
Author **Ian Buchanan Chairman**

Chairman's Report

1. CentrePort/Harbour Quays

Just prior to the holiday break and, a day before the last Wellington City Council (WCC) meeting for the year, our planning officers were advised by WCC officers that a Proposed District Plan change imposing new planning restrictions on the Harbour Quays development was to be presented to WCC for adoption. This proposed Plan change was adopted and I was advised of this. I was a little disappointed in this unilateral action from WCC, as I had earlier initiated a process for discussion and resolution of any issues related to the Harbour Quays development with interested parties, including WCC. I had expected that the process agreed to by the parties would have been followed and provided a non-adversarial way forward to suit all interests. Unfortunately, this has not occurred. Further discussions will be held with the City and CentrePort in the near future.

2. LTCCP

The Council workshops prior to and post Christmas, supported by a great effort by all officers involved in preparation of Business Plans and budget proposals, has meant we are now fully on track to start the public presentation of the proposed LTCCP. Some large numbers, particularly in the transport area, will provide a challenge in gaining the understanding of ratepayers as to what is required over the next 10 years to achieve the levels of service across the Council's functions that is expected of us. My congratulations to all those involved in bringing this to the start of the more formal process on 8 February.

3. Local Government New Zealand National Council

I am involved in two *Local Government New Zealand* (LGNZ) subcommittees that have relevance to Greater Wellington. The first of these involves the development of guidelines for regional councils in the Representation Reviews we are all involved in this year. Regional Councils have different opportunities than Territorial Authorities in providing for exceptions to the population-based formula set by the legislation. The subcommittee has developed a menu of arguments that can be pursued in a consistent manner across the country by

those councils who have major anomalies in representation created by the strict application of the legislation. These are being finalised in early February and will be available to our representation review committee shortly after that.

The second is a “Water” subcommittee charged with engaging with Government at Ministerial level on the development of policy under the Government’s Programme of Action for water. It is the concern of local government that current policy thinking in Government circles is centred around national instruments such as National Environment Standards (NES) and National Policy Statements (NPS) as the primary response to allocation and quality issues. Our experience to date with the outcome of the NES for air quality, and the non-emergence of an NPS on biodiversity does not give a lot of confidence. The engagement at political level will complement the good work being done at Chief Executive level and technical officer level, in endeavouring to provide the right suite of sustainable development tools related to water for the future. An initial meeting with the Minister for the Environment is set for early February, at which we hope to have a set of guiding principles agreed to that will aid in local government involvement in policy development for water.

4. Transport

Some very big challenges lie ahead of us this year. These include managing the largest single investment in public transport made by this Council (replacement of rolling stock) plus resolution of western corridor and RLTS roading allocations. Cr McDavitt continues the hearings process in a highly professional manner and we can look forward as a Region to sound advice from the hearings subcommittee on the way forward for the western transport corridor.

5. Recommendations

That the Committee:

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

Report prepared by:

Ian Buchanan
Chairman