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Committee Hutt Valley Flood Management Subcommittee
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Hutt River Environment Strategy Review

1. Purpose

To update the Hutt Valley Flood Management Subcommittee about progress made with and next steps for the Hutt River Environment Strategy 2001 (HRES) review.

2. Background

Last year the Hutt Valley Floodplain Management Subcommittee approved a review, by GWRC's Flood Protection Department, of the HRES to address recreational and environmental challenges developing in the river corridor.

Environmental planning and design consultants Boffa Miskell are leading the review of the strategy. The strategy was originally established in 2001 to direct policy and to identify beneficial proposals related to recreation, landscape, ecology, history and cultural values and other community-related matters.

The review will establish a positive strategic direction to manage growth within the corridor, for the benefit of all users.

The review will inform the preliminary and detail design of the Hutt River City Centre Upgrade project.

3. User Intercept Survey and Report

As a first step of this review, a user intercept survey of the Hutt River corridor was carried out. 960 people were surveyed between the Hutt River mouth and Harcourt Park from March through to early April 2016.

The purpose of the survey was to identify how the corridor is used and by whom, what they currently think about it and what they want in the future. The survey was designed to allow replication at a future date and measure change overtime.

The user intercept survey results have since been collated and analysed within a report titled “Greater Wellington Regional Council Hutt River Corridor User Survey 2016”, prepared by Rob Greenaway & Associates (**Attachment 1**).

The key findings from this user survey were that:

- Water quality improvement (through the management of algae) was the top management priority identified by users of the corridor;
- The majority of respondents considered the corridor to be the same or better than when they first visited;
- The longer the experience in the river corridor, the more respondents felt the corridor had changed for the better, particularly with regard to access, planting and recreation amenities;
- Those that believed the river corridor had worsened overtime primarily attributed this to algae, lower water levels in the river, and rubbish; and
- The level of perceived conflict between uses is low overall, with 4% of respondents experiencing a negative interaction.

4. Next Step – Consultation

The review of the HRES involves two phases. We are currently mid-way through Phase 1 with the completion of the user intercept survey report (**Attachment 1**). Consultation with the wider community begins on 22 June 2016, as set out in the Communication Strategy (**Attachment 2**). The findings of the survey will be presented and feedback on views about the future of the river corridor will be sought. The results of this engagement will inform Phase 2.

Indicative milestone delivery dates for the HRES review are set out below:

PHASE 1

- A stocktake of what has been achieved from the HRES 2001 over the last 15 years (February 2016).
- Carry out a user intercept survey (March/April 2016).
- Produce a report on the user intercept survey (May/June 2016)
- Engage with the community/stakeholders to guide the review (June/July 2016).
- Produce a report on consultation feedback (July/August 2016).

PHASE 2

- Draft revision and updates made to the HRES 2001 document with the information provided through Phase 1 (August 2016 to February 2017).
- Engagement with the community on the Draft HRES (February 2017).
- Final revisions to the Draft HRES based on engagement feedback (March 2017).
- Final HRES completed (late April 2017).

5. The decision-making process and significance

No decision is being sought in this report. This report provides an update on the Hutt River Environment Strategy Review progress and is for information only.

5.1 Engagement

Engagement on this matter is unnecessary at this time.

6. Recommendations

That the Subcommittee:

1. ***Receives the report.***
2. ***Notes the content of the report.***
3. ***Receives the Greater Wellington Regional Council Hutt River Corridor User Survey 2016.***
4. ***Receives the Communication Strategy for the Hutt River Environmental Strategy Review.***
5. ***Notes the commencement of further stakeholder engagement commencing on 22 June 2016.***

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Attachment 1: Greater Wellington Regional Council Hutt River Corridor User Survey 2016

Attachment 2: Hutt River Environment Strategy Review Communication Strategy