
Late Agenda for a meeting of the Policy & Regulatory Committee to be held via Audio-Visual Conference on **MONDAY, 31 AUGUST 2020** commencing at **9.30am**.

Information and recommendations are included in the reports to assist the Committee in the decision making process and may not constitute Council's decision or policy until considered by the Committee.

REPORTS

6.7 Climate Response and Resilience Policy (2020)

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Open Meeting

To	Policy and Regulatory Committee
From	Clive Morgan General Manager Community Growth
Date	27 August 2020
Prepared by	Jim Ebenhoh - Planning and Policy Manager Katja Jenkins - Risk Advisor
Chief Executive Approved	Y
Reference #	GOV1318 / 2727101
Report Title	Climate Response and Resilience Policy (2020)

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report seeks the Committee's approval of the internal policy for Climate Response and Resilience.

2. RECOMMENDATION

THAT the report from the **General Manager Community Growth** be received;

AND THAT the **Policy & Regulatory Committee** approves the internal policy, *Climate Response and Resilience Policy (2020)*, as attached to the staff report.

3. BACKGROUND

On 5 February 2020, the Strategy and Finance Committee received and approved the Climate Response Planning report. An outcome of the report was the mandate to develop a Climate Action Plan.

Formulation and adoption of an internal policy was determined to be a crucial first step towards the development of an appropriate Action Plan and a key enabler for employees. The policy is important because it:

- Provides a foundation to establish a consistent, standardised, all-of-organisation approach to climate response and resilience.
- Demonstrates and operationalises Council's commitment to take climate action
- Assists with decision making and planning.
- Aligns the organisation with climate related legislation.
- Protects people from risk.
- Sets a framework within which the Climate Action Plan will be developed, in collaboration with our communities and regional partners.

To develop the draft Climate Response and Resilience Policy, Waikato District Council consulted several entities, including:

- Other local and territorial authorities including Hamilton City Council and Waikato Regional Council;
- Internal governance groups including the Climate Action Group, Staff Engagement Group, Executive Leadership Team, and Recovery Planning;
- Waikato District Council (Council Workshop); and
- Waikato LASS (Martin Lynch, Energy Manager).

At the Council workshop on 10 August 2020, Elected Members discussed the draft Policy, asking questions and making suggestions which have been incorporated into the current attached version (such as adding a definition of “resilience”).

On Thursday 27 August 2020, the Executive Leadership Team endorsed the policy and requested that it be brought to the Policy and Regulatory Committee for approval.

4. DISCUSSION

Formally adopting the policy will allow it to be put into immediate effect within the organisation. Doing so now is essential to achieve the following key objectives:

- Aligning with current opportunities to have input into the 2021 Long Term Plan
- Providing balance in COVID recovery planning
- Achieving compliance with legislative requirements
- Facilitating good environmental decisions
- Increasing community trust

The policy supports a balanced approach to how Waikato District Council makes decisions for now and in the future. It will help to ensure that we do not make short-term decisions that have negative long-term consequences.

The next step will be the development of a Climate Response and Resilience Action Plan with specific targets and actions proposed. A draft is expected to be proposed to the Strategy and Finance Committee later this year.

5. CONCLUSION

A window of opportunity exists right now with regard to the 2021 Long Term Plan, Asset Management Plans and COVID recovery planning to build more resilient, liveable, thriving and connected communities. The climate policy assists with this, as a lens for decision-making and a framework for future action, both in the short term and in the long term.

6. ATTACHMENT

- Draft Climate Response and Resilience Policy V0.1 I

Climate Response & Resilience Policy



Policy Sponsor: Jacob Quinn
 Policy Owner: Jim Ebenhoh
 Policy Number:
 Approved By:
 Date Approved:
 Next Review Date:

Objectives

This policy provides guidance on Council's responsibilities regarding climate change including how the organisation undertakes actions that minimise the effects of Climate Change through:

- the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions
- the development of adaptation measures

The policy demonstrates consideration for the needs of future generations by adopting best practice behaviours through a proactive climate change and emissions reduction strategy, and it aligns with Central Government legislation and Waikato District Council's existing commitments.

Application

This policy applies to all elected members of Council, the Chief Executive Officer, and all employees. It is their responsibility to ensure that the policy is applied to inform decision making and planning when working with external parties including contractors, sub-contractors, agents, and intermediaries.

Policy Statements

The Local Government Position Statement on Climate Change (Appendix A) describes the approach to Climate Change in the local government area. Waikato District Council has aligned its policy statements to reflect that position statement within the context of our district. Therefore, we will:

1. Collaborate with other agencies, organisations and the community to achieve a consistent understanding of environmental, social, cultural and economic opportunities and consequences of climate change in our communities including but not limited to those related to;
 - a. Infrastructure (vertical and horizontal)
 - b. Waste Management
 - c. Public Transport
 - d. Regulatory function
 - e. Land Use
2. Collaborate with neighbouring Territorial Authorities, Waikato Regional Council, Central Government, and other agencies to gather information, carry out research, develop strategies and processes, and to clarify each agency's functions and responsibilities
3. Ensure that low emission, climate-resilient development is adopted as a key tenet into development and land-use decisions, including our district plans, annual plans, long term plans, urban design and development, building control, energy use, transport planning and waste management
4. Set emission reduction targets in line with Central Government and partner Councils commitments e.g. the Paris Agreement, UNSDGs, Waikato Regional Council

5. Incorporate emissions reduction targets into investment decisions that it makes on transport, fleet procurement, waste management, buildings, and energy use
6. Plan for and provide infrastructure which recognises and reduces the risk of hazards like floods, storms, and sea level rise including:
 - a. Particular consideration to geographically vulnerable communities
 - b. Renewal and relocation of coastal infrastructure (including future planning during insurance valuation)
7. Include the effects of climate change (adaptation) as part of all hazards assessments, and consider the emissions impact (mitigation), in decision making, including through sections in Council report templates
8. Plan for the impacts of climate change on Councils three waters infrastructure and services including:
 - a. Factoring climate change projections into all freshwater investments and adapting management practices accordingly
 - b. Identifying change requirements in infrastructure investment including land use and green infrastructure, e.g. wetlands, rain gardens and swales
 - c. Considering future requirements for increased water storage solutions
 - d. Modifying building standards with consideration to water storage and increased efficiency of use
9. Promote and encourage the conservation and enhancement of natural environments to aid in emissions reduction (mitigation) and climate change effects (adaptation)
10. Strive for best practice in response to Climate Change - including but not limited to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and, where possible, encourage avoidance of risk rather than remedial measures
11. Accept that the dissemination of information regarding climate change can be emotive and communicate with communities and stakeholders in an empowering and considerate work manner

Implementation method

Effective policy implementation is achieved through Council's commitment to:

1. Undertake necessary work to develop and maintain a firm understanding of, Council's Greenhouse Gas Emissions and those of our district, as well as potential climate related risks that require adaptation or mitigation
2. Implement initiatives to reduce Council's emissions and to increase resilience through adaptation to climate related risks for Council and the district
3. Develop and implement a Climate Action Strategy that includes goals, objectives, actions and indicators for Council
4. Prioritise climate change and emissions reduction initiatives and actions by implementing organisational measures and specific targets through the LTP and annual planning processes
5. Provide appropriate dedicated resources and funding for planning and delivering climate resilience (mitigation and adaptation) initiatives and actions

Definitions

Climate Adaptation	A response to climate change that seeks to moderate or avoid harm or exploit beneficial opportunities.
Council	The Waikato District Council Elected Members.
Climate Action Plan	A plan detailing steps (including specific projects, policies or planning processes) the organisation will develop and implement to achieve the climate action Strategy.
Climate Action Strategy	The overarching document outlining why and how best to achieve business objectives responding to climate change.
Climate Change	Climate change refers to a significant and extended change to the global climate, becoming increasingly severe over time and resulting in problems for life on earth. It includes global warming, changes to weather patterns, sea level rise, pollution, and extreme weather events.
Carbon Sequestration	The long-term storage of carbon dioxide or other forms of carbon to either mitigate or defer climate change climate change.
Emissions	The production and discharge of substances that cause or exacerbate climate change, for example greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide, methane or nitrous oxide.
Climate Hazard	A physical process or event that can harm human health, livelihoods, or natural resources including (but not limited to); tropical cyclones, thunderstorms, tornadoes, drought, rain, hail, snow, lightning, fog, wind, temperature extremes, air pollution, and climatic change.
Climate Mitigation	Efforts to reduce or prevent emission of greenhouse gases e.g. using new technologies and renewable energies, making older equipment more energy efficient, or changing management practices or consumer behavior.
Resilience <i>NB: in terms of Waikato District Council climate change policy</i>	<p>An ability by the climate, community, built and natural environments to recover from setbacks; an ability which is enhanced by actions and strategies that change processes, practices and structures to prevent, reduce, and/or mitigate climate change severity and effects; and that increase preparedness for any unavoidable impacts.</p> <p>Examples of activities that show resilience include actions to reduce per capita greenhouse gas emissions, planning and preparing for reducing the impacts of climate change, action and advocacy to reduce waste and pollution and creating globally sustainable resource use, supporting business and land use activities that reduce impacts on climate change, as well as implementing processes and advocating to meet climate change mitigation requirements NZ has agreed to such as the Kyoto Protocol, Paris Agreement and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).</p>
Risk	An uncertain event or condition that, if it occurs, has a positive or negative effect. Risks can occur from various sources (such as financial, reputation/image, environmental, etc.) and be relevant at either project, operational or strategic levels within the organisation. A risk is quantified in terms of likelihood (probability of occurrence) and consequence (impact).

Risk Assessment	Refers to the overall process of identifying, analyzing, and evaluating risks. It includes qualitative and, in some cases, quantitative assessment.
Risk Management	The culture, processes, coordinated activities and structures that are directed towards managing adverse effects. The risk management process involves communicating, consulting, establishing context, identifying, assessing, and evaluating, treating, monitoring and reviewing risks.
Waikato District Council or WDC	The Waikato District Council as an organisation.

Related Policies, Strategies and Processes

Conservation Strategy

[Activity Management Policy](#)

[Discretionary Grants Policy](#)

[District Tree Policy](#)

[Community Partnerships Loan Funding Policy](#)

[Control of Coastal Erosion Policy](#)

Backflow Prevention Policy

Roadside Weed Spraying – No Spray Zones Policy

Funding of Water & Wastewater Supply extensions by developers

Natural Reserves Management Plan

Grazing Policy

Control of Coastal Erosion on Council Reserves

Pathway to a low-emissions future in New Zealand (External)

[Trade Waste Agreements](#)

[Leasing of Reserve Land Policy](#)

[Procurement Entitlement & Disposal of Council Vehicles Policy](#)

[Procurement Policy](#)

[Strategic Land Acquisition & Disposal Policy](#)

[Transferring or Selling Water Allocations Policy](#)

Reserves – Committees of Management Policy

[Water Policy](#)

Trade Waste Bylaw Charging Policy

District Plan (Sustainable housing / consenting) and all stage 2 natural hazards and climate change

Grass Verge Policy

Refuse Collection and Disposal

Lead Developer Fund (Water/ Wastewater)

Reserve Contributions & Conservation Covenants

Waste Minimisation Plan 2018-2024

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every six months from the date of adoption for the first two years after which it will be reviewed as deemed appropriate by the Policy Sponsor, at least once every three years.