

Chairperson and Committee Members
STRATEGY AND POLICY COMMITTEE

31 JANUARY 2019

Meeting Status: **Public**

Purpose of Report: For Decision

WELLINGTON REGIONAL HEALTHY HOUSING RESPONSE GROUP (RHHRG) MOU

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 This reports seeks to:
 - 1.1 Inform Council about the Wellington Regional Healthy Housing Response Group (RHHRG) and its Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) entitled *Everyone in the Wellington Region Lives in Warm, Dry and Safe Housing by 2025*; and
 - 1.2 Gain Council's support for participation in this regional approach to healthy housing.

DELEGATION

- 2 In accordance with Section B2 of the *Governance Structure and Delegations for the 2016-2019 Triennium*, the Strategy and Policy Committee deals with all strategy and policy decision-making that is not the responsibility of the Council.

BACKGROUND

Wellington Regional Healthy Housing Response Group (RHHRG)

- 3 The RHHRG is made up of representatives from a wide range of agencies with an interest in healthy housing policy in the Wellington region (Appendix 1).
- 4 The RHHRG was established in July 2017 from Well Homes, which is a partnership between Regional Public Health, the Sustainability Trust, Tu Kotahi Maori Asthma Trust, and He Kainga Oranga/Healthy Housing that seeks to provide healthy homes in the Hutt and Wellington regions through public health nursing assessment of houses, eco-energy expert input on interventions for improving housing quality and social service support for whānau to sustain wellbeing within the home environment. Because policy and legislation across the housing continuum significantly affect housing quality and supply, Well Homes began to partner with additional stakeholders to discuss the wider policy and legislative frameworks, and this lead to the establishment of the Wellington RHHRG.
- 5 During 2018, the RHHRG developed a healthy-housing vision for the Wellington region and a pathway for collaborative action to achieve this vision. This work culminated in a Memorandum of Understanding called *Everyone in the Wellington Region Lives in Warm, Dry and Safe Housing by 2025* (Appendix 2),

which outlines the RHHRG's joint vision, mission, and commitment to collective action to ensure that everyone in the Wellington region lives in warm, dry, safe housing.

- 6 On 4 October 2018, a number of member agencies signed the MoU. Signatories to the MoU make a number of commitments, including but not limited to:
- Upholding the partnership model prescribed in Te Tiriti o Waitangi;
 - Ensuring inclusive engagement that privileges the voice of those directly affected by poor housing;
 - Committing to a joint approach to action across government, health, social and housing sectors in the Wellington region;
 - Engaging in regional and national dialogue and information exchange to provide learning and identify challenges/opportunities to influence strategic decision-making for local, regional and national policy development, regulations and legislation; and
 - Developing cross-sector partnerships within the Wellington region to design and deliver integrated effective healthy housing services.

ISSUES AND OPTIONS

Determining Council's Role in Housing

- 7 The strategic direction of the *Long term plan 2018-38 (toitū Kāpiti)* includes an aspiration for “a resilient community that has support for basic needs and feels safe and connected”. Healthy housing is a fundamental component of community resilience; however, determining Council's role in housing is a complex task.
- 8 In its submission to the *Long term plan 2018-38*, the Communities Housing Taskforce (the Taskforce) encouraged Council to undertake more work in relation to housing needs assessments; support for community housing providers; housing supply; housing demand; central government policy; and the quality of current housing stock (see Appendix 3 for the full list of Taskforce recommendations).
- 9 Some of the Taskforce's recommendations were for specific actions that Council should undertake in partnership with local iwi authorities, community housing providers, and government agencies; while other recommendations were for Council to play a stronger role in advocating central government to undertake more work in the district.
- 10 In the *Long term plan 2018-38*, Council acknowledged that it “has a role in social housing as it provides affordable housing”, and made a commitment to “over the next three years ... consider our wider role in social housing” (LTP, p82).
- 11 While healthy housing and social housing are not entirely the same, there are important crossovers and it is important for Council to consider its role across both.
- 12 Presently, Kāpiti Coast District Council is a participant of the RHHRG, but has not signed the MoU.

- 13 Greater involvement in the RHHRG could provide a number of benefits to Council, including:
- 13.1 Progress towards the LTP goal of ‘a resilient community that has support for basic needs and feels safe and connected’;
 - 13.2 Assistance in determining its role in relation to healthy housing of all types, including social housing;
 - 13.3 Increased opportunities for the Kāpiti Coast District to be included in programmes that support access to healthy homes (e.g. regional programmes to improve housing quality for low income households, as in the Well Homes programme);
 - 13.4 Increased opportunities for Kāpiti Coast District Council to become informed early on about proposed changes to central government policy; and
 - 13.5 Progress towards a number of the Taskforce recommendations, particularly those related to collaboration with other agencies and advocacy towards central government on:
 - Housing needs assessments (Recommendations 1A, 1B, and 1C);
 - Help for Community Housing Providers (Recommendation 2A);
 - Increasing supply (Recommendations 3D, 3G, and 3H);
 - Decreasing demand (Recommendation 4A); and
 - Central government policy change (Recommendation 5A).

CONSIDERATIONS

Policy considerations

- 14 There are no immediate policy considerations associated with signing the MoU and appointing a representative; however, signatories to the MoU agree to a number of principles and commitments (see paragraph 6 above). Some of the commitments may have policy considerations in the future (e.g. adopt a joint approach to action). Any policy considerations that do arise will be reported back to Council for further decision making, as required.

Legal considerations

- 15 Legal Counsel has been briefed on this matter; no considerations exist at this time.

Financial considerations

- 16 Initial participation in the RHHRG will be carried out within existing budgets. Any future budget considerations that may arise will be managed through the Annual Plan and/or Long Term Plan planning processes.

Tāngata whenua consideration

- 17 A briefing is scheduled for Te Whakaminenga o Kāpiti on 12 March 2019, which will provide an update on housing issues and initiatives, including the regional approach to healthy housing.

Strategic considerations

- 18 *Toitū Kāpiti* includes an aspiration for a resilient community that has support for basic needs and feels safe and connected. Because healthy housing is a fundamental component of community resilience, participation in the RHHRG will contribute to the attainment of this aspiration.

SIGNIFICANCE AND ENGAGEMENT

Significance policy

- 19 This matter is deemed to be of low significance as it relates to a decision to participate in a regional forum.

Consultation already undertaken

- 20 Kāpiti Coast Communities Housing Taskforce provided a submission to the LTP Consultation Document on 23 April 2018. Participation in the RHHRG, and the development and implementation of a regional work plan, is a positive step towards a number of the Taskforce recommendations.

Engagement and publicity

- 21 An engagement plan is not required for the initial participation in the RHHRG. Once the development of the regional work plan is complete, an engagement plan may be developed, depending on the content of the regional work plan. Any announcements about the signing of the MoU will be coordinated with members of the RHHRG.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council:

- 1 Note the Wellington Regional Healthy Housing Response Group (RHHRG) and its Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) entitled *Everyone in the Wellington Region Lives in Warm, Dry and Safe Housing by 2025*; and
- 2 Support Council's participation in the RHHRG regional approach to healthy housing by agreeing to the Mayor signing the MoU.

Report prepared by	Approved for submission	Approved for submission
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ATTACHMENTS

Appendix 1: Wellington Regional Healthy Housing Response Group membership

Appendix 2: *Everyone in the Wellington Region Lives in Warm, Dry and Safe Housing by 2025* Memorandum of Understanding.

Appendix 3: Recommendations from the Communities Housing Taskforce

Appendix 1: Wellington Regional Healthy Housing Response Group membership

Greater Wellington Regional Council	Te Puni Kōkiri (TPK)
Hutt City Council	Human Rights Commission
Porirua City Council	Treasury
Wellington City Council	Sustainability Trust
Regional Public Health	Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA)
Capital Coast District Health Board	Community Housing Aotearoa
Hutt Valley District Health Board	Salvation Army
Wairarapa District Health Board	DCM (formerly Downtown Community Ministry)
Tu Kotahi Māori Asthma Trust	Wesley Community Action
Asthma and Respiratory Foundation NZ	Connecting Communities Wairarapa
Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE)	Renters United
Ministry of Social Development (MSD)	BRANZ
Housing NZ	University of Otago, School of Medicine, Wellington

Appendix 2

Everyone in the Wellington Region Lives in Warm, Dry and Safe Housing by 2025

Memorandum of Understanding

Regional Health Housing Response Group

August 2018

Background

A warm dry home is the foundation of health and wellbeing throughout life. Housing is an important underlying determinant of health, with housing quality and household crowding playing a major role in health outcomes¹. Poor living conditions, including dampness and crowding, are significant risk factors for acute rheumatic fever. Housing is contributing to hospitalisation and re-hospitalisation rates for children in New Zealand, notably for respiratory infections². These conditions increase their risk of future ill health and poorer performance across a range of social indicators. The burden of disease associated with housing conditions is particularly high for Māori and Pacific whānau³.

This MoU confirms the commitment of key organisations, decision-makers and implementers in the healthy housing space in the greater Wellington region. We commit to joined-up action on improving housing for better health outcomes and to achieve our vision that *Everyone in the Wellington Region Lives in Warm, Dry and Safe Housing by 2025*.

Role

The policy and legislative environment that spans housing is complex – from homelessness (supply and demand) to tenancy/landlord relationships, fuel poverty, housing/health literacy (quality). Given that policy and legislation significantly affect housing quality and housing supply, a coherent approach among all the agencies involved in the housing space will have better impact and avoid duplication. The role of the Regional Healthy Housing Response Group (The Group) is to support a collaborative regional approach to healthy housing in the Wellington region. The Group will provide advice and leadership to develop an effective work plan and ensure implementation.

¹ Krieger, J. and D.L. Higgins, *Housing and health: time again for public health action*. American Journal of Public Health, 2002. **92**(5): p. 758-768.

² 87.3% re-hospitalised at 5502 days following the initial admission (compared to 56% of children admitted with 'non-preventable hospitalisation' conditions)

³ "Housing is a health issue too" Dr. Bryn Jones, <https://thespinoff.co.nz/atea/01-03-2018/housing-is-a-health-issue-too/>

Responsibilities

Signatories to this MoU agree to:

- Uphold Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles with a view to reducing inequities and improving health outcomes for Māori, upholding the partnership relationship and working together in a spirit of collaboration and collective responsibility.
- Attend quarterly meetings and receive reports of working groups as required, providing high level monitoring of agreed measures.
- Support a core sub-group of organisations to consult on and coordinate a regional work plan (including Annual Plan and 3- year Plan).
- Commit to supporting administration of The Group (through a backbone organisation) and items detailed in the Annual Plan.
- Commit to a joint approach to action across government, health, social and housing sectors in the Wellington region;
- Engage in regional and national dialogue and information exchange to, provide learning, and identify challenges/opportunities to influence strategic decision-making for local, regional and national policy development, regulations and legislation.
- Ensure inclusive engagement that privileges the voice of those directly affected by poor housing, and reflects community aspiration in collaborative housing work. This especially includes representation from Māori, Pacific and other groups overrepresented in poor health outcomes.
- Develop cross-sector partnerships within the Wellington region to design and deliver integrated effective healthy housing services that meet the needs of individuals, whānau and communities.
- Ensure the planning, delivery and evaluation of work-plans meets the needs of Māori and Pacific communities, including the collection of specific data and frameworks for evaluation that are meaningful to Māori and Pacific communities.
- Create an enabling environment that allows the work of The Group to succeed. This includes providing or planning for resources as well as delegation of responsibility for implementation and administrative support of The Group.
- Identify success criteria to deliver and measure impact and facilitate strategic learning.

Vision

Everyone in the Wellington Region Lives in Warm, Dry and Safe Housing by 2025

Scope

In order to realise our vision and achieve measureable change, we commit to focussing our work in a number of key areas. These are:

- Housing quality
- Energy hardship
- Healthy housing literacy

The Group seeks to influence the following areas where they intersect with the provision of healthy housing:

- Homelessness
- Location and supply of housing
- Behaviour change and cultural awareness
- Urban design and planning process
- Policy development in local and central government.
- Social connectedness

To guide our work our baseline standards for a healthy home are:

- It is warm and affordable to heat, and has adequate ventilation to support good air quality and thermal comfort even in extreme conditions;
- It is free from hazards, safe from harm and promotes a sense of security;
- Its occupants have security of tenure

Meetings

- Meetings will be held on a quarterly basis for 1.5 hours. Teleconferencing will be available. (Quorum TBC)
- Meetings will be chaired by Greater Wellington Regional Council
- The agenda and papers will be circulated at least 4 days before each meeting.
- Secretariat arrangements will be determined by the core sub-group:
 - Secretary will work with Chair to confirm the agenda, set up the meeting schedule, venue and invitations
 - Chair sets up a roster for meeting minutes among the membership
- If required subgroup meetings will be arranged outside of these times at a time convenient to subgroup members.

Minutes and actions

The draft minutes and actions will be circulated to The Group within seven days of the meeting.

Signatories

A list of current MoU signatories and contact details will be kept by the Secretary.

This Memorandum of Understanding is signed by the following authorised representative on behalf of their organisation:

Signature: _____

Full Name: _____

Designation: _____

On behalf of: _____ **(Organisation)**

Date: _____

Appendix 3: Recommendations from the Communities Housing Taskforce

Rec.	Issue	Recommendation
1A	Housing needs assessments	That Kāpiti Coast District Council completes a Housing Needs Assessment before 31 December 2018 in conjunction with its NPS Housing Development Capacity Assessment.
1B		That KCDC completes an NPS Housing Development Capacity Assessment by 31 December 2018 in conjunction with a Housing Needs Assessment.
1C		Council immediately engages and works with local iwi authorities to provide for their housing needs.
2A	Helping Community Housing providers	That KCDC immediately establishes and supports a Community Housing subcommittee of Council, in conjunction with MSD and MBIE and Community Housing Aotearoa, to ensure ongoing help and support to the Community Housing sector, and a forum for the ongoing relationship to nurture each other's housing work.
3A	Helping increase supply	That Council lease its social housing stock and land to the local Registered Community Housing Providers - Dwell Housing Trust or Link People or Paekakariki Housing Trust, and iwi if they wish, by December 2018.
3B		That Council immediately investigate why landowners do not want to rent unused habitable units that they own, and use the results to free up these potential homes.
3C		Council immediately investigate why Medium Density zoned landowners do not want to develop properties that they own for more homes, and use the results to increase the likelihood of more homes.
3D		Council work with Government to use its powers to ensure that Medium Density zoned land is developed for more homes within 5 years, particularly areas without owner occupiers that do not wish to sell.
3E		Council implement planning rules that require housing subdivisions to provide a quota of affordable sections/homes, or a contribution to Council for affordable housing development nearby.

Rec.	Issue	Recommendation
3F(i)	Helping increase supply (continued)	That Council waive or reduce its fees and levies as appropriate when a residential development includes provision for affordable or social or papakainga housing, particularly where it is to be purchased by a recognised or run by a recognised Community Housing provider.
3F(ii)		That Council use discretion and scaling in the application of its rules, Development Contributions and required items, particularly where the homes being developed are smaller or are socially clustered.
3G		That Council immediately request Government to urgently fund and develop affordable and social housing on suitable NZTA owned Residential zoned land surplus from the construction of the Kāpiti Expressway, to remedy the earlier loss of housing.
3H		That Council immediately request Government to urgently sell the houses on residential land surplus from the construction of the Kāpiti Expressway, to remedy the earlier loss of housing.
3I		That Council look at its land holdings to assess if any land may be surplus to community requirements and is zoned as suitable for affordable or social housing provision.
4A	Helping decrease demand	That Council determines what it considers are the likely causes of housing demand and rising prices that work against NZ homeowners and Community Housing Providers, and request Government remove these causes with policy changes.
5A	Central government policy	That Council immediately request that Government significantly improve the security of tenure for home renters.
6A	Helping improve the adequacy of Kāpiti Coast homes	That Council continuously promote good practice around safe, dry and healthy homes, and continue to provide Sustainable Home Advice to assist people in all homes.

Rec.	Issue	Recommendation
6B	Helping improve the adequacy of Kāpiti Coast	That Council continuously promote good practice around securing houses and furniture to minimise the effects of an earthquake, and continue to provide advice and loans to assist people to provide emergency water tanks in all homes.
6C	homes (continued)	That Council require standards and continuously promote good practice around accessibility to and within houses, and provide advice and loans to assist people to improve accessibility in all houses.