

STAFF REPORT

TO: Mayor and Councillors

FROM: Peter Thomson, Engineering Manager

REFERENCE: R401

DATE: 7 May 2008

SUBJECT: Proposed Top of The South Land Transport Liaison Forum

1 PURPOSE

This report proposes the establishment of a “Top of the South” Land Transport Liaison Forum by Tasman District Council in conjunction with its neighbouring unitary authorities, Nelson City Council and Marlborough District Council.

2 BACKGROUND

The land transport sector has recently reviewed by Government following the publication of several key reports such as:

- EXG Review of Value for Money in the Land Transport Sector,
- Ministerial Advisory Group on Roothing Costs
- Ministry of Transport Review of Business Process and Workflows, and the
- April 2007 NEXT Steps Review

An outcome of this review has been Government’s concern that the current sector arrangements are not fully delivering on the Government’s expectations on wider agenda issues such as:

- economic transformation and sustainability;
- not sufficiently responsive; and
- creating ongoing financial risk for the Crown.

As a result the Government has introduced several new policy and legislative initiatives including:

- Land Transport Management Amendment Bill;
- Updated New Zealand Transport Strategy; and the
- Government Policy Statement for Land Transport

The NEXT Steps Review has resulted in a number of proposed changes to the Government Land Transport sector in terms of investment planning, funding and structure with a view to enhancing agency responsiveness, performance, capability and value for money.

In this context of change within the relatively complex Land Transport sector it is proposed that the “Top of the South” unitary authorities of Tasman District Council, Nelson City Council and Marlborough District Council’s interests would be best served by having a joint political liaison forum at which land transport issues can be addressed for the benefit of the entire “Top of the South” area.

Each of the unitary authorities will be responsible for establishment of new Regional Land Transport Committees, new Regional Land Transport Strategies and new Regional Land Transport Programmes.

The “Top of the South” would be well served by the joint liaison forum that could address the changing planning and funding policies being proposed and adopted by central Government and also to respond to new Government strategies, as well the Ministry of Transport and the New Zealand Transport Agency to be formed from 1 July 2008 from a merger of Transit NZ and Land Transport NZ.

3 DISCUSSION

It is suggested that a draft Terms of Reference be adopted by the Council for discussion with the Nelson City Council and Marlborough District Council as part of the establishment process for the liaison forum. The draft Terms of Reference are set out below.

It is proposed that the political representatives from Tasman District Council should be the Mayor, the Chairman of Engineering Services and the Deputy Mayor in the first instance.

Terms of Reference for the Top of the South Land Transport Liaison Forum

Purpose

The Forum shall provide for informal discussion on any land transportation matters relevant to the three “Top of the South Island” unitary authorities being Tasman District Council, Nelson City Council and Marlborough District Council.

Membership

Membership shall include for up to three political representatives appointed by each of the Councils, the Chief Executive Officer from each Council, and senior transportation managers from each Council.

Objectives

The objectives may include any issues relevant to the land transportation functions of the unitary authorities including:

- To provide clarity between regional and national priorities;
- To identify intra-regional transport outcomes relevant to the “Top of the South”;
- To further identify relevant regional economic considerations and the possible funding of any land transport infrastructure associated with those considerations;
- To recommend the mix of projects that best contributes to the objectives of the “Top of the South” Councils;
- To provide advice and feedback to the Government regarding allocation of funding and the range of funding applied to land transport activities;

- To assist the three “Top of the South” Councils to achieve best value for money and delivery on their regional land transport strategies;
- As far as practical ensure that central and regional land transport plans are aligned;
- Identify expenditure pressures that are not being strategically addressed by Government;
- Promote consistent planning and funding policies that enhance incentives within the “Top of the South”;
- Assist with the roles and relationships of the three Councils with the new transport agency and the Ministry of Transport.

Frequency of meetings

To meet at least six-monthly and to complement the preparation of Regional Land Transport Programmes.

Costs

Each Council will meet its own costs in attending and contributing to the liaison forum activities.

4 RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council approve this proposed Terms of Reference for the Top of the South Land Transport Liaison Forum, and that it be forwarded to the Nelson City Council and Marlborough District Council and that subject to their approval the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chairman of Engineering Services attend the first Liaison Forum meeting with the other Councils within the next three months.



Peter Thomson
Engineering Manager