

1. HEARING OF RESOURCE CONSENT APPLICATIONS

RR 8874

The purpose of this report is to propose a new system for scheduling resource consent hearings.

In the past, hearings have been arranged on an 'as required' basis. This has presented some difficulties, particularly in trying to find enough elected members to make up a Panel, often at short notice. It is not a particularly efficient system, and with some effort could be considerably improved.

The Chairman has proposed that we introduce a new system whereby Monday and Tuesday of every week is scheduled for hearings throughout the year. A note has gone out to all elected members seeking expressions of interest in serving on Hearings Panels, and from that list, Panels will be formed for the year. This will be followed up with the provision of resource management training for panel members in February.

This system will require some flexibility, as it will not always be possible to hear all applications solely on Mondays and Tuesdays. Some hearings, for instance, can last for up to 5 days. On other occasions there may not be any applications requiring a hearing, in which case those slots would be cancelled.

Although there will still always be some juggling involved, it is considered that this proposal offers an opportunity for greater efficiency and reduced costs.

The Committee **decided** that the proposal to introduce a new system for scheduling resource consent hearings be adopted, and reviewed after six months of operation.