

**COUNCILLOR REPORT**  
**for**  
**South Wairarapa District Council Meeting**  
**Wednesday 22 February 2017**

<b>Councillor's Name</b>	Colin Wright
<b>Meeting – Date &amp; Venue</b>	WaiConnect Steering Group Tuesday 17 January 2017 Carterton Events Centre
<b>Key issues from meeting</b>	<p>WaiConnect is the Wairarapa council's joint project to bid for a portion of the additional \$350 million funding which the government has allocated for improvements/extensions to UltraFast Broadband (fibre), Rural Broadband, and Mobile Blackspot from 2017. See <a href="http://www.waiconnect.org.nz">www.waiconnect.org.nz</a></p> <p>The project was initiated in 2014 and an application was lodged for Wairarapa improvements in July 2015 with the required Digital Enablement Plan submitted in September 2015. There has been little visible progress since then as central government keeps delaying the announcement on which NZ towns are to have fibre cables installed for UltraFast Broadband.</p> <p>[Subsequent to the WaiConnect meeting, the government has announced the successful towns which includes all three South Wairarapa towns. Greytown installation is scheduled for completion in the second half of 2020, Featherston in the second half of 2012, and Martinborough in the second half of 2022.]</p> <p>Further information now needs to be submitted by 3 April in relation to our Rural Broadband and Mobile Blackspots applications. The decisions relating to these aspects will be later in 2017.</p>
<b>Specific item/s for Council consideration or noting</b>	<p>In 2014/15 Council contributed a share of the costs on a population basis for the earlier work by WaiConnect (approx \$10K for SW). Additional costs will be incurred to provide the further information now required. A budget has been prepared and agreed to by the three chief executives. Costs are considerably less this time. The steering group considers it essential to submit high quality information for the Wairarapa applications as the government funding is being strongly contested across the country.</p> <p>The chief executives have also agreed for Tony Pritchard of Carterton District Council to coordinate the two council's</p>

	<p>operational requirements with the successful contractor in the hoped-for event of fibre being installed in Carterton and South Wairarapa towns [now to happen]. It should be noted that some of the fibre cables is likely to be aerial, rather than underground, in order for the installation of fibre to be economically justified.</p>
<b>General</b>	<p>Should South Wairarapa receive additional broadband capacity and speed, there will be an obligation on the Council to encourage uptake within the community as set out in the Digital Enablement Plan. For example Carterton have organised a Digital Business Expo for 8 February 2017. There will be some costs incurred at a later time for actioning the Digital Enablement Plan.</p> <p>The Steering Group, which is chaired by Tim Lusk of Martinborough, is to meet next on 28 February 2017.</p>