

REPORT 2
(1215/52/IM)

POLICY PROGRAMME 2010/12 AND IMPROVEMENTS FOR ADVICE DELIVERY

1. Purpose of Report

This paper:

- i. outlines a three-year policy programme based on the strategic priorities agreed in the 2009/19 LTCCP;
- ii. provides an overview of the context, timing, purpose and existing policy environment for key policy work; and
- iii. identifies potential opportunities to improve the information provided to councillors and their involvement in policy programme issues.

2. Executive Summary

The proposed 2010/12 Policy Programme

- focuses on the strategic priorities agreed in the 2009/19 LTCCP
- ensures the Council delivers on its regulatory, legislative and political commitments
- retains capacity for Council to respond to emerging opportunities and challenges, and
- represents a strategic way to respond to the key issues the city faces.

In June 2009 Council agreed the 2009/19 Long Term Council Community Plan. The plan was about building on the city's strengths, sustaining the momentum in areas critical to the city's prosperity and making some modest alterations to services where they do not unduly impact on Wellington's high quality of life. In developing a 10 year approach, 3-year strategic priorities were identified across all seven strategy areas. These priorities were a response to both challenges and opportunities for the city and included commitments to:

- strengthen our partnerships with the government sector and the wider region so we can influence decisions that affect Wellington residents;
- enhance Wellington's place as a vibrant, eventful city by offering a wide range of high quality events;

- improve the city's connections to the world by promoting the development of the city's broadband services and by attracting long-haul airlines from Asia;
- manage demand for potable water and develop a region-wide water management plan;
- take steps to reduce the Council's and the city's – greenhouse gas emissions;
- promote participation in recreation activities to ensure that facilities are used by the whole community;
- provide a safe, efficient transport network; and
- advance planning for development along the 'growth spine' – focusing on the Adelaide Road precinct and Kilbirnie.

The three-year policy programme identifies the key policy decisions needed to support and/or give effect to these and the full range of LTCCP strategic priorities – work essential to ensure that Wellington remains an affordable internationally competitive city, with its competitive advantages identified and maximised.

In addition to Council's LTCCP commitments, the policy programme considers central government priorities and timeframes, responds to changes to the local government environment, delivers on legislative or regulatory requirements and previously agreed decisions of Council and schedules the work required to ensure Council begins early preparation for the 2012/22 LTCCP.

A three-year work programme would provide many benefits. It would bring alignment between the 10 year plan and policy, provide certainty and transparency to the SPC Forward Programme and enable efficient resource allocation over the next two years.

To be successful it is also recognised that the programme must be flexible and provide capacity for Council to respond to emerging opportunities and challenges, and to urgent and/or significant issues as they arise.

Along with the potential opportunities to enhance councillor information and involvement in the policy process, the proposed policy programme represents a strategic approach to responding to the key issues that the city faces.

The potential opportunities to improve councillor information and involvement in the policy process can be summarised as:

- clear and early involvement of councillors in matters of scope, Council approach, critical assumptions and options, and outcomes
- improved levels of information provided by officers to councillors through scoping papers and site visits
- clear and early feedback from councillors to officers on key issues, outcomes and community views and aspirations, and

- an improved governance focus, aligned to Council's strategic priorities and agreed commitments.

This report incorporates councillor feedback from the workshop held on 22 September to discuss these issues.

3. Recommendations

Officers recommend that the Committee:

1. *Receives the information.*
2. *Agrees the policy programme 2010/12 set out by strategy area at Appendix One.*
3. *Agrees the proposals for:*
 - (a) *Policy scoping papers – opportunity to involve councillors early in the policy development process through discussion of scope, options and outcomes*
 - (b) *Structured SPC agendas – to focus effort on the key policy, strategy and other important or urgent decisions required*
 - (c) *Site Visits - changes to the councillor calendar to facilitate councillor site visits, or councillor workshops or briefings on the afternoon of the 4th Tuesday of every month*
 - (d) *Report Information - updated committee report templates to clearly communicate that climate change, financial and funding (including development contributions) and engagement issues have been considered*
 - (e) *Quarterly Report - used for reporting progress and project updates on agreed commitments and/or decisions.*
4. *Agrees that the SPC agenda, report template and advice delivery changes take effect from the first SPC meeting of 2010 (February 2010).*
5. *Notes the SPC Forward Programme will be updated to reflect the decisions taken in respect of this report and will be presented for councillor consideration and agreement on 3 December 2009.*

4. Background

4.1 LTCCP Challenges and Commitments

The LTCCP recognises the challenges that the city will face in delivering on a 10-year plan focused on ensuring Wellington is an internationally competitive and affordable city - the specific challenges being:

- i. The global economic slowdown
- ii. Pressure on household budgets
- iii. Increasing community awareness on environmental issues and focus on carbon emissions and climate change
- iv. The need to engage with citizens about decisions that affect their lives
- v. Positioning Wellington for the future against growing competition
- vi. A population that is growing, diversifying and ageing, with differing needs and wants, and
- vii. Changing technology, which is influencing lifestyles and public expectations

It was in the context of facing these challenges, and taking into account the key considerations of affordability, agility, competitiveness and demand management, that the three year priorities of the LTCCP were agreed.

5. Discussion

5.1 Policy Programme

The three-year policy programme identifies the key policy decisions needed to support and/or give effect to the LTCCP strategic priorities – work essential to ensure that Wellington remains an affordable internationally competitive city, with its competitive advantages identified and maximised.

In addition to Council's 2009/19 LTCCP strategic priorities, the policy programme considers central government priorities and timeframes, responds to changes to the local government environment, delivers on legislative or regulatory requirements and previously agreed decisions of Council and schedules the work required to ensure Council begins early preparation for the 2012/22 LTCCP.

The three-year programme would provide many benefits. It would bring alignment between the 10 year plan and policy, provide certainty and transparency to the SPC Forward Programme and enable efficient resource allocation over the next two years.

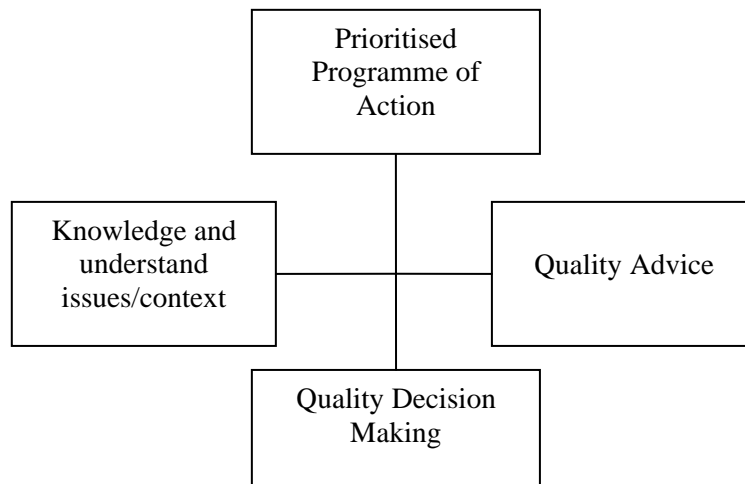
To be successful it is recognised that the programme must be flexible and provide capacity for Council to respond to emerging opportunities and challenges, and to urgent and/or significant issues as they arise.

For consistency with the LTCCP, the programme is presented at **Appendix One** across the Council's seven strategy areas. If agreed, the forward programme approach provides for the co-ordination and alignment of work across and between each strategy. In doing so, the community will benefit from work being 'joined up' in planning and delivery.

5.2 Councillor Involvement in Policy Development

The potential opportunities to improve councillor information and involvement in the policy process include:

- i. scoping papers – opportunity to involve councillors early in the policy development process through discussion of scope, options and outcomes
- ii. structured SPC agendas – to focus effort on the key policy, strategy and other important or urgent decisions required
- iii. site visits - changes to the councillor calendar to facilitate councillor site visits, or councillor workshops or briefings on the afternoon of the 4th Tuesday of every month
- iv. report information - updated committee report templates to clearly communicate that climate change, financial and funding (including development contributions) and engagement issues have been considered, and
- v. Quarterly Report - used for reporting progress and project updates on agreed commitments and/or decisions.

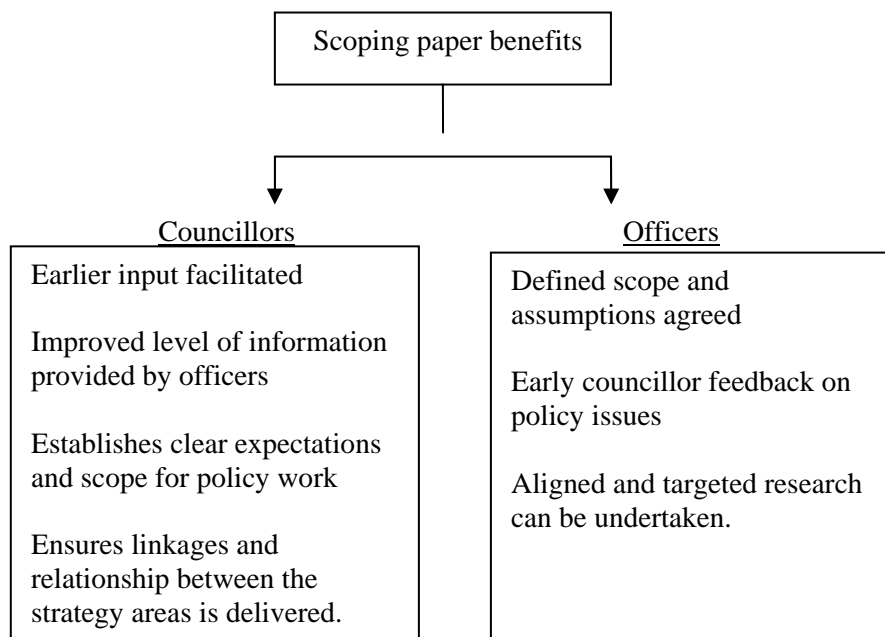


5.2.1 Scoping Papers

For key work issues, early councillor involvement in matters of policy scope, council approach, critical assumptions, and options and outcomes would be beneficial. The use of scoping papers is suggested as an opportunity for councillors to be involved early in the policy process. Scoping papers are considered appropriate as they would provide/ enable councillors to be provided with information on:

- the context and drivers for policy issues
- existing assumptions, current policy outcomes and interrelationships with council priorities
- the scope of the policy review, including options to be considered,
- engagement opportunities and partnership approaches, and
- best practice responses and observations.

It is recommended that when significant policy or project work is being undertaken, a scoping paper would be presented by officers to SPC early in the process. The paper would include recommendations to reflect the key issues, scope and directions sought by officers.



The policy work recommended by officers for a scoping paper is identified in Appendix One. Scoping papers would not be appropriate in all cases and not all issues would require such an approach. Papers/issues that would benefit from a scoping report are those incorporating a combination of some or all of the following features:

- new issue for Council (for example, response to new legislation);
- complexity of issue or interrelationship with multiple strategic priorities;
- Significant financial impact; and/or
- Significant impact and/or change to current policy position.

If the use of scoping papers is agreed, a separate section of the SPC agenda will be identified to support this approach (see section 5.2.2).

5.2.2 Structuring of Agendas

Structured SPC agendas are proposed to give clear priority to the decisions required to be made.

Part I – Urgent Business - Recognising that some critical decisions can be time specific /dependent, and ensuring that SPC retains the capacity to respond flexibly and quickly when required.

Part II – Strategy, policy, planning or other significant decisions to be undertaken, Examples of Part II items would include policy work (Earthquake Prone Buildings Policy), strategy work (strategy reviews to inform the LTCCP) or planning (Adelaide Road or Johnsonville Frameworks) and reviews of Council’s Consolidated Bylaw.

Part III – Scoping Papers /Future Policy / Project Work. Councillor involvement in policy work in the early stages of development, including options analysis and discussion on possible ways forward. SPC would make decisions on the issues and options to be included for further consideration and the approach to be followed.

Part IV – Submissions to external parties – for example Central Government, LGNZ.

Part V – Operational and Other Business – resource allocation decisions, property purchase or disposal reports, naming reports or other matters that require committee decision, traffic resolutions, conference reports, etc.

Public Excluded reports, if required, would be dealt with at the end of the agenda unless there were compelling reasons for them to be dealt with otherwise.

5.2.3 Use of 4th Week

The purpose of using the fourth week of the current monthly cycle (utilising Tuesday afternoons) would be to provide an opportunity for councillors to:

- visit specific places or facilities related to upcoming pieces of policy work or decisions to be made and to see first hand the nature of the issue or facility where decisions required.
- undertake relevant or topical policy workshops or briefings. With a significant programme to be achieved the additional time would allow further opportunity, if required, for councillors to engage on topical issues.

5.2.4 Quarterly Report

The Quarterly Report is Council’s key accountability document that details progress, achievements and future work to be progressed. Where further

information is requested by committee, it is proposed that the Quarterly Report is the appropriate primary vehicle for such information, rather than individual reports to SPC or memos to Councillors. It enables SPC to be informed of the full 'story' of achievement – how Council priorities and commitments are being delivered upon, and how the constantly changing nature of the city impacts on service levels and usage. In this way, requests for information on specific aspects of Council business can be reported in the context of the overall delivery of Council services. It is recognised however that some information is urgent or time-dependent and a three-monthly reporting cycle may not be the most appropriate in some limited situations.

5.2.5 Report Template Changes

In presenting advice to SPC, it is important that there is a clear demonstration that key financial, climate change and engagement issues have been taken into account in developing advice. Accordingly, it is proposed that the SPC report template be amended to provide for specific statements on the:

- engagement and/or consultation that has been undertaken on an issue;
- climate change considerations, including alignment with Council's Climate Change Action Plan; and
- financial impacts and funding options, including the relationship to approved LTCCP commitments and the potential for Development Contributions and/or other revenue sources to be utilised.

It is proposed that these issues would be canvassed in the body of the report, not in the supporting information template.

6. Conclusion

This report outlines a proposed policy programme to deliver on the 3-year priorities agreed in the 2009-19 LTCCP and identifies opportunities to improve the information provided to councillors and their involvement in policy programme issues. If agreed by councillors, the policy work would form the basis for the SPC forward programme through 2010-12 and the SPC agenda, report template and advice delivery processes would take effect from the first SPC meeting of 2010.

Contact Officer: *John McGrath, Manager Policy*

Supporting Information

1) Strategic Fit / Strategic Outcome

This report presents a draft policy programme to support the achievement of Council's strategic priorities.

2) LTCCP/Annual Plan reference and long term financial impact

No immediate or direct LTCCP impacts.

3) Treaty of Waitangi considerations

No immediate or direct Treaty of Waitangi impacts, though individual reports on the policy programme may well have.

4) Decision-Making

This report identifies important decisions required to be made by Council through 2010/12.

5) Consultation

a) General Consultation

This report identifies important decisions on which engagement and consultation will be required through 2010/12.

b) Consultation with Maori

Specific consultation with Maori may be required on individual items identified in this report.

6) Legal Implications

None identified.

7) Consistency with existing policy

This report identifies work required to establish, update and review Council policy.