

DRAFT DIGITAL STRATEGY

1. Purpose of Report

This report seeks approval to engage on a proposed draft Digital Strategy for Wellington City.

The draft Digital Strategy suggests that we undertake a series of activities to significantly increase creative digital activity and visibility in Wellington with the aim of gaining global recognition as a creative digital city.

We are proposing three areas of focus:

- make Wellington the place where talent wants to live
- inspire shared knowledge and development of ideas and creativity
- make Wellington a world leading place for digital activity

With each of these areas of focus we propose a number of activities across the sector to achieve them.

We propose to engage on the draft Digital Strategy alongside the Wellington 2040 City Strategy and the Central City Framework (due to be considered at SPC on 16 June), as one of the means of achieving the Wellington 2040 vision for a smart city.

2. Executive Summary

Consistent with work on the draft Wellington2040 City Strategy to position Wellington for the future, we have commenced work on how Wellington can leverage off our creative reputation and the digital head start we have as a city, through the development and implementation of a Digital Strategy.

The digital area is particularly relevant as a strengths-based response to the “i-city” megatrend identified through the Wellington 2040 project. It is also a good fit with the ‘2015 economic development priorities’ workshop held recently, where a focus was placed on identifying opportunities for jobs and investment.

Officers recommend the strategy set a goal for Wellington to achieve global recognition as a creative digital city, evolving from ‘creative capital’ to ‘creative digital capital’.

Substantial targeted engagement has been undertaken in the formation of the draft strategy, including an ICT forum hosted by the Mayor and Economy Portfolio Leader.

We recommend that the draft Digital Strategy be made public for general comment alongside Wellington2040 as part of that engagement, as well as specific engagement with key stakeholders and organisations from across the digital sector with close involvement of the Mayor and Economy Portfolio Leader.

3. Recommendations

Officers recommend that the Committee:

- 1. Receive the information.*
- 2. Note the Digital Strategy’s relationship to Wellington2040 as outlined in section 5.2.*
- 3. Note that extensive consultation has been undertaken with the sector in the formation of the strategy.*
- 4. Agree to the draft Digital Strategy (attached) being released for public consultation alongside Wellington2040.*
- 5. Delegate to the Chief Executive Officer and the Mayor, the authority to make editorial changes and any changes agreed by the Committee prior to the draft strategy being released for public consultation.*

4. Background

In 2006 Council developed an ICT policy to inform Councils ICT contribution to e-government, e-democracy and in contribution to the city’s economic development.

In deciding whether to refresh or review this policy, there was a sense that a better opportunity existed, to establish a city Digital Strategy in the context of Wellington2040. The digital area has been identified as one of potential significant future strength for Wellington, particularly in response to the 'i-city' megatrend identified by the Wellington 2040 research.

The recent Councillor workshop on economic priorities to 2015 identified the challenge of generating jobs and investment in Wellington. Officers consider the digital area is one that the Council can, working in partnership with the sector, develop to evolve Wellington from its creative strengths to be a creative digital city.

The steps taken to date in establishing a Digital Strategy for Wellington has involved:

- Establishing the current strengths of Wellington's digital sector
- Establishing what differentiates Wellington digital culture from other cities
- Finding out what we are doing well and what the barriers are to doing more of those things
- Collating ideas from the sector for making Wellington stand out from other cities as a place of digital innovation.

5. Discussion

5.1 Why a Digital Strategy?

The development of a Digital Strategy allows Wellington as a city to focus investment and effort in order to exploit its strengths and compliment the other New Zealand cities, rather than directly compete.

As a small city that is a significant distance from global markets, we need to be very clear about what we are good at and how we differentiate ourselves from other cities around the world as well as other cities around the globe.

Our ongoing economic success is influenced by our ability to engage and operate globally and at scale. The best way to do this is to make sure we avoid trying to be best at everything and focus our efforts where our natural strengths lie. This is not about picking winners; it is about understanding what we do well and creating an environment for activities aligned with our strengths to thrive.

The draft Digital Strategy seeks to articulate a position on what those strengths are and what needs to be done to create the best environment for success.

5.2 What is the Digital Sector

For the purpose of this draft strategy officers have loosely considered the digital sector to include digital infrastructure, web design, screen, gaming, application development, digital art, digital sculpture, digital display, coding and anything else that uses data technology as a foundation.

The Grow Wellington Regional Outlook report released in 2009 states:

The sector employed 4,000 FTEs in 2008, or 1.8 percent of the Regional workforce. These workers produced 3.7 percent of GDP (\$844 million), suggesting an average labour productivity far higher than the Regional average. Businesses in the sector tend to be around the same size as the average for the Region.

5.3 What role does Council Play

It is envisaged that the role of Council will be mostly an enabling one. The expertise for a number of the proposed initiatives lie outside Council, but it is appropriate that Council is aware of barriers to implementation and act wherever possible to enable the best outcomes for Wellington City.

However there are a number of areas that Council itself can undertake initiatives that contribute directly to the implementation of the strategy – subject to budget considerations. Examples of these are:

- Review our internal ICT with a view to fostering innovation internally – moving from a culture of providing ICT tools to enabling knowledge gain through technology.
- Adopting a Digital Libraries plan, to increase digital interactive applications and installations in our Libraries
- Enabling all financial interactions to be undertaken on-line
- Ring-fencing a percentage of arts and events funding for digital initiatives
- Providing incentives for development of useful city applications using available civic data
- Prioritise Web and IT interactions to increase civic participation
- Proactively seek to sponsor events and collaborations that inspire knowledge
- Establish formal city relationships that reflect our digital export markets
- Prioritise resources to work alongside Grow Wellington and central government on talent attraction and education initiatives
- Review Council purchasing policies to allow for digital interaction and to allow for factoring business location

- Commence discussions with telecommunication companies and ISP's about removing barriers to providing better services to Wellington and about testing opportunities.

5.4 Consultation and Engagement

It is intended to engage on the draft Digital Strategy alongside Wellington2040. The strategy will be added to the Wellington2040 Website and will be available in print form along with Wellington2040 material through out the engagement period – from Mid June to Mid August.

In addition to the Wellington2040 engagement, we will be asking for specific feedback from as many known digital business in the Wellington area as we can identify. We will also be asking for circulation and feedback through the technology networks like Unlimited Potential, Webstock, and Internet NZ.

We are in discussion with TradeMe about the possibility of featuring it on the Waterfront WiFi access page.

5.5 Financial Considerations

Once feedback has been received and Council has the opportunity to decide whether to adopt the strategy, any budget bids would be made to support its implementation as part of the 2012/22 Long Term Plan discussions.

5.6 Climate Change Impacts and Considerations

The draft strategy proposes measures that would potentially reduce our city's climate change impact over time.

5.7 Long-Term Council Community Plan Considerations

The intent is that, alongside Wellington2040, the draft Digital Strategy would inform Council's Long-Term Plan and priorities.

6. Conclusion

The draft Digital strategy has been compiled by pulling together ideas, thoughts, plans and issues from people working in a range of areas across the sector, but we have not talked to everybody.

There has been a great deal of encouragement and enthusiasm from the people we have talked to and our view at his point in time is that there would be a lot of organisations and individuals keen to get involved in its implementation.

The intention is to test this through much wider consultation. If there is sufficient support then we would develop implementation plans for each of the proposed actions.

Contact Officer: *Philippa Bowron, Senior Strategy Advisor*

Supporting Information

1) Strategic Fit / Strategic Outcome

The Draft Digital Strategy proposes an evolution of Creative Capital to a Creative Digital Capital providing a options for progression for our artists and creative's as well as developing and retaining talented technology people in the city.

It is consistent with and complementary to the Wellington 2040 project and with the outcomes of the Councillors workshop on economic priorities to 2015.

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

The Strategy would inform the priorities in the Long Term Plan.

3) Treaty of Waitangi considerations

Tenths Trust has been consulted on the Wellington2040 and is supportive. We have not specifically consulted with them on the draft digital strategy.

4) Decision-Making

The draft Digital Strategy seeks to get sector and public feedback to inform council in their decision making.

5) Consultation

a) General Consultation

Consultation will be undertaken as outlined in Section 5.3.

b) Consultation with Maori

The draft Digital Strategy will be sent to Mana Whenua and a meeting arranged to discuss. Their feedback will be reported back to Council.

6) Legal Implications

There are no legal implications.

7) Consistency with existing policy

The draft Digital Strategy is a review of the ICT policy document agreed in 2006, expanded to encompass more activity and a view of the city's digital sector.