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## **ADOPTION OF THE FINAL POSITIVE AGEING POLICY**

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### **1. Purpose of report**

This report seeks Committee agreement on the Positive Ageing Policy (the policy, as attached *Appendix 1*) and that it recommends to Council that the policy be adopted.

### **2. Executive summary**

In October 2011 the Committee agreed to review its Older Persons Policy (2005), and what factors would be considered in a revised policy. A draft *Positive Ageing Policy* was presented in February 2012 following input from older persons' interests. This draft was agreed for consultation and fifteen submissions were received.

The policy is a Council-wide response to the rapid growth over the next twenty years in the percentage of older people in the population. This trend is more critical for the city's future when also considering changes in employment and investment patterns, recreational demands, and the diversity of interests that will need to be catered for.

The need for such a policy was widely supported however there were three primary areas of concern from submitters. These were ensuring that the policy translated into actions by the Council, that meaningful monitoring was put in place, and that the importance of the impacts of the baby boomers moving into retirement was fully appreciated in Council responses. These points were considered by the Hearings Subcommittee and have been reflected in the revised version of the draft policy.

### **3. Recommendations**

Officers recommend that the Strategy and Policy Committee:

- 1. Receive the information.*
- 2. Note that the draft Positive Ageing Policy has been consulted on and changes made as a result.*
- 3. Agree to recommend to Council to adopt the Positive Ageing Policy.*

4. *Agree to delegate to the Chief Executive Officer and the Social Portfolio leader, the authority to amend the Positive Ageing Policy to include any amendments agreed by the Committee and any associated minor consequential edits.*
5. *Agree to recommend to Council to delegate to the Chief Executive Officer and the Social Portfolio leader, the authority to amend the Positive Ageing Policy to include any amendments agreed by the Committee and any associated minor consequential edits.*

#### **4. Background**

The Wellington City Council Older Persons Policy was adopted in April 2005.

On 20 October 2011 the Committee was presented with a scoping paper that outlined older persons issues, what Council already does in addressing such issues, stakeholder views and options for a Council policy response. It agreed to review the current policy in light of the impacts of the ageing population for the city and the Wellington 2040 work.

The approach to preparing a draft Policy was shaped by three factors:

1. needing to respond to the impacts of baby boomers moving into retirement
2. the diminished capacity of the older persons' sector to lead strategy and policy development
3. recognising that actions targeted at older people also benefit other population groups.

A draft policy was presented to the Committee on 16 February 2012. This was shaped by input from stakeholder interests. The draft policy was approved for consultation. This consisted of targeted material to relevant organisations, a feature in the *Our Wellington* page, Council website presence, newsletter to Council housing tenants and hard copy distribution through the libraries.

The Positive Ageing Hearings Subcommittee subsequently heard submissions on 9 May. The final Positive Ageing Policy is attached to this report – amendments following the consideration by the Hearings Committee are shaded.

#### **5. Discussion**

##### ***Summary of submissions and changes to the draft policy***

Fifteen written submissions were received of which seven made oral submissions. It should be noted that only one of these (Aged Concern) was from the older persons' representatives who helped develop the draft policy. Twelve submissions strongly or generally supported the draft policy and three opposed it. A summary of submissions is attached (*Appendix 2*).

There were some key themes that ran through the submissions.

### Function and Structure – where are the actions?

Some assurances were sought that the policy will result in action by Council. The Positive Ageing Policy is a *policy response* to the city's strategic vision. However a policy response is not an action plan.

The policy is premised on a 'whole of Council' approach. The policy will be an important consideration in future business and operational planning.

Action areas that are currently not business as usual for Council have been highlighted in the policy, particularly:

- the demands and opportunities presented as baby boomers remain in work longer, invest in the city, and contribute to economic growth
- working with the sector and government to ensure that limited resources are available to those who require services
- information brokering where Council can be a central source of existing material.

### The dynamics of ageing

Responding to the changing nature of ageing and the 'retirement' of baby boomers was at the heart of the draft policy. It was therefore surprising to find some submitters assert that the draft policy was not sufficiently aware of emerging dynamics of ageing such as understanding the needs of the "young" elderly.

An introductory section has been added to the policy to emphasise the importance of the policy to responding to the impacts of baby boomers moving into retirement. Reference is made to taking a different approach to the way we have traditionally addressed ageing related issues.

The 'Objectives and Council roles' section has also been strengthened to pick up the key themes from the introduction that raise the dynamics of ageing.

### Monitoring and Measurement

A range of issues are raised related to the monitoring and measuring process, including:

- having robust research and information upon which to make Council decisions
- having more and concise measures for Council activities
- having a monitoring checklist that reflects Wellington's needs
- having explicit links between Council activities and the World Health Organisation (WHO) Age-friendly checklist.

The intention when releasing the draft policy was to adapt the WHO checklist to reflect Wellington's situation and provide more specific indicators of progress. This has been made explicit in the final policy.

This section has also been simplified so it is clear that monitoring and measuring involves research, assessing progress across the city and reporting on Council activities.

### ***Policy Implementation***

The policy will be an important consideration in future business and operational planning. This will involve ensuring that business units' annual planning processes understand and respond to ageing issues. Subsequent measuring and monitoring will be undertaken so that the city's and Council's performance can be reported.

#### ***5.1 Consultation and Engagement***

This report is the result of a public consultation process.

#### ***5.2 Financial considerations***

There are no additional budget implications arising from the implementation of this policy. Activities are considered in a "business as usual" manner and any project initiatives would be reviewed as part of standard Council planning processes. Some refocusing of activities may be required where Council can provide greater influence.

#### ***5.3 Climate change impacts and considerations***

There are no direct climate change impacts. Involvement of older persons in sustainable energy and related environmental projects is promoted in the policy.

#### ***5.4 Long-term plan considerations***

The Long Term Plan and other strategic documents like *Towards Wellington 2040: Smart Capital* already consider the impacts of the ageing population. This policy is part of an implementation response by Council to such documents.

## **6. Conclusion**

It is recommended that the Committee agree to the policy that has been developed with input from interested parties and consulted on.

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## SUPPORTING INFORMATION

### 1) Strategic fit / Strategic outcome

*The policy supports Council's Long Terms Plan and Towards Wellington 2040: Smart Capital vision in acknowledging the need to respond to a changing environment, particularly the impacts of an ageing population. Agreement to the policy will contribute to Council meeting the outcomes across the seven strategic work areas.*

### 2) LTP/Annual Plan reference and long term financial impact

*The policy puts an ageing population focus across the seven strategic work areas in the LTP. The implementation of the policy is expected to be delivered within existing budgets.*

### 3) Treaty of Waitangi considerations

*There are no Treaty implications. The draft policy has been reviewed by Council's Manager, Treaty Relations.*

### 4) Decision-making

*This is not a significant decision. The draft policy provides for a considered business as usual approach and reflects the views of those with an interest in this matter.*

### 5) Consultation

#### a) General consultation

*A reference group involving representation from older persons advocacy groups, health sector, social services sector, volunteer services, AAG and service groups was established to inform and help develop this policy. A public consultation process has been conducted before presenting a final policy. A Hearings Committee was established to take oral submissions.*

#### b) Consultation with Maori

*There has been no direct consultation with Mana whenua in the development of this policy.*

### 6) Legal implications

*No legal issues have been raised.*

### 7) Consistency with existing policy

*The draft policy is aligned with related Council policies and plans, including the Accessible Wellington Action Plan.*



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**POSITIVE AGEING POLICY**

**WELLINGTON CITY COUNCIL**

**August 2012**

**Amendments following consideration of submissions  
by the Positive Ageing Hearings Subcommittee are shaded**

## INTRODUCTION

### Why a policy for positive ageing

The baby boomers are entering the 65 year and plus age group. Over the next twenty years their number will almost double in New Zealand to over a million. This unprecedented rate of growth has major implications on the demand for services, the city's economic performance and community resilience. The city needs to understand, prepare and respond to the ageing phenomena in ways that are not reflected in the past.

Nearly half of New Zealand's wealth resides with the 55+ age group and the average age of a business owner is estimated at 58 years old. The ability to support and engage with these people as they move into retirement will be crucial for the city's economic future.

The provision of social and support services to the growing number of elderly, particularly as they live longer, is a known challenge. The solutions reside with government, Council, families and the wider community.

### Purpose of the policy

This *Positive Ageing Policy* is to provide direction for the Council to consider and plan for the impacts of an ageing population across all of its activities. This will help ensure that the city accommodates the needs of its citizens as they age. It will also help support the valuable contributions of older persons as they continue to shape the city's future.

*Positive Ageing* is a reflection of the Council's desire for older people to remain engaged with the wider community and contribute to its vitality. At the same time, the Council recognises the need to support older persons in the community as their needs change over time.

### Scope of the policy

The scope of this policy is broad. It considers what roles the Council can play in:

- Positioning Wellington as a desirable choice for older persons
- Promoting the city as a safe, attractive, inclusive and vital place for older people to live



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- Ensuring that neighbourhoods are supportive and caring; and resilient in times of need
- Ensuring that people have the necessary access to health, housing and social services as required
- Ensuring that people remain engaged and valued members of the city as they age, and in retirement.

Most activity related to the impacts of an ageing population will benefit all of the community.

## BACKGROUND

The ageing population in New Zealand will result in significant social, economic and cultural changes for the city. The city's *Towards Wellington 2040: Smart Capital* provides a vision for the future that recognises the impacts for the city from the ageing phenomena.

In partnership with the Government and the community, Council will play a critical role in meeting the future needs of older people. Research into the impacts of an ageing population indicates that older persons will tend to be:

- More active and engaged thus placing greater demands on infrastructure and facilities; and providing opportunities for support of community activities
- More likely to remain in employment beyond retirement age
- Place an increased demand on social and health services and expenditure over time
- More likely to leave the city as they enter retirement however this trend may change as they become more economically active than previous generations. We currently have a third less +65 age group as a percentage of population than the New Zealand average
- More ethnically, socially and economically diverse which means they cannot be treated as an homogeneous group
- Increasingly isolated due to cultural, affordability, health policy, family support and language factors
- More likely to be “ageing in place” and a bias towards solo women as they outlive their male partners
- Increasingly caring for grandchildren or family which has implications for home support services.

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Such trends pose opportunities and challenges for the city as it plans for the future. We will need to adapt to new lifestyle demands. The Council's policy also recognises the need for a partnership approach and is therefore aligned with government priorities in the *Positive Ageing Strategy*.

Opportunities include retaining Wellingtonians in the city as they age. This will help ensure that the city has access to the skills, knowledge and finance it will require for economic growth and vitality.

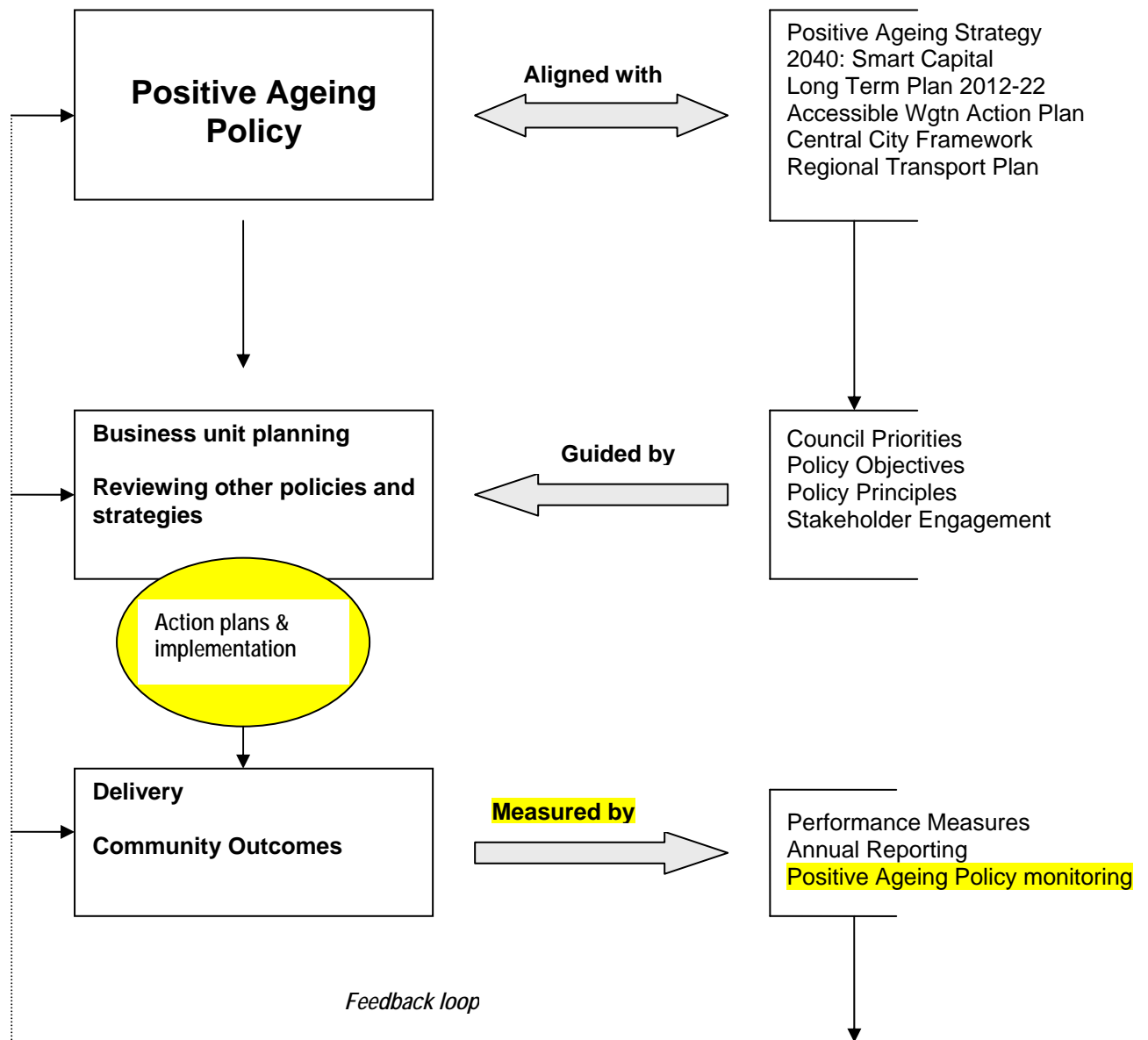
Challenges include changing attitudes towards retirement so that citizens prepare for a lifestyle change, however remain active and engaged in the community and the workplace.

## POLICY APPROACH

The policy approach promotes an enduring response to the impacts of ageing and priority needs as they arise. It consists of the following elements:

1. Alignment with the national *Positive Ageing Strategy* and Council's strategic documents and plans
2. Principles to help guide Council's decision-making and planned activities
3. Objectives, Council roles and actions assigned to the strategic work areas in *Wellington 2040: Smart Capital*
4. Measurement and monitoring of progress

Diagram 1: Alignment with key documents through to objectives and implementation



## Alignment

### The Positive Ageing Strategy Goals

Government has responded to the growing proportion of older people by developing a *Positive Ageing Strategy (2001)*. This affirms and supports the contributions of older people in society. It sets down ten goals, each with a set of actions that aim to improve opportunities for older people to participate in the community. This Council policy adopts these goals (except for that specifically concerned with rural issues) which are incorporated in the policy objectives and Council roles below.

## Towards Wellington 2040: Smart Capital

In 2011, the Council adopted a vision for Wellington in the future. This project considered the major drivers for change of which the ageing population was an important factor. Subsequent strategies, urban design frameworks and actions plans will recognise, and plan for, the needs of an ageing population.

## Long Term Plan (LTP) 2012 -22 Outcomes

Councils are required to develop and review LTPs. These explain what the Council plans to achieve over a ten year period, why it plans to do it, the associated costs and how it will be funded. Activity areas reflect the community outcomes desired by Wellingtonians, including those that impact on the ageing population.

## Accessible Wellington Action Plan

This plan outlines a set of actions designed to improve Wellington's reputation as an inclusive and socially responsible city - one that is accessible, safe and easy to get around. It has a focus on making the city and its amenities more accessible for those with physical limitations of any nature.

Other policies, strategies and plans will be regularly reviewed. This provides the opportunity to refresh our thinking and consider what Council responses might be included to achieve the policy objectives.

## **Principles**

The Council commits to some broad principles to help guide its decision-making processes and service provision, specifically:

- actively engaging older persons in more economic, social, and political ways
- tangata whenua and our multi cultural diversity will be recognised and valued, and reflected in our city's culture
- acknowledging that ageing is a state of mind, not a factor of age.
- considering the impacts of an ageing population in its strategic decision-making, planning and consultation activities :- now and for the future
- working collegially, internally and with affected parties, to help inform decision-making and setting targets

- making decisions based on sound information and future needs
- having a shared responsibility with government and the community in promoting the interests of older people
- focussing on older persons' services, programmes and activities where it has greatest leverage and responsibility
- offering support to those who most need it
- providing opportunity to those who want it

## Outcome

A future position for the city is one that embraces changing notions of 'retirement'; where Wellington is a city choice for older persons wishing to contribute to our social and economic vitality; a city that is appealing for older persons to remain because they are stimulated by the variety of social interactions provided and supported as their needs change over time.

## Council Roles

Because the policy provides a framework for future planning and provision of services to help meet a more desirable state, the four strategic areas of *Towards Wellington 2040: Smart Capital* are adapted. These reflect the focus on positive ageing objectives.

Council roles are a mix of service provision, facilitation, advocacy to government agencies and communications. The four strategic areas are:

1. People Centred City – an open and welcoming city, with healthy and safe suburban communities

### *Role for Council:*

- Consulting with older persons' representatives and groups as part of its engagement framework
- Providing an accountability framework, including a feedback loop, for older persons' outcomes
- Supporting the needs of an ageing population in its strategic, annual and long-term planning processes
- Remaining updated on ageing population research and international best practice service delivery

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- Providing and promoting access to information required by older persons, and in a form that recognises language and disability barriers
- Promoting and supporting the retention of older persons living in the city
- Supporting the participation of older persons in recreation, employment, community services, volunteering, life long learning and technology usage
- Promoting and supporting the diversity of the local population and the contributions made by older persons
- Supporting community resilience through neighbourhood programmes and support networks
- Facilitating community collaboration and mobilisation of resources available for older persons needs
- Ensuring that safety programmes in the city consider the needs and rights of older people
- Including older persons as a target group in the provision of social housing, recreational programmes and information services
- Promoting healthy living for an ageing population
- Supporting a responsive social sector for the city, social cohesiveness and a strong volunteer sector
- Providing opportunities for active and passive recreation that are diverse, safe, affordable, accessible and attractive.

## 2. Connected City - there is effective and efficient infrastructure

### *Role for Council:*

- Planning and providing for the parking and public transport needs of older persons
- Promoting a public transport system that is accessible and affordable for all
- Planning for the city to be pedestrian and cycle friendly
- Supporting ready access to a digital environment.

## 3. Eco-City – the urban environment reflects our needs and values

### *Role for Council:*

- Providing accessibility options in open and public spaces
- Promoting the availability and application of sustainable energy and building performance options that reduce household costs
- Planning for a built environment that provides for a walkable city, sheltered corridors and attractive open spaces
- Involving volunteers and older person's organisations in environmental projects of benefit to the city.

## 4. Dynamic Central City – the central city accommodates the changing demands of an ageing population

## *Role for Council:*

- Planning for the city and its amenities to be accessible for all
- Supporting the retention of ageing skilled workers and flexible work arrangements
- Promoting city activities targeted at an older age group for entertainment, investment, employment, community development and social networking objectives.

## Actions and Implementation

For many Council activities implementation of this policy will be a business as usual approach. For others a more radical shift is required. An example of this is addressing the demands and opportunities presented as baby boomers remain in work longer, invest in the city and contribute to economic growth.

Other activities that will require a more direct approach are facilitating the limited resources available being effectively targeted to those who require services. And easy and central access to the increasing volume of information available for older people.

A business unit within the Council will be tasked with ensuring that Council roles in the policy are properly considered in all operational planning processes, and subsequently reported.

## Measurement and Monitoring

A three tier measurement and monitoring regime is promoted. This involves a hierarchy from assessing citywide trends through to annual reporting of activities by Council business units. Thus the collective actions of government agencies, community organisations and the Council are captured and reported.

The three areas are:

### *Research and evaluation*

City trends for older persons can be analysed from census data to determine factors such as accommodation types, the retention of older people in the city, income levels and employment levels. There is also a growing body of ageing related research that can be collated and applied to Wellington city.

## *Assessing progress*

The World Health Organisation (WHO) Age Friendly Checklist provides a useful assessment tool to regularly test how the city measures up in responding to the needs of ageing citizens. This checklist covers activities in which the Council has influence to a greater or lesser degree. These include transportation, outdoor spaces, housing, social participation, communications and information, respect and social inclusion, social participation, and civic participation and employment.

These factors will be modified in the WHO checklist to reflect Wellington specific conditions and needs.

## *Council activities*

From a Council delivery perspective, existing measurement and monitoring processes can be used or adapted. The annual ratepayer survey information used to inform Council's annual report can, in some cases, be analysed by age groupings. This would give a measure in each of the seven work areas of how older persons rated Council performance, their use of facilities and perception of things such as safety in the city.

Other specific measures related to Council activities that can be included in Annual Plans are:

- Council Housing – waiting times and percentage of elderly tenants
- Transport – number of disability parks and the public provision of mobility equipment
- Recreation – number leisure card holders (+65)



## APPENDIX 2

### Appendix 2: Summary of submissions and actions recommended in final policy

Issue Raised	Number of Submitters	Response and Action
Policy function and structure	3	<p>Submitters raised various points ranging from questioning the relevance of such a policy for local government through to a view that a Positive Ageing Strategy should inform all other council strategies and plans. One submitter called for a more radical approach that addressed the fundamental “age wave” effect on the city.</p> <p>A separate section has been added to the draft policy that expresses the rationale for the policy and what its function is. This background section also provides some additional statistics to highlight issues to be addressed.</p>
Engagement process with older persons’ interests	3	<p>There was a request for more engagement with older persons’ interest groups as part of planning and decision-making processes. One submitter called for a Positive Ageing Taskforce.</p> <p>The policy principles already make reference to active engagement. It is officers’ view that there are sufficient organisations and structures for the Council to engage with. Neither is it appropriate to make specific reference to engagement practices when such activity is currently being reviewed internally and as part of the Efficiency Taskforce’s work to be reported in October.</p>
Translating policy into action	4	<p>While in general agreement with the policy, some submitters raised concerns that there was limited information of how it would be implemented.</p> <p>Officers note that a policy is not an action plan. However an <i>Actions and Implementation</i> section has been added to the draft. Also the process diagram makes a clearer link between planning processes and the delivery of Council activity. Some of the wording describing Council roles has been changed to better reflect an action focus.</p>
Ageism	3	<p>There were numerous comments related to perceptions of aged, retirement, “young and old” elderly, and attitude not being a factor of age.</p> <p>Wording has been changed in all sections of the draft policy and an addition to the principles. These are designed to reinforce the idea that the policy is a response to the impacts of the ageing population rather than to any age related groupings.</p>

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<p><b>Council roles and priorities</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">13</p>	<p>Submitters were asked to provide comment on Council roles and priorities. This was generally taken as an opportunity to present specific ideas and/or an organisation’s particular perspective (eg Living Street Aotearoa, Architectural Centre).</p> <p>Priorities areas were housing, transport and safety related. There were also multiple references to providing information services and supporting volunteerism in the city. These roles are included in the policy. Additional roles related to safety, targeted activities and the built environment have been added to reinforce some important areas where Council has a major influence.</p> <p>Activities that would not be considered business as usual for Council but important factors to address, have been added to the <i>Action and Implementation</i> section.</p>
<p><b>Monitoring and measurement of the policy</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">4</p>	<p>Issues here related to needing good research to inform decision- making, having Wellington specific measures of progress and tangible measures for Council activities.</p> <p>The <i>Measurement and Monitoring</i> section of the draft policy has been reformatted and divided into 3 sections:– research, city wide progress and Council activities. The World health Organisation age friendly checklist will be adapted for Wellington and used a basis of monitoring the city’s situation.</p>
<p><b>Language and terminology</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2</p>	<p>Submitters raise various points including consistency with LTP and other Council documents, and reference to “retirement age” not being legally determined by age.</p> <p>The necessary wording changes have been made to the draft policy.</p>