
REPORT 4
(1215/52/IM)

**CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION PLAN: 2006/16
DRAFT LONG TERM COUNCIL COMMUNITY PLAN**

1. Purpose of Report

This report seeks approval of the consultation and communication plan to be undertaken for the 2006/16 draft Long Term Council Community Plan (draft LTCCP).

2. Executive Summary

The draft LTCCP is a core document for the city. It details over the medium to long term what the Council aims to achieve for Wellington, the projects it will deliver to accomplish these aims, the costs of providing them, and how we intend to measure progress towards these goals.

This report covers:

1. How we intend to raise awareness of the LTCCP process and communicate the importance for the community to participate in the consultation exercise.
2. How we intend to communicate the proposals contained within draft LTCCP to the community.
3. The processes and format by which we will receive feedback from the community.

This consultation plan aims to provide a sensible range of communication tools and an appropriate mix of opportunities for people to express their views on the draft LTCCP. This consultation and communication plan follows similar patterns to previous years which have proven to be successful in achieving high levels of submissions. A different approach is recommended in the way we undertake public meetings and oral hearings to both attract a wider sector of the community and generate even higher levels of participation.

With the continued low levels of attendance at ward meetings and in an effort to attract a greater number and diversity of people to meetings to discuss the draft LTCCP it is recommended that public meetings be centrally located and based around groups of activities (strategies) rather than geographical boundaries. A specific meeting will be held for all progressive and resident associations.

Additionally it is recommended that a LTCCP hearings subcommittee be established. A smaller hearings committee is able to operate less formally and allow more time for elected members to ask questions and engage with submitters. The less formal environment is also likely to be more attractive to participants.

3. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. *Receive the information.*
2. *Note the communication tools that will be used to support the consultation on the draft LTCCP (section 6 of the report).*
3. *Agree that public meetings be structured around the following areas of activity in lieu of ward meetings:*
 - *Urban development*
 - *Transport*
 - *Economic development*
 - *Environment*
 - *Cultural Wellbeing*
 - *Social and Recreation.*
4.
 - a) *Agree to delegate the hearing of oral submissions on the draft 2006/16 LTCCP to a subcommittee.*
 - b) *Recommend to Council that it agree to establish a LTCCP Hearings Subcommittee with the terms of reference attached in appendix 1.*
5. *Note that the formal consultation period commences on Wednesday 12 April 2006 and closes on Friday 12 May 2006 with hearings scheduled from 17- 19 May 2006.¹*

4. Background

The Local Government Act 2002 (LGA 2002) requires Council to adopt the LTCCP for the period beginning 1 July 2006. The LTCCP will cover the next three years in detail and provide projections for the following seven years.

¹ Consultation on the LTCCP includes fees and charges, development contributions, the revenue and financing policy, the significance policy and any other policy or plan to be consulted on as required by legislation.

The purpose of the LTCCP is to:

- describe the community outcomes of the city and what role Council will play in achieving them
- describe what Council wants to achieve for Wellington
- describe the activities of Council and how they will be funded.

The LTCCP process provides: for a long-term focus for the decisions and activities of council; a basis of accountability of Council to the community, and provides an opportunity for community to participate in the decision making process.

Council is required under legislation to consult on its draft LTCCP ahead of it being adopted. The draft LTCCP must be consulted on using the special consultative procedure as prescribed within the LGA 2002.

Process to date and where to from here

The draft LTCCP will result in a long term plan for the city and preparations for it started well over a year ago. These steps have included:

- The development of community outcomes
- Contribution to the Draft Wellington Regional Strategy
- The development of Council outcomes and priorities
- The identification of new initiatives that align with the priorities
- The reviews of asset management plans
- The establishment of the Revenue and Activity Review Working Party.

The decisions resulting from this work will be consulted on as part of the draft LTCCP in early March.

Timing

The formal consultation period is scheduled to run for one month in keeping with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002. It is set to run from Wednesday 12 April until Friday 12 May 2006. This will be followed by public hearings, which are scheduled for 17-19 May 2006.

The schedule should provide sufficient time for the public to prepare submissions and for officers to evaluate them and prepare any commentary ahead of the final plan being agreed to in late June (deliberations are scheduled for 21-23 June with Council sign-off scheduled for 28 June.)

5. Discussion

5.1 Raising awareness and interest in the draft LTCCP

It is important that the public is aware of the draft LTCCP process and are provided with information that will allow them to contribute in a meaningful way. Raising awareness of the draft LTCCP ahead of the formal consultation period is necessary to achieving high levels of participation.

The objective will be to:

1. Stimulate interest in the draft LTCCP to the whole community and highlight its importance and Council's commitment to public involvement in the decision-making process.
2. Encourage the public to consider their issues / submissions in the context of Council's overall activities.
3. Allow the community and groups to prepare for the formal consultation period.

Audience

The draft LTCCP sets out Council's priorities for the medium to long term. As such it is important that anyone that wishes to participate has the opportunity to do so.

Raising awareness of the draft LTCCP consultation exercise is targeted at a broad audience and will include: Wellington residents and ratepayers; locally-based organisations and sports groups; Council's reference and advisory groups²; the Tawa and Makara/Ohariu Community Boards; mana whenua; council controlled organisations and the hundreds of individuals and organisations on Council's Annual Plan database (approximately 500 individuals and business groups). Existing networks will be used to engage with individuals and interested parties where possible.

Communication tools

The communication tools to raise awareness of the draft LTCCP include:

News releases	News releases will be provided at regular intervals leading up to, and during the consultation period.
Website	Council's website will outline the consultation process and who to contact for more information.
Reminder Letter	A letter outlining the timing and the scope of this year's planning process will be sent to the 500 (approximate) customers on the AP database.
Residents Association letter	The planning process and timelines will be outlined in a letter to resident and progressive associations.

² Officers will work with the DRG to develop the best method of presenting the information to people who are sight impaired. Previous plans were reproduced in a format that was compatible with some 'assistance software'. Officers have also received positive feedback that the narration that accompanies the video images has been of use.

Public Notices	Public notices are required to be placed in the local newspaper.
Newspaper advertisements 'Our Wellington' page	A series of newspaper advertisements will be run in the Dominion Post and local papers prior and through-out the consultation period.
Absolutely Positively Wellington (APW) newspaper	The APW will be used to highlight the timeline, process and some key areas of new activity. The paper is provided to each household in Wellington.
Radio advertisements	A series of radio ads highlighting key issues and the availability of the draft will be aired prior and during consultation.
Public display	Posters outlining timelines, the availability of the draft and public meetings will be posted in council owned facilities and other key public areas. Posters and flyers inviting the public to a presentation on the draft LTCCP at the Tawa and Makara/Ohariu Community Boards will also be posted and distributed.
Rates Newsletter	An outline of the proposed rates impact will be included in the May issue of the rates newsletter. The February Rates Newsletter contained information on the timelines and consultation period of the draft LTCCP.
Annual Plan database Newsletter	The planning process and timelines will be outlined in a letter distributed to all individuals and organisations listed on the Annual Plan database.
Informal	Informal communications will be used with council's existing networks i.e. city communities and other business units with high contact time with the community will be briefed on draft LTCCP matters and asked to raise awareness of the draft LTCCP and the proposals contained therein in their daily contact with the community. Informal communications remains a very effective mechanism to raise awareness about issues especially with hard to reach audiences such as youth etc.

5.2 Communicating the proposals within the draft LTCCP

It is important that the public have easy access to all the relevant information to allow them to make informed submissions. There are three parts to this:

- (a) That the layout and content of the documents are easy to follow and comply with best publishing practices (including the online layout).
- (b) That the requirements of groups with special needs are catered for (specifically the blind and deaf communities).
- (c) That participants have the opportunity to clarify points before making submissions.

The key to this is ensuring that core information is available and accessible in a variety of mediums. The following tools will be used to communicate the draft LTCCP.

Draft LTCCP document

The written document and the summary document are the primary means of communicating the draft LTCCP. The layout of last year's draft annual plan received positive feedback from submitters and officers will build on the strengths of that document to develop this year's publication. The information requirements of the draft LTCCP are considerably higher than those of the draft annual plan and consequently the projected size of the draft LTCCP has necessitated that it be structured as two separate documents. The first part will contain information on all the projects and programmes and the second part will contain the policies required by legislation.

The LGA 2002 also requires that a summary of the main information be made publicly available. The purpose of the summary is to provide - as widely as possible - information about the draft LTCC, and will be one of the primary means by which Council informs the community on the draft LTCCP. The APW newspaper will be used to raise awareness of the draft LTCCP, but not as the vehicle to communicate the summary of the draft LTCCP as with previous years. Due to the level of information needed to be summarised, this year's draft LTCCP summary will be communicated through a stand alone document. The draft LTCCP summary document will be made widely available and will also be accessible from council's website, libraries and service centres.

Video

In addition to the core publication the use of video and online tools are proposed. A video will be produced outlining the themes and goals of the draft LTCCP. This method of communication was used for the past three years and has been very well received.³

The video will detail proposed new initiatives and place these in the context of the Council's overall programme and delivery of core services. It is considered an effective way of presenting the key messages in the plan in a consistent way. It would be provided to external groups and be shown as an introduction at Council led meetings. The video would also be shown on a loop at the city service centre.

The internet continues to grow as an avenue for members of the public to understand the functions of Council. The publication and the summary will be provided online and the ability to make a submission on-line will again be provided this year.

Public Meetings

Meetings of the Pacific Island forum, Ethnic forum and Youth forum to discuss draft annual plans have traditionally received high levels of attendance. In contrast, turnout at ward meetings on draft annual plans have often been low. Turnout at ward meetings has averaged well below 20 people per meeting in most wards over recent years.

Previous draft annual plan consultation exercises show that the majority of submitters submit on a single activity or a small group of closely related activities rather than on issues on geographical or suburb basis.

In order to generate greater interest and higher levels of participation at public meetings, it is recommended that Council move from ward meetings, to public meetings structured around areas of activity (i.e. strategy areas) to inform the community on the draft LTCCP. For instance, one public meeting would be dedicated to the presentation of urban development matters (i.e. Council's draft urban development strategy, council's activities and priorities in this area, and any proposed new activities or changes in the levels of service would be presented). These public meetings would be advertised and representatives from groups and organisations known to have interests in the area of activity would be invited to attend.⁴ The same process would be repeated for

³ 35 Copies of the video were provided to groups and companies for use at their meetings. Positive feedback was provided at public meetings and through the submissions process on the use of the video.

⁴ A draft list of organisations to be invited is attached as appendix 2.

other areas of Council activity such as the environment, the economy, transport and so forth.

The advantages of taking this approach are that:

- meetings around specific groups of activities is likely to be of interest to a greater number of people and result in higher levels of attendance
- organisations involved in a specific area of activity will be invited and are more likely to attend
- synergies between attendees will allow more in-depth and detailed discussions to take place.

A specific meeting for progressive organisations, residents associations and individuals who are interested in the full breadth of Council activities, and particularly ward issues, will also be scheduled. This will provide them the opportunity to receive all the relevant information, use their networks to disseminate the information to their respective organisations and wards, and consider all the issues with their members before making a submission.

All meetings will be open to all members of the public. The public meetings will be held centrally at an appropriate inner city venue⁵ to ensure easy access for all interested persons.

Where there are clear synergies between the role of city and the regional council in an area of activity (i.e. environment, transport), Greater Wellington Regional Council will be invited to present their draft plan in conjunction with that of Council.

It is proposed that public meetings for the draft LTCCP be structured around the following areas of council activity:⁶

- Urban development
- Transport
- Economic development
- Environment
- Cultural Wellbeing
- Social and recreation.

As elected member responsible for facilitating the annual planning process, Councillor Armstrong will chair the meetings with assistance from the relevant portfolio leaders. All Councillors will be encouraged to attend.

The full draft LTCCP will also be presented and discussed at the following public meetings:

- Pacific Advisory Group/ Pacific Island forum
- Ethnic forum
- Disabled forum
- Youth council/forum
- Hui.

⁵ Officers are currently exploring inner city venue options.

⁶ The activity of Governance encompasses all Council activities and will not be the subject of a separate public meeting.

The draft LTCCP presentation will also be placed on the forward programmes for the Community Boards and Council's advisory and reference groups. Officers will work with the Community Boards to ensure that the draft LTCCP presentations are widely advertised (through the use of posters, the distribution of flyers and informal networks etc) in their respective areas to attract high levels of attendance.

The dates for all public meetings are to be confirmed but will occur within the formal consultation period.

6. Receiving Feedback from the Community

It is important that submitters are provided the opportunity to present their views in a manner and format that is appropriate to their needs. Council will continue to provide a sensible range and mix of opportunities for people to express their views on the draft LTCCP⁷ while enhancing the way council undertakes oral hearings.

6.1 Oral hearings

Oral hearings are a statutory requirement and an important opportunity for the public to express their views in person to elected members and for elected members to ask questions of clarification of submitters. For the submitters it provides the opportunity to express their views in a different medium and reinforce, amend or add to their written submission.

However the formal nature of the current hearings process makes them uninviting for some members of the community and potentially acts a barrier to more people participating in oral hearings. Hearings tend to be dominated by representatives of formal organisations rather than individuals, and the static nature of the hearings format often results in submitters covering the same points as their written submission. There is limited opportunity for elected members to engage in a discussion with the submitter and to ask them substantive questions to help in their final decision making.

It is recommended that a hearings subcommittee be established to undertake oral hearings on the draft LTCCP. The advantages of a subcommittee include:

- Fewer people at the hearing will create a less formal environment which is likely to be more attractive to the submitter and attract more participation in the process.
- A smaller hearings committee is able to operate a less formal hearings format. The allocated time can be used more effectively by giving over more time to questions or informal discussion with the submitter rather than a formal presentation. This will allow councillors to obtain a finer grained understanding of the issues the submitter is presenting. How each submitter is heard will be determined largely by the preferences of the submitter and be established between the chair and the submitter at the beginning of the submitter's allotted time.

It is recommended that as part of their portfolio responsibilities, Portfolio Leaders form the membership of the draft LTCCP hearings subcommittee. This will ensure that the breadth of council activities is represented. All elected members will be able to attend the hearings.

⁷ To make it as easy, Council provides freepost submission forms, the ability to present views by letter, email, in person and also the opportunity to submit views online.

A summary report of all the submissions, survey work undertaken on key aspects of the draft LTCCP and the subcommittees report⁸ on the hearings will be presented to the Strategy and Policy Committee before final decisions are made.

7. Conclusion

The development of the draft LTCCP that is supported by a strong consultation and communication plan will ensure that Council continues to be well placed to engage with the community on planning processes that affect their lives in the coming years.

Contact Officer: *Baz Kaufman – Corporate Planning Advisor.*

⁸ The subcommittee's report to the strategy and policy committee will consist of an oral report by the chairperson and the formal minutes detailing a summary of all oral submissions.

Supporting Information

1) Strategic Fit / Strategic Outcome

This project supports outcome 9.2: *“People are encouraged to participate in the decision making of the city.”*

This project supports the following draft council outcomes:

More inclusive

Wellingtonians will be more actively involved in the future direction of their communities.

More actively engaged

Wellington will operate an open and honest decision-making process that generates confidence and trust in the democratic system.

More actively engaged

Information required by citizens and groups will be easily accessible, to enable participation in the community.

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

Development and consultation on the LTCCP sits within the following project: C530 Annual Planning

3) Treaty of Waitangi considerations

Targeted consultation will be undertaken with support by the Director of Treaty Relations.

4) Decision-Making

This is not a significant decision.

5) Consultation

The report provides a sensible range of communication tools and an appropriate mix of opportunities for people to express their views on the draft LTCCP.

6) Legal Implications

The consultation and communication plan meets all statutory requirements of the LGA 2002.

7) Consistency with existing policy

This report is consistent with council’s current Consultation Policy and guidelines.

LTCCP Hearings Subcommittee

Membership:

The Subcommittee's membership will consist of those elected members appointed as portfolio leaders.

Alternative membership

A portfolio leader may nominate an alternate in his or her absence.

Quorum:

4

Chair:

The Chair will be elected by Council.

Frequency of meetings

The Subcommittee will meet on an as required basis.

Sunset clause:

The Subcommittee will discontinue no later than 20 June 2006.

Parent Body:

The Subcommittee reports to the Strategy and Policy Committee.

General Purpose:

The Subcommittee has responsibility to hear submissions on the 2006/16 draft Long Term Council Community Plan and report to the Strategy and Policy Committee.

Terms of Reference:

The Subcommittee will have responsibility and authority to:

- 1.0 Accept and hear submissions on Council's draft 2006/16 Long Term Council Community Plan and report back to the Strategy and Policy Committee.

Delegated Authority

The LTCCP Hearings Subcommittee will have delegated authority to carry out activities within its terms of reference.

APPENDIX 2

Indicative List

Urban Development:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disability Reference Group • CentrePort • Historic Places Trust • Wellington Waterfront Ltd • Property Council of NZ • Waterfront Watch • Representatives from community groups interested in urban development issues
Transport:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transit • Land Transport NZ • Greater Wellington Regional Council • Stagecoach • Infratil • Cycle aware • Walk Wellington • Representatives from community groups interested in transport issues
Economy:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wellington Regional Chamber of Commerce • Local Government Forum • Industrial Research • Positively Wellington Tourism • Positively Wellington Business • Massey and Victoria Universities • NZ Stock Exchange • NZ Retailers Assoc. • NZ Hoteliers assoc. • Representatives from community groups interested in economic issues
Cultural Wellbeing:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Museums Trust • Toi Maori • Te Papa • Representatives from community groups interested in cultural activities
Social and Recreation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital Coast Health • Housing NZ • NZ Police • Citizen's Advice Bureau • Wellington Zoo • Stadium Trust • SPARC • Representatives from various sporting codes • Representatives from community groups interested in social and recreation issues
Environment:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority • Greater Wellington regional Council • Karori Wildlife Sanctuary • Ministry for the Environment • Glenside Streamcare Group • Trelissick Park/Ngaio Gorge Working Group • Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust • Representatives from Wellington's environmental groups.