

APPENDIX 5.3.7

STRATEGY 7

Governance

DELIVERING CONFIDENCE IN CIVIC DECISION-MAKING

One of our key responsibilities is to enable democratic local decision-making. This means making sure residents are kept informed about what we're doing, are able to have their say, and feel confident that their views – and votes – count.

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Introduction

'Governance' includes all those roles and responsibilities that help the city run smoothly, support Council decision-making, keep residents informed, and ensure that Wellingtonians have a meaningful say about the city's direction. It includes the election of councillors, running of meetings, and supporting councillors' decision-making by providing information and advice. It also includes informing and consulting residents, and dealing with queries and complaints.

Democratic decision-making is important for its own sake — it's one of the key responsibilities of any local authority. But it's also important for the health of the city. The more involved residents are in city decision-making, the more confident they are likely to feel in the decision-making process.

Encouraging people to become more involved is a significant challenge. People have busy lives, and in general are less involved in and trusting of public institutions than they once were. Participation in local elections has declined over the last decade or more. And only a small proportion of residents take advantage of opportunities to have input into Council decisions.

Key facts

The Council is made up of the mayor and 14 councillors. They are elected to make decisions on behalf of residents and ratepayers.

Only 42.2 percent of Wellingtonians voted in local elections in 2004, down almost six percentage points from the previous election.

Each year, we hold more than 130 meetings of the Council and its committees and subcommittees. Agendas are available at least two working days in advance.

Our Contact centre answers more than half a million calls each year.

OUR LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

Our overall goal is to build confidence and trust in civic decision-making. This means making the decision-making process work better, with greater involvement from residents. It also means strengthening our relationships with other councils and government agencies that make decisions affecting Wellingtonians.

Over the next 10 years, we aspire to the following specific outcomes:

7.1 MORE INCLUSIVE: WELLINGTONIANS WILL BECOME MORE ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN THE FUTURE DIRECTION OF THEIR COMMUNITIES.

Democracy is a way of making decisions for the community but it is also instrumental in involving people in the future direction of their community. Fostering civic engagement leads to better decisions and a sense of belonging. It also builds self-reliance and moves away from an emphasis on expecting public bodies to resolve issues. Developing more active involvement will mean:

- supporting community groups and organisations, and
- lifting levels of participation.

7.2 (A) MORE ACTIVELY ENGAGED: WELLINGTONIANS WILL RECOGNISE THE SPECIAL POSITION OF MAORI IN THE HISTORY OF THIS PLACE AND THIS WILL BE EVIDENT IN CURRENT RELATIONSHIPS.

Wellington has a long history of occupation by iwi who enjoyed its natural harbour and plentiful food supplies. This is part of Wellington's rich history and is recognised in many ways including place names, land ownership, public art and monuments.

The Treaty partnership relationship created by the Treaty of Waitangi and subsequent court decisions is clearly between Maori and the Crown. This relationship distinguishes between iwi and the wider Maori community. However, local government acts under a mandate from Parliament and is responsible for many of the resource allocation and regulatory decisions, which are of direct interest to Maori, in a local area. This results in a unique relationship between Council and Maori. Improving Maori partnerships will mean:

- visible recognition of the historical relationship of Maori within the Wellington area
- operating under memoranda of understanding with the Wellington Tenth Trust and Ngati Toa Rangatira

- opportunities for iwi to be involved in Council decision-making processes, and
- working with the wider Maori community on specific issues.

7.2 (B) MORE ACTIVELY ENGAGED: WELLINGTON WILL OPERATE AN OPEN AND HONEST DECISION-MAKING PROCESS THAT GENERATES CONFIDENCE AND TRUST IN THE DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM.

Democracy is a foundation for our society, and the Council is uniquely placed to facilitate the decision-making processes that support this on behalf of the community. Our system is ultimately representative democracy but with a high level of participation in the process. Many people, having voted, clearly expect their representatives to make decisions on their behalf. A critical aspect of democracy is having the option to participate and make your views known, even if that option is not exercised. In this sense, the perception and reality that this option remains open is hugely important. Developing an open and honest decision-making processes will mean:

- early participation of interested parties in decision-making
- developing a network of Council advisory groups
- more open and honest communication policies, and
- improving the levels of community engagement.

7.2 (C) MORE ACTIVELY ENGAGED: INFORMATION REQUIRED BY CITIZENS AND GROUPS WILL BE EASILY ACCESSIBLE, TO ENABLE PARTICIPATION IN THE COMMUNITY.

The Council accepts its responsibility to ensure that people have easy access to information about Council business, and city events and attractions. The Council provides a number of public services to facilitate the flow of information. These include the City Service Centre in the main foyer of the Council buildings in Wakefield Street, and our contact centre, which fields calls about all Council business. We also provide the public with the information on property values and access to the vast amount of historical information found in the Wellington City Archives.

Better access to information will mean:

- maintaining high quality information databases
- being highly responsive to enquiries, and
- providing easy access to information.

HOW WE'LL MEASURE OUR PROGRESS TOWARDS THESE OUTCOMES

To assess whether city decision-making is becoming more inclusive, we plan to monitor participation in local government elections and compare that with participation in other local, regional and national elections. We also plan to survey residents to find out how much influence they feel they have on Council decisions.

To assess whether people are becoming more actively-engaged in city decisions, we plan to:

- conduct interviews with mana whenua organisations about the Treaty partnership
- survey residents to find out: whether they feel Council decisions are made in the city's best interests; whether they understand how the Council makes its decisions; and whether they feel Council information is easy to access.

OUR THREE-YEAR PRIORITIES

For the period 2006-09, we've identified the following three priorities for our governance work. These priorities are important stepping stones towards our long-term goals.

- We will improve the transparency and quality of processes for public involvement in civic decision-making
- We will improve communication with communities
- We will increase participation rates in democratic processes.

HOW WE PLAN TO ACHIEVE THESE PRIORITIES

We already play a vital role in facilitating local decision-making and keeping residents informed. Our work includes: holding local elections every three years; running Council meetings; providing elected councillors with information, advice and support to help them in their decision-making; developing strategies and plans to shape the city's future direction; consulting residents and stakeholders to ensure Councillors are informed about community views before they make decisions; seeking input from local iwi and other partners; informing residents (through our website, Contact centre, newspapers and other publications); reporting on our financial and service performance; and dealing with residents' queries and concerns.

We're considering several options to encourage more people to vote in local elections. This includes steps that will make it easier to vote, and initiatives that will raise the profile of local elections.

We're also working on ways to increase our levels of engagement with the people of Wellington, and make it easier for residents to have a say before Councillors make decisions. As a first step, in the coming year we plan to publish simple "Have your say" guidelines explaining how to take part in city decision-making. We're also reviewing our Consultation Policy and considering other initiatives such as setting up a community panels to give feedback on issues facing the city, and increasing opportunities for people to provide comment through our website or e-petitions.

We're also looking to support central government's civic education initiatives which will help school students learn about local government and how they can influence decisions.

Detailed information about our proposed activities is provided on the following pages.

SIGNIFICANT NEGATIVE EFFECTS

We do not anticipate any significant negative effects from our governance activities.

Our Governance Activities

Over the next few pages, we provide detailed information about our proposed governance activities, what they cost, who we think should pay, and how we'll measure our performance.

7.1.1 CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

What we do

We keep residents informed through a wide variety of media, including newspapers, radio, Council publications and our award-winning website. We consult widely before making decisions, and we seek feedback on issues facing the city through resident surveys and partnerships with a wide range of groups.

Over the next three years, we are planning several new projects aimed at keeping people informed about local issues and enhancing involvement in decision-making. These include:

- using e-democracy initiatives to increase public input into our decisions, for example by using e-petitions or setting up an 'e-panel' of residents who can provide online feedback on issues we face. We have developed a draft ICT Policy to support our work in this area. Public input on this draft policy is currently being sought. Copies of this are available on line at www.Wellington.govt.nz or from our Contact centre, phone 499 4444.
- strengthening community involvement in our decisions by increasing opportunities for residents to provide regular feedback – one option under consideration is to set up a 'civic network' of residents who will provide regular feedback about issues facing the city.
- publishing new "Have your say" guidelines explaining how residents can have their say about decisions affecting the city
- reviewing our Consultation Policy with the aim of finding ways to increase public input into our decisions
- enhancing our communication with the media and stakeholder groups by providing weekly 'Council updates' with information about our proposals and decisions

- enhancing our communication with Pacific groups through regular Pacifica pages in our *Absolutely Positively Wellington* newspaper and by increasing the number of appearances by Council officers on Samoan Capital Radio
- increase our website resources to help deal with rapidly increasing demand.

Why it's important

Democratic local decision-making is important for its own sake, because we exist to represent the collective will of the people we serve. It is also important for the benefits it brings such as higher levels of community engagement and higher confidence in local decision-making. Our communication and consultation work contributes to the following community outcomes: 'Wellington will have a culture of open and honest, no surprises consultation involving all age groups that is genuine, timely and well informed'; and 'Information required by citizens and groups will be easily accessible, to enable participation in the community'.

How we will measure our performance

Performance measures and targets for this activity are currently being developed.

Who should pay

User charges	0%
Other revenue	0%
Targeted rate	0%
<u>General rate</u>	<u>100%</u>
TOTAL	100%

What it will cost

(Insert financial table)

Note: this activity provides budgets for e-democracy and civic network programmes. The cost of running our website is spread across all activities on a pro-rata basis. The costs of our media/communications work and most publications are also spread across all activities.

7.2.1 MANA WHENUA PARTNERSHIP AND WIDER MAORI COMMUNITY

What we do

Wellington has a long history of occupation by Maori, and this creates responsibilities for the Council. We want to see the special position of mana whenua (i.e. iwi with customary authority over the area) acknowledged and reflected in the way we make decisions about the city and its resources.

We work with the city's two mana whenua organisations, the Wellington Tenth Trust and Ngati Toa Rangatira, to ensure their views are represented in decisions about the city, and to ensure their contribution to Wellington's heritage is fully and publicly recognised. Our responsibilities to these groups are outlined in memoranda of understanding.

We also involve the wider Maori community on issues of specific interest to them.

Why it's important

Engagement with mana whenua recognises their special status in the city. As a local authority with a Crown mandate to control development of land and other resources, we have obligations to ensure their views are heard. Engagement with the wider Maori community reflects the right of all residents and groups in the city to have a say about issues affecting them.

Our work in this area also contributes to Wellington's 'sense of place' and to understanding of the city's heritage and helps to develop community organisations' capabilities.

Through this activity we meet the community outcomes: 'The Treaty partnership will continue to be acknowledged in all local decision-making processes', 'Wellington will have a culture of open and honest, no surprises consultation involving all age groups that is genuine, timely and well informed', and 'Information required by citizens and groups will be easily accessible to enable participation in the community'.

How we plan to develop opportunities for Maori to contribute to our decision-making processes

We recognise and act on our obligations to develop opportunities for Maori to contribute to our decision-making processes. We foster partnerships with mana whenua and build relationships with the wider Maori community through effective consultation.

These relationships are supported by a dedicated unit. This team provides the Council with advice and administrative support on treaty-based relationships.

Memoranda of understanding with mana whenua organisations, Ngati Toa Rangatira and the Wellington Tenth Trust, outline how they participate in decisions on policy, protocol, and regulatory and service delivery issues. They also have ex officio membership on the Council's Strategy and Policy committee.

We maintain networks with Maori in Wellington and hold hui to discuss matters of mutual concern to them and to Council. Our internal recruitment and training procedures aim to improve our capacity to respond to Maori issues appropriately.

The Council continuously seeks to identify opportunities to improve these relationships. As part of this we survey our mana whenua partners annually.

How we will measure our performance

Performance measures	Performance targets	
Interviews with both mana whenua partners covering a range of issues relating to the Treaty Partnership.	2006/07	Overall - quite satisfied (4 measured on a 5- point scale)
	2007/08	Overall - quite satisfied (4 measured on a 5- point scale)
	2008/09	Overall - very satisfied (5 measured on a 5- point scale)
	2016/17	Overall - very satisfied (5 measured on a 5- point scale)

Who should pay

User charges	0%
Other revenue	0%
Targeted rate	0%
General rate	100%
TOTAL	100%

What it will cost

(Insert financial table)

7.2.2 CITY GOVERNANCE AND DECISION-MAKING

What we do

Our city governance and decision-making activities include running local elections every three years, running meetings of the Council and committees where residents present their views and decisions are made, advising elected members on policy and operational issues, supporting community boards and advisory groups, supporting elected councillors to carry out their roles effectively, carrying out consultation on our annual and long-term plans and on our policies and strategies, and publishing our annual reports.

Much of our work is subject to legislative requirements. We aim to exceed these requirements and find the most appropriate and effective way of involving residents in our decisions.

The budget for this activity also includes a \$10,000 discretionary fund to the Tawa Community Board to allow it to support local projects.

Key projects for the next three years include:

- developing ways to increase public involvement in local elections — this will include taking steps to raise the profile of the elections, and to make the voting process simpler and easier
- carrying out a Representation Review to get public views about the size of the Council, whether we should elect on a city wide basis or by wards, and the number and location of community boards
- running the 2007 local elections
- working with other agencies on a civics education initiative aimed at helping school students learn about local government and how they can influence decisions
- completing rolling reviews of each of the activities outlined in this plan and maintaining a policy programme to ensure our work continues to be effective, efficient and contributing to the long term outcomes set out by the Council .

Why it's important

This activity is closely linked with our Communication and Consultation work, and is important for similar reasons. Through this activity we fulfil statutory requirements, ensure our decisions are transparent, ensure that we can be held to account for our decisions and actions, and provide opportunities for public input to decisions. This work contributes to the following community outcomes: 'Wellington's governing bodies will comply with all legislative requirements, and will behave in an ethical and fair manner' and 'Wellington will have a culture of open and honest, no surprises consultation involving all age groups that is genuine, timely and well informed'.

How we manage our assets that support this activity

We maintain equipment used for electronic counting of votes in local elections. We are investigating options to either upgrade or replace this equipment to allow it to be used for STV processing and vote counting at the next local election in 2007.

How we will measure our performance

Performance measures	Performance targets	
1. The percentage of residents who are satisfied that the Council consults with them the right amount.	2006/07	55%
	2007/08	57%
	2008/09	60%
	2016/17	70%
2. The percentage of residents who are satisfied with the way the Council involves people in decision-making.	2006/07	40%
	2007/08	43%
	2008/09	46%
	2016/17	55%
3. The percentage of Council and committee agendas that are made available to the public 5 days prior to the meeting (statutory obligations mean that all agendas need to be available to the public at least two working days before the meeting).	2006/07	75%
	2007/08	75%
	2008/09	80%
	2016/17	80%

Who should pay

User charges	0%
Other revenue	0%
Targeted rate	0%
<u>General rate</u>	<u>100%</u>
TOTAL	100%

What it will cost

(Insert financial table)

7.2.3 CITIZEN INFORMATION

What we do

We provide information, answer queries and deal with complaints through our 24 hour a day Contact centre and our City Service Centre in Wakefield St. We also provide information through our website and various other media/publications, and through our branch library service centres. This information covers the full range of Council activities including city events and attractions, public works, Council plans and policies and so on. We also give members of the public access to information on property values.

Why it's important

Information is important for several reasons. It may allow people to have an input into decisions, or take advantage of entertainment or recreation opportunities, or make decisions about their own property, or simply to know what's going on in their local area. Open, honest communication about public services is part of any healthy democracy. This activity contributes to the following community outcome: 'Information required by citizens and groups will be easily accessible, to enable participation in the community.'

How we will measure our performance

Performance measures	Performance targets	
1. The number of business transactions carried-out at the Service Centres	2006/07	155,386
	2007/08	150,724
	2008/09	146,202
	2016/17	We will review our long-term target following analysis of our short-term achievement.
2. The percentage of telephone calls answered within 30 seconds at the Contact centre.	2006/07	80%
	2007/08	80%
	2008/09	80%
	2016/17	80%

Who should pay

User charges	5%
Other revenue	5%
Targeted rate	0%
<u>General rate</u>	<u>90%</u>
TOTAL	100%

What it will cost

(Insert financial table)

Note: this activity provides budgets for the City Service Centre, Contact centre, and property valuation/information systems. The cost of running our website is spread across all activities, as are the costs of most of our publications and media/ communications activities. Branch library service centres are funded from the branch libraries budget.

10-year financial projections

OPERATIONAL SPENDING

(Insert 10 year financial table (Opex) for Governance Strategy)

CAPITAL SPENDING

(Insert 10 year financial table (Capex) for Governance Strategy)