
REPORT 5
(1215/52/IM)

**CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION PLAN:
2010/11 DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN**

1. Purpose of Report

This report seeks approval of the consultation and communication plan to be undertaken for the 2010/11 Draft Annual Plan.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. *Receive the information.*
2. *Note the communication and engagement tools that will be used to support the consultation on the 2010/11 Draft Annual Plan.*
3.
 - a) *Agree to delegate the hearing of oral submissions on the 2010/11 Draft Annual Plan to a subcommittee.*
 - b) *Recommend to Council that it agree to establish the Draft Annual Plan Hearings Subcommittee with the terms of reference attached in appendix one and that it elect a chairperson for the subcommittee.*
4. *Agree that the formal consultation period start Friday 9 April 2010 and closes on Monday 10 May 2010 with hearings scheduled in mid May 2010.*

3. Discussion

3.1 Background

The purpose of the 2010/11 Draft Annual Plan is to:

- provide the opportunity for the community to provide feedback on proposed variations to the Long-term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) and on any other matter

- extend the opportunity for public participation in the decision-making process and allow for new ideas to be tabled
- contribute to Council's accountability to the community
- detail the annual budget and funding impact statement.

The wider matters of role, scope, service levels and priorities of Council have been confirmed through the LTCCP process after substantive engagement with the community. Consultation on the LTCCP was undertaken in two stages using new techniques to reach wider audiences, resulting in significant feedback from the community.

As the Draft Annual Plan presents proposed variances to the LTCCP, its consultation aims to supplement the LTCCP consultation exercise rather than repeat it.

3.2 Key messages in the Draft Annual Plan

The development of the Draft Annual Plan has been guided by the principles outlined as part of the LTCCP that aim to balance continued investment in the city while maintaining a wide breadth of quality services that are value for money.

The process determines the Council's activities and budget for the financial year ahead and how we pay for them. The Draft Annual Plan builds on the work done for the LTCCP and aims to deliver on the goal of Wellington as an internationally competitive, vibrant and affordable city.

The key messages are structured around the five key areas of focus for the 2010/11 Annual Plan. These are:

- delivering on the commitments for year two
- leveraging off the Rugby World Cup to showcase Wellington to the world
- ensuring capacity for the future
- aiming for zero harm
- keeping rates increases significantly below those forecasted for 2010/11 in the LTCCP.

All the proposed variances align with these and will be outlined in the plan. Changes to fees and charges for some Council services will also be outlined. These have arisen as part of the annual review of compliance with the Revenue and Financing Policy.

Consultation on the Climate Change Action Plan and the Community Facilities Policy will run concurrently with consultation on the Draft Annual Plan. Consultation on the Draft Liquor Bylaw will also be scheduled during this period. Hearings will be combined where possible.

3.3 Communication tools

The following communication tools will be used ensure we 'reach' Wellingtonians, raise their awareness of the plan and inform of the key issues and encourage them to participate in the engagement process.

Communication tools	
Draft Annual Plan document	<p>The Draft Annual Plan document will be made available from Council's libraries, swimming pools, service centres and through the call centre.</p> <p>Submission forms will be available with the document.</p>
Summary Draft Annual Plan document	<p>This high level summary of the key issues for consultation will be widely distributed, including at the venues listed above as well as local cafes etc.</p> <p>Submission forms will be available with the document.</p>
Website	<p>The Draft Annual Plan document and a summary of the key issues will be available online.</p> <p>People will be able to make a submission online or by email.</p> <p>Officers are also currently investigating opportunities for people to download the Draft Annual Plan, or sections of the Draft Annual Plan to their MP3 player / iPod.</p>
Newspaper advertisements 'Our Wellington' page	<p>The Draft Annual Plan, key issues, and how people can have their say will be extensively promoted through the 'Our Wellington' page of the DominionPost newspaper leading up to and during the consultation period.</p>
Radio advertising	<p>The Draft Annual Plan and how people can have their say will be advertised on a number of radio stations during the consultation period.</p>
Annual plan database	<p>The Draft Annual Plan and submission form will be sent to approximately 250 residents / organisations / community groups listed on the Annual Plan Database.</p>
Media releases	<p>News releases on the Draft Annual Plan will be delivered at regular intervals leading up to, and during the consultation period.</p>
Public Notices	<p>Formal public notices outlining the consultation period and how the community can have their say will be placed in the DominionPost newspaper and other local newspapers.</p>
Public meeting	<p>Three Draft Annual Plan public meetings will be held. The Draft Annual Plan public meetings will be actively promoted.</p> <p>The Draft Annual Plan will also be presented to Council advisory /reference groups, at Council fora scheduled during the consultation period, and at community group / organisation meetings at their request.</p>

Communication tools	
Informal communications	<p>Informal communications will be used with existing Council networks i.e. city communities and other business units with high contact time with the community will be briefed on Draft Annual Plan matters and asked to raise awareness of the Draft Annual Plan and the process by which people can provide feedback.</p> <p>Informal communications remains a very effective mechanism to raise awareness about issues especially with hard to reach audiences such as youth.</p>
Targeted communications	<p>The Draft Annual Plan provides an overview of the year two work programme and any proposed variances. Concurrently, consultation will occur on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Draft Climate Change Action Plan • the Draft Community Facilities Policy • the Draft Waterfront Development Plan. <p>While the Draft Annual Plan will include the variances, and a high level overview of these draft plans / policy, supplementary consultation processes, meetings and communication material will be used to target audiences with a specific interest in these areas</p> <p>Hearings will be combined.</p>

3.4 Public meetings

The Council has used public meetings as one of its engagement tools in the past. It is proposed that a total of three dedicated meetings be held this year. These allow for discussion and promotion of the plan.

These meetings will be supplemented by others including presentations to the Council's advisory and reference groups and at fora and community board meetings.

The Greater Wellington Regional Council will be invited to present their Draft Annual Plan at these meetings.

As in previous years it is recommended that an offer be extended to community groups / organisations for Council representatives to attend one of their regular meetings during the consultation period to outline and discuss any proposals.

This approach acknowledges that people tend to take an interest when issues directly affect them. It also recognises that people's free time is limited and that they already contribute to a wide range of groups that meet on a regular basis.

The community based meeting approach will be actively promoted (i.e. through the 'Our Wellington' page and public notices) and officers will be available to attend meetings. It is anticipated that participation will vary depending on what issues a group wishes to discuss. It is likely that the relevant portfolio leader and ward councillors would attend. Officers will liaise with groups to determine who they would like to participate.

3.5 Hearings Subcommittee

Past research indicates that one of the main barriers to submitters making an oral submission is the formal nature of hearing committees¹. This is particularly the case for younger submitters who show the lowest level of participation in public consultation.

Hearings are an essential component of any engagement process and need to be included as part of the process. In the past a subcommittee has been formed to hear all oral submissions. In addition to providing a less formal environment for the submitter (therefore acting as less of a barrier to participation) it also provides elected members more of an opportunity to engage in a discussion with the submitter to get a more detailed understanding of their views and ask for points of clarification if required.

As with previous years the hearings schedule will be programmed to have sufficient flexibility to allow additional time for informal discussion as and when required.

It is recommended that as part of their portfolio responsibilities, Portfolio Leaders form the membership of the Draft Annual Plan Hearings Subcommittee. This will ensure that the breadth of Council activities is represented. All elected members will be sent the schedule of submissions ahead of when they will be heard and will be able to attend the hearings.

The Draft Annual Plan Hearings Subcommittee will report to the Strategy and Policy Committee. Its terms of reference are attached as appendix one.

3.6 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 Friday 9 April 2010 until Monday 10 May 2010. This will be followed by public hearings, which are scheduled for mid May 2010.

The schedule will provide sufficient time for the public to prepare submissions and for officers to evaluate them and prepare any commentary ahead of the final plan

¹ Residents Participation in Public Consultation – Qualitative Research, TNS April 2005

being agreed in late June (deliberations are scheduled for early June with Council sign-off scheduled for Friday 25 June 2010).

4. Conclusion

This consultation and communication plan provides a range of communication / engagement tools to support the annual plan during the consultation period.

A full copy of all submissions, a summary report of all the submissions, and the Subcommittee's report² on the hearings will be presented to the Strategy and Policy Committee before final decisions are made.

Contact Officer: *Josie Askin, Senior Advisor, Performance Improvement and Research*

² 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

The consultation and communication plan contributes towards the following outcome:

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

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

Development and consultation on the DAP sits within the following project: C530 Annual Planning and Reporting.

3) Treaty of Waitangi considerations

Targeted consultation will be undertaken with support by the Director of Citizen Engagement and 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 Annual Plan 2010/11.

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 Engagement Policy.

Appendix 1:


Membership:

The Subcommittee's membership will consist of the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor and those elected members appointed as portfolio leaders.

Quorum:

5

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 30 June 2010.

Parent Body:

The Subcommittee reports to the Strategy and Policy Committee.

General Purpose:

The Subcommittee has responsibility to hear submissions on the 2010/11 Draft Annual Plan and any other plans, bylaws or policies being consulted on concurrent to the 2010/11 Draft Annual Plan.

Terms of Reference:

The Subcommittee will have responsibility and authority to:

1. Accept and hear submissions on the 2010/11 Draft Annual Plan, and any other plans, bylaws or policies being consulted on concurrent to the 2010/11 Draft Annual Plan, and report the minutes and a synopsis of points raised at the hearings to the Strategy and Policy Committee.

Delegated Authority

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