
DRAFT ENGAGEMENT POLICY AND ACTION PLAN

1. Purpose of report

This paper reports back to the Committee on work undertaken on an 'engagement framework' and seeks approval to consult with the public and Council staff on a draft Engagement Policy and associated documents.

2. Executive summary

An Engagement Working Party of Councillors was established in August 2012 to oversee a revision of Council's engagement practices. That review has involved holding a workshop with Councillors, interviews and workshops with key stakeholders, a desktop review of existing documentation on Council's engagement activities and evaluations of Council's current practice.

Anne Pattillo, an international engagement specialist based in Wellington, was also contracted to review Council's existing Engagement Policy and provide input into Council's future approach to engagement.

As a result of this work, officers recommend that Council adopts a more integrated and focussed approach to its engagement practices. Key characteristics of this "total engagement" approach include:

- Recognising that good engagement enables the Council to 'deliver what's right'
- Achieving better planned and more focussed engagement
- Better integrating and aligning all Council engagement activities including customer service, relationship management, community engagement and consultation, marketing, communications and research
- Making a public commitment to improve how we engage across the organisation over time
- Establishing the mechanisms and building the capacity of the Council to meet that commitment

The attachments to this paper include the following documents that officers recommend that the Committee approves for public consultation:

- A draft Engagement Policy
- A draft Public Commitment

It is proposed that these documents are consulted on from 5 August to 5 September 2013, after which revised drafts will be presented to this Committee on 19 September with a recommendation for adoption by Council.

Council staff will also be invited to provide feedback on the proposed approach and draft documents during the public consultation period.

During the consultation period, officers will be developing engagement plans for both the 2014/15 Annual Plan process and the Transport Strategy. These will demonstrate how the new approach will be applied. These plans will be presented to the Committee as part of other papers scheduled on the Forward Programme before the end of this triennium.

3. Recommendations

Officers recommend that the Strategy and Policy Committee:

1. *Receive the information*
2. *Agree to publically consult of the following documents:*
 - (a) *A draft Engagement Policy*
 - (b) *A draft Public Commitment*

4. Background

At its meeting of 23 August 2012, the Strategy & Policy Committee agreed that:

- A councillor workshop be held to comprehensively identify issues and concerns around Council's engagement practices
- A working party be established, consisting of the Portfolio Leader, Community Engagement (Chair) and four other councillors, to work with officers to further develop the engagement framework
- The working party would report back to the Committee by December 2012

The working party was established with Councillor Paul Eagle as Chair and Councillors Iona Pannett, Ngaire Best, Simon Marsh and Bryan Pepperell as members. It met periodically to review officers' progress on the engagement work and provide guidance.

The workshop with Councillors was held on 1 November 2012. The summary notes from that workshop are attached as appendix 1 to this report.

Soon after the workshop with Councillors, the working party met and agreed that the following approach should be taken in relation to the engagement work:

- The issues raised by Councillors that relate to marketing and communications should be addressed by officers through a separate, but connected, Marketing and Communications Framework
- The Council's existing Engagement Policy (dated December 2006) is largely sound but is in need of a review and refresh

- Officers would focus on the development of an ‘action plan’ to implement the current policy
- In refreshing the policy and developing the action plan, officers should engage directly with Council’s key stakeholders and partners
- That an update on progress with the engagement work would be circulated to all Councillors in lieu of a formal report back to the Strategy & Policy Committee

In relation to the above:

- A new Marketing and Communications Framework is in its final stages of development for sign-off by the Executive Leadership Team.
- Anne Pattillo was engaged as an external consultant to review the existing Engagement Policy and provide input into Council’s approach to engagement. Her recommendations have greatly informed the improvements officers are recommending through this paper. Anne also facilitated a workshop with senior officers from across Council.
- Officers also recognised that Council had previously consulted on (when the existing policy was developed in 2006), and undertaken evaluations of, its engagement practices in the past. This information has been reviewed and has informed the proposed approach in this paper.
- Recognising the ‘across-Council’ nature of this work, an internal reference group was formed to have input into this work. It consisted of senior officers involved in service delivery, customer service, resource planning and treaty relations.
- A list of the people that officers interviewed in the development of this work is attached as appendix 2. A workshop was also held with stakeholders on 11 July to receive feedback on the draft policy and other documents associated with this paper.
- A written update on progress with the engagement work was circulated to all Councillors in May.

5. Discussion

5.1 Changing engagement landscape

Local authorities in New Zealand have had a legislative requirement to meet in terms of consultation since the Local Government Act 2002. These requirements were introduced, in part, to balance other significant changes in the legislation at that time, namely the conferring of ‘powers of general competence’ on councils. Having provided these, legislators wanted to provide a check on these powers by ensuring a council would have to involve its citizens and stakeholders in its planning and decision making processes. Within this context, the Council faces questions related to the voices we hear and listen to. For example, how do we access and represent the views of the ‘silent majority’ alongside those of the ‘vocal advocates? Also, how do we ‘weight’ input we receive from organisations in relation to that we receive from individuals?

Changing technology, community expectations and pressure on resources have also significantly changed the experience and expectations of engagement.

Factors influencing change for our Council include:

- Government through its *Better Local Government* programme, in particular the work of the Local Government Efficiency Taskforce¹, has looked to improvements in engagement practice.
- Council's *Towards Wellington 2040: Smart Capital* vision. Research by the Grattan Institute in Australia, presented in the report *Cities: who decides?*², demonstrates how eight successful cities employed high and sustained levels of public engagement in decision making, particularly where hard choices had to be made.
- Council's *Smart City* agenda where we want to make better use of technology so that it is easy for people and businesses to interact with us and be part of the ongoing development of our city.
- Use of social media has changed how the Council communicates and changed how citizens comment on and react to Council actions and community issues. These feedback pathways are not always represented in the formal feedback processes of Council.
- Pressure on Council budgets and workload is generating opportunities to focus on changing community behaviour and direct their contribution to the work of Council and community outcomes.
- A shift internationally to use social media and technology techniques to engage a broader range of people in significant decision including budget setting.

This environment provides both new opportunities and risks for our Council. Firstly, it provides us with more opportunities to draw on the knowledge and passion of our partners and citizens. Effective engagement, especially early in the development of strategies and projects, enables us to tap into the expertise that exists outside our Council and build their buy-in to our work, which in turn will enable us to implement it more effectively once finalised. The countervailing risk is that if we do not undertake effective engagement as a matter of course, we will lose the trust and confidence of our partners and community. This will subsequently hamper our ability to act effectively, because our decisions and actions will be open to challenge.

One of the key values included in Council's organisational strategy is that we will:

'Deliver what's right'.

This paper contends that we can only achieve this goal through an integrated 'total engagement' approach that creates an overview across internal, customer, stakeholder, partner and community engagement.

¹ <http://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/local-government-efficiency-taskforce-report-released>

² <http://grattan.edu.au/publications/reports/post/cities-who-decides/>

5.2 How we are performing currently

Through interviews conducted as part of this work, some stakeholders have reported that they believe Council is improving its engagement practices. In particular they reported that:

- They were seeing an attitudinal change in some staff – some are working better with communities
- Council is doing more partnering with other organisations
- Recent online activity such as *Our Capital Voice* is good

There are examples of focussed engagement projects, for instance the engagement on the Town Belt Management Plan and the Alcohol Strategy and Policy consultation, that meet international standards for quality engagement.

However, through these interviews and the workshop with Councillors, it is clear that further improvements need to be made. Key issues raised include:

- Staff across Council have different levels of skill in terms of engagement
- We are not engaging early enough, and so when we do, it feels like the decision has already been made
- Formal consultation approaches are too daunting and confusing for some;
- The Council needs to explore different ways to engage people, that better meet the needs of those we are trying to connect with
- The Council needs to do better around gathering and managing information

Council has a number of performance measures that relate to engagement. Surveys were undertaken of Wellington citizens and partner organisations in May and June this year to inform Council's annual reporting. These results (in appendix 3) show a decline in satisfaction with Council's engagement practices.

It is important to note that the results themselves may have been influenced by the change in surveying methodology as outlined in the appendix. In addition to this, recent challenges we have faced in the Environment Court and the 'John Street Protocols' demonstrate that we have not always met our obligations or people's expectations in terms of consultation. This may also have impacted on the public's perception of how well we engage. Officers are proposing to undertake some further research into these results, using focus groups and *Our Capital Voice*, ahead of the final report back to this Committee in September.

5.3 Key elements of the proposed approach

5.3.1 Total Engagement

Through the workshop and discussions with Councillors, it is clear that engagement is viewed as occurring 'whenever people have contact with Council'. Consequently, engagement is seen to overlap with Council's communications and marketing activities as well as its approach to relationships and customer service. It is also recognised that there is a relationship between engagement and research. Both are key inputs into Council's strategy, policy programme development and decision making processes.

The approach proposes an integrated overview of all the points of contact between Council and stakeholders and community.

As discussed with the Councillor working party and for the purposes of this paper, aspects of engagement that relate to communications and marketing will be addressed through Council's Marketing and Communications Framework, which is currently being finalised. The focus of this paper will therefore be on a future approach to the following three types of engagement:

- The contact people have with Council through our service and facilities (customer engagement)
- The ongoing relationships Council maintains with different communities and sectors (relationship engagement)
- The way we engage people in our decision making (decision-making engagement)

5.3.2 Public Commitment

To signal the Council's commitment to strengthening the way it engages, the proposed approach includes a statement of public commitment in terms of engagement. The public commitment will be based on the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) Core Values and the partnership agreements Council has with its key iwi partners. The draft Public Commitment is in appendix 4. It highlights the purpose of Council's engagement as being 'to deliver what's right'. Please note that officers intend to add appropriate Māori phrases for each of the commitment's headings in the final draft for consultation.

5.3.3 Clear results

The proposed new approach will be strengthened with a dashboard showing engagement 'impact and results'.

The results of a more integrated approach to engagement would be measured by:

- Increases in the **reach** of engagement into the diverse communities of the city
- **More efficient and timely engagement** through the use of the information, feedback and insights Council receives through its everyday services
- **Robust and rigorous engagement** earlier in the life of critical decisions for Council
- **Consistent engagement practice** across the Council
- Increased **partner and community contribution** to community outcomes
- **Increased confidence** in the Council

More reflective evaluation of our practices and the mechanisms we use to engage, along with a regime of regular reporting, is a key aspect of the proposed new approach. As a first step, an evaluation of aspects of our engagement for the Alcohol Management Strategy and Annual Plan is currently underway and will inform the report back to Council on this policy in September. It is also proposed that the results of ongoing monitoring and evaluation will be reported to this Committee and the public through Council's Quarterly Report.

5.3.4 Engagement is led and purposeful

In the November workshop, Councillors expressed a strong desire for Council to identify the key matters that it wants to engage on well in advance. This would also address issues raised by our partners during our early engagement on this work. The advantages include:

- Providing a focus in terms of the policy and project work the Council undertakes over the three year period
- Enabling policy, engagement and research resources to be prioritised
- Providing more planning and lead-in time for major projects and policies
- Providing stakeholders with greater clarity and advance notice of the work we are undertaking
- Enabling major consultation exercises to be scheduled to better meet the needs of key stakeholders

This approach is consistent with the Chief Executive's desire to agree priority areas of focus with Councillors at the beginning of the triennium. It is therefore proposed that officers will hold workshops with Councillors at the start of the triennium to discuss and seek agreement on the priority areas of focus for Council in the subsequent three years. Annually, the Council and business units would also prioritise key activities and decisions into three level of engagement.

1. **Critical strategic questions:**
Each year the Council and its business units will identify the critical few big conversations to advance the development of Wellington. This would be best done as part of its long-term and annual planning processes. Tailored approaches will be designed to enable significant deliberation and engagement with the wider community. The timeframes and resources required for such engagements are large. However, as a result of such engagement, it is likely that more effective programmes of activity will result, greater collaboration and the empowering of stakeholder and community activity will occur, and the Council will find it easier to implement subsequent policies and programmes. The engagement for this level of significant decision would aim to engage broadly and provide significant opportunities for the community to influence the decision making of Council.
2. **Key projects and activities:**
Each year Council and its business units (also through annual planning processes) will identify the key projects that need stakeholder and community involvement. Those stakeholders and communities impacted

on by the issue will be identified. Robust standardised and consistent engagement processes will then be used to ensure they can have a say in what is proposed. This may or may not involve the use of a Special Consultative Procedure. An example of such would be the upcoming consultation on lowering the CBD speed limit.

3. Business as usual and implementation:
Each year the Council needs to undertake targeted consultations (e.g. traffic resolutions) or to inform the public of its intention to implement a policy or programme. This communication should involve consistent and accessible tools (e.g. public notices, information provided through the partner networks, letters to affected parties and other localised, specific communication). This ensures that people are aware of what is planned and are able to raise any objections. A traffic resolution to create a 'no parking area' on a section of suburban road would be an example of such a consultation. The engagement in this level of decision is likely to be more focussed on the provision of good information and 'service' level check before implementation.

5.3.5 Service level engagement

Most contact with the citizens and stakeholders of the Council is through the everyday service activities of Council.

The proposed approach is to, over time, build the capacity of Council to use this daily feedback and contact to build a shared understanding across Council of the current issues and perspectives of citizens. This would be done through using the information Council already collects and to develop a feedback process through team meetings from the insights of staff from their work.

Creating a single Council view of this diverse input will build awareness of community needs and priorities.

5.3.6 Relationship engagement

The Council already has a diverse and rich set of relationships. The proposed approach is to map existing relationships and to create a hierarchy of relationships by type and purpose. This will enable the Council to, over time, better use the networks and reach of our partners to increase our understanding of diverse views and work with the people of Wellington.

5.3.7 Consistent practice

This paper proposes that Council develops and maintains consistent engagement practice. To give enable this, the Council will develop a more detailed engagement 'improvement plan' to build the capability, consistency and efficiency of engagement practice.

5.4 Proposed suite of documents

To give effect to the above approach, it is proposed that the Council develops the following four key documents:

5.4.1 Engagement Policy

A draft revised policy is attached as appendix 5. It details the different elements of the new approach, as outlined above. It is recommended that the policy is revised every three years, and is consulted on as part of the long-term plan.

5.4.2 Public Commitment

This is a new document and concept. It is proposed as a simple public summary of what the public and stakeholders can expect in terms of Council and its engagement. The proposed draft (attached as appendix 4) has been informed by the John Street Protocols and suggested changes from the 11 July workshop with stakeholders.

Those attending the workshop applauded this approach and saw it as Council committing to improve its engagement over time. It stimulated a discussion about whether the commitment applies to Councillors themselves or whether it was about guiding the actions of officers. In response, officers highlighted that local government in New Zealand operated on the basis of a representative democracy and so Councillors should not be bound by the results of community consultation. Given this, the Commitment would primarily drive the approach and actions of officers undertaking engagement activity.

5.4.3 Improvement Plan

To enable the implementation of the Policy and to achieve the aspirations of the Public Commitment, a comprehensive improvement plan is in development. This document will outline a programme of actions to be undertaken across the three types of engagement covered by the policy as follows:

1. Customer engagement

The Council is currently implementing a Council-wide programme of customer surveys using the *GetSmart* tool. The results of these surveys are being used by business units to improve their own services. Business units also have other means of collecting and responding to feedback from service users. This paper contends however, that the citizens of Wellington see the Council as a single organisation and should be able to provide feedback on our activities at any point of contact with our staff. Furthermore, there should be a range of convenient ways for the public to provide feedback to Council. Currently, there is no single point where the view of the public can be fed into so that it can be responded to appropriately and used to inform future development of our programmes and policies.

It is proposed that a processes and associated tools are developed to enable staff and the public to send feedback to a single collection point to enable a 'whole of council' view of what the public is telling us. This information can then be used to stimulate innovation in terms of service delivery as well as improvements to our policies. It is noted that in a recent culture survey of Council staff, the area that staff most wanted to see improvements made was in the area of customer service and improving our services to respond to the needs of customers.

In addition to this, and for the purposes of this paper, the process used to collect and process this feedback should enable Council to identify trends and key issues from the feedback we receive on an ongoing basis. This should then be used to inform policy, programme and strategy development before we undertake public consultation on the topics in question.

2. Relationship engagement

A recent assessment of progress on the Council's Economic Development Strategy identified the need for Council to better manage its relationship within the business and associated sectors. Work is currently underway to develop a more structured approach to relationship management within the Council. This work will be undertaken by the Economic Growth Group as a priority with the resulting framework applied across other sectors with which Council engages. Overall oversight of relationship management activities will sit with the Communications & Marketing team.

3. Decision-making engagement

The third stream of activity within the Improvement Plan will relate to how Council engages stakeholders and the public in our decision-making processes. A number of proposed actions have already been identified including the need to:

- Address inconsistency of process and officer capability through a programme of engagement training
- Include high quality engagement practices as a core competency for defined roles
- Develop an Engagement Guide for Council managers and staff
- Improve publications that are used for engagement so they are user-friendly, in plain English, other languages when necessary and accessible to people with impairments
- Review current engagement mechanisms including reference groups and forums
- Explore and trial new ways of engaging including the use of new engagement tools such as budget calculators
- Make ongoing improvements to the oral submission process
- Establish a review and evaluation process for engagement activities

Officers intend to complete the Improvement Plan this year based on input received from Councillors, Council staff and the public during the consultation period on the draft policy and public commitment. The Council's Consultation

and Engagement team will then oversee progress on the implementation and evaluation of the plan, once it is finalised.

5.4.4 Engagement Guide

A key component of the Improvement Plan will be the development of an Engagement Guide for managers and staff to plan for and undertake engagement activities. This will be heavily informed by the approach and processes recommended by the International Association of Public Participation.

5.5 Consultation

The proposed approach to consulting on the draft Policy and Public Commitment is outlined in appendix 6 to this report.

6. Conclusion

Officers propose that the Council adopts an improved approach to engagement, which has been informed by research and consultation, and guided by the Engagement Working Party. The proposed approach will both improve the consistency of how Council engages and provide external parties with greater clarity on our engagement practices. This approach should culminate in the Council being able to work more effectively with our stakeholders and the community to progress the development of our city.

Contact Officer: *Martin Rodgers, Manager Research, Consultation & Planning*
Lisa Matthews, Senior Advisor, Consultation & Engagement

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1) Strategic fit / Strategic outcome

The policy supports Council's overall vision of *Wellington Towards 2040: Smart Capital* by improving the way we engage the public and stakeholders in developing and delivering on our strategic direction.

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

Engagement activities are undertaken by multiple business units and across multiple projects.

3) Treaty of Waitangi considerations

The Local Government Act 2002 does contain specific provisions in relation to consultation and engagement with Maori. These have specifically been addressed in the draft policy.

4) Decision-making

The recommendations in this paper do not involve 'significant decisions' and so the use of the full Special Consultative Procedure is not proposed. The decisions are primarily operational in nature.

5) Consultation

a) General consultation

The processes used to engage stakeholders in this work are outlined in this paper.

b) Consultation with Maori

Both of Council's mana whenua partners have been spoken to during the development of this paper. They will be consulted again during the consultation period.

6) Legal implications

Council's lawyers have been consulted on the potential implications of the 'engagement commitment' recommended in this paper. Their advice is that neither the Policy nor the Public Commitment is likely to create a legitimate expectation that consultation will occur.

7) Consistency with existing policy

This paper proposes that Council's existing Engagement Policy is replaced by the final version of the draft policy attached to this paper.

Councillors' workshop 1 November 2012

The overall themes resulting from the discussions are outlined below.

One Council

- One point of entry - residents currently have trouble finding their way through the “maze” of Council. If the Council acted as one organisation and not disparate sections, then the needs of residents would be better met.
- There is a need to look at the Council's engagement programme as a whole with an overall calendar for the year of activities/issues that require engagement. It would be a calendar that goes beyond the Policy Forward Programme to include other activities. This would bring different parts of the Council together and provide useful information to Councillors and staff.

Good Process

- Moving to a model of engaging earlier, being clear about what level on the IAP2 Spectrum we are wanting to engage with the community on, enabling the community to define the problem and allowing different views to be heard and resolved.
- Information needs to be accessible and delivered in different formats depending on the audience.
- There needs to be a culture of review and evaluation.

Stakeholders

- Having greater information available about stakeholders across the Council.

Leadership

- To manage reputational issues by building engagement practice within the Council.
- A need to communicate stories about what the Council does.
- Greater use of different types of media including community networks to let people know what is going on.

Outcomes

- Increasingly, the Council will be achieving good engagement outcomes, where people feel happy and feel listened to.
- The Council, as a matter of course, explains decisions and the process that was undertaken to get to the decision.

People and organisations officers interviewed in the development of the engagement policy work.

1. Phil Squires, **Sustainability Trust**
2. Alan Probert, **Enterprise Miramar**
3. Caroline Gordon, **Sport Wellington**
4. **Newtown Residents' Association**
5. **Newtown Business Association**
6. Wayne Wright, **Woodridge Estate Ltd**
7. **Creswick Valley Residents' Association**
8. **Strathmore Residents' Association**
9. **Wellington Council of Social Services**
10. Mohamud Mohamed, **Multicultural Council**
11. **Federation of Progressives and Residents' Associations**
12. Bruce Patterson, **Grenada Village Residents' Association**
13. **The Wellington Youth Council**
14. **Wellington Housing Association of Tenants**
15. **Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust**
16. **Accessibility Advisory Group**
17. Robert Clemens, **Stratum Development**

Activities:

1. Pacific Forum
2. Ethnic Forum (survey)

Appendix 3:

How we are performing currently along with some comparisons with other councils:

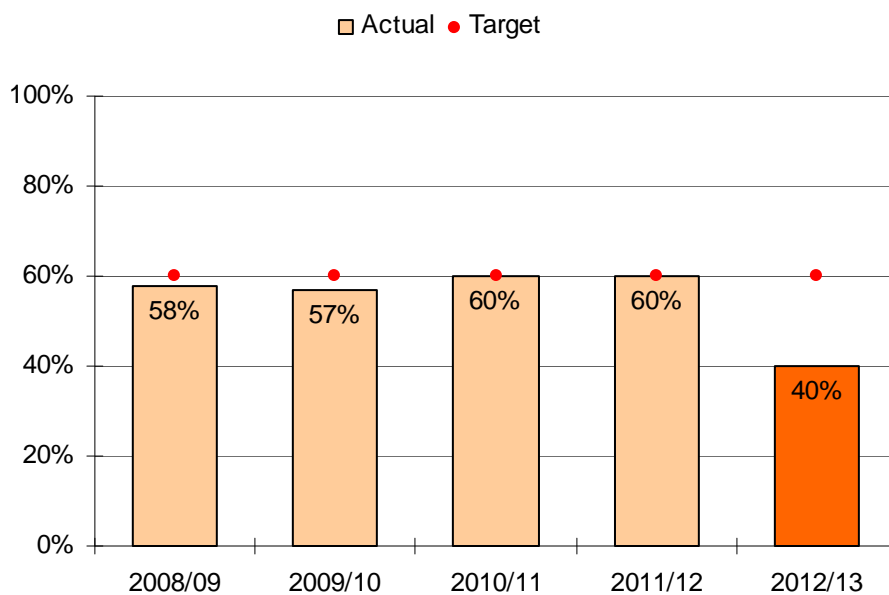
Please note:

This data has been sourced from the recently completed 2013 Residents' Monitoring Survey. In previous years, this has involved 600 residents being surveyed about Council activities and services via CATI (phone interviewing). This year the Wellington City Council established our own research panel, and switched to using an online methodology. The number of respondents was also reduced to 500, as doing so had a minor effect on the results confidence interval.

It is uncertain what proportion of the result differences can be accounted for by the interviewing method or the sample selection, or indeed whether some unknown cause may be influential. From comparison testing on another survey and secondary research it can be said with reasonable confidence however that the methodology change by itself is likely to result in a lower favourability rating for most of the questions; as CATI respondents tend to be more favourable with their ratings and are more likely to use the extreme positive end of the scales (e.g. strongly agree). The time series data is therefore affected, which is why the 2013 results have been visually separated out.

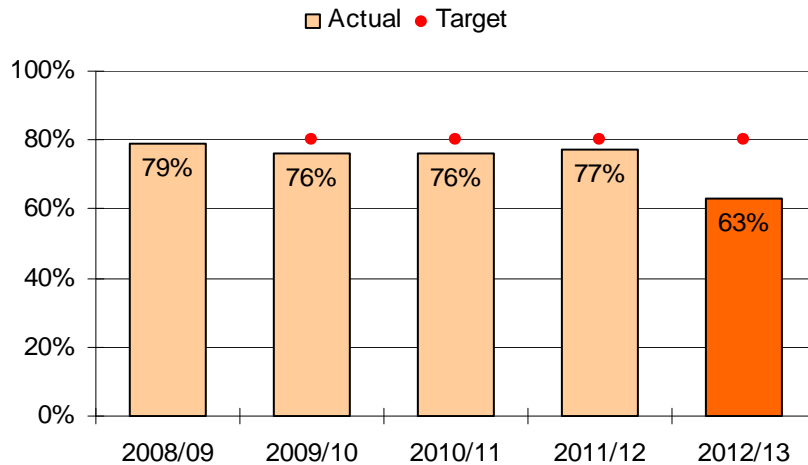
Governance results

Figure 1: Residents (%) satisfaction with the level of consultation (i.e. the right amount)



APPENDIX 3

Figure 2: Residents (%) who are satisfied or neutral (neither satisfied nor dissatisfied) with regard to their involvement with decision-making



Other Councils	Measure	2011	2012 Actual	2012 Target
Auckland Council (Source: 2011/12 Auckland Council Annual Report http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/EN/planspoliciesprojects/reports/annual_report/Documents/annualreport20112012vol1.pdf p.301)	Percentage of residents who believe they have appropriate opportunities to participate in the Council's decision-making process.	23%	24%	50%
Hutt City Council (Source: 2011/12 Annual Report http://www.huttcity.govt.nz/Documents/Annual%20Report%202012.pdf p.22)	Residents' satisfaction with our public consultation: improvement	90%	89%	
Porirua City Council (Source 2011/12 Annual Report http://www.pcc.govt.nz/DownloadFile/Publications/Annual-Report-2011-12/PCC-Annual-Report-2011-12 p.114)	Increase % resident satisfaction with the way Council involves public in decision making	47%	51%	50%

Proposed Public Commitment to how we engage:

Council is committed to working towards effective engagement in partnership with the people of Wellington. This will enable Council to progress its commitment to 'Positioning Wellington as an Affordable, Internationally Competitive City'. This includes a commitment to 'Deliver What's Right'.

1. Te Tiriti o Waitangi / Treaty of Waitangi

We will continue to utilise a range of different mechanisms to engage with the wider Māori community and ensure their views are appropriately represented in our decision making process.

2. Listen first and seek to understand.

We will collect and reflect on what we hear from the people of Wellington before we develop and engage on any proposal.

3. Engage early.

We will engage when the details of a proposal are still at a higher level and there is flexibility to make changes to address the issues raised.

4. Seek diverse perspectives.

We will seek and use the rich diversity of the people of Wellington to enable good problem solving, policy development and decision making.

5. Build commitment and contribution to advancing Wellington.

We will engage in a way that gives the people of Wellington opportunities and processes to contribute actively to advancing Wellington.

6. Give and earn respect.

We will give respect to every one we engage with and work to earn the respect of the people who engage with us.

7. Trust.

We will undertake actions that build trust and credibility for the engagement process and act with integrity when we analyse and present the results of our engagement activities.

8. Transparency.

We will disclosure information relevant to the people's understanding of a proposal. We will be open and clear about the processes for engagement. We will give feedback on how we have responded used and acted on the contribution, advice, information and insights we receive.

9. Monitor

We will monitor and evaluate our engagement practice.

WELLINGTON CITY COUNCIL ENGAGEMENT POLICY

SECTION 1: OVERVIEW

1.1 Policy purpose

Wellington City Council (the Council) is committed to engaging with the people of Wellington and stakeholders. It has developed this engagement policy so that people are able to participate in and contribute to advancing the city.

Engagement provides the Council with a strong base to develop a relationship with Wellington communities. It provides the opportunity for the Council to learn about diverse views, insights and issues by talking with as many of its residents and stakeholders as possible.

Engagement can be both proactive and responsive. It can happen in a number of ways, all of which provide a solid platform for engagement to occur. The platform comprises of:

- how Council undertakes everyday services and activities
- the relationships the Council develops and maintains with its communities and sector groups
- the range of consultation processes it undertakes.

This policy also relates to the integrated approach that the Council takes as an organisation to continue building and strengthening its engagement with its communities through all of these channels.

1.2 Policy overview

This policy is the first part of four key elements of the Council's engagement practice. It will inform

- a *Public Commitment*, the commitment by Council to engage with its people and stakeholders of the city
- an *Improvement Plan* to further develop the Council's engagement capability
- an *Engagement Guide* for Council managers and staff.

These will be published by the Council as supporting documents to this policy.

Policy	Public Commitment	Improvement Plan	Engagement Guide
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal commitment of the Council to its integrated engagement practice • Reviewed every three years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple public summary of what the public and stakeholders can expect in terms of the Council and its engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan to improve engagement practice and build confidence in the engagement practice • Reviewed every year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guide to managers and staff about how to plan for and undertake engagement • Outline of responsibilities

SECTION 2: CONTEXT

2.1 Policy goals

Council managers and staff will be guided by a set of goals when they engage with the people of Wellington and stakeholders of the city. The Council will:

- be in touch with the values, concerns and aspirations of the people of Wellington
- shape its proposals and decisions based on the involvement of, and feedback from, the people of Wellington
- partner with key organisations to advance the city
- empower the people of Wellington to contribute to advancing the city

2.2 Legal obligations

The Council takes into account many factors in determining its activities and how it involves the community. Factors include legislative requirements, including those in the Local Government Act 2002 and the Resource Management Act 1991, Council bylaws, policies and plans, and the Council's role.

The Council affirms its obligations to the involvement of Māori in decision making processes as set down in the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA) which includes recognition of the Treaty of Waitangi, for example: Section 4 - Treaty of Waitangi "In order to recognise and respect the Crown's responsibility to take appropriate account of the Treaty of Waitangi and to maintain and improve opportunities for Māori to contribute to local government decision-making processes..."

At different times, the Council can be a decision maker, regulator, service provider, licensing entity, funder or an enforcement entity. Sometimes the Council can be acting as a community advocate or participating in another organisation's decision process. Consequently, this policy and accompanying documents take a principle based approach to Council's role. This enables the public to have clear expectations of how Council will engage despite the varying contexts it operates within.

Consultation is a subset of engagement. This policy sets out Council's aspirations around engagement. It does not mean that Council will need to consult before every decision.

2.3 Engagement with Māori

Council will continue to work with the city's two mana whenua iwi, the Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust and Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira Incorporated, to ensure their contributions are represented and their status is publicly recognised.

Council acknowledges the unique status of Māori and will continue to utilise a range of different mechanisms to engage with the wider Māori community and ensure their views are appropriately represented in the decision making process. We are committed to providing relevant information to inform Māori contribution and improve their access to Council's engagement and decision making processes.

SECTION 3: ORGANISATIONAL APPROACH

3.1 Informed engagement

The Council has a commitment to engaging with its stakeholders and the communities of Wellington. As well as developing and publishing the *Public Commitment*, an *Improvement Plan* and an *Engagement Guide*, it will use the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum and decision orientation approach as the foundation for its engagement. The spectrum will help the Council to decide what type of engagement is required to enable decisions to be made.

IAP2 five-step spectrum

Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Provide balanced and objective information to assist people to understand the issue	Obtain public feedback on analysis, options and/or decisions	Work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are understood and considered	Partner with the public on each aspect of the decision, including the development of options and identification of the preferred solution	Public makes final decisions

3.2 Spheres of engagement and approaches

Engagement that is initiated by Council will focus on engaging stakeholders. The Council will ensure that when proactive engagement is planned, it will use the following 'spheres of engagement' to help determine the relative priority and resourcing of its work. It will also ensure that clear and consistent messages are given to foreshadow the significance of decisions to be made.

Sphere	Purpose	Description	Approach
A	Critical strategic questions	Each year the Council and its business units will establish the critical few big conversations to advance the City through collaboration and empowering stakeholder and community activity.	Tailored approaches designed for strategically significant deliberation and engagement.
B	Key projects and activities	Each year Council and its business units will identify the key projects that need stakeholder and community involvement.	Robust standardised and consistent engagement processes.
C	Business as usual and implementation point activities	The Council will use all of its processes to listen, and capture the views, concerns and values of the people, to inform its policies and actions.	Use of efficient and effective tools and points of contact.

SECTION 4: RELATIONSHIP-FOCUSSED ENGAGEMENT

This engagement approach emphasises the importance of Council's network of relationships with key stakeholder, community and neighbourhood groups. These relationships enable the Council to connect with a broad set of perspectives, which reflect the needs and aspirations of different communities of interest.

On a continuing basis, the Council and its business units will identify key partners and relationships needed to advance the development of the city. These relationships will be maintained using a range of agreements, memoranda of understanding, meetings and forums.

One of the key outcomes of this engagement approach is to partner with key organisations as hosts for the key conversations for the city. Critical partners will include:

- Mana whenua, iwi and Māori organisations
- Community and business stakeholder organisations
- Government and education sector.

Relationships with key stakeholder, community and neighbourhood groups can occur at different levels within the Council – governance (the Mayor and Councillors), the executive, and at the operational level.

Knowledge gained from Council's relationships will be effectively co-ordinated and managed internally to enhance the outcomes of Wellington City.

SECTION 5: SERVICE-FOCUSSED ENGAGEMENT

People in Wellington engage with the Council through everyday Council services, Council staff and contractors and by using Council facilities.

Service focussed engagement relates to the everyday comments, feedback and communication received by the Council. It collects information through:

- personal service interactions
- the service and contact centres
- stakeholder meetings
- the media and social media
- public comment.

These provide a rich source of information for the Council to use not only as part of its engagement processes but also in relation to its business planning and innovation processes. Consequently, at the start of any engagement process, the Council will be able to have more meaningful discussions because it will be better informed by what people have already said about the issue at hand.

SECTION 6: DECISION-MAKING FOCUSED ENGAGEMENT

The Council is responsible for making many decisions on behalf of the people of Wellington and stakeholders of the City. As part of decision-making engagement, the Council will engage with stakeholders to ensure they are able to make their views known and that they are able to inform and influence the decisions. This part of the policy describes how Council would like to engage in relation to different types of decisions. From time to time Council needs to make decisions under time constraints or in circumstances which need to be taken into account when Council is determining how it will engage and/or consult (if at all).

6.1 How will the Council engage?

The Council's decision-making activities will be prioritised as either:

Critical strategic questions – big conversations

The Council will design tailored approaches to specifically guide these strategically significant conversations. Stakeholders, mana whenua, communities, neighbourhood groups and individuals will be part of the conversation. Activities will be tailored to the issue and enable large scale participation.

Key projects and activities:

The Council will use robust standardised and consistent engagement processes. This may or may not involve the use of a Special Consultative Procedure. Affected groups, individuals and stakeholders will be asked to participate.

The Council acknowledges that the people of Wellington engage with the Council all the time in different ways. This 'total engagement approach' means that information gained from these engagements will inform Council's decision-making processes and increase the impact of people in decision-making.

In particular, the Council will review available information before determining the issues for the critical strategic questions and key projects and activities.

6.2 Who will the Council engage with?

When the Council decides the critical questions for the big conversations each year, it will identify the people of Wellington and stakeholders that are likely to be affected by or have an interest in the decisions to be made.

The Council will identify participants from its relationship and service focussed engagement processes. These approaches will also give the Council an indication of what has already been said or conveyed by those identified about the matters at hand.

The Council will ensure, as is appropriate and relevant, that representation is obtained from across community and sector groups and that engagement is not dominated by single organisations or sectors of the community. It will also involve participants who can provide information and expertise the Council may not otherwise have access to.

Where groups claim to represent a community or sector, the Council will encourage them to provide:

APPENDIX 5

- evidence of the authority to represent the community or sector, including a summary of the people and organisations they represent.
- information on how they formed their position on the issue concerned.

There may be situations where the Council may want a specific group to be involved, but finds it is limited in doing so as the group does not have the capacity or skills needed to engage to an appropriate level in the process. In these cases, the Council will consider providing opportunities or support that will enable the group to enhance its ability to be involved.

Wellington city stakeholders, community and neighbourhood groups have their own relationship with communities and individuals. From time to time, the Council may ask for assistance and support to reach these communities and individuals to ensure that their views are represented in the decision-making process.

SECTION 7 – POLICY TERM AND REVIEW

The Council will review the policy and *Public Commitment* every three years. These will be amended and confirmed through public consultation as part of the long-term plan.

Engagement Policy consultation plan

Project details

Project name	Update of the Engagement Policy	BU/Team	Consultation and Engagement
Project Leader	Martin Rodgers/Lisa Matthews	Project Tm	

Overview

What are you specifically consulting on and why? Include or attach all background information

Two documents are being released for public consultation: the draft Engagement Policy and the draft Public Commitment.

These documents are the result of the decision to update the Engagement Policy after work done with Councillors and the Councillors' Working Party to improve how the Council engages with its citizens.

Planning

When will the consultation run?	Start	6 August	End	5 September
---------------------------------	-------	----------	-----	-------------

The purpose of consultation is to collect the public's response to Council proposal. Who are the stakeholders/interest groups that you will need to include in this consultation process?

Wellington City Council staff, Wellingtonians, key stakeholders

What methods will you use to ensure that your consultation process reaches a wide audience?³

The proposed approach to the consultation is as follows:

- Both documents are made available through the Council's website, service centre and libraries.
- The draft policy and public Commitment will be featured in an edition of Council's *Our Wellington* page.
- The draft documents with a covering letter will be sent to key stakeholder groups including residents' associations, reference and advisory groups and those interviewed in the development of these papers.
- The use of focus groups to better understand current views of Council's engagement and how improvements can be made.
- The use of Our Capital Voice
- It is not proposed that oral hearings are held in relation to this policy.
- Key stakeholder groups, other than those interviewed in the development of the documents, will be sent the documents and invited to meet with officers to discuss them.

³ Consider a range of different methods depending on your consultation. Flyer drops, partnering with community groups to run meetings, contacting Residents Associations.

APPENDIX 6

Talk to Treaty Relations about how to work with our iwi partners and the wider Māori community in your consultation. Record the advice given below.

We met with Port Nicolson Settlement Trust to discuss and we are planning to meet with other Māori organisations during the consultation.

What are the issues that the public are likely to have with the consultation topic? What efforts will you make to inform and explain?

Issues	Mitigation
That the Council doesn't engage well	That the policy will ensure better engagement
That the Council won't abide by its own policy	The Action plan that supports the policy will be reviewed yearly