REPORT 6
(1215/52/IM)

DRAFT INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY POLICY

1. Purpose of Report

This report presents for the Committee's consideration:

- a draft of the e-Democracy and e-Community (previously referred to as "Community ICT") components of the Council's Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Policy
- a plan for the consultation exercise to be undertaken on the draft policy.

2. Executive Summary

The draft e-Democracy and e-Community components of the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Policy have been developed and are ready for public consultation, if the Committee agrees.

The Draft ICT Policy (attached as Appendix 1) describes the Council's role in utilising current and new ICTs so that Wellingtonians are able to actively participate in an economy and society that has an increasing reliance on ICT.

The e-Community component of the policy focuses on ensuring that disadvantaged communities in Wellington do not miss out on the economic, social and cultural benefits that technologies can provide. It aims to ensure no one is excluded from the burgeoning "knowledge society" because of a lack of access to ICT or to the skills they need to use it.

The e-Democracy component of the policy focuses on the opportunities technology presents for enhancing and increasing citizen involvement and engagement in Council decision-making processes. ICT has the potential to break down barriers to participation as it increases information availability, can provide new channels for dialogue between citizens and elected representatives, and can make the process of making a formal submission more convenient.

It is proposed that consultation on the Draft ICT Policy is incorporated within the 2006-2016 Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) consultation as any new initiatives to implement the policy will be included in the Draft LTCCP document. Concurrent targeted consultation will be undertaken on the draft policy to ensure that identified stakeholders and interested individuals and groups receive a copy for their comment.

3.   Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

1.   *Receive the information.*

2.   *Agree that the Council's aim for being involved in e-Democracy is "to encourage an increased and enhanced level of engagement in the Council's decision-making processes and to provide efficient access to Council services".*

3.   *Agree that the Council's aim for being involved in e-Community is "to build capability and capacity in the community so that all can participate in an economy and society that has an increasing reliance on ICT".*

4.   *Note that funding for the implementation of the e-Democracy and e-Community components of the Draft Information and Communications Technology Policy will be considered through the 2006-2016 Long Term Council Community Plan new initiatives process.*

5.   *Agree to the draft e-Democracy and e-Community components of the Information and Communications Technology Policy, attached as Appendix 1 to this report, for the purposes of undertaking public consultation.*

6.   *Agree to incorporate the consultation process for the e-Democracy and e-Community components of the Draft ICT Policy with the consultation process to be undertaken for the 2006-2016 Draft LTCCP, noting that concurrent targeted consultation will be undertaken to consult on the Draft ICT Policy alone.*

7.   *Note that the financial information to be included in the Draft ICT Policy consultation document will depend on the Committee's decisions in the Draft LTCCP deliberations being held 1-3 March 2006.*

8.   *Agree that officers may amend the Draft ICT Policy document to reflect the outcome of the Draft LTCCP deliberations on 1-3 March 2006.*

9.   *Agree to the consultation plan attached as Appendix 2 to this report.*

4.   Background

4.1 Council's ICT Policy

The Draft ICT Policy is attached at Appendix 1 for the Committee's consideration. The Council has been developing this policy to describe how it will take advantage of the opportunities that current and new technologies provide.

This policy updates the InfoCity Strategy agreed to by the Council in 1995[1], taking into account the changes experienced since then not only in technology, but general attitudes to technology and user behaviour.

The Draft ICT Policy outlines the Council's role in ICT and how the Policy will contribute to the Council's proposed new strategic direction for 2006-2016 (including the strategic priorities for 2006-09).

The ICT Policy has three components to it, which focus on how ICT can be used to:
- enhance the city's economic development
- enable community development in the city – particularly through building capability and capacity (e-Community)
- promote enhanced and increased participation in civic decision-making (e-Democracy). This is a new component that was not part of the InfoCity Strategy.

The e-Community and e-Democracy components of the Policy are drafted with aims and objectives developed in both areas. The economic development component, however, has proven more complex to develop and has not reached a draft stage. This is mainly because of the high cost and risk associated with getting meaningful gains in the ICT infrastructure (particularly broadband) projects being considered in this area.

4.2   Government's Digital Strategy

The release of the government's Digital Strategy has provided an impetus for the Council to consult on the e-Community and e-Democracy components of the Policy separate from the economic development component.

The Digital Strategy looks at how ICT can be used to enhance all aspects of New Zealanders' lives. Through its strategy the government sends strong signals that local government is an important partner in enabling it to meet some of the strategy's key outcomes. Most significantly, the government has established two new contestable seed funds that will be used to support such partnerships:
- the Community Partnership Fund – a fund to support grassroots initiatives that will build ICT skills in communities and regions and help create distinctive New Zealand content
- the Broadband Challenge – a fund to enable the roll-out of affordable broadband (high speed bandwidth) in the regions' centres, based on competitive open-access principles.

The Community Partnership Fund directly fits with the objectives the Council has identified in the draft e-Community component of the Policy. Officers have applied to the fund for one of the potential new initiatives the Council could undertake to implement this policy. There is considerable scope and opportunity for the Council to also bid for funding in other areas, for example, for the hubs proposed in section 5.4.2 of the following discussion.

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[1] This Strategy resulted in the Council supporting a number of initiatives – including the CityLink CBD broadband roll-out, (e)-Vision, the creation of a Wellington City portal (W4), the establishment of the 2020 Communications Trust, the Smart Newtown pilot programme, the Wellington Community Network, and Computers for Communities programme.

5. Discussion

5.1 Strategic Fit

The Council is proposing to adopt a new strategic direction for 2006-2016 in the upcoming LTCCP process. This strategic direction is described within seven draft strategies, which together provide the Council with a set of long-term (10 year) outcomes and short term (3 year) strategic priorities.

These outcomes and strategic priorities provide a new context for understanding the Council's current business and for determining priorities.

The **e-Community** component of the policy falls under the *Draft Social and Recreation Strategy*, and is able to contribute to the Council meeting the following outcomes:

- Outcome 6: More actively engaged – Wellington residents will be actively engaged in their communities, and in recreation and leisure activities

- Outcome 7: Better connected – Wellington will offer excellent access to a sound social infrastructure that supports high levels of social cohesion.

e-Community will also directly contribute to the Council meeting the strategic priority of "building capability and capacity within the community to promote social cohesion and sound social infrastructure".

The **e-Democracy** component of the policy falls under the *Draft Governance Strategy*. e-Democracy contributes to the Council meeting the following outcomes of the Strategy:

- Outcome 5: More inclusive – Wellingtonians will be actively involved in the future direction of their communities

- Outcome 6: More actively engaged –
  - Wellingtonians will operate an open and honest decision-making process that generates confidence and trust in the democratic system
  - Information required by citizens and groups will be easily accessible, to enable participation in the community

e-Democracy will also directly contribute to the Council meeting the following strategic priorities for 2006-09:
- improving the transparency and quality of processes for public involvement in (civic) decision-making
- improving communication with communities.

5.3 e-Democracy

e-Democracy, or electronic democracy, refers to how the Council will use ICT to facilitate and encourage participation in its local decision-making processes, as well as to increase efficiency by providing Council services online.

In November 2003 the Democracy Subcommittee developed the aims and objectives for the Council's involvement in e-Democracy. While the aim is in line with the proposed outcomes and strategic priorities of the *Draft Governance Strategy*, it does not fully reflect the Subcommittee's discussion on the Council's position in providing its services online. As such, officers recommend the aim is revised to include the following words (new words added in bold):

"*to encourage an increased and enhanced level of engagement in the Council's decision-making processes **and to provide efficient access to Council services**.*"

Key objectives of the policy are to:
* provide easily accessible information
* provide a variety of avenues for the public to engage with elected members and officers
* encourage broader consultation
* enhance the accountability of elected members
* increase the Council's efficiency by providing Council services online.

5.3.1   Links with the Communication and Participation Project

The e-Democracy component of the ICT Policy is closely related to the Council's Communication and Participation Project because of its focus on how the Council can improve the way it engages and communicates with residents, community groups and businesses, and how it involves them in its decision-making processes.

The Communication and Participation Project is currently due to be considered by this Committee on 9 March 2006. Investigations in both of these projects have indicated that new technologies will be an effective means for addressing some of the issues identified.

5.3.2   Implementing e-Democracy

Current Initiatives
The Council has been advancing its e-Democracy capability over the past few years through the information and functions it has made available on the website.[2] Recent additions to the website include:

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[2] The public is able to access elected members' contact details (including email addresses), accountability information (annual plan, annual report), policy and bylaws information, meeting schedules (including reports and minutes), a consultation schedule, information on all of the Council's services. Members of the public can also make an electronic submission for Council consultations (This function has been used increasingly over the past few years. On average, 30% of submissions are now received via the website - the range from November 2004 to date was 3% through to 58%).

- information on how to participate in the Council's decision-making processes in a number of different languages
- a web alert subscription service, where people can elect to receive email notifications about new content in areas of interest to individual users
- a "fix-it" page the public can use to inform the Council of a problem.

The Council also supports the Wellington Community Network (WCN)[3] which not only addresses community groups' ICT needs but doubles as an e-Democracy tool as it enables community groups to have an online presence and voice, and to access online facilities, information and programmes they might not otherwise be able to.

Additional Initiatives

New funding for additional e-Democracy initiatives is being proposed through the LTCCP new initiatives process. Evaluations undertaken on international e-Democracy initiatives have been considered to help officers determine what initiatives are likely to be successful and/or appropriate for the Council to implement. A summary of these evaluations is provided in Appendix 3.[4]

The additional projects that are being considered for implementation are listed in Appendix 4. e-Voting is not explored as a possible initiative as the Local Electoral Act 2001 does not currently provide for online voting (e-Voting).

Costings on the total e-Democracy "package" recommended to implement the policy will be provided to this Committee as part of the LTCCP new initiatives process.

5.4 e-Community

The e-Community component of the policy focuses on ensuring that disadvantaged communities in Wellington do not miss out on the economic, social and cultural benefits that technologies can provide. It aims to ensure no one is excluded from the burgeoning "knowledge society" because of a lack of access to ICT or to the skills they need to use it.

In May 2004 the Community, Health and Recreation Committee developed the aims and objectives of the proposed policy. The aim was stated as seeking to *enable all to participate in an economy and society that has an increasing reliance on ICT.*

Given the policy's fit with the strategic priority of building capability in communities, officers recommend that the aim of the e-Community component of the policy is expanded as follows (new words in bold):

*"**To build capability and capacity in the community so that** all can participate in an economy and society that has an increasing reliance on ICT."*

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[3] An electronic community network that provides website hosting to over 580 community groups, as well as content management support, training and email and discussion forum facilities.

[4] Appendix 5 also provides information about potential projects by outlining a list of the "Top Ten e-Democracy Projects" governments should be implementing, according to e-Democracy practitioner Steven Clift.

Key objectives of the policy are to:
- raise awareness to the benefits ICT provide
- increase access to those who do not have ready access
- provide affordable training and support.

5.4.1 Implementing e-Community

The implementation of the policy is focused on establishing new initiatives on a cost-sharing basis through partnerships with not for profit groups, the private and philanthropic sector and central government. Of particular note is the "Community Partnership Fund" established under the government's Digital Strategy. This fund offers seed funding to e-Community initiatives that are based on genuine partnerships, cost-sharing, and which are ideally supported by agreed ICT policies (i.e. a commitment to sustainable funding is attached).[5]

Current Initiatives
In 2005/06, the Council is funding Project C592: Community Computing $223,500 for the following initiatives:
- three community computing hubs in Newtown[6] ($78,500)
- a grant for the Wellington 2020 Communications Trust (W2020)[7], which runs the Wellington Community Network on the Council's behalf, provides advice on community ICT ($145,000) and implements projects to install hubs and other e-Community initiatives.

Both of these projects continue to meet the objectives outlined in the draft policy:
- The Newtown hubs provide access to and training on ICT in one of the city's most ICT disadvantaged suburbs. The hubs continue to be well used and receive positive feedback.[8] Although there is no intention for more than one hub to be provided per suburb in the future, there is significant support in the community to keep all of these hubs operational. The ongoing usage and continued support for all of the hubs, however, will be regularly monitored.
- The WCN addresses the ICT access and use issues of community and not-for-profit groups seeking a website presence. It has shown consistent growth over the past four years and is currently undergoing major development that will further enhance the service.

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[5] At the time of writing this report, officers have submitted an "expression of interest" (stage 1 of applying) to the Fund for a proposal to establish computer rooms in two Council Housing complexes.
[6] The hubs provide free access to computers and the internet as well as free training programmes. The hubs are located in the Pacific Island Network Centre (10 computers), Newtown Community and Cultural Centre (six computers), and the Newtown Library (three computers, without internet access). In the past year, the following changes have occurred:
- the PINC and Newtown Library computers have been upgraded
- NCCC is being used more effectively – with regular school homework groups using it.
[7] W2020 was created in April 2002. Its main objective is "to empower all citizens of the Wellington region by ICT, and strengthen their communities through full participation in the information society." Prior to W2020's creation, community ICT initiatives in Wellington were run by the 2020 Communications Trust, which has now been superseded by both W2020 and a new National 2020 Trust, which now carries out national projects.
[8] From July 2004 to June 2005, 344 new internet users and 169 new students registered at the hubs. Between April and June 2005, 2,089 computer sessions were logged on the computers at PINC.

Funding for both of these projects is up for review at the end of the 2006/07 financial year.

Additional Initiatives
New funding for additional e-Community initiatives is being proposed through the LTCCP new initiatives process. Information on the new projects is attached at Appendix 6. Costings on the total e-Community "package" recommended to implement the policy will be provided to this Committee as part of the LTCCP new initiatives process.

5.2   Consultation Process

The Draft ICT Policy is currently part of two processes:
- the process that has been undertaken to develop the draft policy – which would usually conclude with a consultation process for stakeholders and the general public
- the LTCCP process for determining whether or not new initiative funding for the policy's implementation will be included in the coming year's annual plan and beyond – which includes a full public consultation process.

As such, if the Strategy and Policy Committee (SPC) agrees to include the new initiative funding for the implementation of the Draft ICT Policy into the Draft LTCCP, information on the Draft ICT Policy will be spread between two different documents:
- the financial implications of implementing the policy will be in the Draft LTCCP document
- the policy aims and objectives the Council is seeking to achieve will be in the Draft ICT Policy.

In addition to the processes associated with LTCCP consultation, a targeted consultation process will be undertaken to ensure all identified stakeholders and interested individuals/groups are directly asked for their comments. The Draft LTCCP document will also state that the Draft ICT Policy is available to anyone interested in providing more detailed feedback (note: it is not possible to incorporate the draft policy into Draft LTCCP document due to its length).

The consultation plan (attached at Appendix 2) outlines the key messages this targeted consultation will have, identifies the stakeholders who will be sent a copy of the draft policy, and provides a timeline for the consultation (which fits with the LTCCP process timeline).

6.   Conclusion

A draft of the e-Community and e-Democracy components of the ICT Policy and a consultation plan for the policy is attached for the Committee's consideration.

The Committee should consider the documents and amend them as deemed appropriate.

Contact Officer: *Adele Gibson, Policy Adviser*

Supporting Information

1)Strategic Fit / Strategic Outcome

The e-Community component of the ICT Policy fits under the Council's proposed Draft Social Strategy, which will be considered by the Council as part of its 2006-2016 LTCCP process.

The e-Democracy component of the policy fits with the Council's draft Governance Strategy, which also will be considered by the Council through the 2006-2016 LTCCP process.

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

This is covered in sections 5.3.4 (e-Democracy) and 5.4.2 (e-Community) of the report.

3) Treaty of Waitangi considerations

Members of the Maori community will fall into the target groups outlined as part of the e-Community policy, as well as the "hard-to-reach" groups identified in the e-Democracy policy.

4) Decision-Making

This report does not require the Committee to make a "significant" decision.

5) Consultation
a)General Consultation

A consultation plan is attached as Appendix 2.

b) Consultation with Maori

Mana whenua and the wider Maori community will be consulted.

6) Legal Implications

Not applicable.

7) Consistency with existing policy

The ICT Policy will provide the Council with an update of the InfoCity Strategy adopted by the Council in 1995. The ICT Policy will be consistent with other current Council policies.

Appendix 1

DRAFT INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECNOLOGY POLICY

Wellington City Council

Consultation Foreword

What do you think?

The Council has been developing an Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Policy. Drafts of the e-Community and e-Democracy components of the policy have been completed and the Council wants to know what you think about them.

At the back of this document is a freepost submission form with some questions we'd like your feedback on. We want to know:
- what you think about the aims and objectives of the policy
- what projects you would most like to see implemented as part of the policy.

The elected Council will read your comments and take them into account when they are making their decision on the final policy.

Submissions on the policy close **5pm, Friday 12 May 2006**. Submissions can be made on the attached freepost form, online at www.Wellington.govt.nz, or sent by email to adele.gibson@wcc.govt.nz.

You also have the opportunity to provide your views in person to the Strategy and Policy Committee on **17-19 May 2006**.

If you have any questions about this draft Policy, please feel free to contact either:

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SECTION 1: Overview

1.1   Introduction

Information and Communications Technology (ICT) has already changed the way many Wellington residents live, work and play, and the Council believes it has further potential to enhance the lives of Wellingtonians.

ICT includes electronic information processing technologies such as computers and the internet (including email) as well as cellular, digital and wireless technologies and fixed line telecommunications. The Council believes these technologies have the ability to:

- enhance the city's economic development – by providing a telecommunications infrastructure that enables new opportunities for innovation, increased productivity and an enhanced quality of life

- contribute to the well-being of the community – by building capability and enabling individuals and communities to develop economically, socially, and culturally

- enhance and increase engagement in local democracy by enabling individuals and communities to be linked to local government and local networks.

The ICT Policy is divided into three separate, but interrelated, areas:
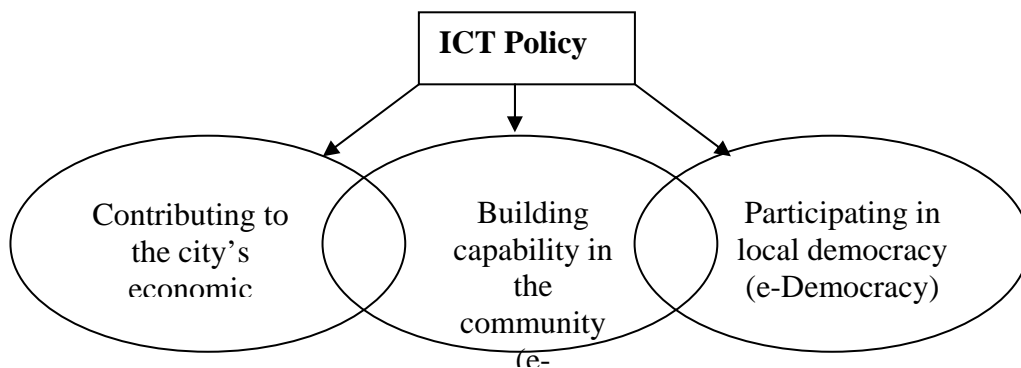
At this stage the Council is consulting on the draft e-Community and e-Democracy components of the policy. No date has been set for consulting on the economic development component, although we anticipate that this may be late in 2006.

The e-Community component of the policy focuses on ensuring that disadvantaged communities in Wellington do not miss out on the economic, social and cultural benefits that technologies can provide. Access to ICT, and the ability to use it, is increasingly critical for accessing information and resources. The e-Community component of the policy aims to ensure no one is excluded from the burgeoning "knowledge society" due to a lack of access or skills.

The e-Democracy component of the policy focuses on the opportunities technology presents for increasing citizen involvement and engagement in Council processes.

ICT has the potential to break down social, geographic, physical and economic barriers to participation as it makes information readily available and can provide new channels for dialogue between citizens and elected representatives. The e-Democracy component of the policy aims to enhance and increase participation in the Council's decision-making processes as well as provide efficient access to Council services.

1.2 Why is the Council involved in ICT?

The Council has been involved in encouraging the deployment and use of ICT in Wellington City since 1995 when it first adopted its InfoCity Strategy.[9]

In 1995 the Council's involvement was based on the premise that it was uniquely situated to provide leadership to the business and community sectors in the take up and application of emerging technologies. The Council saw that emerging technologies provided it with new opportunities to:
- accelerate economic development
- enhance the achievement of social and community development principles
- provide a new "frontier" for business and community development.

ICT provides opportunities for the city's development – economically and socially, and is a useful tool for participation in civic decision-making processes.

The Council recognises that market gaps still exist – new technologies are not being deployed as quickly as might be desirable and the cost of technology has not sufficiently lowered to enable all businesses, communities and households to readily purchase ICT.

The Council is in a unique role – it can influence and bring together business and community sectors, while also being able to work closely with government agencies to achieve aims beneficial to all.

The Council's involvement in ICT builds on its commitment to the "Global Cities Dialogue" – through which the Council recognised that cities have a role in building a fair society and made a commitment to improving the quality of life and work of individuals, the quality and cost effectiveness of processes and services and ensuring effective progress towards sustainable development.

1.3 Strategic Fit

The Council has been developing a new strategic direction for 2006-2016. A set of seven draft strategies have been developed that express the outcomes the Council wants to achieve for the city over the next 10 years. The outcomes are deemed to be key attributes that Wellington will need to demonstrate if it is to fulfil its "Creative

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[9] This Strategy resulted in the Council supporting a number of initiatives – including the CityLink CBD broadband roll-out, (e)-Vision, the creation of a Wellington City portal (W4), the establishment of the 2020 Communications Trust, the Smart Newtown pilot programme, the Wellington Community Network, and Computers for Communities programme.

Wellington – Innovative Capital" vision and establish and maintain a global competitive advantage into the future. The strategies also identify the areas that the Council wants to give specific priority to over the next three years.

The Council will be considering adopting these strategies through the process of determining the 2006-2016 Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP). They will be consulted on during from 12 April to 12 May 2006 as part of the Draft LTCCP document.

The proposed strategies, outcomes, and strategic priorities that this policy contributes to are outlined in the policies below.

1.4 Links with other strategies

This policy has close links with the following strategies:

The Digital Strategy
The government's Digital Strategy looks at how ICT can be used to enhance all aspects of New Zealanders' lives. Through its strategy the government sends strong signals that local government will be an important partner in enabling it to meet some of the strategy's key outcomes. Most significantly, the government has established two new contestable seed funds that will be used to support such partnerships:
- the *Community Partnership Fund* – a fund to support grassroots initiatives that will build ICT skills in communities and regions, as well as help create distinctive New Zealand content online
- the *Broadband Challenge* – a fund to enable the roll-out of affordable broadband (high speed bandwidth) in the regions' centres, based on competitive open-access principles.

Strategic Plan for e-Local Government
The plan aims to enable New Zealand local government to be a world leader in e-local government. The plan focuses on how:
- access to local government information and services can be made easier
- participation in local government democracy can be increased
- local government can provide leadership in e-business initiatives.

Draft Wellington Regional Strategy
The Wellington region's local authorities are joining together to create a shared vision for the region. The "unlocking economic potential" focus area of the draft Strategy has a close relationship with the economic development component of the ICT Policy as its main aims are to plug the region's telecommunications infrastructure gaps and connect the networks.

1.5 Review

The ICT area is witnessing rapid change not just in technological capability, but also in attitudes to technology and user behaviour. Things seen as challenges now may not

be so in a short space of time. Because ICT evolves so rapidly, this policy will be reviewed every three years to ensure that:

- the Council's involvement is still necessary
- the policy is targeted to emerging ICT needs
- new technologies, and the new challenges they may present, are taken into account.

SECTION 2 – ICT and Economic Development

2.1   Introduction

The Council's draft aims and objectives for this component of the policy are still under development. A separate public consultation process will take place once this has been achieved.

SECTION 3 – ICT and Community Development

3.1   Policy Aim

Technology provides opportunities for individuals and communities to gain new capabilities that can positively impact on their lives economically, socially and culturally. ICT has the potential to improve quality of life, educational and employment opportunities, and provide access to timely and cost effective services.

However, there are communities and individuals in Wellington that do not have access to ICT or the skills and confidence to use it, be it due to economic, social, physical or cultural circumstances. Many of these communities and individuals are already disadvantaged in other ways and risk being further disadvantaged as current and new technologies become increasingly prevalent.

The e-Community component of the policy seeks to minimise the division between those who do and do not have access to ICT, with its main aim being:

"To build capability and capacity in the community so that all can participate in an economy and society that has an increasing reliance on ICT."

3.2   Strategic Fit

The e-Community policy falls under the *Draft Social and Recreation Strategy*. e-Community will contribute to the Council meeting the following outcomes of the Strategy:

- Outcome 6: More actively engaged – Wellington residents will be actively engaged in their communities, and in recreation and leisure activities

- Outcome 7: Better connected – Wellington will offer excellent access to a sound social infrastructure that supports high levels of social cohesion.

e-Community will also directly contribute to the Council meeting the strategic priority of "building capability and capacity within the community to promote social cohesion and sound social infrastructure".

3.3   Analysis of Wellington's Community ICT Environment

Information on ICT usage in Wellington is currently sourced from Statistic New Zealand's census results from 2001. Based on these results, the communities of interest and identity in Wellington least likely to have household access to the internet are:
- Pacific Island
- Maori
- people in low income households

- households with only one parent
- households that rent from a city council or Housing New Zealand
- people aged 65 years and over
- people with no or low qualifications or poor literacy
- unemployed people
- refugees and migrants
- people with disabilities.

The geographical communities least likely to have household internet access are Grenada North, Kilbirnie, Lyall Bay, Berhampore, Newtown, Strathmore, the Aro and Nairn Street areas and Miramar/Maupuia.

In 2004, the Council undertook an initial needs assessment in Wellington's three most ICT deprived communities (Newtown/Berhampore, Kilbirnie/Lyall Bay and Grenada North). This assessment sought to gain an insight into the perceived barriers facing people in using ICT. These were identified as:
- practical (such as lack of access to computers)
- emotional/attitudinal (such as fear of computers)
- cultural barriers to ICT usage (such as needing to learn how to use computers in a language other than English).

The main reasons why people thought they would use ICT was to:
- keep in touch with friends, family and cultural groups via email
- keep up-to-date with news and information
- read/listen to music in their own language (seen as critical by immigrants)
- access entertainment and relaxation tools – e.g. games, music
- obtain information and undertake research
- access education and learning opportunities
- seek employment.

3.4   Objectives

The policy's objectives aim to overcome the barriers people experience in using ICT – be it because they are unsure of the relevance of ICT, lack access to it or do not have the skills and confidence to use it.

Objective 1: Raising awareness

To raise awareness amongst targeted communities about the potential benefits of ICT.

Under this objective, the Council will seek to raise awareness about the potential economic, social and educational benefits of using ICT (for example, increased connection with friends, access to e-learning opportunities, democratic participation, enhanced employment).

This objective particularly focuses on breaking down emotional and attitudinal barriers to ICT usage, such as overcoming a fear of ICT. The most likely mechanism for achieving this will be through localised advertising – informing people where free

and/or affordable access to ICT equipment, training and technical support is located, and raising awareness about the cost of ICT.

Possible other mechanisms the Council will explore for achieving this objective include:

- IT centre open days – where ICT could be showcased and people have the chance to use it while being helped by a trainer.

- "Asset maps" – showing where community/public assets are, which could be made readily available to communities.

Objective 2: Increased access

To increase access to ICT for those who do not have ready access.

This objective is focused on ensuring access to ICT – through making it readily available to disadvantaged communities and residents.

The Council sees community computing hubs[10] as key to meeting this objective. The Council currently supports three hubs in Newtown,[11] which were initiated as part of the "Smart Newtown" pilot project undertaken during 2001/02. It is very likely that this objective will result in the Council supporting further "visible and accessible" computer hubs in other Wellington suburbs. Hubs could be located in such community facilities as a public library, community centre, Council housing complex, recreation centre, Citizen Advice Bureau, retirement home, marae or enabled through a partnership with a school, cyber cafe, or another group that operates an ICT room.

Taking into account the valuable insights gained from the Smart Newtown Pilot project, factors that need to be considered when selecting a site for a community-based hub/ICT centre are:
- the site is, or has the potential to become, a 'third place' where people from the community can meet outside their homes
- the ICT hub should be a natural addition to, or extension of other community services already available at the site
- the site provides a reasonable degree of safety and security to users
- cultural and ethnic issues are catered for in the design and operation of the ICT hub
- the centre has the administrative expertise, processes and procedures in place to handle the increased workload from the ICT hub.

Mechanisms for enhancing community groups' access to and training on ICT are already also being supported by the Council through the "Wellington Community Network" (WCN)[12], which is an electronic community network operated by the Wellington 2020 Communications Trust (W2020)[13]. WCN provides free website-

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[10] Community computing hubs are places that provide free access to computers and (usually) the internet. Free training may also be offered.

[11] These are located in the Pacific Island Network Centre (10 computers), Newtown Community and Cultural Centre (six computers), and the Newtown Library (three computers, without internet access).

[12] WCN currently hosts the websites of 649 community groups.

[13] W2020 was created in April 2002. Its main objective is "to empower all citizens of the Wellington

hosting, an email service, training and support, as well as a discussion forum function to community groups that may otherwise not be able to be online.

Possible other mechanisms the Council will explore for achieving this objective include:

- a mobile computer unit – e.g. a bus e-enabled with multiple computers and internet access. The unit could visit any part of Wellington and would be operated by people able to provide training and resolve minor technical issues.

- "rent-to-buy" schemes – enabling low income families to purchase ICT with little or no initial out-lay

- support for computers in homes programmes in school areas (particularly disadvantaged areas).

Objective 3: Affordable training and support

To provide affordable training and technical support to new ICT users in the target groups.

The Council will continue to focus on providing basic training for people who have never used a computer before (for example, people who may not know what a mouse is or have keyboard skills). The aim of this training is to enable people to become sufficiently skilled that they are able to access other free or low cost training courses (such as free polytechnic classes).

This objective also addresses the specific barriers that prevent people from accessing other ICT training courses (such as cultural and language issues).

Ways of overcoming the barriers of obtaining affordable technical support will also be explored, as it has been identified as a need for people and groups that may have older computers installed in their offices or homes and only have limited resources to support them.

Possible mechanisms for achieving this objective include:

- providing basic training in different languages – either through interpreters or training people from different cultures to train others

- providing basic training at different times to different groups (for example, groups of women, different ethnic groups, aged based groups)

- providing affordable technical support or a help desk – which could be located in a public library, a "mobile computer unit" or provided through an "e-rider"

- setting up a buddy system or informal neighbourhood internet help groups – so that people are encouraged to continue using ICT.

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region by ICT, and strengthen their communities through full participation in the information society."
Prior to W2020's creation, community ICT initiatives in Wellington were run by the 2020 Communications Trust, which has now been superseded by both W2020 and the National 2020 Trust.

3.5   Principles

The following five principles have been developed to guide the Council's approach in supporting e-Community projects:

Principle 1: Meeting identified need

The Council will work with communities to assess their main ICT needs and the best possible solution to meet those needs before projects are implemented. The Council will prioritise projects that are focused on the people using the technology rather than technology provision.

Solutions found will suit the communities' needs, without a "one size fits all" solution being taken across the city. This may result in different solutions being provided within one community (although solutions that can benefit a number of communities at once will generally be sought).

The needs assessment process will establish communities' "buy-in" to the project, establishing a basis for community ownership, as well as identifying key stakeholders (or "digital champions") that are able to participate in leading projects.

Principle 2: Targeting disadvantage

The Council's community ICT programme will be targeted towards disadvantaged individuals and groups in the community.

The Council will work with those communities of interest and identity that have been identified as having the lowest access to ICT (i.e. Pacific Island, Maori, people in low income households, households with only one parent, households that rent from a city council or Housing New Zealand and people aged 65 years and over).

The Council will also initially concentrate its efforts on those geographical areas known to have low ICT access and high concentrations of the above target communities (Newtown, Berhampore, Kilbirnie, Lyall Bay and Grenada North followed by Strathmore, Aro/Nairn Street and Miramar/Maupuia).

Information on target groups and areas will be updated with each new census (at the time of this policy being written, the next census is scheduled for 2006).

While not necessarily "disadvantaged", community and not for profit groups also fit into this category – particularly if they do not have the resources to purchase computer systems, obtain internet access or afford the required training and technical support.

Targeting of specific communities may result in an uneven distribution of community ICT programmes across the city. This policy is premised on prioritising some communities rather than achieving an equitable, city-wide approach.

Principle 3: Working in partnership

The Council will work in partnership with the community, central government, not for profit, philanthropic and private sectors to deliver community ICT programmes.

This principle seeks to ensure the success of community ICT initiatives by ensuring programmes are:
- driven by the community and local "digital champion(s)" (where such people are identified through the needs assessment process)
- community "owned" – through a high level of community buy-in (recognising that final responsibility will rest with the Council where the Council is the principle funder and coordinator)
- established with the appropriate resources (particularly sustainable funding, technology and management).

Principle 4: Coordinating resources

The Council aims to maximise the use of assets in the community and ensure there is no duplication of resources through providing a coordinated approach to implementing and operating community ICT initiatives.

Part of ensuring that resources are coordinated adequately will be achieved by the appointment of an officer responsible for overseeing the Council's e-Community projects. This person would provide:
- clear project management of Council programmes – to provide continuity through project's design, implementation and operation, and to ensure the expectations of all stakeholders are understood
- a main Council liaison point for community and private sector relationships
- a point of financial accountability for the Council's budget.

The Council will also establish an "asset map" showing where current resources are, such as community ICT equipment and expertise resources, skills, services, buildings, land, and ICT devices.[14]

Principle 5: Ensuring sustainability

Programmes will only be initiated if it can be ensured they will be sustainable before they are implemented.

Funding, technology and human resources all need to be sustainable. Sponsorship, services and support (including 'in-kind') will be sought for community ICT projects. The Council will be committed to ongoing operational funding, but expects that it will not meet the full costs of operating any programme as cost sharing partnerships will be actively sought.

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[14] For example, for Wellington these could include schools, community centres, Work and Income NZ offices, libraries, recreation centres, cyber cafes, independent community ICT providers (for example, SeniorNet), any place where training is available (for example, through the Community Education Centre, Whitireia Polytechnic).

The Council will support initiatives that take a sustainable approach to rapidly changing technology, looking for solutions that can provide high speed and high specification technology without necessarily providing the most recent equipment.

The Council recognises that volunteers are important to the operation of projects and will put a programme for attracting, training and retaining volunteers in place. The Council will also provide training and development opportunities for community people employed to coordinate specific programmes.

Electronic Waste
A further part of ensuring sustainability will be achieved through the Council determining its position on the disposal of electronic waste (such as computer hardware and monitors). Currently the Council is addressing this issue through its Solid Waste Management Plan, where e-waste has been identified as a potential area of concern. The Council is keeping abreast with national and international developments in order to take advantage of any future sustainable and pragmatic diversion or reuse opportunities.

3.6   Policy Implementation

The Council is currently supporting the following e-Community initiatives:
- funding three community computing hubs in Newtown[15] ($78,500)
- providing a grant for the Wellington 2020 Communications Trust (W2020)[16], which runs the Wellington Community Network on the Council's behalf and provides advice on community ICT ($145,000).

In addition, the Council is considering whether or not to allocate additional funding for ICT. The 2006-2016 Draft LTCCP document is currently being consulted on, and included in that document is new funding for: [to be completed after the Draft LTCCP deliberations on 1-3 March].

3.7   Performance Measures

Performance measures will be established to evaluate the effectiveness of the projects undertaken in this policy and to determine the policy's overall effectiveness.

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[15] The hubs provide free access to computers and the internet as well as free training programmes. The hubs are located in the Pacific Island Network Centre (10 computers), Newtown Community and Cultural Centre (six computers), and the Newtown Library (three computers, without internet access). In the past year, the following changes have occurred:
- the PINC and Newtown Library computers have been upgraded
- NCCC is being used more effectively – with regular school homework groups using it.

[16] W2020 was created in April 2002. Its main objective is "to empower all citizens of the Wellington region by ICT, and strengthen their communities through full participation in the information society." Prior to W2020's creation, community ICT initiatives in Wellington were run by the 2020 Communications Trust, which has now been superseded by both W2020 and a new National 2020 Trust, which now carries out national projects.

For example, the Newtown computer hubs provide a good benchmark for understanding the level of usage for a successful computer hub, how many people can be trained through the hubs, and whether or not new users are being attracted to use the hubs. Further information could also be sought on how many users go on to owning their own computers as a result of their initial interactions with ICT at the hubs.

SECTION 4: e-democracy

4.1   What is e-democracy?

e-Democracy, or electronic democracy, refers to how the Council will use ICT to facilitate and encourage participation in its local decision-making processes.

e-Democracy is usually closely associated with electronic voting (e-Voting). This policy, however, focuses how the Council promote democratic engagement in between elections times by providing information and avenues for residents and ratepayers to interact with elected members and officers on local issues.

The Council recognises that it is just one democratic player and that other organisations, groups and individuals may also be proponents of their own e-Democracy initiatives.

4.2   Why e-Democracy?

As public usage of the internet grows, so does the expectation that central and local government will increasingly communicate and interact with residents and ratepayers online. The advent of the internet has caused governments worldwide to reconsider the way they communicate with their citizens as the internet is seen to have the potential to "renew" democracy from a trend of increasing disengagement. Many believe that e-Democracy may be able to help reverse the decline being experienced in political participation and engagement, and stimulate involvement between election times.

The internet is seen a tool that can promote, strengthen and enhance democratic structures as it can be used to:

- make decision-making more transparent – decisions, and the information behind them, can be more readily accessible

- provide greater accountability – as it can be used to follow and scrutinise elected members' actions and decisions

- enable individuals to access information and services – including "hard to reach" groups in the civic decision-making process. ICT can overcome issues of low mobility (for example, for disabled, elderly, people with young children), sensory deprivation, or other barriers such as geography, a lack of time, cultural and/or language barriers

- provide individuals and groups with an immediate, inclusive, and interactive tool that encourages dialogue between citizens, elected members, community groups and communities.

- build trust between the government and citizens – through government responsiveness, in delivering services and by providing a secure, private place to express opinions.

ICT has the potential to transform the way residents interact with the Council. It is a powerful tool that can connect people with information as well as provide an interactive experience where views can be expressed and debated. It gives individuals more choice about how they can participate in the civic decision-making process and provides a means for community groups to activate wide response to government actions.

Through its e-Democracy policy the Council aims to *encourage an increased and enhanced level of engagement in the Council's decision-making processes and to provide efficient access to Council services.*

Limitations on e-Democracy

e-Democracy is not the entire solution to addressing the issue of disengagement. Evaluations undertaken on international e-Democracy pilots demonstrate that while technology has the potential to strengthen participation in representative democracy, it has not proven to be the complete answer. For this reason, e-Democracy will only be used to complement conventional forms of participation rather than replace them.

Furthermore, e-Democracy has the potential to exacerbate barriers to participation unless it is complemented with an e-Community programme. The same people who do not traditionally participate in Council processes tend to also have the least access to ICT. For e-Democracy to provide maximum benefit, it is essential the barriers to ICT access are reduced.

4.3   Strategic Fit

The e-Democracy policy falls under the *Draft Governance Strategy*. e-Democracy will contribute to the Council meeting the strategy's following outcomes:

- Outcome 5: More inclusive – Wellingtonians will be actively involved in the future direction of their communities

- Outcome 6: More actively engaged –
    - Wellingtonians will operate an open and honest decision-making process that generates confidence and trust in the democratic system
    - Information required by citizens and groups will be easily accessible, to enable participation in the community

e-Democracy will also directly contribute to the Council meeting the following strategic priorities for 2006-09:
- improving the transparency and quality of processes for public involvement in (civic) decision-making
- improving communication with communities.

4.4   e-Voting

The Local Electoral Act 2001 does not provide for online voting (e-Voting). The issue of e-Voting is not addressed in the policy at this stage.

4.5   Objectives

The following objectives have been developed for the e-Democracy Policy.

Objective 1: Accessible information

To provide easily accessible and relevant information that will enable people to effectively participate in the Council's decision-making process.

The provision of information is one of the building blocks of e-Democracy. Information is a precursor to engagement as it enables people to be informed enough to participate, scrutinise decisions and hold elected members accountable.

The main goal underlying this objective is for the Council to ensure the information it provides is:
- relevant
- able to be found easily on the website
- sufficient, enabling people to participate effectively by having the necessary information.

Possible initiatives that could support this objective include:

- expanding the "Public Input" page on the Council's website so that it:
    - provides an explanation of the participation/consultation process
    - shows the progress of past consultations as well as current ones through the decision-making process. The Bristol City Council has an example of such an initiative (http://www.bristol-city.gov.uk/ccm/content/Council-Democracy/Consultations/consultation-finder.en)
    - provides a weekly summary updating how many submissions have been received for present consultations
    - provides a summary of how past consultations have had an impact on the decision being made (e.g. Manchester City Council has a page titled 'How does consultation make a difference': http://www.manchester.gov.uk/bestvalue/consult/change.htm)

- live online coverage of Council meetings (webcasting) – which can also be archived online for later viewing

- elected member websites/blogs/e-newsletters (subscription based) – enabling elected members to provide information directly to the public about their role, the decisions they are and will be making and other city and Council matters

- "MyGov" – enabling citizens to customise the content displayed to them on the Council's website so that it displays all the relevant information they want in one quick view (e.g. such as property information, community facilities, events, and dog licenses).

Objective 2: Accessible elected members and Council officers

To provide a variety of avenues for the public to engage with elected members and Council officers on issues affecting the city.

The provision of information should be a two way flow so that it is not just about the Council providing information to the public, but having clear channels for the public to provide information to the Council.

This objective recognises that the internet provides a unique environment for overcoming traditional barriers to consultation as it is not constrained by time, cost, and existing information networks.

The Council has enabled the public to provide information online through online submission forms, feedback forms (e.g. the "fix-it" and complaints forms) and by providing elected members' email addresses. The next step is for it to provide interactive facilities that enable discussion and debate between community groups, residents, Council officers and elected members. Such mechanisms allow for residents and groups to discuss issues that affect them, which might not necessarily be the issues being considered by the Council at that point in time.

In providing interactive facilities, the Council will establish clear guidelines on how it will respond to public input (as this will be critical to building trust and ensuring ongoing involvement in discussions with the Council) and the sphere of influence that contributions will be able to impact on. Initiatives in this area will be supported by:
- clear rules of engagement – a charter setting out participants' rights and responsibilities
- increased officer resources to ensure the mechanisms are supported effectively
- appropriate marketing to raise awareness about the mechanisms.

Possible initiatives that could support this objective include:

- e-Petitions – a system for hosting electronic petitions (where "electronic" signatures are collected online and the petition is traced from its receipt at Council through to the Council's response to it). The Scottish Parliament has an example of such an initiative (http://epetitions.scottish.parliament.uk/)

- electronic public participation – enabling people to submit via an online form what they would say as part of the standard "public participation" slot at a committee or Council meeting

- interactive forums – e.g. web-based discussion forums, chat rooms, or email lists focused on policy and planning issues, which the public, elected members and officers can be part of. Recognising that this may best be achieved through an independently facilitated website, e.g. the Waitakere e-Democracy Group (www.wedg.org.nz), the "Ask Bristol" website (www.askbristol.com)

- elected member websites/blogs/e-newsletters (subscription based) – access to Councillors through their own websites (which also might include a discussion forum, weblog facility, or regular online chat session)

- "online surgeries" – chat room style fora enabling citizens to conduct secure

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online discussions individually and as part of a group with local government representatives

- neighbourhood websites – local community websites promoting interaction between local residents and their representatives and encouraging public participation.

Objective 3: Encouraging broader consultation

To encourage "hard to reach" groups to participate via the internet.

This objective focuses on extending consultation and engagement beyond the groups that are traditionally politically engaged. These groups include many of those listed in the e-Community component of this policy, which makes it critical that those groups can overcome the barrier of lack of access to ICT.

The Council already meets this objective in that it is accessible to people who need to use "reader software" and who have low specification computers (the site does not require the use of high specification programmes). Information on how people can participate in the Council's decision-making processes is also provided in alternative languages.

The Wellington Community Network also contributes to the Council's e-Democracy outcomes, giving community groups a powerful tool to advance democratic issues through their potential to connect and mobilise communities as well as access timely information.

Possible further initiatives that could support this objective include:

- providing increased amounts of information online that is directed to hard to reach groups and is in a suitable format – this could be achieved by targeting areas of the website to such groups or by providing information in multiple languages

- using mobile phone "text" messages as a means of communicating (e.g. targeting youth about new consultation)

- neighbourhood websites – local community websites promoting interaction between local residents and their representatives and encouraging public participation.

Objective 4: Enhancing accountability

To enhance the accountability of elected members.

This objective ties in closely with the previous objectives – as at its heart is the transparency of the Council's decision-making processes and providing the public with the ability to scrutinise public documents and decisions.

The Council will continue to provide information on the website such as the Council's accountability documents (annual plans, annual reports), bylaws, policies and plans, meeting schedules (including agendas, reports and minutes) and contact details for elected members. The implementation of initiatives already mentioned above will

contribute to further enhancing elected members' accountability – for example, through such initiatives as:

- elected member websites, weblog facilities and webcasting

- an expanded "Public Input" page – which could include a summary of how consultation processes have influenced decisions.

Objective 5: Efficient services

To increase the Council's efficiency by providing council services online.

The Council has an internal Website Strategy that is working to meet this objective. For example, work is currently underway to make GIS data and the archives databases publicly available online. The Web Strategy focuses on enhancing the Council's services online in a manner that will be sustainable – in terms of cost-effectiveness and in the use of officer resources.

In providing feedback on this policy, submitters are requested to tell us what services they would most like to see available online.

4.6 Policy Implementation

The Council is currently supporting the following e-Community initiatives:
- funding three community computing hubs in Newtown[17] ($78,500)
- providing a grant for the Wellington 2020 Communications Trust (W2020)[18], which runs the Wellington Community Network on the Council's behalf and provides advice on community ICT ($145,000).

In addition, the Council is considering whether or not to allocate additional funding for ICT. The 2006-2016 Draft LTCCP document is currently being consulted on, and included in that document is new funding for: [to be completed after the Draft LTCCP deliberations on 1-3 March].

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- the PINC and Newtown Library computers have been upgraded
- NCCC is being used more effectively – with regular school homework groups using it.

[18] W2020 was created in April 2002. Its main objective is "to empower all citizens of the Wellington region by ICT, and strengthen their communities through full participation in the information society." Prior to W2020's creation, community ICT initiatives in Wellington were run by the 2020 Communications Trust, which has now been superseded by both W2020 and a new National 2020 Trust, which now carries out national projects.

4.7   Performance Measures

Performance measures will be established to evaluate the effectiveness of the projects undertaken in this policy and to determine the policy's overall effectiveness.

Freepost Submission Form (to be formatted)

Mr / Mrs / Miss / Ms * (circle which applies)

First Name(s) * _____

Last Name * _____

Street Address
* _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Are you representing: yourself ❑ an organisation
❑

If an organisation, which one? _____

Would you like to speak in person to the Committee? yes ❑ no
❑

Privacy Statement

All written submissions (including name and details) will be made available to the Mayor, Councillors and the public.

The Council wants to know what you think about the e-Community and e-Democracy components of its Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Policy.

Submissions close **5pm, Friday 12 May 2006**. Submissions can be made on the freepost form, online at www.Wellington.govt.nz, or by email to adele.gibson@wcc.govt.nz.

You also have the opportunity to provide your views in person to the Strategy and Policy Committee, when it meets during **17-19 May 2006**. If you tick "yes" to the above question, we will contact you to organise a time.

If you have any questions about this draft policy, please feel free to contact either:

Adele Gibson   Allan Prangnell
Policy Adviser   Principal Policy Adviser
Wellington City Council   Wellington City Council
Ph: (04) 801 3346   Ph: (04) 801 3425
Email: adele.gibson@wcc.govt.nz   Email: allan.prangnell@wcc.govt.nz
Fax: (04) 801 3231

e-Community

1.　What do you think of the proposed aim and objectives of the policy? (Is anything missing, or are there things that should not be included?)

_____

_____

_____

2.　What projects would you most like to see implemented under this policy?

_____

_____

_____

e-Democracy

1.　What do you think of the proposed aim and objectives of the policy?

_____

_____

_____

2.　What projects would you most like to see implemented under this policy?

_____

_____

_____

3.　Do you think that you would be more likely to participate in the Council's decision-making processes if e-Democracy initiatives (such as the interactive ones described in the draft policy) are provided?

_____

_____

4.   What Council services would you most like to see available through the Council's website?

_____

_____

_____

5.   Do you have any other comments you would like to make on the draft ICT Policy?

_____

_____

_____

CONSULTATION PLAN

1. Consultation Focus

The consultation on the e-Democracy and e-Community components of the Council's Draft Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Policy is focused on obtaining feedback on the draft policy's:
- financial implications (to be consulted on directly through the Draft Long Term Council Community Plan)
- aims and objectives (to be consulted on through the Draft ICT Policy).

2. Objectives

The objectives of the consultation on the Draft ICT Policy are to:
- obtain feedback from a representative cross-section of Wellington's residents and ratepayers, and from community groups and organisations
- start developing community interest in the e-Community component of the policy
- start raising the profile of electronic avenues as a means for participating in the Council's decision-making processes.

3. Key Issues And Messages

Before the Council makes any decisions on increasing the work it puts into e-Community and e-Democracy, it wants to know what the public thinks.

Key Messages are:
- Current technologies are providing the city with opportunities that will make it an even better place to live, work and play.
- The Council wants to ensure that all residents have the ability to reach their potential by being part of the "Knowledge Society" – the e-Community Policy will provide targeted access to and training on how to use current and new technologies
- Current technologies can make it easier for you to be part of the local decision-making process – e-Democracy provides new ways for you to connect with the Council, elected members and other people in your community.

4. Target Audience

The consultation process is intended to encourage the widest possible range of responses from both the general community and stakeholders identified as having a particular interest in this issue. The general community will largely be reached through the consultation process for the Draft LTCCP. Targeted consultation will be directed at the following stakeholders and interested groups, who will be sent a copy of the draft policy and asked for their feedback:

- Community boards
- Wellington 2020 Communications Trust

- Mana Whenua – Wellington Tenths Trust and Te Runanga o Toa Rangatira
- Federation of Residents and Progressive Associations
- Residents' and Progressive Associations
- Disability Reference Group
- Pacific Advisory Group
- Youth Council
- Massey University – Research Unit
- Fujitsu NZ Ltd
- Community centres
- Community Advice Bureaux
- All participants in the needs assessment process undertaken in 2004. This included a number of individuals, as well as representatives of the following community groups and organisations:
  - Ethnic Council
  - Samoan Aotearoa Unity Trust
  - Newtown School
  - Kilbirnie/Lyall Bay Community Centre
  - Newtown Community Creche and Playground
  - Newtown Cultural and Community Centre
  - ALAY Centre
  - New Zealand Computer Society
  - SeniorNet
  - WestpacTrust Community Responsibility Group
- Refugees and Migrants Centre
- Multicultural Services Centre
- New Settlers Service
- Wellington Refugee Council
- Ethnic communities (Cambodian, Somalian, Filipino, Sri Lankan, Sudanese, Pacific groups, Chinese, Russian)
- Wellington Ethnic Council
- Wellington Housing Association of Tenants (WHAT)
- Council housing tenants
- Wellington Community Network users (targeted)
- Rotary and Lions Clubs
- People involved in the Newtown Hubs, including Newtown Park Flats computer room
- Department of Internal Affairs (the unit responsible for the community section of the Digital Strategy)
- Ministry of Economic Development (responsible for the overall implementation of the Digital Strategy).

5. Consultation Techniques

The documents prepared for the targeted consultation include:
- a draft of the e-Community and e-Democracy components of the ICT Policy
- a freepost submission form that sets out questions asking for people's views of the aims and objectives of the policy and which projects/services they would most like to see implemented.

These documents will be:
- provided directly to all of the identified stakeholders
- posted on the Council's "Have Your Say" section of the website, which will include the ability for people to submit their views online
- available at the Council's libraries, service and recreation centres.

Officers will meet with the community boards and advisory groups to obtain feedback on the draft policy.

As well as being publicised through the Draft LTCCP process, consultation on the draft policy will be publicised via:
- media releases
- an article in "Our Wellington"
- advertisements in the community newspapers
- article(s) in the Council's *APW* newspaper.

Written comments on the proposal will be invited and submitters will also be given the opportunity to make an oral submission. Submitters will receive advice that their written submission has been received.

6. Consultation Evaluation

Written and oral submissions will be summarised and analysed. The result of the consultation will be reported back to the Strategy and Policy Committee.

All submission writers will be notified of the results of consultation.

7. Consultation Programme

DATE	TASK/TIME/PEOPLE
16 February 2006	Strategy and Policy Committee considers the consultation document.
1-3 March 2006	Strategy and Policy Committee deliberates on the 2006-2016 Draft LTCCP.
12 April 2006	**Consultation begins**
12 April 2006	- Consultation document and submission form on the Council's website - Document sent to stakeholders, libraries, and service centres.
13 April 2006	- Information on the consultation published in the "Our Wellington" page
12 May 2006	**Consultation ends**
17-19 May 2006	Strategy and Policy Committee hears oral submissions
8 June 2006	Submissions analysed and summarised into a report for the Strategy and Policy Committee to consider adopting the policy.
21-23 June 2006	Feedback on the proposed funding for this policy obtained through the Draft LTCCP consultation process is debated and the Strategy and Policy Committee decides whether or not to include it during these LTCCP deliberations.
28 June 2006	Council considers adopting the LTCCP and the policy.
1 July 2006	If the draft policy has been adopted and funding set aside for it in the 2006/07 LTCCP, the policy is fully implemented from this date.

Evaluations of e-Democracy Initiatives

Since the Democracy Subcommittee first started investigating e-Democracy in 2003, a number of international pilot e-Democracy initiatives have been completed and evaluated. These studies provide invaluable information that can influence the projects the Council should consider implementing. The studies include:

- The United Kingdom's Local e-Democracy Project – which undertook a number of pilots across UK local governments, including initiatives around e-Petitions, online consultations, discussion forums and webcasting

- The Queensland State Government's e-Democracy Project – a project that piloted the use of e-Petitions, online consultations and "webcasting" over a two year period

- The State of Victoria's Inquiry into Electronic Democracy – which examined worldwide trends and evaluated pilot projects such as the "My Connected Community" initiative.

Findings from the UK's Local e-Democracy Project were inconclusive that e-Democracy helped improve the breadth and depth of participation in democratic processes. However, the evaluation of the Queensland project concluded that e-Democracy increased the transparency of consultation processes and contributed to engaging more people, particularly those who may not be reached through traditional consultation methods.

All of the pilots were very positive about the potential impact e-Democracy could have on participation in decision-making.

Key lessons taken from all of the evaluations were that for e-Democracy to be successful, it must be supported by:
- responsive (timely and quality) feedback on consultations
- a marketing campaign to raise awareness about the initiatives (which is also directed at promoting inclusiveness so that e-Democracy does not just become a channel for the already politically engaged)
- independent moderators (where discussion forums are used) whose roles are explained to participants
- published rules and guidelines about what people can expect from the process, what is appropriate behaviour and language, etc
- partnerships with non-government organisations (NGOs) and voluntary groups as appropriate (for example, to develop e-participation spaces independent from "official" sites).

The following provides summaries of the evaluations of specific e-Democracy initiatives such as webcasting, e-Petitions, online consultations, elected members' websites and "blogs".[19]

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[19] "Blogs" is short for "web logs", which are personalised spaces where people can record their own comments online.

e-Petitions

The pilots undertaken in both the State of Queensland and through the Scottish Parliament were found to be highly successful, with full implementation undertaken immediately. The e-Petition facility gained a high level of supporting in community and by MPs, although it was noted that the facility had not reached as varied sectors of the community as expected. However, those that took part in the pilots believed the facility was able to increase accessibility.

Webcasting

As with other e-Democracy initiatives, webcasting has the potential to make a very positive impact. It can make Council processes more transparent, and provides another opportunity for the public to engage with local authority where they do not need to leave their own homes.

The main comment about webcasting, however, is that it has not yet fully demonstrated its effectiveness. In the pilots, it was not clear that public engagement increased because of the initiative – although this did also raise questions about how success is measured for such an initiative (for example, is simply doubling the audience sufficient, even if this is referring to a small amount of people?).

A key identified gap in the research is what people want from webcasting. Organisations were able to determine how many times the webcast has been viewed, but had no information about who was viewing it.

It was noted that technology was a key issue – as the initiatives required high specification broadband.

The main lessons learned through the pilots were:
- Meetings need to be discussion topics that have a direct impact on citizens/or which are topical to generate public interest (i.e. if the subject is not interesting to the general public, webcasting will become just another mechanism for those already engaged with local authorities and democracy)
- It is essential to manage expectations, especially around the type of connection people will need to watch the webcast, and how it will work

In summary – believe in its future potential as an "additional tool in the communications and participation kit" – not an alternative

Web-based discussion forums:

One o the main questions about web-based discussion forums is whether or not they should be on a Council sponsored (and moderated) website as it is not clear this is the best place to encourage free conversation. Discussion forums in particular can risk

being subject to capture by individuals and community groups. An OECD report on e-Democracy stated that:[20]

- expectations on discussion forums can be very high, with the reality being a very low participation rate
- participation often comes from "elitist" participants who might already be participating through means other than the internet
- governments run a risk if actual policy developed ends up having no clear connection to citizens' contributions in the discussions
- content of the forums can be more about giving opinions than engaging debate.

In the UK project, it was found that discussion forums generated and connected networks of interest or practice, but did not lead to greater trust between elected representatives and public. The forums were reported to be of a high quality, being contributed to by informed people.

Recommendations made for such forums were that
- the purpose and terms of the forums needed to be made clear at outset (i.e. including that the forums were not making policy, but informing decision-makers)
- more effort needed to be made to recruit participants – particularly from a socially inclusive point of view
- contributions needed to be summarised by an independent body and/or an intermediary should facilitate the forums
  feedback needed to be provided on the outcome – to help provide proof that contributions are taken into account in deliberations.

"Online consultations are not, and will not become, a panacea for disconnection between politicians and citizens, but they do have the potential to support a more direct form of representation (in contradistinction to direct democracy) in which the public is likely to feel less unheard."[21]

Web logs – "blogging"

According to the UK project, the positive side of web logs is that recipients are no longer receiving a "packaged product" but are part of a discourse. The positive effects of web logs were that they were able to raise awareness of the work of elected members and helped engage citizens in that work.

However, while they were seen as a good way to connect the public with elected members (either to help them with good advice about local issues or to find out their opinions), it was not determined if they were able to "humanise elected representatives in the public eye".[22]

Online Consultations

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[20] "The e-mancipation of the citizen and the future of e-government" – a report for the OECD e-Government Project by Dr Valerie A.J. Frissen.
[21] "Connecting Parliament via the Internet", Stephen Coleman, p16.
[22] "Civic Leadership Blogging – initial findings:, UK Local e-Democracy National Project, p5.

The Queensland State government piloted online consultation and came to the overall conclusion that online consultation was "an effective and appropriate mechanism for seeking public responses to government initiated policy issues."[23]

Users of the online consultation facility were surveyed, with the following findings:
- less than 1% of surveyed users said they would have written and posted a submission if the online consultation process had not been available
- users from diverse parts of Queensland participated in the online consultation
- more than one third of the people had not contacted the government about issues important to them previously
- users saw the process as more transparent – as consultation responses were published online, although, there was also criticism from users about the lack of appropriate feedback and response to the submissions

In all, it was found that the consultations obtained a good level of interest from people who would not already engage with government. Enhancements were suggested through:
- increasing the facility's promotion
- changing the site's location and design
- providing well-structured background information for each consultation.

Websites for Elected members

A centralised function for providing elected members with websites was provided within the UK Local e-Democracy Project. Findings were that:

- Elected members tended to not see the sites as a priority, so information was often not changed or updated regularly
- The sites did not receive a lot of visitors
- The sites were time consuming for elected members to administrate
- More information was needed on how constituents wanted to use these sites.

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[23] 'ConsultQld: 12-month evaluation outcomes and lessons learned', M & P Henderson and Associations Pty Ltd, 2005, p.21

Potential New e-Democracy Initiatives

a) *Electronic public participation*
Under this initiative, public participation could be submitted via an electronic form from the website for consideration at a committee meeting. Although it is currently possible for people to email comments to Democratic Services for distribution at official meetings, under this initiative the participation would be received in the meeting and recorded in the minutes in the same way that other public participation is. The Council's Standing Orders may need to be changed if this initiative is to proceed, and rules would need to be established around language use, how often people could use the facility, and how many would be accepted per meeting (and whether or not this would impact on the number of public participants able to speak in total).

Cost:	None – an online form can be created and administered within current budgets
Risks:	Low – would create firm rules around appropriate usage
Evaluations:	None available.

b) *E-Petitions*
The internet provides the opportunity for petitions to be run online. Such petitions can be established online, have names collected electronically, and then be tracked to show the Council's receipt of it through to how it is responded to. This initiative may also impact on the Council's Standing Orders as it elaborates on the current process, which is limited to how petitions will be received and treated at Council meetings.

Cost:	Medium-High - $50,000 for software and officer time
Risks:	Low – although expectations would need to be managed regarding the impact petitions can have
Evaluations:	Positive. Increases transparency around the process.

c) *e-panels*
Under this initiative residents would sign up to a list to provide regular input on issues. For example, Wolverhampton City Council in the UK aims to have 650 online participants who regularly participate in providing views on current issues facing the Council.

Cost:	Medium ($30-50,000). The main cost will be officer time to implement and operate the initiative
Risks:	Medium – would need to ensure appropriate resourcing so that people receive information regularly as well as feedback on consultations they have already been a part of
Evaluations:	Positive. Creates an informed group of people commenting on Council issues.

d) *Discussion forums*

Chat rooms, discussion boards and online surgeries all fall under this initiative. Some e-Petitions also run discussion boards so that people can log their comments about the subject. Pilot projects have been evaluated that show these can be worth doing. However, it may also be worthwhile for the Council to undertake further work to determine the extent of their use and usefulness (taking into account questions of whether or not they can achieve inclusiveness and whether they might be more effective run independently from the Council).

Cost:	High – ($60-80,000) software and officer time
Risks:	Medium-High – would need to manage expectations carefully about the impact of participation
Evaluations:	Inconclusive – particularly concerned with the independence of the forum. It may be more appropriate to separate the forum from the Council's main website[24] – either through having an alternative website or even working with an NGO[25] to host it.

e) *Live online coverage of committee/Council meetings (webcasting)*

This initiative provides the public with information on the substance of committee and Council debate and how decisions are made. Meeting coverage can also be archived online for later viewing.

Cost:	Medium – $40,000
Risks:	High – potentially low user interest, limited use of the function because of the high specification broadband it requires
Evaluations:	Inconclusive about the benefits.

f) *Elected members' websites, web logs and/or e-newsletters*

This initiative enables elected members to provide information directly to the public about their role, the decisions they are and will be making and other city and Council matters. Elected members would, however, need to be careful they did not enter into political debate while using this publicly funded medium, as per the good practice communications guidelines provided by the Controller and Auditor General[26]. Further clarification would also be required around the "conflict of interest" ramifications if an elected member was to state their position on an issue.

Cost:	Medium – $30-50,000, would also require significant ongoing elected member time
Risks:	High – potential lack of interest, too resource intensive to maintain adequately
Evaluations:	Inconclusive about the benefits

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[24] For example, Bristol City Council has named their interactive website "Ask Bristol" (www.askbristol.com).

[25] For example, Waitakere City has the "Waitakere e-Democracy Group", an incorporated society, which runs its own forums on issues to do with the city.

[26] "Good Practice for Managing Public Communications by Local Authorities", April 2004.

Other initiatives that have not been costed, but which could also be implemented include:

- *an expanded "Public Input" page* – which provides information on the progress of past/current consultations, a weekly update of how many submissions have been received for present consultations, and a summary of how past consultations have had an impact on the decisions being made

- *"My Gov" personal portal* – which enables citizens to customise the content displayed to them on the Council's website so that it displays all the relevant information they want in one quick view (e.g. such as property information, community facilities, events, and dog licenses)

- *neighbourhood websites* – which provide local community websites which promote interaction between local residents and their representatives and encourage public participation

APPENDIX 5

"Top Ten e-Democracy 'To Do List' for Governments"

Steven Clift is an internationally known e-Democracy practitioner. He has established a "Top 10 e-Democracy "To Do List" for Governments around the World". The Wellington City Council's performance against this list is evaluated below:

List of "Top-ten" e-Democracy functions	Is the Council doing it?
1. Announce all public meetings online in a systematic and reliable way	Yes
2. Put a "Democracy Button" on your site's top page	Yes – "Have your say"
3. Implement "Service Democracy" Better, more efficient access to service transactions and information products. Use comment forms, online surveys, citizen focus groups.	Yes: • Complaints forms • Fix-it form
4. End the "Representative Democracy Online Deficit" Representing the elected members' voices through technology.	No
5. Internet-enable existing representative and advisory processes "Virtual Committee Rooms", web-casting, and enabling video conferencing	No – in consideration
6. Embrace the two-way nature of the internet Ensure have tools in place to respond to email in an effective and timely manner.	Yes – have standards for responding to emails.
7. Hold government sponsored online consultations	No – in consideration
8. Develop e-democracy legislation Seek budgetary investments to enable e-Democracy i.e. it requires online writers, communicators, designers, programmers and facilitators to make it of real value.	Yes – considering increasing budget with this policy.
9. Educate elected officials on the use of the internet in their representative work	Yes – have computers, email addresses, mobile phones
10. Create open source democracy online applications	No – not in consideration

APPENDIX 6

Potential New e-Community Initiatives

a)   Community ICT Coordinator

The role of the Community ICT Coordinator is critical to the success of this policy. This position would be responsible for bringing cohesion to the Council's e-Community policy by:

- having a management (including budgetary) overview of all of the community computing initiatives
- project managing new initiatives
- being the main point of contact for business and other partners
- providing expertise, advice and support to community groups in the process of establishing community ICT projects.

b)   Housing computer rooms

The Council's housing amenity provides an appropriate environment for providing computer room facilities, especially as a number of complexes have high concentrations of the target communities identified in the policy. The provision of computer facilities can also contribute to a better sense of community and social cohesion within the amenity.

A new model to provide for the implementation and ongoing operation of the Housing computer rooms on a managed cost basis is being investigated. The model includes an ongoing partnership with Fujitsu, a paid hub coordinator being on-site (who is responsible for overseeing the room and volunteers), a free internet access partnership and charitable organisation rates for hardware, software and warranties. This model will address issues associated with the previous pilot:

- an over-reliance on volunteers for critical positions
- inadequate controls on the use of computers
- high support costs (Fujitsu were contributing approximately $40-50,000 in technical support, which they could no longer justify).

Officers have also initiated an application to the government's Community Partnership Fund requesting support for establishing the two rooms. If this is approved for the full amount requested, this will substantially reduce the cost of the rooms to the Council in the first year of the project. Officers will find out at the end of February whether or not the application has passed the "expression of interest" stage (Stage 1) of applying to the fund.

c)   Computer Hubs in other areas of identified need

Computer hubs are a key component of the e-Community Policy as they contribute to all three objectives in the draft policy (they directly make ICT more accessible and provide ICT training, and indirectly help raise awareness of ICT by being located in communities).

Assurance needs to be provided that the model used for the computer hubs is managed for its total cost and is reasonable – from the project's development and implementation phase through to its ongoing operation.

Officers have been working to establish a sustainable model for computer hubs based on their experience with the Newtown computer hubs and the Housing complex computer rooms, as well as the learnings identified through the evaluation of the Smart Newtown pilot project undertaken by Massey University researchers and W2020's Post Implementation Review. Based on these experiences and learnings, the model for any proposed future hubs would include:

- a Council-based officer taking overall management and oversight of projects

- partnerships with the community, community groups, firms, tertiary institutions and not for profit groups

- a paid onsite computer hub coordinator to undertake day to day management of each computer hub

- the implementation of a robust architecture that can be easily supported

- best practice security measures that provide protection from viruses, malicious code and inappropriate use by community clients

- appropriate internet controls.

The National Library (which includes local councils and a number of other agencies) is leading a project to investigate establishing a "People's Network" of computers throughout New Zealand. Access to computers (including the internet) would be made freely available and libraries would host an internet gateway that provides content specifically tailored to New Zealanders' information needs. This project may mean that the Council, rather than taking full responsibility for providing computer hubs, may integrate its computer hub project with one run by the National Library.

d) *e-riders* – information technology specialists who provide advice and site technical support to not for profit organisations, community groups and residents at low or no cost. This is a new proposal initiated by W2020 which has sponsored a bid for funding to the Community Partnership Fund.

e) *ICT awareness raising days* – which can be achieved through such low cost options as being part of the Community ICT Coordinator's role or higher cost options of holding widely advertised computer hub open days.