
**CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION PLAN: 2005/06
DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN**

1. Purpose of Report

This report seeks approval of the consultation process to be undertaken on the 2005/06 Draft Annual Plan.

2. Executive Summary

The Draft Annual Plan is a core document for the city. It details what the Council aims to achieve in the year, the projects it will deliver to accomplish these aims, and the costs of providing them. Seeking appropriate community input into development of this plan is statutorily required. It is also important that the Council transparently governs the city so that others can understand and identify the contribution that they can make to its development. This consultation plan aims to provide a sensible range and mix of opportunities for people to express their views on the Council's plan.

3. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. *Receive the information.*
2. *Note that consultation on the following items will be held concurrently with the consultation on the 2005/06 Draft Annual Plan*
 - i. *Liquid Waste Strategy*
 - ii. *Establishment of the Indoor Stadium Trust*
 - iii. *Establishment of the Arts Centre Trust*
 - iv. *Statement on Water Sanitation Services*
 - v. *Development Contributions Policy.*
3. *Note the tools (outlined in appendix one) that will be used to support the consultation on the Draft Annual Plan.*

4. *Agree that officers prepare the 'summary of information' for the Draft Annual Plan for inclusion in the April version of the APW newspaper, which is distributed to every household in the city.*
5. *Agree that the formal consultation period commence on Wednesday 20 April 2005 and close on Friday 20 May 2005 with hearings taking place on 1- 3 June 2005.*

4. Background

The Council is required under legislation to consult on its Draft Annual Plan ahead of it being adopted. Legislation also stipulates occasions when the special consultative procedure needs to be used as part of the decision-making process. The following items fall into this category and will be consulted on concurrently with the Draft Annual Plan:

- Liquid Waste Strategy
- Establishment of the Indoor Stadium Trust
- Establishment of the Arts Centre Trust
- Statement on Water Sanitation Services
- Development Contributions Policy.

A summary of each of these items and an outline of the consultation process for each will be included in the Draft Annual Plan.

4.1 Focus for the coming year

The forthcoming financial year represents year three of the Council's long-term council community plan, which means that the primary focus of consultation is on changes from those forecast. Emphasis will be placed on new initiatives in the context of the Council's overall work programme.

As with last year a series of newsletters will be sent to inform people of the timing and scope of the consultation. A number of tools will be used to support the consultation process and these are detailed below. A summary of these is attached as appendix one.

5. Outline of consultation

5. 1 Raising awareness of the consultation process

It is important that the public is aware of the Draft Annual Plan process and are provided with information that will allow them to contribute in a meaningful way. The running of an awareness campaign ahead of the formal consultation period is proposed.

The objective of this promotion will be to:

1. Stimulate interest in the plan and highlight its importance and Council's commitment to public consultation

2. Encourage the public to consider their issues / submissions in the context of Council's overall activities
3. Allow communities and groups¹ to prepare for the formal consultation period.

The method and tools to be used for this exercise will be a series of media releases and distribution of newsletters to groups and organisations. The promotion will continue through the formal consultation period and will be directed at the general public – the use of billboards and posters will be employed as they have been in previous years. A summary of the consultation tools, audience and feedback mechanism is outlined in appendix two.

5.2 Timing

The formal consultation period is scheduled to run for one month in keeping with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002. It is set to run from Wednesday 20 April until Friday 20 May 2005. This will be followed by public hearings, which are currently scheduled for 1-3 June 2005.

The timing together with the earlier publicity should provide sufficient time for the public to prepare submissions and for officers to evaluate them and prepare any commentary ahead of the final plan being agreed in June. The Council is required to adopt its Annual Plan ahead of the financial year to which it relates.

5.3 Audience

The Draft Annual Plan sets out all the activities that the Council intends to undertake in the coming year. As such it is important that everyone that wishes to participate has the opportunity to do so. The audience for the consultation is therefore broad – it will include Wellington residents and ratepayers, locally-based organisations, and the Council's reference groups².

Information about the consultation will be widely available and existing networks will be used to engage with individuals and interested parties where possible.

5.4 Publications

It is important that the public have access to information that allows them to make informed submissions. The key to this is to ensure that core information is available and accessible. There are three parts to this:

- (a) That the layout and content of the documents are easy to follow and comply with best publishing practices (including the online layout)
- (b) That the requirements of groups with special needs are catered for (specifically

¹ The following groups will be included in the planning process: staff in frontline business units; Community Services Unit; Mana Whenua; Community Boards; council facilities; Council's advisory and reference groups; and those on the AP database.

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

the blind and deaf communities)

(c) That participants have the opportunity to clarify points before making submissions³.

5.4.1 Draft Annual Plan

The layout of last year's Draft Annual Plan received positive feedback from submitters and officers will build on the strengths of that document as this year's is developed. The publication will be structured round three sections:

- i. The first section will provide an introduction, set the strategic context and outline the new initiatives and other key messages (this allows readers to see at a glance the main items that are open for consultation). This section will in essence be an executive summary of the plan. Its structure will allow it to stand alone and be provided readily.
- ii. The second section will detail the Council's activities by key achievement area and outcome. It will detail project costs and performance measures. The section will be similar to that used in last year's plan.
- iii. The final section will provide the financial detail, outline fees and charges, and information on the other issues open for consultation.

The statement of proposal, including the summaries of new initiatives, performance measures, forecast financial statements and the funding impact statement will be presented to Council on 15 March for adoption. As with last year a delegation that allows officers to copy edit the publication will also be sought.

5.4.2 Summary of Information

The Local Government Act 2002 requires that a summary of the main information in statements of proposal be made publicly available. The purpose of the summaries is to provide, as widely as possible, information about the scope of the consultation.

The APW newspaper is an effective means for the Council to communicate in a succinct way the activities that are proposed in the coming year. Its broad distribution ensures that each household in the city has direct access to information on what the Council is proposing.

It is proposed that the summary include:

- An outline of each new initiative
- An outline of the likely impact on rates
- Summary financial table including funding sources
- Summary of amendments to the long term council community plan
- An outline of the reasons for the establishment of the trusts.

The summaries will also be available from the Council's website and at libraries and service centres.

³ Officers will be available to attend meetings of community groups and organisations where their concerns are clearly stated.

5.5 Concurrent Consultation Processes

Five consultation processes will run concurrently with the Draft Annual Plan.⁴ Running these consultation exercises alongside the Draft Annual Plan will ensure that they are open to the widest possible audience. It will also result in some advertising and administration cost savings.

Each of these items has been or will be discussed separately by committee. They each relate to activities that Council proposes to commence in the coming year and it is appropriate that commentary on them is included in the Draft Annual Plan.

Statements of proposal for the following four items were agreed by Council on 23 February. The statements for these will be included in the Draft Annual Plan. They will also be provided separately at Council facilities and separate reference will be made to it on the Council's website. They are:

- The establishment of two separate entities: the Indoor Stadium Development Trust, and the Arts Centre Trust.
- The Liquid Waste Management Plan (as required by statute)
- Assessment of Water and Sanitary Services (as required by statute).

Council will be considering its policy on Development Contributions on 7 April 2005. It will be recommended that consultation occur at the same time as the Draft Annual Plan but due to the complexity of the matter that it be presented separately to the plan. The consultation plan will be also be presented on 7 April. This approach has been confirmed with the Council's legal advisers.

5.5 Public Meetings

Past turnout to public meetings on Draft Annual Plans has been unpredictable and often low. The average turnout at last year's Council initiated meetings was 22. Nevertheless the meetings can be a useful way to engage with the public and can be seen as means to extend the Council's accountability.

It is proposed that the Draft Annual Plan be discussed at the following public meetings:

- Ward meetings
- Pacific Island forum
- Ethnic forum
- Youth forum
- Hui.

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

⁴ Consultation on the V8 Car Race is discussed separately. It is expected to run earlier than the Draft Annual Plan consultation.

5.6 Innovative Tools

In addition to the core publication the use of video and online tools are proposed. A video will be produced outlining the themes and initiatives of the Draft Annual Plan. This method of communication was used for the past two years and has been very well received.⁵

The video would focus primarily on the new initiatives for the coming year and place these in the context of the Council's overall programme. It is considered an effective way of presenting the key messages in the plan in a consistent way. It would be provided to external groups and be shown as an introduction at Council led meetings. The video would also be shown on a loop at libraries and at the service centres.

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

6. Conclusion

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

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

Draft Annual Plan Consultation Tools			
Informing	News releases	Releases will be provided at regular intervals leading up to and during the consultation.	20 April
	Reminder Letter	A letter outlining the timing and the scope of this year's planning process will be provided to the 400 customers on the AP database.	
	Residents Association Newsletter	The planning process will be outlined as part of the regular newsletter that is distributed to the associations.	
	Public Notices	Public notices are required to be placed in local newspaper.	
	Newspaper advertisements	A series of newspaper ads will be run in the Dominion Post and local papers through-out the consultation period.	
	Radio advertisements	A series of radio ads highlighting key issues and the availability of the draft will be aired during consultation.	
	Public display	A large billboard promoting the draft will be placed on the road frontage outside the railway station. (Officers will also explore the option of Cinema advertising).	
	Rates Newsletter	An outline of the proposed rates impact will be included in the May issue of the rates newsletter.	
	Webpage – summary and draft	The summary and full document will be available from the Council's website (and other links). The ability to make submissions online will be provided. An option of putting portions of the video on the webpage is being explored.	
	Public displays	Displays will be placed at the libraries and service centre.	
Residents' Survey	Summary questions on the overall goals for the coming year will be included in the May version of the residents' satisfaction survey		
Publication	1500 copies of the draft will be produced. It will be publicly available and distributed to those on the annual plan mailing list.		
APW summary	A summary of the new initiatives and forecast rates impact will be contained in a section of the April/May APW newspaper. The paper is provided to each household in the area. The executive summary the Draft Annual Plan covering the key messages in the context of Council's overall programme will also be publicly available.		
Video	A video summarising new initiatives will be produced. The video will be displayed at Council facilities, screened at public meetings and distributed to community groups and local companies.		
Engaging Raising Awareness	Deaf video	A sign-interpreted version of the video will also be produced. This has been produced previously and was well received by the deaf community.	June Mid – March
	Public meetings	The draft will be presented at the following public meetings:	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five ward meetings • Pacific Island Forum • Ethnic Council • Youth Council • Hui. <p>The draft will also be placed on the forward programmes for the Community Boards and Council's advisory groups.</p>	
	Hearings	Submitters will have the opportunity to present to the Strategy and Policy Committee.	

Appendix two

Audience	Setting the Scene	Feedback
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General public - Frontline staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Website advertising - Media releases - Radio interviews - Residents' Assoc Newsletter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Informal
Audience	Consultation tools	Feedback
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General public - Community boards - Local area groups: eg School Boards of Trustees, sports clubs - Youth - Media - Council controlled organisations - Reference groups - Pacific and Ethnic Forums - DRG - AP Database (520 groups and individuals). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provision of the Draft Annual Plan - Provision of summary document and executive summary - Attendance at public meetings - Documents online - Video - Market Research. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Submissions forms - Oral hearings - Online submissions - Summary of submissions report.