
REPORT 3A
(1215/52/IM)

2007/08 DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN: NEW INITIATIVES

1. Purpose of Report

This report seeks agreement to the new initiatives for inclusion in the 2007/08 draft annual plan.

2. Recommendations

That the Strategy and Policy Committee recommend that Council:

1. *Receive the information.*
2. *Agree to the new initiatives at the level indicated in schedule 1 (attached)*
 - a) *Inner city living demonstration project*
 - b) *Events development fund: additional funding*
 - c) *Museums Trust*
 - d) *Anti-graffiti flying squad*
 - e) *CPI increases for grants*
 - f) *Extension of eastern carpark at the Wellington Regional Aquatic Centre*
 - g) *Community centre operations*
 - h) *Community ICT contract adjustments*
 - i) *Sports grants*
 - j) *Tsunami warning system*
 - k) *Provision of a wet hostel*
 - l) *Khandallah hall concept plan*
 - m) *Video conferencing*

3. Background

The 2007/08 draft annual plan comprises year two of the long term plan and any variations to that. Planning for the 2007/08 draft annual plan started in 2006 and included the consideration of new initiatives at a councillor workshop in December 2006. Elected members as representatives of their respective communities were also requested to outline any new proposals that they wished considered. All new initiatives were then considered at a councillor workshop in February 2007.

The attached schedule reflects the discussions at the workshop, with the exception of the Museums Trust proposal. This was pending at the time of the workshop. The request has now been received and is attached as appendix 1.

Officer responses to additional information requests in relation to the Wet Hostel and Video Conferencing are attached as appendix 2 and 3 respectively.

Subject to the deliberations process, all new initiatives will be consulted on with the community during April and May as part of the 2007/08 draft annual plan.

Schedule 1:*Note numbers included in this schedule are pre inflation***Urban development:**

Project title	Project description	\$000 Opex			\$000 Capex		
		2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Inner city living demonstration project	This proposal will develop a 'Good Practice Guide' around how to retrofit existing central city commercial buildings for residential use. There are a range of issues that need to be analysed and solutions developed to facilitate a better end product than that which the market is currently delivering in regard to inner city living accommodation. It is proposed that Council works with a developer to produce a demonstration project. Developers and the public will see how a range of issues can be resolved such as: noise control; environmental control systems; retrofitting of services etc that make economic sense when considered against the life time costs of the project.	-	105	-	-	-	-

Economic development:

Project title	Project description	\$000 Opex			\$000 Capex		
		2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Events development fund: additional funding	<p>The Events Development Fund has been successful in developing significant events for Wellington and delivering economic benefit. The discretionary ability of the fund to attract new "one-off" and iconic events has diminished as the number of key major events has grown.</p> <p>Funding will allow for additional iconic events to be established and will also provide for greater discretionary funding to support one-off events such as Volvo Ocean Race, World Mountain Running Champs and World Golden Oldies Rugby Festival.</p> <p>An increase in funding for the Events Development Fund will allow Wellington to maintain its leadership position and continue to generate high levels of economic benefit.</p>	500	500	500	-	-	-

Cultural wellbeing:

Project title	Project description	\$000 Opex			\$000 Capex		
		2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Museums Trust	The proposal is to provide a funding adjustment to the Museums Trust to ensure that their funding retains its value and is not eroded. See appendix 1 for further information.	480	480	480	-	-	-

Social and recreation:

Project title	Project description	\$000 Opex			\$000 Capex		
		2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Anti graffiti flying squad	It is proposed that an Anti-Graffiti Flying Squad be constituted with the sole purpose of eliminating graffiti from the city's public spaces and – where consensual – private property. The Flying Squad will aim to remove graffiti within 24 hours, and will also have an active role in making certain areas unattractive to graffiti through the use of murals and other initiatives. The Flying Squad will be constituted for a one year trial, and will have secondary roles of: establishing a database of graffiti; and assessing the total cost to the Council of graffiti.	225	-	-	-	-	-
CPI increases for grants pool	The proposal is to provide a 'cost of living' funding adjustment to those organisations on three year contracts to ensure that their grants contract funding retains its value and is not eroded.	117	117	117	-	-	-
Extension of eastern carpark at the Wellington Regional Aquatic Centre	The proposal is to create a car park on land previously leased from the Council by the Park Bowling Club. The carpark will service the new hydrotherapy services building to be completed in 2007, and will also provide additional parking capacity for the Wellington Regional Aquatic Centre, local sports fields, the Kilbirnie Recreation Centre, the Park Bowling Club, the Ruth Gotlieb Library and the children's playground.	-	-	-	220	-	-

Community centre operations	<p>This proposal provides for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the operations of the new Newlands Community Centre: piloting direct management and operation of the centre by the Council. ▪ resolution of issues arising from the Community Facilities Activity Review. ▪ cost of living adjustments for the operation of the Council's existing network of community centres. <p>The project addresses some short to medium term issues related to community centres and their operations, and will align the Council's approach to community centres with the outcomes of the Community Facilities Activity Review.</p>	206	296	296	-	-	-
Community ICT contract adjustments	<p>This initiative provides for a funding adjustment to the contract amounts for Wellington 2020 Communications Trust (W2020) and Smart Newtown. Actual contract adjustments would be determined following upcoming reviews of the strategic alignment and benefits of the current three year contracts which expire on 30 June 2007.</p>	23.4	23.4	23.4	-	-	-
Sports grants	<p>It is proposed that an additional funding pool be made available to sports clubs so that they can secure professional advice and support for programme development, club growth and expansion, asset management (not maintenance), club diversification and feasibility studies. Priority would be given to proposals that will directly impact on youth participation in sport and recreation.</p>	100	100	100	-	-	-
Tsunami warning system	<p>The proposal is to establish an effective early warning system for tsunami and other civil defence emergencies in the Wellington area. To overcome the effects of the wind and Wellington's topography, the project proposes to establish a mobile siren/PA system that can be mounted on a helicopter in conjunction with the installation of a number of strategically positioned fixed sirens.</p>	-	-	-	100	-	-

Provision of a wet hostel	The proposal is for council to contribute towards the establishment of a wet hostel. A wet hostel is distinct from other (dry) accommodation options for chronic alcoholics in that residents are permitted to drink alcohol on the premises. The accommodation will provide professional support for people who are sleeping rough or are homeless, who have a history of heavy drinking and who are unable to sustain tenancies in any other form of accommodation. The initiative will be in partnership with Capital and Coast Health District Health Board who have confirmed their contribution of \$500,000 over two years. See appendix 2 for further information.	250	250	-	-	-	-
Khandallah Hall	The proposal is to develop concept designs for the redevelopment of Khandallah Hall. The designs will be developed in consultation with the community and will include sketch plans and an estimation of costs for phase two - preliminary and detailed design, contract documentation, and construction.	60	-	-	-	-	-

Governance:

Project title	Project description	\$000 Opex			\$000 Capex		
		2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Video conferencing	Officers will continue to monitor business and community need for and access to video conferencing facilities to determine if Council should change its approach to supporting and/or facilitating such facilities within resources currently allocated to the implementation of the Information and Communication Technologies Policy. If further formal research is identified as being needed, officers will request additional funding through a future new initiative process. See appendix 3 for further information.	-	-	-	-	-	-

Wellington Museums Trust

The Proposal

The Wellington Museums Trust (WMT) has requested additional funding of \$480,000 for 2007/08 and out years.

Project Outline

Without an increase in funding, it will not be possible for the WMT to provide its current level of service. An increase in its grant is seen as necessary for several reasons as outlined below.

1. WMT have already cut services

Funding pressures in recent years have led the WMT to reduce the services that it provides. Examples of reductions in service levels include:

- Reducing the number of exhibitions from 4 to 2 at the Museum of City and Sea
- Reducing the number of exhibitions from 4 to 3.5 at the City Gallery
- Changing the mix of exhibitions at the City Gallery away from international exhibitions and toward Australian and New Zealand art.

Cutting services indicates that the WMT has been under financial pressure.

2. WMT are operating at a deficit

In order to not reduce service levels further, Council has allowed the WMT to operate at a deficit in 2006/07. The agreed deficit in the WMT Statement of Intent was \$201,000.

Council policy is for the CCOs to generally operate at breakeven. The WMT is not financially able to operate at a deficit for a second year in a row because the working capital position will not allow this. Therefore, without an increase in funding, the WMT will not be able to offer the same level of service in 2007/08 as it will in 2006/07.

3. WMT funding has not increased in line with CPI

While the Consumer Price Index is not a perfect measure for cost increases for the museum sector, it does give some indication of the cost pressures faced by the WMT.

Between 2003/04 and 2006/07 WMT's funding from the Council has increased by 3.25%. During the same period the CPI change has been 8.7%.

If WMT's funding had been increased by CPI they would have received an additional \$289,000 of funding in 2006/07. If costs were increased for 2007/08 at 4% to take into account inflation, the WMT would receive \$162,000. This would be a total increase of \$441,000 if Council had increased WMT funding by inflation from 2003/04 – 2007/08.

4. WMT activity review

The Council's activity review of its funding for museums and galleries conducted in 2006 recommended: that, in general, service levels for the Wellington Museums Trust be

retained. The review also said that it did not appear that the Council over invests in this area and the performance of the WMT appeared reasonably solid.

5. Significant cost increases

Three key exhibition costs have increased for the City Gallery. Energy, freight and insurance have all risen significantly in the last 3 years. Insurance is more expensive because the art market has seen significant increases in the value of the types of works the City Gallery displays.

Conclusion

Officers' recommendation is that the WMT funding be increased by \$480,000 per year. This will allow the trust to maintain current levels of service and return them to levels provided around 2003/04.

A reduced increase or no increase in funding is not recommended as there is a risk that this would erode the WMT finances to such a degree that they are unable to provide a level of service expected by residents. This would reduce resident satisfaction and have a significant negative impact on visitor numbers. It would have the potential to undermine the assertion that Wellington is the cultural capital.

Provision of a Wet Hostel

1. The Proposal

This initiative proposes that Wellington City Council agree in principle to a financial contribution of \$500,000 over 2 years (i.e. \$250,000 per annum) for the establishment and initial operation of a wet hostel. Conditions attached to this initiative are that:

- The \$500,000 contribution from Capital Coast District Health Board is confirmed
- This is a two year only contribution from Council for establishment and initial running costs and that no further funding will be budgeted. Any operational costs beyond this point will have to be picked up by central government

The wet hostel will provide accommodation and professional support for people who are sleeping rough or are homeless, who have a history of heavy drinking and who are unable to sustain tenancies in any other form of accommodation. A wet hostel is distinct from other (dry) accommodation options for chronic alcoholics in that residents are permitted to drink alcohol on the premises. A number of operating models have been explored and a supported accommodation option is favoured because it offers less operating risk than a model with low supervision and minimum standard accommodation.

The initiative will be in partnership with Capital and Coast Health District Health Board (CCDHB) who have confirmed their contribution of \$500,000 over two years. Other funders have indicated their positive support, in particular the Department of Corrections and Housing New Zealand Corporation. At this stage the project is awaiting commitment of sufficient funding to enable a suitable location to be found.

4. Project Outline

4.1 Purpose

The project is to establish a residential wet hostel for 12 – 14 Wellington City residents who are chronically alcohol dependent and homeless.

4.2 Background

Approximately 73% of homeless adults are alcohol dependant with a high frequency of heavy alcoholism (i.e. greater than 20 drinks/day). This is exacerbated by the easy availability of low cost, non-beverage alcohols (e.g. methylated spirits). Police and City Council interactions with this group are frequently generated through complaints of public drunkenness and nuisance.

This population has been under-recognised in programme development. It was noted in the study “Slipping through the Cracks: A Study of Homelessness in Wellington”, that Wellington’s existing emergency accommodation only accepts those homeless people who do not have alcohol dependency.

4.3 Target group

A wet hostel will assist people who have late stage chronic alcohol dependence, a history of homelessness, and are unable to sustain tenancies in any other form of accommodation. Most likely the target group would:

- have numerous failed attempts at entering into detoxification centres or completing detox treatment
- have deteriorated physically due to alcohol abuse
- have experienced homelessness for the majority of the past five years - independent living, for a variety of reasons, is unlikely to be sustainable
- be people whose lifestyle is chaotic, who sleep rough and are unlikely to have the life skills to meet basic needs of food, sleep and shelter
- have proven to be incapable of adequate self-care due to alcohol abuse.

This group of homeless are the most visible and the most vulnerable. This group has a tendency to drink, urinate, vomit and beg in public, and have complex needs for which there are no simple solutions. As a result they are generally the most difficult to get off the streets.

4.4 Model

The wet hostel model is shared housing with single bedrooms, sleeping 12 -14. There will be communal facilities with shared lounge, bathrooms and dining facilities. Each resident would receive case management services, as needed, through resident case workers. Residents are not required to follow any rigid curriculum or treatment and are free to stay as long as they choose to. Liaison with accommodation support services and case management will facilitate progression into other accommodation for residents who may be ready to move.

While no longer homeless, this group of vulnerable people will continue to have a high risk lifestyle and complex needs; some are a threat to both themselves and other members of the community. The range of mental health problems encountered in a wet hostel can include cognitive impairment related to long-term alcohol dependency, alcohol induced psychosis, manic depression, clinical and reactive depression. Some may have major medical complications or a learning disability. The facility will have appropriate professional support networks to assist residents presenting with co-existing disorders.

4.5 Operating the wet hostel

There are two components to the operation, the residence building itself and the provision of services to the residents.

Residence

Decisions about building selection and ownership will be largely opportunistic. It is possible that the building will be partly funded by a private benefactor or Housing New Zealand (or a combination of both) with support from WCC.

Delivery of Service

The ongoing operation of the wet hostel and provision of services to the residents will primarily be managed by Capital and Coast Health in partnership with Wellington social agencies and service providers. It is most likely that a service provider will be contracted to operate the residence and provide services for residents

4.6 Building requirement

General

- The building must provide a safe environment for staff and residents, with this in mind a single floor open plan would be preferable.
- The building location would be in walking distance of the inner city and have minimal neighbour contact.

- The bedrooms should be located on a single floor, afford some privacy and safety for the residents, and be lockable.
- The building must have good access. Amongst people who have experienced severe social and economic deprivation the incidence of disability is 30%. This is because the severity of impairment increases as a consequence of overt environmental and health impacts (such as sleeping rough and chronic alcohol abuse). Access to primary health services is limited and thus the homeless have a high incidence of chronic physical and medical issues that give rise to impairments. While there won't be high number of wheelchair users in this highly disadvantaged group, mobility can be severely compromised and there is a need to ensure ease of access.
- Specialist soft furnishings and floor coverings are recommended.

Security

- 24 hour camera surveillance will be provided.
- Adequate staff cover will be required.
- Strong networks with community police will be developed.
- Excellent safety precautions against fire will be incorporated.

Staffing requirements

- Twenty-four hour awake cover with two staff during the evening and early morning.
- Specialist staff trained in dealing with alcohol dependency and dual diagnosis issues and anti social behaviours.
- Key worker model focusing on budgeting, health and nutrition.
- Strong advocacy and cultural and social awareness.
- Access to specialist services.
- Regular supervision and ongoing training provision.

Conclusion

The provision of a Wet Shelter for Wellington would enable Wellington to:

- reduce instances of anti-social and aggressive behaviour and avoidance of their negative effects on communities, businesses and civil society
- reduce the number of rough sleepers
- provide housing, care and support to people who have a history of heavy drinking and homelessness, and who are unable to sustain tenancies in any other form of accommodation
- increase collaboration with and between social service agencies
- fully implement the Homeless Strategy.

Video Conferencing

Investigations have been undertaken to see if the Council has a role in facilitating access to video conferencing facilities for business and community use.

Video conferencing is a medium that enables individuals and groups at two or more different sites to interact simultaneously via high-quality audio and real-time video. Usually, “video conferencing” refers to a connection between two locations (“singlecasting”) while the term “access grids” is used to refer to a connection between multiple locations (“multicasting”). Access grids are further described as “intelligent meeting rooms”.

Both facilities enable people to meet and collaboratively work together in real time, regardless of location. They provide a number of benefits to business and communities by reducing location as a disadvantage through:

- enabling immediate and timely collaboration between local, national and international partners
- reducing the time and expense associated with travelling (making global communications more cost and time effective).

This proposal is being considered in the context of the Council’s *Information and Communications Technology Policy* (adopted June 2006), recognising that video conferencing has the potential to positively impact on both economic and social development.

Comment

Current availability of video conferencing facilities

Many large businesses and government departments already have video conferencing facilities. Victoria and Massey universities also both have video conferencing and access grids facilities. Access to all of these facilities, however, is not usually readily available to outside organisations.

Some secondary schools are currently able to video conference (i.e. singlecast with one other school), but such facilities are generally not available in and to smaller businesses and community organisations/groups.

Further, it needs to be noted that outside of the CBD, video conferencing and (in particular) access grids can only operate with higher-speed broadband infrastructure than may be currently available and/or affordable.

Initiatives Underway

Initiatives are underway that will impact on the availability of videoconferencing for both business and community organisations.

- *Wellington Loop*

The Wellington Loop is a partnership between the Council, CityLink and five CBD based Wellington schools to establish and maintain a new collaborative learning environment using high speed fibre-optic links. Video conferencing and access grids will be important tools that can be used via the Loop.

The Council has submitted an application to the government's Community Partnership Fund on the project's behalf. The project, though initiated from the five schools, has a strong community element to it where it is envisaged that videoconferencing/access grid facilities will become available to the wider community (be it through schools, libraries and/or community centres, etc.).

- *PWB Initiative*

Positively Wellington Business (PWB) is currently working with Internet NZ to establish a video conferencing/access grid facility in the central city. This facility would be available for organisations to use.

- *Broadband Project*

On Thursday 1 March, the Strategy and Policy Committee requested officers to undertake further work on a potential role for the Council in the provision of broadband infrastructure in the non-CBD areas of the city. Such investigations will help contribute to the wider availability of video conferencing and access grid technologies as they will ensure that broadband of a sufficiently high speed and affordability is available to enable it.

Conclusion

Video conferencing and access grid technologies are able to provide multiple benefits to business and communities.

Currently, such technology is already being used in some of the city's larger organisations and an initiative is underway by PWB to make the technology more accessible to Wellington organisations.

Although not directly involved in providing video conferencing/access grid facilities, the Council is involved in two broadband initiatives that will help create the environment where video conferencing and access grid technologies will become increasingly available and affordable to business and community groups.

Within resources currently allocated to the implementation of the Information and Communication Technologies Policy, officers will continue to monitor business and community need for and access to video conferencing facilities to determine if Council should change its approach to supporting and/or facilitating such facilities. If further formal research is identified as being needed, officers will request additional funding through a future new initiative process.