
Report 6
(1215/52/IM)

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION PLAN: 2007/08 DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN

1. Purpose of Report

This report seeks approval of the consultation and communication plan to be undertaken for the 2007/08 draft annual plan.

2. Executive Summary

For ease of reference this report:

- highlights how we will raise awareness of the draft annual plan process
- details how we will communicate proposals contained within the draft annual plan
- outlines the processes by which we will receive feedback from the community (including criteria for any proposals to form part of the Resident Satisfaction Survey)
- recommends the establishment of an draft annual plan hearings subcommittee.

This consultation and communication plan aims to provide a sensible range of communication tools and an appropriate mix of opportunities for people to express their views on the draft annual plan. This consultation and communication plan follows similar patterns to previous years which have proven to be successful in achieving high levels of community feedback.

3. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. *Receive the information.*
2. *Note the communication tools that will be used to support the consultation on the 2007/08 draft annual plan.*

3.
 - a) *Agree to delegate the hearing of oral submissions on the 2007/08 draft annual plan to a subcommittee.*
 - b) *Recommend to Council that it agree to establish the Draft Annual Plan Hearings Subcommittee with the terms of reference attached in appendix 1 and that it elect a chairperson for the Subcommittee.*
4. *Note that the formal consultation period commences on Monday 16 April 2007 and closes on Friday 18 May 2007 with hearings scheduled in late May 2007.*

4. Background

The 2007/08 draft annual plan describes the second year of the long-term plan. It highlights for that year what the Council aims to achieve for Wellington, the projects it will deliver to accomplish these aims, the costs of providing them, and how we intend to measure progress towards these goals.

The purpose of the 2007/08 draft annual plan is to:

- support the long term plan in providing integrated decision-making and the coordination of Council resources
- extend the opportunity for public participation in the decision-making process
- contribute to Council' accountability to the community
- detail the annual budget and funding impact statement, and
- identify any variances from the long term plan for that year.

The annual plan is primarily a budgeting tool and focused on financial matters. The wider matters of role, scope, service levels and priorities of Council have been dealt with through the long term plan process. Any variations will be consulted on as part of the draft annual plan process.

The steps Council has undertaken to date include:

- facilitating the community outcomes process
- consultation on the community outcomes
- contribution to the Wellington Regional Strategy
- agreeing to Council outcomes, priorities, levels of service and budgets as part of the long term plan
- consultation on the draft long term plan.

Council is required by legislation to consult on the 2007/08 annual plan ahead of it being adopted using the special consultative procedure as prescribed within the Local Government Act 2002.

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 Monday 16 April 2007 until Friday 18 May 2007. This will be followed by public hearings, which are scheduled for late May 2007.

The schedule will provide sufficient time for the public to prepare submissions and for officers to evaluate them and prepare any commentary ahead of the final plan being agreed to in late June (deliberations are scheduled for 20-21 June with Council sign-off scheduled for 27 June 2007.)

5. Discussion

5.1 Raising awareness of the draft annual plan

It is important that the public is aware of the draft annual plan and are provided with information that will allow them to contribute in a meaningful way. Raising awareness of the draft annual plan at the start of the consultation period is necessary to achieve high levels of participation.

The objective will be to:

1. Stimulate interest in the draft annual plan for the whole community and highlight its importance and Council's commitment to public involvement in the decision-making process.
2. Encourage the public to consider their issues / submissions in the context of Council's overall activities.
3. Allow the community and groups to prepare for the formal consultation period.

Audience

The draft annual plan covers all of Council's business. As such it is important that anyone that wishes to participate has the opportunity to do so. Raising awareness of the draft annual plan consultation exercise is targeted at a broad audience and will include: the Wellington community; locally-based and national organisations and sports groups; Council's reference and advisory groups¹; the Tawa and Makara/Ohariu Community Boards; mana whenua; Council Controlled

¹ Officers will work with the DRG to develop the best method of presenting the information to people who are sight impaired.

Organisations and the hundreds of individuals and organisations on Council's Annual Plan database (approximately 400 individuals and business groups).

Communication tools

The communication tools to raise awareness of the draft annual plan will include:

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| News releases | News releases will be provided at regular intervals leading up to, and during the consultation period. |
| Website | Council's website will outline the consultation process and who to contact for more information. |
| Reminder Letter | A letter outlining the timing and the scope of this year's planning process will be sent to the 400 (approximate) customers on the Annual Plan database. |
| Residents Association letter | The planning process and timelines will be outlined in a letter to resident and progressive associations. |
| Public Notices | Public notices are required to be placed in the local newspaper. |
| Newspaper advertisements 'Our Wellington' page | A series of newspaper advertisements and editorials will be run in the 'our Wellington' page of the Dominion Post leading up to and through-out the consultation period. |
| Absolutely Positively Wellington (APW) newspaper | The APW will be used to highlight the timeline, process and some key areas. The paper is provided to each household in Wellington. |
| Radio advertisements | A series of radio ads highlighting key issues and the availability of the draft annual plan will be aired during the consultation period. |
| Rates Newsletter | The February Rates Newsletter will highlight the timelines and consultation period of the draft annual plan and an outline of the proposed rates impact will be included in the May issue of the rates newsletter. |
| Informal | Informal communications will be used with council's existing networks i.e. city communities and other business units with high contact time with the community will be briefed on draft annual plan matters and asked to raise awareness of the draft annual plan and the process by which to provide feedback in their daily contact with the community. Informal |

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| | communications remains a very effective mechanism to raise awareness about issues especially with hard to reach audiences such as youth etc. |
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5.2 Communicating the proposals within the draft annual plan

It is important that the public have easy access to all the relevant information to allow them to make informed submissions. 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 the blind and deaf communities).
- (c) That participants have the opportunity to clarify points before making submissions (primarily through public meetings).

The key to this is ensuring that core information is available and accessible in a variety of mediums. The following tools will be used to communicate the draft annual plan.

Draft annual plan document

The written draft annual plan document will be the primary means by which council will communicate the draft annual plan. The layout of last year's draft long-term plan received positive feedback from submitters and officers will build on the strengths of that document to develop this year's publication. The publication will be considerably smaller than the long-term plan.

The draft annual plan document and its summary will be made widely available and will also be accessible from Council's libraries and service centres.

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

Video

In addition to the core publication a draft annual plan video will again be used. This method of communication was used for the past four years, provides a consistent message at meetings, and has been well received.

The video will provide an introduction by the Mayor and detail proposed new initiatives and variations from the long-term plan and place these in the context of the Council's overall programme and delivery of core services.

The video will be provided to external groups and will be shown as an introduction at Council led meetings. The video would also be shown on a loop at the city service centre.

In a change from previous years, key parts of the video will also be made available online.

Public Meetings

Public meetings are an important part of the consultation process. They allow Council to present key messages and provide the opportunity for the public to clarify matters through question and answer sessions with elected members before making their submissions.

With the long-term plan, Council moved to public meetings based around areas of activity (strategy) rather than wards, to alleviate what was seen as low turnouts at ward meetings in previous years.

This was done as the majority of submitters submit on a single activity or a small group of closely related activities rather than on issues on geographical or suburb basis. Meetings based around areas of strategy were seen as likely to be of interest to a greater number of people and result in higher levels of attendance.

The meetings structured around strategy areas resulted in slightly higher overall levels of attendance for the long-term plan. Feedback from attendees was also largely positive.

It is recommended that for the 2007/08 draft annual plan, public meetings continue to be structured around strategy areas². These public meetings would be advertised and representatives from groups and organisations known to have interests in the area of activity would be invited to attend. All Councillors will be encouraged to attend.

A draft list of organisations to be invited is attached as appendix 2.

All meetings will be open to all members of the public. The public meetings will be held centrally at an appropriate inner city venue to ensure easy access for all interested persons.

In addition to public meetings based around strategies, the draft annual plan will also be presented at meetings of the Pacific Island forum, Ethnic forum, Youth forum, Hui, reference and advisory groups as well as Council's community boards.

² The public meetings will be urban development, transport, economic development, environment, cultural wellbeing, and social and recreation. The activity of 'governance' encompasses all Council activities and will not be the subject of a separate public meeting.

Where there are clear synergies between the role of city and the regional council in an area of activity (i.e. environment, transport), Greater Wellington Regional Council will be invited to present their draft plan in conjunction with that of Council.

There will be a total of sixteen formal meetings at which the draft annual plan will be presented³. While the number of days available during the consultation period does not make it conducive to having ward meetings in addition to strategy meetings, all progressive organisations and residents associations will be advised of the consultation timeframes and the public meetings in February 2007 so they can make arrangements to attend meetings or make alternative arrangements to engage with their local representatives.

The organisational portfolio spokesperson is responsible for facilitating the annual planning process and will chair the public meetings based around strategy areas with assistance from the relevant portfolio leaders. The organisational portfolio spokesperson will also present the draft annual plan at all forums and advisory groups. Where the organisational portfolio spokesperson is unavailable, this function will be performed by the Mayor.

6. Receiving Feedback from the Community

Written submissions

It is important that submitters are provided the opportunity to present their views in a manner and format that is appropriate to their needs. Submitters will be able to submit written submissions by letter, fax, online and email. Free post submission forms will also be included in all draft annual plan documents. These will be widely distributed and available at service centres and all Council libraries.

All submissions will be made available to elected members and the public.

Oral submissions

People will also be able to provide their feedback in person. Oral hearings provide the submitter the opportunity to express their views in a different medium and reinforce, amend or add to their written submission.

As with last year, it is recommended that a subcommittee be formed to hear all oral submissions. The less formal environment of a subcommittee acts as less of a barrier to participation and provides elected members the opportunity to engage in a discussion with the submitter to get a more detailed understanding of their views.

³ Note that there are only sixteen available evenings at which these meetings can be held once you exclude weekends, Fridays and the days around Anzac day.

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

A schedule of submitters and a copy of their submission will be circulated prior to all hearings. This will ensure councillors are aware of when matters concerning their ward or community organisations representing a ward are scheduled to be heard so they can attend.

The Draft Annual Plan Hearings Subcommittee will report to the Strategy and Policy Committee. Its terms of reference are attached as appendix 1.

Survey research

Determining the public interest, reconciling competing demands, and deciding on areas of priority is at the core of the draft annual plan process. Determining the public interest will be undertaken through the formal consultation process and survey work.

Running survey research alongside submissions offers a synergy whereby objective data can provide a structure to analyse the subjective information that Council receives through the consultation process. It also ensures the views of the 'silent majority' are captured. By having both quantitative and qualitative information, councillors will be able to obtain a high level of understanding of the community's views to assist in their decision making.

While we extrapolate quantitative data from submissions (total for and against a given proposal and demographic type information etc) the submitters are self selected and the number of submissions on any given proposal can be quite small thereby reducing the accuracy of any quantitative conclusions.

Survey research on the 2007/08 draft annual plan will be conducted through the Resident Satisfaction Survey. The type of survey used will be 'call-back' – where a demographically accurate sample of residents is recruited (randomly from the Telecom White pages) by the research company and sent the 2007/08 draft annual plan summary for information. They are subsequently called back for their views.

It is not possible to canvass all matters contained in the draft plan through the survey. A proposal will be included as part of the survey if:

- a) the proposal involves significant costs
- b) it is a new function Council intends to perform
- c) there is significant public interest
- d) the proposal has a city-wide affect
- e) there is no existing data available to gauge public views.

A full copy of all submissions, a summary report of all the submissions, the survey results and the Subcommittee's report⁴ on the hearings will be presented to the Strategy and Policy Committee before final decisions are made.

7. Conclusion

The development of the draft annual plan that is supported by a strong consultation and communication 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.

Contact Officer: *Baz Kaufman – Corporate Planning Advisor.*

⁴ The Subcommittee's report to the Strategy and Policy Committee will consist of an oral report by the chairperson and the formal minutes detailing a summary of all oral submissions.

| Supporting Information |
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| <p>1) Strategic Fit / Strategic Outcome <i>The consultation and communication plan contributes towards the following outcome: “Wellington will operate an open and honest decision-making process that generates confidence and trust in the democratic system.”</i></p> |
| <p>2) LTCCP/Annual Plan reference and long term financial impact <i>Development and consultation on the DAP sits within the following project: C530 Annual Planning and reporting.</i></p> |
| <p>3) Treaty of Waitangi considerations <i>Targeted consultation will be undertaken with support by the Director of Community services and Treaty Relations.</i></p> |
| <p>4) Decision-Making <i>This is not a significant decision.</i></p> |
| <p>5) Consultation <i>The report provides a sensible range of communication tools and an appropriate mix of opportunities for people to express their views on the draft annual plan 2007/08.</i></p> |
| <p>6) Legal Implications <i>The consultation and communication plan meets all statutory requirements of the LGA 2002.</i></p> |
| <p>7) Consistency with existing policy <i>This report is consistent with Council’s Engagement Policy.</i></p> |

Draft Annual Plan Hearings Subcommittee

Membership:

The Subcommittee's membership will consist of those elected members appointed as portfolio leaders.

Quorum:

4

Chair:

The Chair will be elected by Council.

Frequency of meetings

The Subcommittee will meet on an as required basis.

Sunset clause:

The Subcommittee will discontinue no later than 27 June 2007.

Parent Body:

The Subcommittee reports to the Strategy and Policy Committee.

General Purpose:

The Subcommittee has responsibility to hear submissions on the 2007/08 draft annual plan and report to the Strategy and Policy Committee.

Terms of Reference:

The Subcommittee will have responsibility and authority to:

- 1.0 Accept and hear submissions on Council's 2007/08 draft annual plan and report back to the Strategy and Policy Committee.

Delegated Authority

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

Indicative List

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| Urban Development: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disability Reference Group • CentrePort • Historic Places Trust • Wellington Waterfront Ltd • Property Council of NZ • Representatives from community groups interested in urban development issues |
| Transport: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transit • Land Transport NZ • Greater Wellington Regional Council • Stagecoach • Infratil • Representatives from community groups interested in transport issues |
| Economy: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wellington Regional Chamber of Commerce • Local Government Forum • Industrial Research • Positively Wellington Tourism • Positively Wellington Business • Massey and Victoria Universities • NZ Stock Exchange • NZ Retailers Assoc. • NZ Hoteliers assoc. • Representatives from community groups interested in economic issues |
| Cultural Wellbeing: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Museums Trust • Toi Maori • Te Papa • Representatives from community groups interested in cultural activities |
| Social and Recreation: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital Coast Health • Housing NZ • NZ Police • Citizen's Advice Bureau • Wellington Zoo • Stadium Trust • SPARC • Representatives from various sporting codes • Representatives from community groups interested in |

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| | social and recreation issues |
| Environment: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority• Greater Wellington regional Council• Karori Wildlife Sanctuary• Ministry for the Environment• Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust• Representatives from Wellington's environmental groups. |