

25. DRAFT CONSULTATION POLICY

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The purpose of this report is to provide a draft of the new Consultation Policy for discussion and feedback by Standing Committees and Community Boards.

INTRODUCTION

Following the enactment of the Local Government Act 2002 and the requirements on local authorities concerning consultation processes and practices, the Consultation and Communication Special Committee have been involved in the preparation of a new Consultation Policy. The draft policy has been signed-off by the Committee and is now presented to the Standing Committees and Community Boards for discussion and feedback. Following feedback from the Standing Committees and Community Boards, the draft Consultation Policy will be submitted by the Consultation and Communication Committee for adoption by the Council at its meeting on 24 July 2003.

BACKGROUND

A fundamental principle of the new Local Government Act is the importance of community consultation over local services and decision making (Section 14(1)(c)). Community consultation is seen as a key ingredient in quality decision-making and policy development. Consultation must take place with the right people for the right purpose and in the right way (Section 78). Legal action may result if consultation is not undertaken when required or is undertaken incorrectly.

While the Committee identified that the Council's current policies were consistent with the intent of new legislation, there were however, some inadequacies and discrepancies existing between various policies. Therefore, the Consultation and Communication Special Committee agreed that it was appropriate for the Council to review its consultation policies.

DRAFT POLICY

The proposed new consultation policy has been developed to incorporate and reflect the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002, as well as the Christchurch City Council's commitments to ongoing and effective consultation with the people of the city.

A draft of the policy is attached for discussion. This initial draft was approved by the Committee at the meeting on 17 April 2003 for consultation with Standing Committees and Community Boards.

Staff members involved in the development of the policy will be available at your meeting for further explanation, if required.

Staff

recommendation: That the draft discussion document be referred to all Standing Committees and Community Boards for comment.

Chairperson's

recommendation: That the draft consultation document be approved.