

## 1. CONSULTATION POLICY

Peter Mitchell (Legal Services Manager) and Mary Richardson (Social and Economic Policy Analyst) facilitated discussion on "What the Council's future policy on consultation will look like in terms of the Local Government Act 2002".

In presenting extracts from the Act (sections 78 and 82) Peter Mitchell signalled:

1. Consultation is inherent in the decision-making process of local authorities.
2. However, there must be a real purpose for consultation.
3. There must be a consistent quality in the standard of reports being placed before a local authority.
4. Local authorities were required to have in place their policy on significance by 30 June 2003.

The meeting acknowledged:

- Council policies, and policies relating to Community Boards must be developed in consultation.
- The Local Government Act 2002 has reshaped the governance role of local authorities.

The meeting also acknowledged the Draft Consultation Policy prepared by Mary Richardson and signalled the following alterations/adjustments to the draft document, which will now become part of a more detailed report for further consideration by the Committee:

- Separate policy and strategy documents, ie:
  - Policy with statements and principles,
  - Strategy with the "when and how" on implementation etc.
- Documents will apply equally to the Council and Community Boards
- User friendly language

The meeting was advised that with urgency dictating the timing of a Policy on Significance, staff would be submitting a report to the Strategy and Finance Committee on 17 March 2003.

The Committee **decided**:

1. That the Chairman confer with the Chairman, Strategy and Finance Committee regarding a joint meeting of the two Committees on this report on the morning of 17 March 2003.
2. That immediately following this joint meeting, the Consultation and Communication Special Committee hold a workshop on the updated draft consultation policy prepared by Mary Richardson.