

2. COMMUNICATION POLICY

Officer responsible
Director of Human Resources

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The purpose of this report is to request the Council to approve the final draft of the new Communication Policy.

INTRODUCTION

Together with its work on the Consultation Policy, adopted by the Council at its June meeting, the Consultation and Communication Special Committee was involved in the preparation of a Communication Policy.

BACKGROUND

The Committee asked staff to look at the range of communication/media policies other Councils have in place. Several Councils were contacted as well as the Communication Manager at Local Government New Zealand. It was found that most had a written policy or guidelines on how to relate to the media. Some had communication documents with varying levels of detail and content, which were being reviewed or work in progress.

The Committee decided that staff investigate ways of developing an overall communication policy documents. A process and areas to be covered in the policy were agreed.

Feedback from a workshop held with staff formed the basis of the first draft of the policy which was presented to the Committee. Amendments were received from the Committee together with a request that more informal language be used.

The amended draft was re-presented to the Committee at its meeting on Friday 20 June where it was adopted subject to some minor amendments. It was also agreed that the policy be circulated to all Standing Committees and Community Boards for comment and feedback to the Council via the Strategy and Finance Committee.

DRAFT POLICY

The proposed new communication policy aims to achieve a consistent approach to communication and recognises the need to be aligned with the consultation policy and other relevant internal policies and standards.

The draft policy was presented to and supported by the Standing Committees and Community Boards subject to the following:

1. The communication objectives being bullet-pointed rather than numbered (to reduce any idea of prioritisation)
(Burwood/Pegasus Community Board)

The Burwood/Pegasus Community Board made two other recommendations, relating to the development of best practice exemplars and improving the profile of Community Boards, which will be brought to the attention of the new management and addressed in proposed work on strategy and branding.

2. The inclusion of Our City under the Methods of Communication scheduled in the Appendix of the policy
(Hagley/Ferrymead Community Board and Parks, Gardens and Waterways Committee)
3. The inclusion of examples where, under the provisions of the Local Government Act 2002, we reserve the right to confidentiality (*second paragraph of the introduction*)
(Chair, Strategy and Finance Committee)
4. Inclusion of "advocacy" in the Methods of Communication section of the policy to reflect the role the Council plays in representing the views of the Christchurch community to other agencies such as central government.
(Strategy and Finance Committee)

The final draft of the policy, which incorporates the above amendments, is attached for the Council's approval.

Recommendation: That the draft policy be adopted.