

COUNCIL WORKSHOP COMMUNICATIONS AUDIT REVIEW

AGENDA

TUESDAY 7 AUGUST 2012

AT 11AM

IN COMMITTEE ROOM 2, CIVIC OFFICES

(Note: This forum has no decision making powers and is purely for the purpose of information sharing.)

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1. APOLOGIES

Councillor Peter Beck for lateness.

2. COMMUNICATIONS AUDIT REVIEW

11AM

At its meeting on 31 July, the Community, Recreation and Culture Committee resolved to:

'Ask that an urgent open workshop be held prior to the matter going to full council, with all Councillors on the Communications Audit, to consider the Communications Audit Recommendations, the staff recommendations, and the Chairpersons Recommendations.'

The Communications Audit Review will be considered by the full Council at its meeting on 23 August 2012.

Attached to this agenda for discussion are the following documents for discussion:

Attachment 1: Communications Audit Review (*this has been previously circulated to the Councillors*);

Attachment 2: Staff Recommendations Table;

Attachment 3: Recommendations tabled by the Chairperson of the Community, Recreation and Culture Committee at its meeting on 31 July 2012.

No Surprises

- * The Mayor and Councillors will take all reasonable measures to ensure that the CEO, Council staff, Mayor and other Councillors are aware of issues that they wish to raise at the Council table.
- * The CEO and Council staff will take all reasonable measures to ensure that the Mayor and Councillors, at an early stage, are aware of any issues, across the city that are likely to affect them or have any potential to be controversial.
- * Important decisions are to come to full Council, as early and with as much information as possible.
- * The CEO or staff to do full and regular reporting to Council on important projects, from inception to completion, so the Council is aware of emerging risks.
- * Council to be provided with enough information to understand the risks and consequences of decisions before they make them, even if this involves 'robust enquiry of management' at times.
- * Managers are to operate on a 'no surprises' basis with the governance group.
- * Council to maintain a clear, up-to-date delegations policy so that decisions are taken at the right level and properly authorised.

Good Faith Relationship

- * The Councillors and the CEO commit to establishing a working relationship based on respect and trust.
- * Councillors and the CEO will endeavour to have a constructive relationship through regular communication and open discussion to address any emerging tensions as soon as they arise.
- * Councillors and the CEO will periodically consider whether this core relationship is operating well from each of their perspectives, and whether there are any aspects that can be improved.

Breach

In the event that something occurs which is in breach of the No Surprises section of the Charter, any concerns on the matter will be addressed in house.

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ATTACHMENT 2

No.	Audit Recommendation	Staff Comment	Staff Recommendation
1.	An overarching communications strategy to inform residents about Council's vision for the city and how it is to be implemented.	Elected members, at the LTP committee, have discussed the need to revisit the vision for the city.	<p>Recommend staff arrange a facilitated workshop for Council to agree a new vision for the city.</p> <p>Recommend staff work on a draft Communications strategy to inform residents about how the vision for the city is to be implemented, and that this draft strategy be brought back to the Community, Recreation and Culture Committee.</p>
2.	A communications plan to explain the council's thinking, its programme of decision making, the rationale behind decisions and how they were made.	<p>Staff will review the effectiveness of the Your Council your Voice materials.</p> <p>Staff support the preparation of a communications plan that addresses the key findings of the residents survey that show the public do not understand how Council decisions are made.</p>	Recommend staff prepare a communications plan to explain the council's programme of decision making, the rationale behind decisions and how they were made, and that this draft plan be brought back to the Community, Recreation and Culture Committee for discussion by October 2012.
3.	Ensure the Public Affairs Group is responsible for prioritising and managing council-wide communications activity by rethinking the shared service model for Public Affairs and related budgeting and planning processes for marketing and public relations activity		Recommend that the General Manager Public Affairs review the operation of the shared service in discussion with the Executive Team.
4.	A recovery communication plan encompassing CERA, CCDU, the City Council, other local authorities and other recovery agencies, using international disaster recovery communication and expertise.	<p>CERA, as the government agency tasked with leading the recovery of Christchurch, is already working on a cross-agency public education programme.</p> <p>Council staff work closely with CERA staff at all levels and have good contacts with other agencies.</p>	Recommend staff continue to work closely with CERA.
5.	An engagement strategy that sets measurable objectives for both management and elected members to interact with, listen to and respond appropriately to the Council's key stakeholders.	Communication and consultation staff propose preparing a draft engagement strategy using learnings from the successful Share an Idea community engagement initiative.	Recommend staff prepare a draft engagement strategy with input from community boards, by October 2012, for discussion with the Community, Recreation and Culture Committee.

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ATTACHMENT 2

No.	Audit Recommendation	Staff Comment	Staff Recommendation
6.	Provide Unit Managers and their frontline staff with training in customer service and in building community relationships.	<p>A customer service excellence programme run by HR for all staff began in 2009 but was put on hold due to the earthquakes. It was recently restarted.</p> <p>The programme aims to embed Council customer service principles and standards across the organisation, to help improve customer service.</p> <p>Some areas of the Council, including the Consenting team, now have a specific customer service strategy targeted at their work.</p> <p>The recently introduced call recording system in the call centre which also records the 'handshake' to back office staff is also helping to highlight to these staff where customer service can be improved.</p>	Note that staff will continue to roll out the customer service excellence training to all staff and ensure it reflects the findings of this audit.
7.	A no-surprise process for ensuring councillors and community board chairs are briefed prior to the public release of information.	<p>A No Surprises Policy for staff and elected members is being developed as an Appendix to the Charter.</p> <p>The elected members intranet has been revamped and turned into a one stop shop for the latest information on earthquake recovery and other Council initiatives.</p> <p>An action has been included in the performance plans for all Communication Advisers to: "Ensure elected members are informed of relevant communication activities".</p>	Note that staff will continue to monitor the effectiveness of the initiatives in place to ensure elected members are kept informed of Council activities.
8.	Reinstate the mayoral forum (or a similar stakeholder forum) so that elected members can re-engage with stakeholder groups outside periods of formal consultation.	Staff have discussed this with the Mayor and he would like to engage with stakeholder groups on a regular basis, similar to the business breakfasts that were held prior to the earthquakes.	Recommend staff set up regular Mayoral stakeholder meetings.

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ATTACHMENT 2

No.	Audit Recommendation	Staff Comment	Staff Recommendation
9.	Ensure that Councillors have responsibilities that enable them to speak formally on specific portfolio matters and engage in a more trusting relationship with staff on specific portfolio matters.	With the adoption of four new committees, committee Chairs are authorised to make statements within the terms of reference of their committees as outlined in the Charter.	Note that the new Committee structure gives Chairs responsibilities to speak formally on portfolio matters and engage with staff on these matters.
10.	Apply consistent standards of timeliness and substance in responding to requests for information.	<p>A process for dealing with Councillor requests is outlined in the new Charter.</p> <p>Other requests are handled under our customer service core standards which outline that staff will return a voicemail call within one working day and respond to written enquiries within ten working days. All Official Information Act (OIA) requests are to be responded to within 20 working days.</p> <p>Staff will initiate a process for monitoring requests to ensure they are responded to in a timely manner.</p>	Recommend that staff initiate a process for monitoring requests to ensure they are responded to in a timely manner.
11.	Improve current council project and event planning by combining marketing and communication plans into a single plan. Ensure all plans have measurable objectives that can be reported on.	The Communications Manager and marketing manager have actioned this recommendation and it will be included in their performance plan for the coming year.	Note that staff have actioned the recommendation to combine all marketing and communications plans into a single plan and ensure all plans have measurable objectives that can be reported on.
12.	<p>Significantly improve the Council's online communication tools to provide ratepayers with more direct access to information about council decision making and services.</p> <p><i>Continued over ...</i></p>	<p>The current ICT strategy prioritises improvements to online customer self service.</p> <p>A project is currently underway that will enable customers to lodge a consent application, pay online and then follow its progress online.</p> <p>Another project is underway that will enable all council business units to write and update website content in their unit's area in a more efficient and quicker way.</p>	<p>Note that staff will continue to roll out online customer self service projects as prioritised in the IM&CT strategy.</p> <p>Recommend the Committee set up a working party to look at possible options for making it easier for the public to access information on the web, including ward based web pages for the public to access specific local issues and council projects.</p>

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ATTACHMENT 2

No.	Audit Recommendation	Staff Comment	Staff Recommendation
	12. Continued	Staff will be evaluating new technology so that we are able to present council information to the public in a more mobile way e.g. Smartphones, tablets.	Recommend staff bring a recommendation to the Community, Recreation and Culture Committee for web-streaming council meetings and options for this by September.
13.	Significantly improve response times for media inquiries by streamlining approval processes.	<p>In the past month (18 June - 17 July), 80 per cent of media enquiries were responded to within the same working day. 15 per cent were responded to the following day, and five per cent took two days or more to respond to.</p> <p>All Unit Managers have had media training and have the authority to respond to media enquiries.</p> <p>The Communications Manager will produce a documented process for streamlining media inquiry response time and will review the media policy to ensure it emphasises prompt response times and includes the appropriate spokespeople.</p>	Recommend staff produce a documented process for streamlining media inquiry response time by September 2012.

Chairperson Recommendations:

That the Committee notes that these recommendations are a preliminary response to the Audit/Review and that it does not preclude further work being done in response to the issues raised within the report.

1. That the Committee establish a working party to report back within three months to review the:
 - the current Communications Policy (**Attachment A**).
 - online communication tools including the website
 - the Your Council Your Voice resource
 - Civics Education resource

2. That the Committee note that there is a strong need for a clear picture of how council is focusing resources on earthquake recovery and how the organisation has adapted to take this into account. As such it recommends to Council that it work with the CEO to develop a Recovery map that sets out a coherent strategy of how Council is dealing with earthquake issues as opposed to the business as usual approach.

3. That the Committee recommend that the CEO Sub Committee review the Performance Agreement and KPIs with the CEO in regards to improving the delivery of communications and making this a key priority of focus. That this incorporate staff recommendations 6, 10, 11, 13 and that regular progress is reported back to the Committee.

4. That staff work with the committee to prepare
 - a draft recovery communications plan in conjunction with key stakeholders such as CERA, CCDU, some or all UDS Partners, SCIRT, and Cancern to be reported to the Community, Recreation, and Culture committee by Sept 1st 2012.

 - a draft MOU outlining the way in which CERA, CCDU, and SCIRT will engage at a Governance level with the elected Council and Community Boards in recovery decisions by Oct 1st 2012.

5. That the No Surprises section attached is inserted into the Charter and adopted at the next full Council meeting. (**Attachment B**)

6. That staff prepare a schedule of regular quarterly forums between Council and key stakeholders including developers, investors, government departments, business sector, community groups, sports groups and the media. The Committee recommends that the CEO and senior management be encouraged to attend and that these forums be an opportunity for two way dialogue with a chance for Council to present, but also a chance for Council to listen. (by Sept 1st)

7. That Council develop and establish positive and constructive relationships with the Government (CERA, CCDU, EQC, and local MPs), ECAN, and other local Councils by requesting staff organising a regular schedule of face to face meetings where items can be discussed (by August 20th)

8. That the Charter be amended to include the role of Committee Chairpersons to speak on issues relevant to their terms of reference and to enable other Councillors to speak on certain portfolios as agreed to by Committees or Council.

Introduction

We, the Christchurch City Council (1), recognise the importance of communication in our relationship with the people of Christchurch and various other stakeholders. As a public body, we have a duty to inform, which in some cases is a statutory requirement. We also have an obligation to ensure the citizens of Christchurch know how they are being affected by our actions and what their rights and responsibilities are in relation to them.

However, under the provisions of the Local Government Act 2002, there are some circumstances where we reserve the right to confidentiality. Some reasons why information may be withheld are when it would:

- Endanger the safety of any person
- Prejudice maintenance of the law
- Compromise the privacy of any person
- Reveal confidential or commercially sensitive information
- Cause offence to tikanga Maori or would disclose the location of waahi tapu
- Prejudice public health or safety
- Compromise legal professional privilege
- Disadvantage the local authority while carrying out negotiations or commercial activities
- Allow information to be used for improper gain or advantage.

This Communication Policy has been prepared to be consistent with the Local Government Act 2002 as well as the principles and recommendations outlined in the Auditor-General's Report on guidelines for local authorities around some aspects of communication. (2) The policy also recognises that we seek to be consistent in matching our communication with our actions.

To achieve a consistent and readily identifiable approach to communication, this draft policy has been prepared to align with the draft Consultation Policy and other relevant internal policies and standards as well as Acts of Parliament (see appendix for these).

Under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act we are required, when asked, to disclose all information unless it can be withheld for one of the reasons in the Act. Withholding of information by the Council can be reviewed by an Ombudsman so we are unable to guarantee individual privacy on matters being discussed with us.

Scope

This draft document is intended to cover both internal and external Council communication. It is acknowledged that there will be some variations to the application of the policy as it is applied internally. However, the underlying principles should remain the same. This policy does not preclude elected members from voicing their individual views on issues, and is being addressed by the Code of Conduct for Elected Members.

A list (not exhaustive) has been compiled to recognise the variety of roles which we fulfil in our communication, identify the key audiences involved and our methods of communication (see appendix for this).

Communication objectives

- To communicate in a way that reflects the Council's vision, mission statement and strategic direction.
- To inform the people of Christchurch, other key audiences and stakeholders about our activities, plans and strategies which affect them.
- To improve public awareness and understanding of our processes and activities.
- To develop communication which stimulates and encourages public confidence and involvement in local democratic processes.
- To develop and support management processes that ensure effective internal communication.
- To promote a proactive stance in our communication with the wider public.
- To develop an environment which encourages an effective and ongoing flow of information amongst Council staff and between staff and elected members.

These objectives will be given effect to by way of a Communication Strategy.

Communication principles

- Walking the Talk - we will work towards ensuring that the actions of the organisation reflect the messages conveyed.
- Transparency - we recognise that all levels of information need to be balanced, honest and fairly expressed.
- Consistency – we will ensure that consistent information is provided in a coordinated manner (3) and is easily identifiable as being from Council/Community Boards.
- Accessibility (4) – we will endeavour to identify key audiences to clearly convey information at a time and in a manner and form that meets their needs.
- Accuracy - we will ensure that all levels of information are as complete and accurate as possible, having regard to the principle of accessibility.
- Clarity of purpose - all organisational communication will have a clear objective.
- Cost-effectiveness - we will provide information in a cost-effective way.
- Responsiveness - communication received by the Council will be responded to and acted upon in an appropriate manner, which can include referral to other organisations and/or sources of information.

Other policies/standards

It is recognised that there are relationships between this draft Communication Policy and other Council guidelines, standards and policies as well as Acts of Parliament.

These include:

- Consultation Policy
- Strategic Direction and Vision

- Giving Value - Being Valued
- Codes of Conduct - Staff and Elected Members
- Local Government Act 2002
- Long Term Council Community Plan
- Customer Service Standards
- Draft Policy on Significance
- Governance Framework
- Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act
- Official Information Act
- Privacy Act.

Roles we fulfil in our communication:

These include:

- Facilitator
- Negotiator
- Investigator
- Enforcement
- Leader
- Informer
- Influencer of attitudes and behaviour
- Leader of public debate
- Reporter
- Lobbyist - central government etc
- Educator - encouraging participation through knowledge
- Promoter
- Empowerer of people to take part
- Advocate
- As a first port of call for the public
- Internal information provider
- Decision maker
- Regulator
- Public service provider
- Sponsor.

Key audiences:

These include:

- Ratepayers of Christchurch
- People of Christchurch
- Maori
- Business community
- Community sector organisations (NGO, non profit, community groups)
- Customers and user groups
- Visitors (temporary students, conference participants, tourists etc)
- Pacific Island communities
- Ethnic groups
- Other local bodies and central government
- Elected members of the Christchurch City Council
- Staff of the Christchurch City Council

- Target groups - children, youth, older persons, people with disabilities
- Partners and potential partners
- Investors and potential investors
- Wider political networks – e.g. Local Government New Zealand.

Methods of communication

These include:

- Advertising
- Advocacy
- Publications
- Internet and other electronic material
- Logo/branding
- Media relations
- Facilities (eg Our City O-Tautahi, Christchurch City Libraries)
- Signage
- Sponsorship (given and received)
- Customer services
- Relationship building - internal and external
- Public meetings/workshops/focus groups/site visits
- Internal communication
- Staff in one-to-one situations outside the work environment
- Research
- On-site learning situations
- Events/festivals.

Council
20 November 2003

(1) Christchurch City Council refers to elected members (Council and Community Boards) and the staff of Christchurch City Council. It does not include Council Controlled Trading Organisations or Council Controlled Organisations.

(2) Report of the Controller and Auditor-General, Suggested Guidelines for Advertising and Publicity by Local Authorities, July 1999

(3) It is recognised as important to be seen as “speaking with one voice,” Report of the Controller and Auditor -General, Suggested Guidelines for Advertising and Publicity by Local Authorities, July 1999

(4) Section 82 (1), Local Government Act 2002