

# **City Development Committee**

**Thursday, 8 April 2004  
Commencing at 9.30 am**

**Item 12: Waitakere Online Progress  
Report**

**AGENDA SUPPLEMENT**

**SUPPLEMENT TO AN ORDINARY MEETING OF THE CITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
TO BE HELD IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, 6 WAIPAREIRA AVENUE, LINCOLN,  
WAITAKERE CITY, ON THURSDAY, 8 APRIL 2004,  
COMMENCING AT 9.30 AM.**

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**12 WAITAKERE ONLINE PROGRESS REPORT**

**PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

The purpose of this report is to provide the City Development Committee with options for managing the initial development of the Waitakere City Web Portal, and to recommend an appropriate governance model for the ongoing long-term management of the site. This report also provides the Committee with an update on the role of the Waitakere EcoTech Working Party and options for working toward a relationship between Council and external groups who wish to progress Information Communication Technology projects in the City.

**BACKGROUND**

Waitakere Online is a key strategic programme aimed at improving the City's Information Communication Technology infrastructure and business/community access to that technology.

The previous report to the December 2003 meeting of the City Development Committee identified the City Web Portal as a current priority project for the Waitakere Eco-Tech Working Party. The following resolutions were adopted at this meeting:

- “1. *That the information be received.*
2. *That a Councillor's workshop be scheduled to confirm Council's preferred level of involvement and governance structure to support the City Portal/Gateway project and associated initiatives.*
3. *That the outcomes from the Councillor's Waitakere City Web Portal workshop be discussed with the Waitakere Portal Project Team and broader stakeholders and that the outcome from the discussions be reported back to the City Development Committee.”*

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Subsequent to this meeting, the following actions have occurred:

- Broader Stakeholder Consultation Workshop (17 December 2003) to discuss requirements for the future look, feel and functionality of the City Web Portal;
- Councillor's workshop, 3 February 2004, to explore issues associated with the governance structure of a City Web Portal;
- Discussions on the governance issues associated with the City Web Portal (held at the February 2004 and March 2004 meetings of the Waitakere EcoTech Working Party).

As an outcome of these discussions Council has confirmed its support for the value of a Waitakere City Web Portal in assisting with citywide information provision by providing links to local businesses, social/residential information, and civic services in the City.

## **STRATEGIC CONTEXT**

A City Portal, developed in partnership with Council, business and the community, supports Council's strategic platforms for access to Information Communication Technology. Council's partnerships with external parties in developing communications infrastructure, technologies and skills to access this infrastructure, supports Waitakere's businesses and communities, and has an important role in the social and economic development of the City.

The City Web Portal Project and the formation of partnerships with external groups who are initiating and progressing Information Communication Technology projects, sit within the work being undertaken as part of the Waitakere Online programme. The vision of this programme is to improve Information Communication Technology infrastructure and services necessary to support Council's goals and priorities for developing Waitakere as an Eco-City. The programme involves working toward this vision by providing improvements to Information Communication Technology infrastructure within the City to facilitate ongoing sustainable economic growth, and by enabling the people, business and communities of the City to take maximum advantage of communications technologies to improve social and economic wellbeing.

The launch of a Betatype Portal model will provide the Waitakere community with an opportunity to test this new technology, working towards developing a final model that will continually evolve to meet the needs of its users.

## **ISSUES**

### **Portal**

Consideration needs to be given to the following factors:

- Council's role in providing support for the development of the Portal during the start-up phase, and how this would impact on Council's responsibilities in terms of design, content control, and legal liabilities associated with the publication of information;
- Governance issues associated with ongoing management and governance of the Portal.

### **Council's Role During the Start-Up Phase**

Council has demonstrated its commitment to the initial design and development of the Portal through the allocation of funding for the purchase of hardware, software, and staff resources to develop the Portal project.

The Waitakere EcoTech Working Party has recommended that the Portal be developed in two stages, initial development/design, and on-going development and content control beyond the start-up phase.

### **Work Programme**

Council's objectives during the start-up phase are to develop a model that has a clear structure and baseline functions, such as providing a basic local search engine. It will also have a "look and feel" that will be improved and modified as the Portal is developed. It is proposed that this model will include links to externally controlled sites. During this start up phase testing of the model will be undertaken to determine demand from stakeholders and the viability of the Portal's key functions. This "start-up" phase will have a set term of 12-18 months, after this the funding support and governance structure of the Portal will be reviewed as its development enters the next phase.

The baseline governance and operational structure of the Portal during the start-up phase (with Council as the primary sponsor) will be as follows:

- Council owned and operated server;
- Council owned hardware and software;
- Council staff resource Web Content Management;
- Council policies/procedures for publishing and linkages to external sites;
- Formation of a voluntary editorial board, which will make decisions on linkages to external sites (Council will have representation on this board).

The next steps for Council in supporting the start-up phase of the Portal are as follows:

- A8-A11* 1. To establish rules and policies for: the style of the portal, its method of publication in terms of access to information, and its adherence to Central Government web guidelines. A list of recommended policies is attached at pages A8 to A11.
- A12-A13* 2. To address the content and functionality requirements that have been identified through the initial public consultation. In addressing these requirements, Council needs to address the risks and resource requirements associated with the hosting and content control of the Portal where there are links to externally controlled sites. These issues are identified in the table attached at pages A12 to A13.
3. To establish an editorial board to make decisions on content and preliminary design, which will include an elected member and be formed from members of the City Web Portal Project team.
- A14* A timeline for future development of the Portal has been attached at page A14.

### **On-Going Management and Governance Options**

At the end of the start-up phase (12-18 months from the launch of the Portal) Council will assess the development of the Portal, how its content has been managed and governed, and what role Council will play in the ongoing development of the project, including issues of governance, management and funding. Once the Portal has been launched and functionality testing has been undertaken, a further report will be taken back to the City Development Committee to resolve these issues.

### **Model for Information Communication Technology Partnerships**

Council recognise the presence of a number of other external groups who support Information Communication Technology projects, which contribute towards the goals and objectives of the Waitakere Online Strategy. Some examples of external Information Communication Technology entities include WorkRaft Trust, Unitec (E4Free), Ranui Action Project, and the Ministry of Education (through the PROBE project), and others.

Council recognises the value of these organisations in delivering projects that have not currently been prioritised as part of the Waitakere Online Work Programme. Council also recognises the importance of supporting these external entities in undertaking these projects. Council staff propose to explore formal relationships with these entities through discussions on how the parties could best work together to achieve Eco-Tech Waitakere goals, which could lead to the development of a Memorandum of Understanding with these parties. These Memorandum of Understandings would outline the roles of both Council and the external group, formalised working relationships and the areas where the parties might work together for external entity projects. Council financial support and staff resources for external entity projects could be part of the working relationships. It is proposed that Council begin by exploring the possibility of developing an Memorandum of Understanding with WorkRaft Trust, subject to their agreement. Once this relationship model has been developed, it is possible that aspects of it could be applied to relationships with other external (Information Communication Technology supporting) groups.

## RESOURCES

Council has approved funding for the establishment phase of the Portal project. In the Long Term Council Community Plan, Council has committed to the following:

- The hardware and software necessary to host and develop the Portal during the development phase and a staff resource to manage web content;
- Council has also employed a project manager to facilitate and support the Eco-Tech Working Party in progressing this project.

## CONCLUSION

The Waitakere Portal Project Team have made considerable progress in establishing and developing the framework for the City Web Portal. They have undertaken consultation to resolve the issues surrounding the 'look and feel' of the Portal and the governance issues. They are now entering into a phase of development, which will include broader stakeholder consultation to prepare for the testing, refinement and launch of the Beta Test Portal in May 2004.

During this start up-phase policies and procedures will be put in place to filter appropriate links to externally controlled sites, and an editorial board be formed to make final decisions on web content. This governance model will be re-evaluated beyond the start-up phase (in 12-18 months) and further debate will continue to ensure a robust understanding of the implications of the ongoing management of the Portal for Council. This work programme will be endorsed by Council.

The development of working relationships between Council and external entities who wish to progress Information Communication Technology projects in Waitakere City is also another area in which Council can make progress.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Waitakere Online Progress Report be received.
2. That Council adopt an initial governance and operational structure for the City Web Portal during the start-up phase whereby a Council hosted and managed site will provide linkages to external sites, and that Council continue to develop policies for linkages between a Council hosted City Web Portal and externally controlled web sites.
3. That further discussions be held between Council and external stakeholders on the long-term governance of the City Web Portal, and that a report on these matters be taken back to the City Development Committee after the Beta-site prototype model is launched and further stakeholder consultation on these issues has been undertaken.
4. That an editorial board be established with responsibility for approving content on the portal, approving links to other site being established and approving the disestablishment of links to other sites within the framework of any terms of reference the Council may set from time to time.
5. That the development of a Memorandum of Understanding with the WorkRaft Trust, subject to their agreement, to set out common objectives and ways in which Council and the Trust will work together to further Information Communication Technology related goals for the City be approved, and that this model be used as a basis for developing relationships between Council and other external entities working in the Information Communication Technology area as required.

6. That the Memorandum of Understanding be reported back to the City Development Committee for approval before execution.
7. That once the Portal and the Memorandum of Understanding have been established, a report be brought back to the City Development Committee on the management of Council's ongoing activity in the Information Communication Technology/Waitakere Online area, including other possible relationships with external entities, possible Information Communication Technology initiatives, work programmes with external entities and examination of the need for the on-going existence of the EcoTech Working Party.
8. Recommendation 8 will be considered in the Confidential Supplement of the Agenda and has been circulated to members separately with this agenda.

Report prepared by: Rochelle Edwards, Waitakere Online Project Manager.

