

## WELLBEING SUMMIT 2004

### Mayor's Welcome Speech on Friday, July 16

#### Acknowledgements:

- MPs – (Lynn Pillay is the only MP confirmed at his stage)
- Councillors
- Managers & staff from central government agencies
- Leaders of our community, representatives of community organisations
- Members of the Collaboration Strategy Group who have organised this Summit

In 1996 we published our first Wellbeing Report. Basically it was a "Call To Action"- setting out what needed to be done, jointly, to improve the lives of our communities.

I have been excited by the work that you have been undertaking since the last Summit , in 2002

We can be collectively proud of the way we have worked together as community – central government – council. While working together we have still been able to challenge each other - robustly when necessary.

I wish to acknowledge the government agencies that have been prepared to resource the Wellbeing Collaboration Project through funding the Project Manager – a role that has been vital in keeping our three-way partnership on track.

Today we will be reflecting on information in the Waitakere Wellbeing Report – for the first time this has been produced jointly.....with representatives from the community, local government and central government sectors.

There is much to celebrate in this report in terms of achievements and highlights e.g.

- For me, perhaps the most pleasing is that 86% of residents think that this city is a great place to live. That's simply outstanding and, I believe, would be hard to beat anywhere in the country.

Let me just read a couple of quotes that, for me, sum up the essence of that spirit:

- *"There is something magical about the West. We're proud to be Westies.*
- *We're no nonsense people, we just get in and do things".*
- *" We are proud of our strong local identity. We are seen to have a 'can do' attitude, are down to earth, and community minded."*

Other highlights in the report include.....

- Major new leisure and recreational facilities...the Trusts Stadium, just down the road, is a magnificent example.
  - A relatively low unemployment rate
  - Our new Waitakere Hospital
  - The enrichment of our city with increasing ethnic diversity
- At the same time as celebrating these achievements we need to recognise that we are a city growing rapidly with all the strains that it brings ..... by 2021 the city will have around 50,000 more people.

We need to carefully plan for this growth and ensure that we **grow together** the necessary services, facilities and services.

Your current 'Calls to Action' such as those focussed on Early Childhood, New Migrants, and the transition from school to work are extremely important relevant in this context.

And in doing all this, however, we need to retain that special spirit we have here in Waitakere ....what we call the 'Waitakere Way'.

So thank you, once again- have a great day.....

**LYNNE PILLAY MP FOR WAITAKERE  
LAUNCH OF THE WAITAKERE ONLINE PORTAL  
NEW ZEALAND BIBLE COLLEGE  
16 JULY 2004**

**MAKING THE CONNECTIONS**

Thank you for inviting me here today and it's a great pleasure to share the platform with Mayor Bob Harvey in launching Waitakere Online, the new electronic gateway for Waitakere City.

And it's great to be here as part of the 2004 Wellbeing Summit. The Wellbeing Project is one of Waitakere's major successes.

It's been a journey involving this community working together to identify weaknesses in our social fabric and seek collaborative solutions – and collaboration is what the West excels in.

It is appropriate therefore, to be talking communications technologies at a Wellbeing Summit. Communications technologies are one of the key tools of the future for us all to use to connect, to inform each other, to work and pursue new opportunities, to bridge large distances and isolation, to educate, to socialise.

Creating an understanding of the capabilities of this technology for people in the community is an important first step in developing a "knowledge society." And I say that as someone that still marvels at how those voices go along the telephone lines.

I'm going to focus on two points today around the national context for initiatives and development in Information Communications Technology or ICT.

The first is the importance of creating “connected communities” through improved ICT infrastructure and ensuring that all New Zealanders have access to this technology. The second point will be to touch on the Government’s new draft Digital Strategy, and on how Waitakere’s exciting new use of the opportunities provided by ICT, will deliver parts of this strategy.

### Connected Communities

New technologies are an essential part of our toolkit for sustained economic and social development. They enable us to use our knowledge for the benefit of all.

My government has taken action in recognition of the importance of new technologies, and just a few of our key actions to date have been:

- The development of government’s new draft Digital Strategy,
- Ensuring all schools have access to broadband through improved connections;
- Focusing on the ICT sector generally as a source of economic development through the Growth and Innovation Framework;
- Making sure government information is accessible via the internet, as in the revamped Beehive site and Treaty of Waitangi sites.
- Building pilot projects for community technology initiatives.
- Ensuring that research is in place to evolve the benefits of ICT economically and socially.

A key task for government is addressing the Digital Divide, - the divide between those New Zealanders who can access and use computers and the Internet and those who cannot. The Internet has the potential to bring us closer together and brings us closer to the world. And communities must be inside the technological loop. Being inside means being part of the future, being outside means being lost in the past as the future romps away.

The Waitakere Online project is about empowerment, empowerment of individuals and communities to bring themselves inside the loop and thus guarantee their place in the future. This is because it is a community driven project that provides relevant local information for all of the people of Waitakere.

A number of key measures have been identified by my government to address the Digital Divide. These include:

- New community products such as on-line directories, maps of local activities, web pages of local groups and businesses, information developed by and with, communities and on their terms.
- A multi-lingual, multi-cultural and multi-ability presence on local websites.
- Improved access to information stored in a community archive.
- New service channels enabling local people to access local, regional and nationally based health, education, employment, housing and all other services which promote social cohesion.
- Improved local employment prospects as the community's expertise in ICT increases and adds value to our traditional industries and creates new opportunities for trade and innovation.
- It's about job growth.

The Waitakere Online Portal has the potential to deliver all of these initiatives, and more importantly it does this by bringing the different community players together.

As we know from the Wellbeing Project it takes drive and determination to move things beyond a good idea into a real, delivered project. I want to congratulate all the working party members and staff who pushed this initiative into the delivered form that we will see switched on by Mayor Bob Harvey today.

### Draft Digital Strategy

I'd also like to use this opportunity today to tell you about how Waitakere Online aligns with the work that government has been doing on the new draft Digital Strategy. This draft strategy aims for New Zealand to be a world leader at using information and technology to realise our economic, social and cultural goals. This strategy is focused on government, communities and business working together to deliver another three C's content, confidence and connection to ICT.

What does this mean?

Content is about putting the information there in the first place so that it is actually there for people to access. It is about providing as much information as possible in an electronic form that every New Zealander can find and use. It means building an electronic library of everything we know.

On the other side it means making sure that all New Zealanders have the confidence and capability to use ICT to access that information in their own way and not just in their own time but at any time of the day or night, on any day of any year.

Being connected is about having high quality infrastructure in place, to enable people to “log on” access the sites they need and to get the information - locally and globally. Infrastructure is the telephone lines, the fibre optics, the wireless connections: it is the “road” on which the information travels between people

Confidence and Capability is about all New Zealanders having the ability and confidence to use ICT to access the information they need.

Content is the most relevant category to this meeting today.

Just as an example, content is about an Iwi using ICT to capture its stories and heritage. It is about having the information there for a single mum with a young kid being able to get on line to make sure she is getting the government services and benefits she is entitled to. It is about the sole trader filing a GST return electronically.

It is about these things and many, many more, indeed there is no reason it cannot benefit literally every facet of our lives. If I want to know something, I should be able to get on line and find it; if I want to buy something, sell something pay for something, even vote.....

Waitakere City has recognised the importance of providing relevant Content to the people of this City by developing an electronic gateway through which to access literally the world of important information.

This project *is* significant and very very cool. It has been driven by the community and, as we see so often in the west is leading the way in community based technology projects.

And so finally, Waitakere online is your Portal: use it or lose it. Use it and enrich it. Use it and send a signal to us all – in local as well as central government – that connecting communities is the way of the future. I am pleased to support this initiative, and congratulations once again to all involved. We all look forward to seeing this project go from strength to strength.