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**Committee** Policy, Finance and Strategy Committee  
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## Local Governance Statement

### 1. Purpose

To provide Council with a copy of Greater Wellington Regional Council's Local Governance Statement: *How You Can Have Your Say*.

### 2. Background

#### 2.1 Local Governance Statement - A Requirement of the LGA 2002

Section 40 of the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA) requires councils to prepare a local governance statement and make it available to the public. This section also outlines the information that must be included in the statement (**Attachment 1**).

#### 2.2 Purpose of the Local Governance Statement

A local governance statement is a collection of information about:

- the processes through which the Council engages with its community
- how the Council makes decisions and
- the ways in which citizens can influence local democratic processes.

The statement is written for the information of the general public.

#### 2.3 Deadline for the Local Governance Statement

In general a local governance statement must be prepared within the 6 months following each triennial general election. However, transitional provisions in the LGA 2002 require councils to prepare their first local governance statement by **31 December 2003**.

### 3. Comment

Greater Wellington Regional Council's Local Governance Statement, *How You Can Have Your Say*, is provided in **Attachment 2**. The statement covers the

information required by section 40 of the LGA 2002. Greater Wellington already discloses much of the information required in the local governance statement in either its long-term and annual plans or the official information directory (which was a requirement of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987). What the local governance statement does is draws all this information together into a single statement.

The intention of the statement is to ensure that the principles relating to local authorities (s 14), governance principles (s 39), and obligations relating to contributions to decision-making processes, are set out in a transparent manner.

*How You Can Have Your Say* aims to be as accessible and engaging as possible to members of the public. As the document is rather long, the executive summary aims to encapsulate the ways the community can influence local democratic processes. It lists the ways in which members of the public can voice their thoughts and concerns, and influence democratic local decision-making. It also states the channels through which information can be accessed.

As the local governance statement is a statutory requirement and the details of what must be included are rather specific much of the content cannot be changed. Officers would, however, be interested to hear any feedback councillors may have on the statement and/or the methods for making it publicly available, so that they can take it into account before publishing the final document before the end of this month.

## **4. Communication**

### **4.1 Public Access to GWRC's Local Governance Statement**

The LGA 2002 requires council to make their local governance statement 'publicly available'. It does not, however, stipulate when and where the document should be made available. This means Greater Wellington is free to choose how it makes the document available to the public. Council officers plan to place the document:

- in Greater Wellington's offices
- in the region's public libraries, including the Parliamentary Library
- on our website.

There are also options for distributing the key messages of the statement to members of the public. These include developing a pamphlet based on the executive summary of the statement and distributing it to community groups or with an edition of Greater Wellington's *Elements* newspaper. Council officers will look into these options further in 2004.

## 5. Recommendations

*That the Committee:*

- (1) *Receives the document: **How You Can Have Your Say – Greater Wellington Regional Council’s Local Governance Statement**;*
- (2) *Notes the contents of the document;*
- (3) *Notes that council officers will update the document from time to time as appropriate.*

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