Responses to community's feedback

The future of city housing

Theme	Response
Operation and administration concerns	Submitters raised a number of points about operational aspects of the housing service and details of the adminstration or set up of a CHP to ensure good outcomes. The points raised included about whether a CHP would provide more or less transparency and accountability than a Council service, importance of being accountable to tenants and involving them in decision making, importance of honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi and meeting the diverse needs of tenant communities, importance of safeguarding against privatisation, and deliver a high-quality service that manages anti-social behaviour and provides well-maintained properties. If the Council set up a housing trust, the trust would be a regulated entity and would need to meet requirements for registration and regular monitoring with central government – these requirements include standards for tenancy management, property management, tenant partipation and responsiveness, governance and management. The Council can determine to also register the trust as a charity to address further requirements about the entity's purpose. As part of these requirements, a CHP is required to have a tenant participation policy, and tenant feedback and complaints policies which all enable tenants to hold the CHP to account and be involved in decisions. The Council would also establish key governing documents for the CHP (i.e., its Trust Deed and lease agreement) which would set out its overarching purpose and how it needs to operate. The Trust Deed would set out the details on the Trust Board to ensure it was well governed by people who could understand and meet the needs of the community. In the Council's preferred model, the Council remains the owner of the housing assets so these cannot be sold without the Council's decision.
Social housing should be a central government responsibility	Many submitters commented that providing social housing is a central government responsibility, not a local government responsibility, and suggested that the Council sell the housing assets to the government with funding invested in core local government areas to help manage increasing costs. Some submitters said, by providing social housing, local government had been subsidising central government. The Council has made a commitment to central government to play a key long-term role in social housing in Wellington and to complete upgrade work on half the housing portfolio (the government funded the upgrade of the

	first half of the portfolio). The Council's view is that meeting housing needs in Wellington requires partnership between central and local government, and other providers such as CHPs – and this priority is reflected in the Council's Housing Strategy and Long-Term Plan.
IRRS accessbility to all tenants	A number of submissions said tha that existing tenants should have access to the IRRS and the Council should continue to advocate with central government to gain access to the subsidy. Some submitters said all tenants should be given access to IRRS if the Council establishes a CHP. Access to IRRS for council housing tenants has been a key point of advocacy from Wellington City Council and other councils around New Zealand for several years. The government's policy position is that council tenants cannot access the subsidy as they are already adequately housed and the subsidy instead is intended to help reduce the public housing waitlist and support new build social housing. Given the government has not extended the subsidy to local government, the Council needs to consider other options that are available to address the current financial challenges.
Rental affordability concern	Several submssions raised points about rental affordability, including the impact of cost-of-living pressures, the need for secure tenancies and affordable rents for tenants, the need for tenants to be supported under a CHP model, identification of a the need for properties at below-market rent (not just public housing), and suggestions that rents are frozen or not increased. Rental affordability is a key consideration for the Council as it considers options for change. A CHP model would mean that new, eligible tenants would have their rent capped at 25% income and the Council has a number of measures in place to manage rental affordability for current tenants. These include a starting 30% discount on market rent, a cap on annual rent increases of $20 for an individual and $30 for couple/family, a rent freeze for tenants who are 80+ years old, and an Affordable Rent Limit Subsidy which tenants can apply for that caps rent at 35% of income. Additionally the Council has frozen rents for the 2022/23 year to recognise current cost pressures. If the Council established a CHP, all existing tenants tenacies are secure. The Council would also provide take decisions about rental settings for current tenants to ensure tenants had certainty and affordability was maintained and these decisions would be written in to the lease agreement between the CHP and the Council. The Council recognises the need for a range of social and affordable housing in the community. If the Council established a CHP, the Council, CHP, government and other partners would work together to understand the need for different types of housing in Wellington and determine how best to meet that need through the provision of different types of housing.

Cost management concerns	A number of submissions discussed issues of cost management, including noting that rates were under significant pressure already and not wanting to add to rates increases, making changes to manage the costs of the service (e.g. by reducing upgrade requirements) or wanting to understand what had been done in the past to manage housing costs, and commenting about general poor cost management on the part of council. Others questioned whether the CHP would achieve any cost savings, and others said they were comfortable raying increased rates to pay for the housing service. The Council has taken a number of steps to manage the costs of the housing service over time, including making changes to staffing, leasing properties to other providers to increase revenue, and establishing a divestment and redevelopment programme to reinvest the proceeds from the sale of properties that are no longer fit-for-purpose into new developments that meet tenant needs. The Council will manage the costs of the upgrade work as efficiently as possible through the use of strong Project Management and procurement processes; however the Council has an agreement with the government to complete the upgrade work on the remaining properties in the portfolio so needs to meet these costs. The work to date have helped manage the costs of the service but have not been sufficient to address the underlying challenges. This is why the Council has consulted on more significant options for change. Given the cost pressures the Council faces in other areas (e.g. water, infrastructure and transport) which require higher-than-previous rates increases to address, the Council has consulted on a CHP model for housing, which would resolve the housing cost pressures at a lower cost to Council than increasing rates to cover cost shortfalls.

The future of the Southern Landfill

Theme	Response
Reduce waste	In making the decision to adopt the landfill Piggyback option, Council is committed to waste reduction and will introduce initiatives to maximise resource recovery in line with the concept of a Circular Economy. The existing Regional WMMP (2017-2023), has a range of actions to support waste management and minimisation in the city. These actions include a commitment to investigate and if feasible, develop a region-wide resource recovery network - including facilities for construction and demolition waste, glass, food and/or biosolids, and other organic waste. Council has already committed to diverting sludge away from landfill, and will also consider extending kerbside services to include greenwaste and food waste, as well as composting as an option for processing this material in the future. Council will also work with Central Government and national businesses to ensure that there are sustainable processing options for materials, which are unable to be processed locally.
Improve Recycling Facilities	Council is currently undertaking a range of actions to improve recycling services and facilities. Some currently underway or recently completed include: • Multi-Unit Development planning: The development of regulatory guidance for developers around waste storage and servicing planning in Multi-Unit Developments (in accordance with the Solid Waste Management and Minimisation Bylaw). • Household food waste diversion trial: Successful implementation of the Para Kai food waste diversion trial on the Miramar Peninsula. This involved 450 households trialling a range of on-site food waste diversion options, including composting, worm farm and bokashi systems, and 500 households trialling kerbside food waste collection. • Wellington city kerbside waste service review: We are currently reviewing household kerbside waste services and commercial kerbside servicing within the CBD. • Resource recovery investigations: Assessment of the feasibility of a community resource recovery facility and/or expansion of existing facilities supported by a review of available Council infrastructure and catchment mapping is scheduled for 2022/2023. • Organic waste processing options investigations: Investigation into organic processing technology options and end markets, including community-based composting and technology-based processors is scheduled for 2022/23.
Environmental Concern	In considering waste to energy incineration, Council took into consideration its commitment to waste reduction. Whilst the environmental impact of waste to energy incineration is initially less than the landfill Piggyback option, as electricity generated can offset carbon and there is no methane generation. However, over time waste to energy incineration is likely to have a higher long-term carbon impact than the landfill extension because it needs a minimum volume of waste to operate efficiently. As Wellington City and local areas reduce the amount of waste they generates, a waste to energy incinerator will require more waste from further afield, which will result in increased carbon

	emissions from the transportation of waste. The design of the landfill Piggyback option will include a landfill gas capture system, which will result in the methane being used to generate electricity.