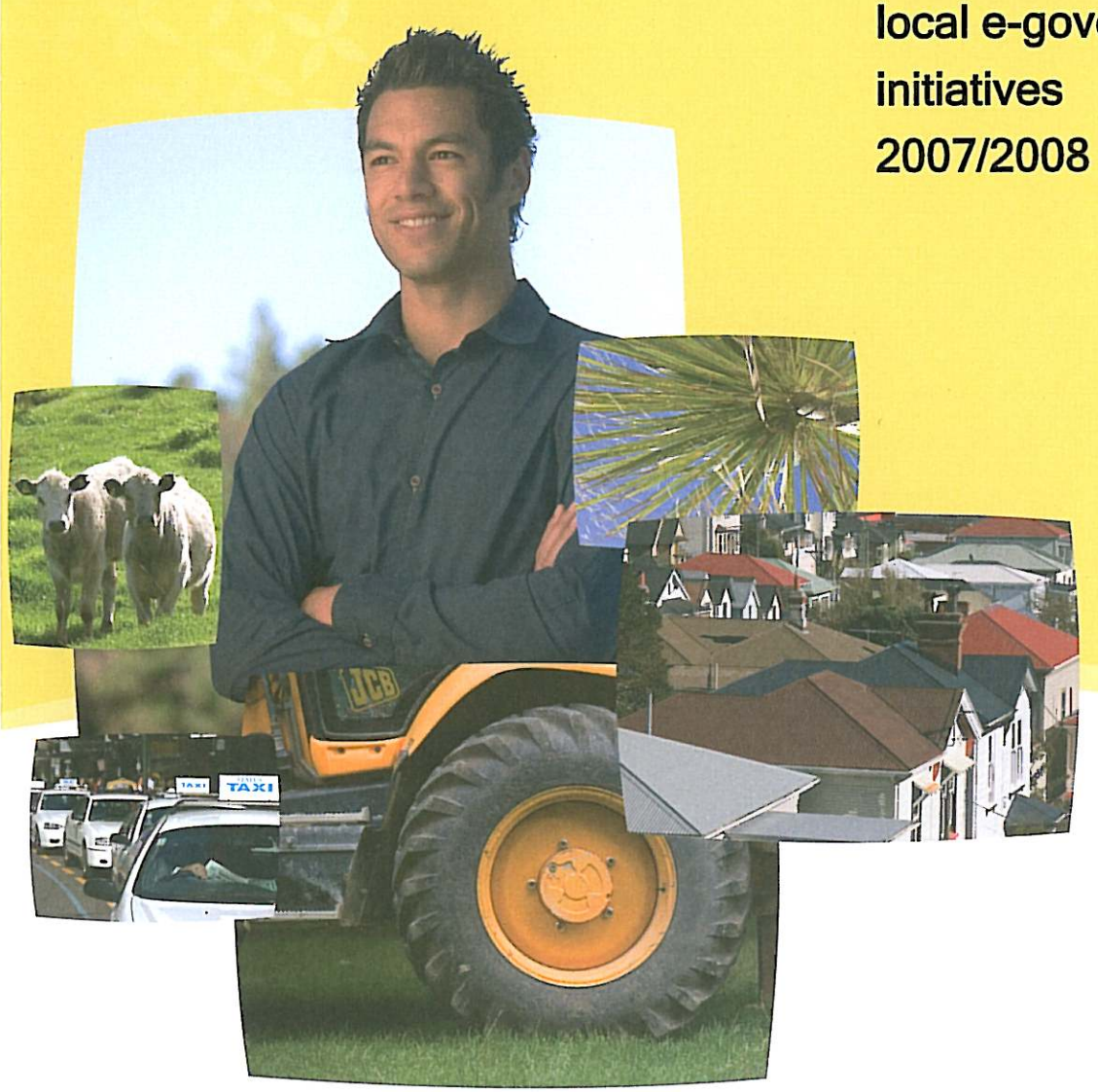
Benchmarking New Zealand local e-government initiatives 2007/2008



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Working Group is very grateful to Jennifer Northover for her persistence in gathering information from councils . This data was collected from councils in 2007.

The Working Group acknowledges the support of Local Government Online (LGOL), and Association of Local Government Information Management Inc (ALGIM) who were joint sponsors of this survey.

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FOREWORD

The third update of the E-government Strategy in 2006 outlined the ICT work programme for all sectors in government. The 14 workstreams in this work programme build on central and local government's achievements in using technology, and are organised around the three characteristics of success for e-government: Convenience and Satisfaction, Integration and Efficiency, Trust and Participation.

There is much interest in the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) initiatives that local government has been implementing. However, there is also a gap in our knowledge about the extent to which local government's achievements match up with the E-government Strategy, and how they compare with the initiatives of public service departments. Relevant data can be an excellent benchmark against which to assess current success, and can also provide a guideline for measuring future success.

In response to this need, the *Local Government New Zealand* ICT Working Group commissioned a survey to gather base data on local government's alignment with the 14 workstreams. Sponsored by *Local Government New Zealand*, the role of the ICT Working Group is to bring into alignment ICT initiatives that are taking place in both local and central government.

A total of 77.6% of all councils participated in this survey. The results provide an insight into the current state of progress at the local government level, and will serve as a good source of data to enable councils to develop and improve their services.

Further phases of this research may involve comparing this data with activities in public service departments, and developing the frameworks and tools to support e-government implementation in councils.

New Zealanders see local government as a significant part of their experience of public services; this was confirmed by the recent findings from the *Kiwis Count* public satisfaction survey. By filling an important gap in our knowledge, this e-government research contributes to the ongoing improvement of better quality services that government delivers.

Laurence Millar
Deputy Commissioner and Government CIO

FOREWORD

The application of technologies by local government for the provision of democracy and information services is acknowledged as being very important. This survey provides an indicator of the current performance of councils based on the e-government framework, and by default identifies where improvements can be made.

The ICT-Digital area is fertile ground for councils at present. Involvement in broadband deployment, geospatial projects, community technology uptake and the provision of web based services can now be framed in the context of the 14 workstreams.

Survey findings relating to the level of capability and knowledge of key e-government elements demonstrate the challenges ahead for councils in providing the level of services increasingly expected from our communities. It also highlights the disparity between larger and smaller councils in meeting e-government standards and ensuring that these become more mainstream in council processes and applications.

A baseline of understanding has now been gained, upon which progress can be monitored. I wish to acknowledge those involved in this exercise, particularly Jennifer Northover who undertook most of the work and achieved a good response rate from councils.

Mark Farnsworth
Chair, Local Government ICT Advisory Group

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Sixty six (of 85) councils participated in a survey commissioned by the *Local Government New Zealand* ICT Advisory Group to assess the extent to which local government is adopting ICT in alignment with e-government.

The survey was jointly sponsored by State Services Commission (SSC), *Local Government New Zealand* (LGNZ), Association of Local Government Information Management Inc (ALGIM) and Local Government Online (LGOL). It was conducted in late 2007/early 2008.

The key findings of the survey are summarised below.

Connectivity

Connectivity infrastructure was difficult for many councils to report on. Follow up contact with a number of councils showed that the data was either not available or not known. The results found:

- 14 of 51 councils (28%) that responded (generally smaller district councils) believe cellphone coverage to be less than adequate for their region
- 16 of 55 councils (29%) that responded (mostly district councils) believe broadband coverage is poor in their region.

Convenience and Satisfaction

Ninety-six percent of Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) and IT Managers either agree or strongly agree that technology is integral to the delivery of government information.

Almost all councils provide online products or services, for example 90% of councils provide downloadable PDF forms. However, the findings showed:

- interactive functionality is not widespread – only 15 councils in the survey claim to provide interactive forms and fewer than 10% of councils offer automated fulfilment such as online consents tracking
- 55% of councils have no formal policy for offering multiple channels. The majority of these councils are small (population less than 50,000).

Nevertheless, access to the Internet is provided in almost all libraries, and there is widespread interest in investigating new channels. Principally under consideration are sms and RSS feeds.

Twenty-six councils (41%) are involved in the development of authoritative databases. On the other hand, just five councils are planning to use the Government Shared Network (GSN), with eight using e-GIF, the e-Government Interoperability Framework.

Only one council has adopted all seven e-GIF standards. The standard most adopted is “Name” and “Address”. Lack of resources is typically claimed as the reason for not implementing e-GIF standards.

Twenty-six of 49 councils (53%) have developed links to Local Government Online (LGOL) as a principle information resource. A smaller number (17) have links to the general government site - newzealand.govt.nz.

Property and environmental data are shared across many councils. Confidence in data accuracy is reasonably high at 69%.

Integration and Efficiency

Council size is a factor in the development of integration and efficiency strategies. Smaller councils are less well advanced in many aspects. For example:

- just over 20% of very small councils (population less than 20,000) have formal guidelines for managing information technology (IT) projects, compared to more than 80% of large councils (population more than 100,000). In total, 31 (47%) councils have formal guidelines
- large councils are 50% more likely to participate in syndicated procurement than very small councils
- large councils are twice as likely as small councils (population less than 50,000) to be using the government authentication programme
- 42% of city councils fund initiatives to research use of technology for service delivery, while 89% of district councils do not
- larger councils are significantly more likely to have a competency framework in place for training ICT staff and to provide support for formal training at tertiary level.

There is considerable collaborative effort among councils in developing cross-agency services, in particular library systems and Geographic Information Systems (GIS). Most operate within a committee structure, but this is not without inherent difficulties of determining funding and staff contributions, dealing with differing expectations, and parochialism.

Smaller councils benefit more from working in shared services than larger councils, indicating that they gain more business benefits by pooling resources with others. These councils rated most highly “enabling small councils to achieve big things”.

While 66% of councils have formal ICT policies, only 10 (15%) of the 66 councils in the survey have formal policies to develop e-government services. Larger councils (city and regional) fare little better - just nine (43%) have formal e-government policies.

Trust and Participation

Equipping elected representatives with technology and training is strongly related to council size. For example, 88% of large councils (population more than 100,000) provide their elected representatives with equipment or a funding equivalent, while 88% of very small councils (population less than 20,000) do not.

Strategies to manage security risk are not well developed. All key plans or strategies are little more than at existence level. For example:

- only 3% of councils have a formally monitored Information Management Standards process
- 40% have no risk management strategy.

Conclusions

E-government is not mainstream. While there is widespread agreement that technology is important, very few councils have formal strategies to build e-government services and ICT functionality is limited.

The conclusions are summarised below:

Council size - many survey results correlate strongly with council size. Either a smaller resource base creates constraints to investing in new ways of doing things, or other factors such as community profile and/or connectivity play a role in how services are delivered. Smaller councils value the opportunity to work with the extended resource base made available in a shared services environment.

Connectivity – most councils do not know how "connected" their communities are for Internet and cellular communications, yet ICT service delivery relies on this infrastructure. Councils should have more reliable data on connectivity.

Uptake of e-GIF standards – engagement with the interoperability standards is very low. Resourcing is claimed to be a factor for low uptake.

IT policies – strategies to manage risk are surprisingly under-developed and less than half of all councils in the survey have formal guidelines for managing major IT projects.

Interactive applications – this is lower than expected. Many interactive technologies today are available "off the shelf" and are not difficult or costly to implement. As an example, Local Government Online has a comprehensive suite of online interactive forms, complete with back-end management and online payments. These are available to councils at no capital cost and with a very small usage fee, yet less than one third of city councils have interactive forms of any kind.

It is clear from the results of the survey, indicating the general preparedness levels of many councils, that the majority of local authorities have not made a serious move towards using interactive technologies. Uptake of e-government technologies has largely relied on a "sprinkling" of enthusiasts and champions spread very thinly across the sector, rather than on planning and development.

INTRODUCTION

The third update of the E-government Strategy sets out 14 e-government activities that describe approaches to transform local and central government service delivery through smart use of technology.

The *Local Government New Zealand* ICT Advisory Group commissioned a survey to assess the extent to which local government is adopting ICT in alignment with these activities. The survey was jointly sponsored by SSC, LGNZ, ALGIM and LGOL. It aims to produce a benchmark for councils and government entities to assess progress against the goals of the Digital Strategy.

The knowledge obtained from the survey will be used to produce a "toolkit-style" document to assist councils in making better use of technology to improve services to their constituents and achieve resource economies.

The approach

The survey was designed to address all aspects of the 14 activities, and was extended to all 85 local government authorities. Survey questions were compiled after extensive consultation with representatives from the local government sector and central government personnel with specific experience in ICT development. Each of the 85 entities was assigned two logins for Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and IT Manager roles (or their equivalents) to participate. Few mandatory questions were set to ensure the data collected was accurate rather than incorrect estimates.

The survey was released in September with an introductory covering note from Mary Bourke, Chairperson of the Local Government ICT Advisory Group. Each CEO was provided with the two logins for their council. The LGOL Surveys Administrator was on hand to deal with problems and issues.

The survey finish date was extended a number of times with the aim of securing at least one response from each council to achieve full representation in the results. By the survey end date in mid January 2008, 79 responses had been received from 66 councils (77.6% of the total 85). The following 19 councils are therefore not represented in the survey results:

Kaipara District Council
Thames Coromandel District Council
Waikato District Council
Waipa District Council
Ruapehu District Council
Horizons Regional Council
New Plymouth District Council
Taranaki Regional Council
Kapiti Coast District Council
Porirua City Council
Carterton District Council
Greater Wellington Regional Council
Kaikoura District Council
Waimakariri District Council
Chatham Islands Council
Westland District Council
Otago Regional Council
Clutha District Council
Invercargill City Council

Interpretation

1. Data is expressed on a per council basis. In most cases, where a council submitted two surveys, the two sets of data were found to be reasonably similar. In instances where responses for a question differed, either one set was more complete and was chosen in full or an averaged response was chosen. In other instances, if the question was of a strategic nature the CEO response was selected over the IT Manager and vice versa - IT Manager answers were selected over the CEO answers for a technical question.
2. "Larger regional councils" refers to regional councils with a population greater than 250,000, as reported for June 2007 on the Department of Statistics website. "Smaller regional councils" are regional councils with reported population less than 250,000.
3. "Larger councils C,D,U" refers to city, district and unitary councils with a population greater than 50,000 as reported for June 2007 on the Department of Statistics website. "Smaller councils C,D,U" are city, district and unitary councils with reported population less than 50,000.
4. Mandatory questions are indicated by an asterisk.
5. "Councils responding" is the number of councils responding to a question [n], a subset of total participating councils [N=66]. Data percentages are based on the subset population 'n'. It is assumed that data provided by 'n' is representative of the total population [85].

Participation

Thirteen councils submitted two surveys and 53 councils submitted one survey:

Council type	City	District	Unitary	Regional	Total
No. in total	15	53	5	12	85
Did not participate	2	12	1	4	19
Two submissions	2	7	1	3	13
One submission	11	34	3	5	53
No. participating	13	41	4	8	66
*Total submissions	15	48	5	11	79

Participating councils by population band:

Population:	City	District	Unitary	Regional	Total
0-20k	0	18	0		18
20-50k	1	17	4		22
50-100k	2	6			8
> 100k	10				10
Regional: <150k				2	2
150-250k				2	2
250-500k				2	2
> 500k				2	2
*Total councils	13	41	4	8	66

SURVEY RESULTS

CONNECTIVITY

Councils were asked to estimate the coverage of broadband, dial-up Internet access, and cellphone coverage for households and businesses in their area.

This information was difficult for many councils to provide and should be regarded at best as soft and at worst, unreliable. Nevertheless it creates a starting point for assessing the availability of infrastructure essential for interaction and service delivery using ICT.

Adequacy of coverage

Broadband connectivity

Councils responding: 55

Adequate coverage to households/businesses	No	%	Comment
80-100%	8	15%	Selected most by regional councils (three of eight). Not selected by any unitary council
60-80%	13	24%	
30-60%	18	33%	
0-30%	16	29%	Most selected by district councils - 35% (12 of 32). Least by city councils - 11% (one of nine)

Dial up access

Councils responding: 51

Adequate coverage to households/businesses	No.	%	Comment
80-100%	16	31%	The two bands 60-100% selected by 80% (eight of ten) city councils, 50% of other councils
60-80%	11	22%	
30-60%	14	27%	
0-30%	10	20%	This band chosen by 25% (eight of 32) district councils

Cellphone coverage

Councils responding: 51

Coverage inadequate for % of households/businesses	No.	%	Comment
Coverage inadequate for 0-25%	23	45%	Selected most by city councils (seven of 10), and by 10 of 32 district councils
25-50%	14	27%	
50-75%	8	16%	
75-100%	6	12%	Most selected by smaller councils C,D,U

Development of broadband

This question aimed to provide an indication of growth prospects of connectivity, in particular broadband, for council constituents.

Key findings:

- 52% of councils are actively involved in the development of broadband
- 34% of councils have no involvement and are not considering this.

Councils responding: 64

- eleven of 13 city councils are actively involved in developing broadband
- one city council is neither involved in development nor considering doing so
- 18 of 43 district and unitary councils indicate active involvement, the majority in partnership with others and a further seven are considering broadband
- 18 district councils have no involvement in broadband
- four of eight regional councils are developing broadband
- Northland and Wellington councils are most involved in broadband development
- Hawke's Bay and Canterbury councils are least involved.

Importance of technology*

The question focused on technology being integral to the delivery of government information, services and processes. Twenty-five CEOs and 54 IT Managers responded.

Key findings:

- for both CEOs and IT Managers, 96% strongly agree or agree that technology is important.

Response	CEO		IT Manager	
	No.	%	No.	%
Strongly agree	13	52%	35	65%
Agree	11	44%	17	31%
Disagree	1	4%	2	4%
Strongly disagree	0	0%	0	0%

Strategy to design, build and launch e-government services*

Key findings:

- one third of councils have no strategy to design, build and launch e-government services
- fewer than half (nine of 21) of all city and regional councils have formal strategies
- informal strategies are in use at a little over half of district and unitary councils.

Option	No.	%	Comment
Formal strategy backed up by written plans	10	15%	75% (three of four) of larger regional councils; 46% (six of 13) of city councils
Informal strategy	35	53%	All unitaries, 56% (23 of 41) of district councils
No strategy	21	32%	56% (10 of 18) of very small councils (population less than 20,000)

CONVENIENCE AND SATISFACTION

1. Delivering government services

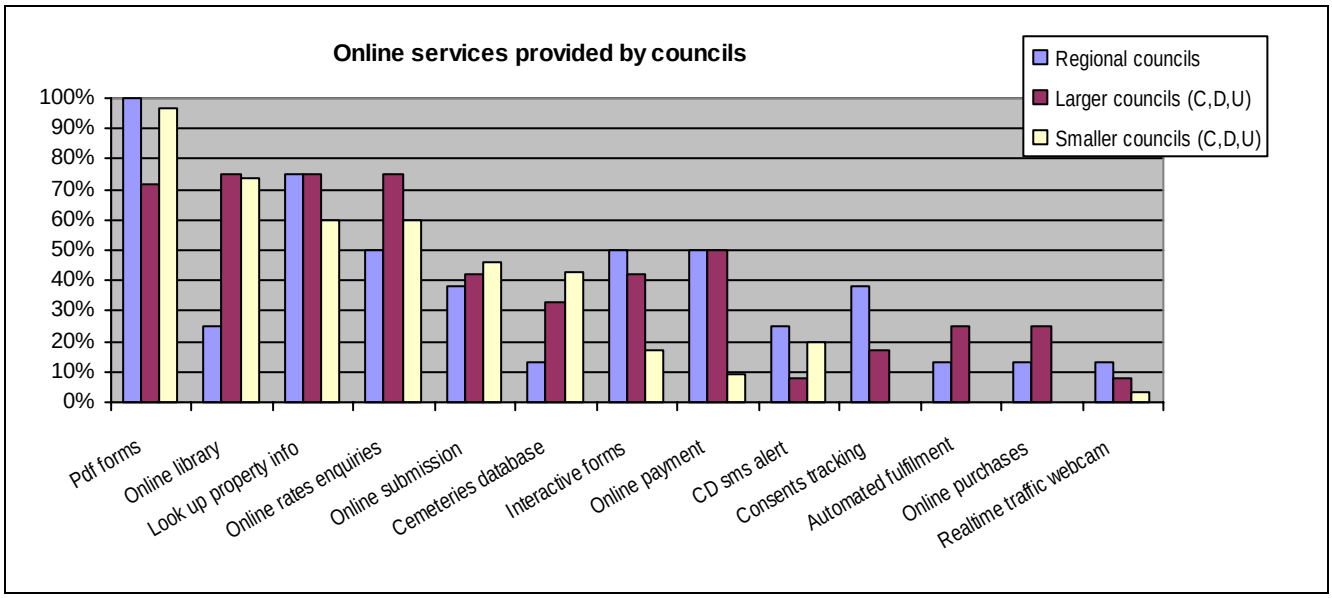
Providing online services that are user-centered, convenient, integrated, proactive, inclusive and efficient.

Delivering services

Key findings:
- interactive (two-way) functionality is limited.

Councils responding: 61

Most councils (90%) provide downloadable PDF forms. Other online products include:
- look up property information (provided by 69% across all councils)
- online rates enquiries (available from 62% of councils)
- online library lookup and bookings (available from 70% of councils)
- consents tracking and automated fulfillment of purchases such as a Land Information Memorandum (available from eight percent and seven percent of councils respectively)
- 25% of councils provide interactive forms.



Regionally, Northland and Auckland are best equipped with online payment functionality; approximately 50% of councils in these regions offer this.

New initiatives under development

Key findings:
- there are a wide range of e-government initiatives under development in 37 councils.

Councils responding: 39

The range of new developments includes enhanced web development, real-time traffic information, online forums, authentication, and others.

Initiatives cited most are:
- online interactive forms - 13 councils
- online payments - 10 councils
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS) lookup - eight councils
- enhanced online library functions – five councils
- civil defence and emergency management – five councils
- property data search – five councils
- enhanced website/portal functions – five councils.

Online payments

Key findings:
- regional councils have the widest range of online payment types.

Councils responding: 51

Online payment type	No.	%	Notes
Direct debit	43	84%	Highest use: 100% by larger regional councils; 88% by district councils
Automatic payment	41	80%	Highest use: 100% by regional councils
Internet banking	36	71%	Used by all regional councils. Least used by unitary councils
Online payment arrangement with bank	29	57%	In use at all larger regional councils
Credit card	16	31%	Highest use: six of nine city councils Lowest use: five of 34 district councils

Internet banking is available at:
- 78% of city councils
- 68% of district councils
- 100% of regional councils.

Credit card is accepted by:
- 67% of city and regional councils
- 15% of district councils.

Online payment with a bank is arranged with:
- 83% of regional councils
- 67% of city councils
- 50% of district and unitary councils.

Planning for online services

This assesses the nature and extent of research into user needs when planning to develop and introduce new e-government services.

Key findings:
- 54% of councils assess feedback from the public
- 25% of councils admit to little or no research to assess user needs.

Councils responding: 55

Most popular research techniques are:
- feedback from the public and information from call centres (54%)
- focus groups – these are popular among regional councils (used by 75%) compared to city and district councils (25%)
- other methods of assessment including peer review, discussion with staff, best practice, what works at other councils.

Promoting online products to users

Key findings:
- promotion medium used by most councils is the local paper
- television is the medium least used.

Councils responding: 53

Methods of promoting new online products most widely used by councils are:
- promotion in the local paper
- flyers/mailouts including the council newsletter
- promotion through the web.

Other methods:
- use of the web is most popular in the major regions of Auckland and Wellington/Wairarapa
- 20% of councils use other local outlets to spread the message. Television is used by two councils – one city council and one regional council.

2. Enabling variety in delivery

Access to local government services and information reflects the varying needs of New Zealanders and their families, and businesses.

Policy to implement multiple channels

Key findings:
- 55% of councils have no policy to implement multiple channels.

Councils responding: 64

Policy	No.	%	Notes
Formal written policy to implement multiple channels	6	9%	Highest use: 25% of city and regional councils
Informal policies in use	23	36%	
No formal policy	35	55%	27 of the 35 are smaller councils (population less than 50,000)

Channels currently in use and under development

Channels in current use and those being developed by councils to deliver services, and to interact with their communities:

Channel	Current use	Being developed	Notes
Telephone/face to face	98%	-	
Mail-outs	97%	-	
Local paper	95%	-	
Field outlets	51%	-	
Website	100%	-	
Email	75%	-	
sms	17%	37%	Highest rate of development by district councils
RSS feeds	11%	35%	In current use at 11 councils, four in the Auckland region
Blogs	11%	29%	Highest development – regional councils
Digital broadcast	2%	20%	Being developed by 10 councils – five in the Auckland/Northland regions
Wiki	3%	29%	Currently used in two city councils
Podcast	0%	22%	
Field remote	-	14%	Four of seven councils developing this channel are district councils

Local outlets

Councils provide assistance or resources to local groups to enable or assist with uptake of online services.

Key findings:
- 41% of councils provide assistance to local groups.

Councils responding: 64

Fifty-nine percent of councils do not provide assistance or are unsure. Forty-one percent provide assistance in various forms. The forms of assistance most provided are:
- donation of staff and IT resource time
- website hosting/provision of community website
- donation of retired PCs and other equipment to community groups
- provision of library support and training facilities.

3. Adding value to information

People know local government information is well-managed and they can readily access digital content. Gateways to information resources held centrally are developed and implemented.

Intellectual Property (IP) guidelines for ICT applications*

This questions whether councils have intellectual property guidelines for ICT applications.

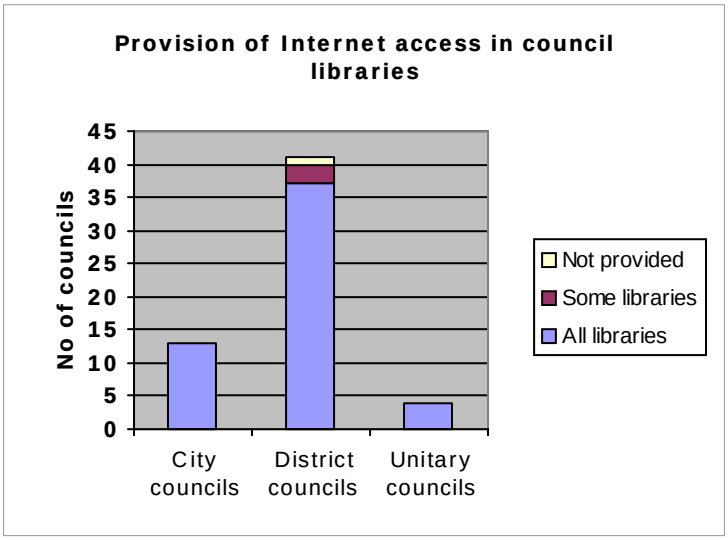
Key findings:
- 66% of councils either have no guidelines or are unaware of any.

Councils responding: 66

IP guidelines	No.	%	Notes
Have IP guidelines for ICT applications	17	26%	Highest: 69% of city councils have guidelines in place
IP guidelines for shared services	5	8%	Highest use: 100% by regional councils
Do not have IP guidelines	28	42%	Highest among district and unitary councils
Not aware of any guidelines	16	24%	

Internet access provided at local government libraries

Key findings:
- internet access is widely provided in council libraries.



Councils responding: 63

Internet access is provided in libraries of all territorial councils except for four district councils. These four councils provide Internet access in some, but not all of their libraries.

Linking to central information resources

Local government entities are encouraged to develop gateways or links to centrally-held websites made available as information resources.

Key findings:
- the website most linked is LGOL (53% of councils).

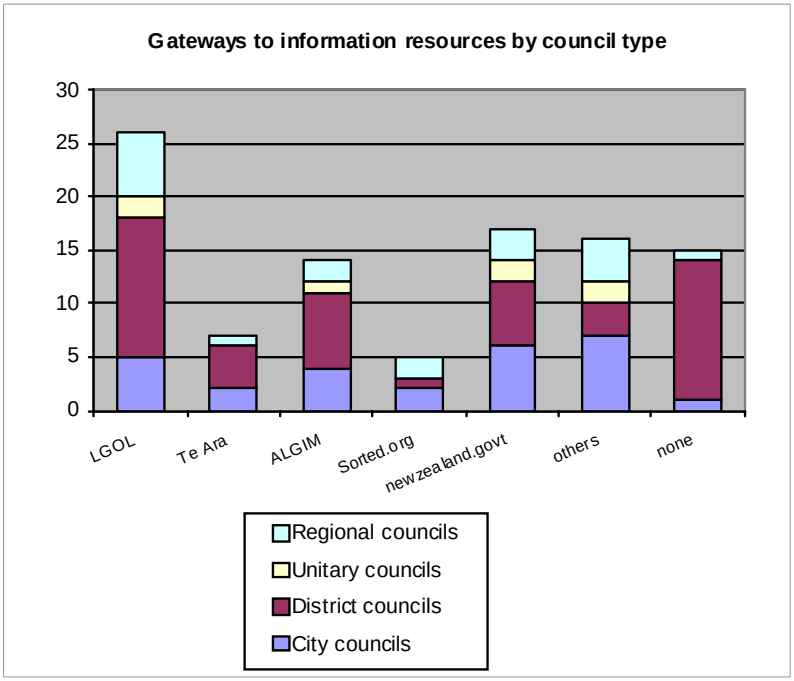
Councils responding: 49

Other gateways in place:
- the general government site newzealand.govt.nz (35% of councils)
- ALGIM (29%)
- Te Ara (16%)

Fifteen councils have no links developed to central information sites. Forty-six percent of district councils have no links, a higher proportion than other council types.

4. Providing authoritative data

Authoritative data means a single source of data able to be accessed and used across government. Data standards and data quality/accuracy are key.



Involved in developing authoritative databases

Key findings:

- 41% of councils are involved with other councils in developing authoritative databases.

Councils responding: 64

Involved in development of Authoritative Database(s)	No.	%	Notes
Are involved	26	41%	Majority (57%) of city and regional councils
Not involved	36	56%	Two thirds (26 of 39) of district councils
Unsure	2	3%	

Sharing data across councils

Key findings:

- 73% of councils share data across councils
- 53% of councils share property data
- 18% of councils do not have formal processes to test the accuracy of their data.

Data most shared across councils:

Councils responding: 60

Data	No.	%	Notes
Property data	32	53%	Highest: 69% of city councils
Environmental	23	38%	Highest: 75% of regional councils
Heritage	15	25%	Highest: 62% of regional councils
Financial data	6	10%	
GIS	6	10%	

Considering property data:

- 69% of councils sharing this data believe the data to be accurate
- 31% of councils believe the data to be mostly accurate
- regional councils have less confidence in data accuracy than other council types.

Councils should have formal processes to test and maintain the accuracy of their data:

Councils responding: 55

Data accuracy	No.	%	Notes
Have formal processes to monitor/maintain data accuracy	31	56%	Highest: 77% of city councils, 71% of regional councils
Processes are under development	14	25%	Highest rate: 34% of district councils
Do not have processes for data accuracy	10	18%	Includes 25% of district councils, 14% of regional councils, 8% of city councils

Difficulties with data sharing

Key findings:

- 39% (19 of 49) councils experience no problems sharing data across councils
- problems most experienced are systems issues and incompatible data form.

Councils responding: 49

Data sharing	No	%	Notes
Systems issues	17	35%	Highest: 63% of regional councils
Incompatible data form	16	33%	
Uncertain data accuracy	13	27%	Includes: 50% of regional councils, 31% of city councils, 19% of district councils
Privacy issues	5	10%	
No problems experienced	19	39%	

INTEGRATION AND EFFICIENCY

5. Delivering value for money

Using technology adds value for both users and government. Use opportunities to achieve synergies and ensure technology is used efficiently and effectively

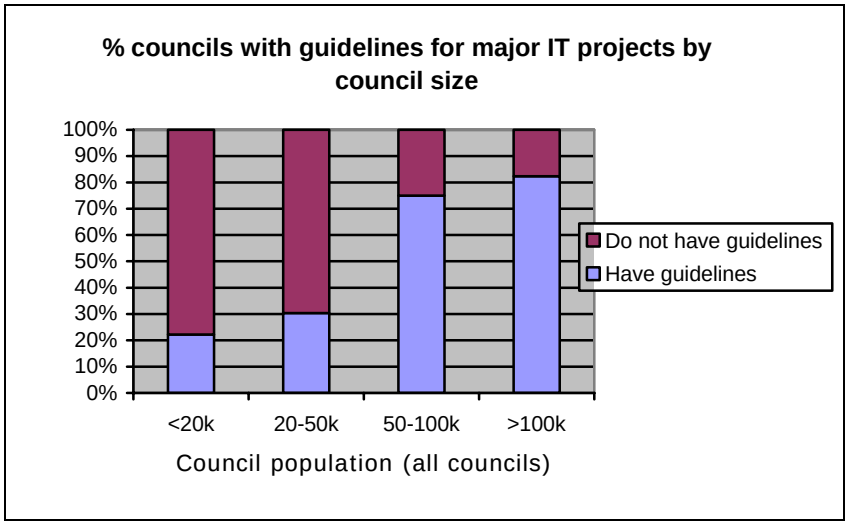
Formal guidelines for managing and monitoring major IT projects*

Councils should have formal guidelines in place for major IT projects.

Key findings:

- 31 councils (47%) have formal guidelines
- larger councils are more likely to have formal guidelines.

Councils responding: 66



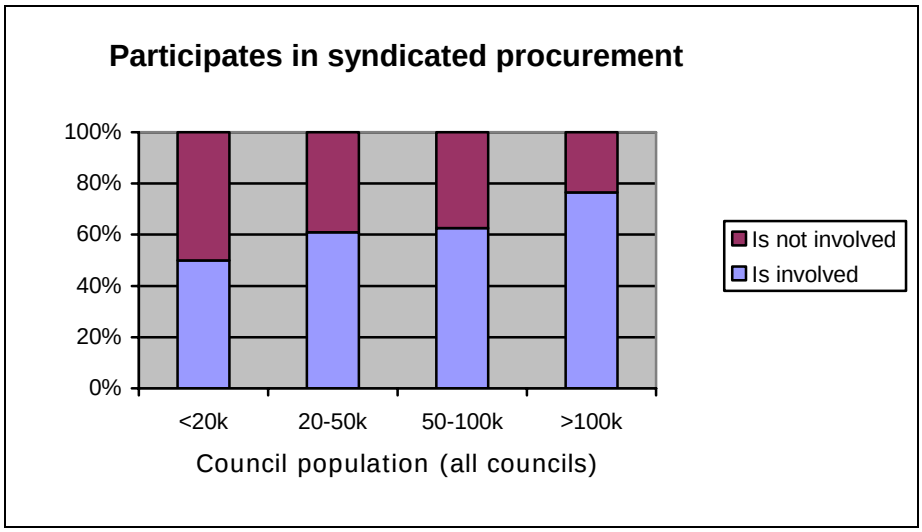
Sharing with other councils

Of the 31 councils with guidelines:

- 18 (58%) share with others
- 13 (42%) do not share with others
- 100% of regional councils share their guidelines
- other council types are evenly split; 50% share and 50% do not.

Syndicated procurement

Forty-one of 66 councils (62%) are involved with other councils in syndicated procurement. The larger the council, the more likely it is to be involved in syndicated procurement.



Prioritising e-government projects

Councils were asked to specify the criteria primarily used to establish priorities for new online services projects.

Key findings:
- criteria most used by councils are of an internal nature (cost, resources)
- 60% of councils consider benefits to users.

Councils responding: 57
- "benefits to users" is the criteria most selected by district councils
- "development/investment cost" is most selected by other council types.

Criteria	No. of councils selecting	District	City	Regional / unitary
Development/investment cost	39	20	9	10
Benefits to users	34	21	7	6
Current IT staff competencies	18	11	3	4
Political acceptance	13	9	1	3
Being developed by other councils	9	6	0	3
Efficiencies/ROI	4	2	0	2
Other	7	4	3	0

Evaluating the effectiveness of ICT services

Councils responding: 42

Evaluation measures most used:
- usage/rate of uptake (selected by 19 councils)
- feedback from users/customer satisfaction (selected by 15 councils)
- reduced resources /efficiency gains (selected by six councils).

Evaluating benefits to users of ICT services

Councils responding: 52

Evaluation measure	No.	%	Notes
Measure uptake of the service	36	69%	Highest use: 92% of city councils, 75% of regional councils
Survey/questionnaire	31	60%	
Measure pre-set KPIs	12	23%	
Feedback from staff/users	4	8%	

Evaluating benefits to council of ICT services

Councils responding: 48

Evaluation measure	No.	%	Notes
Survey/feedback from staff	35	73%	Highest use: all unitary councils, 81% of district councils
Cost/savings	24	50%	Most used by regional councils (86%)
Measure pre-set KPIs	15	31%	
Other	4	8%	

6. Building standards and interoperability

Local government adopts and uses common standards to ensure they and their partners can work together, and users can access services and information.

ICT policy

Councils should develop a formal ICT policy for developing infrastructure and service delivery.

Key findings:
- 66% of all councils have a formal ICT policy, and a further 14% are currently considering this.

Councils responding: 64

ICT Policy	No.	%	Notes
Have a formal ICT policy	42	66%	Highest: city councils (85%)
Being considered	9	14%	No unitary councils considering ICT policy
Do not have a formal ICT policy	13	20%	

- all city councils either have a formal policy or have this under consideration
- 25% to 30% of district, unitary and regional councils do not have a formal ICT policy and are not currently considering one
- regionally, councils in Northland have the highest level of adoption.

e-GIF standards

The government is promoting the E-government Interoperability Framework, for councils to consider adopting.

Key findings:
- 13% of councils are using the e-GIF. The main obstacle to adopting e-GIF is lack of staff and resources
- most use the Name and Address standard (10 councils).

Councils responding: 61
- eight councils are using the e-GIF
- 28 councils are considering e-GIF
- 25 councils are not using the framework.

Twelve councils stated that lack of resources and staff is the main factor against implementing e-GIF standards. A small number of councils stated the process difficulty and the documentation as being disincentives.

Standards adopted:
- name and address standard – 10 councils
- GIS standard – six councils
- uniform resource name – four councils
- one city council has adopted all seven standards, one other has adopted three
- one regional council has adopted four standards.

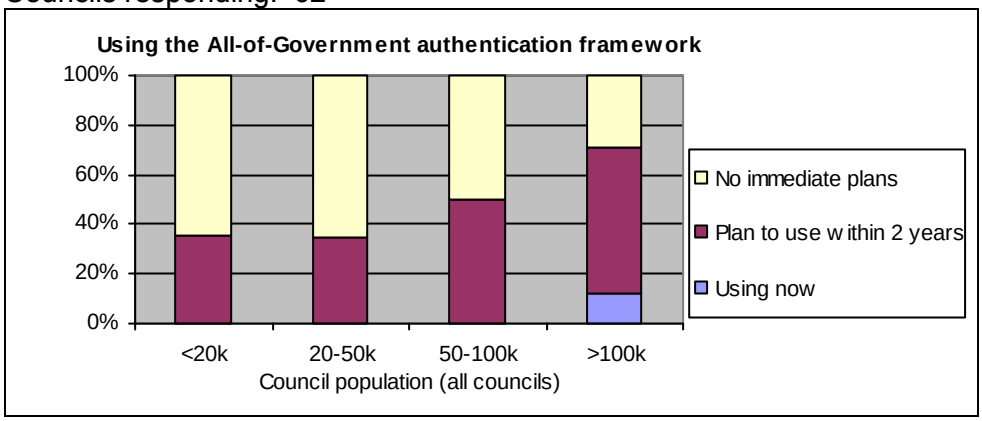
City councils have a higher average number of standards adopted at three per council. This compares to 2.3 average per regional council, and 1.4 per district council.

7. Building the foundational infrastructure

Technology efficiencies are gained by developing, managing and operating common tools and networks which enable collaboration and cost-effective service delivery.

All-of-Government authentication framework

Councils responding: 62



Councils not planning to use the framework gave the following reasons:

- no identified business value, or no need (11 councils)
- lack of knowledge about the framework and what benefits it would provide (six councils)
- is not a priority (five councils).

Local Government Online as a resource for information and collaboration

Councils were asked their views on the extent to which they use and contribute towards Local Government Online (LGOL).

Q. Councils consider LGOL to be a major resource for information on local government activities in New Zealand and as a resource to encourage collaboration between councils.

Councils responding: 58

Answers	No.	%	Notes
Yes	35	60%	Highest: Smaller councils C,D,U (77%)
No	13	22%	Highest: Larger regional councils (75%)
Other	10	17%	

- 100% of unitary councils and 72% of district councils selected Yes, compared to 40% of city councils and 13% of regional councils
- some councils view LGOL as a good information resource, but have varying views on the extent to which it encourages collaboration.

Q. Proportion of staff using the facilities provided by Local Government Online.

Councils responding: 65

Answers	No.	%	Notes
More than 70%	2	3%	
40% - 70%	10	15%	
Less than 40%	27	42%	Highest: district councils (45%)
Not sure	26	40%	Many councils uncertain

- regional and city councils mostly selected “less than 40%” or “not sure”.

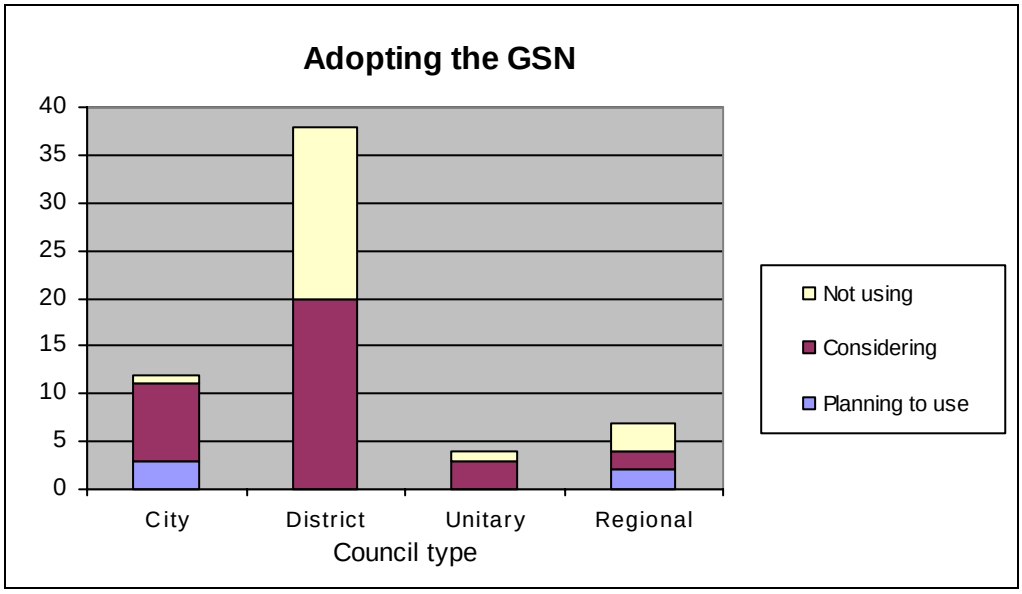
Q. Council makes regular contributions to Local Government Online’s Resource library.

Councils responding: 65

Answers	No	%	Notes
Yes	3	5%	Two district councils and one unitary council
No	30	46%	Highest: district councils (60%)
Not sure	32	49%	

Government Shared Network (GSN)

Five councils report they are planning to use the GSN. A further 33 are considering the GSN. Councils in the Manawatu region are most likely to be considering GSN.



The majority of those not using the GSN:
- do not see the value/business benefits in adopting the GSN, or
- are uncertain of what it is and how it can provide benefits.

8. Addressing collaboration

Legislation, administrative practices, and organisational cultures allow data and information to be exchanged and used, and support the governance and funding of technology-based initiatives.

ICT initiatives developed as a shared service by councils

Key findings:
- GIS and library systems are initiatives most being developed as a shared service.

Councils responding: 38

ICT initiative	No of councils	No of councils % of 38
GIS	12	32%
Library systems/services	9	24%
Share workspace/group chat	7	18%
Core systems	6	16%
Disaster Recovery/Civil Defence and Emergency Management	6	16%
Broadband development	6	16%
Spatial data/aerial photography	5	13%
Website/portal enhancement	5	13%
After hours contact centre	4	11%

Governance models used for ICT shared services

Councils provided information on governance models applying to ICT shared services initiatives they are involved in.

Key findings:

- committee (non-incorporated) is the most widely used model.

Councils responding: 45

Governance model	No	%
Committee	20	45%
Separate company	10	23%
Independent project manager	6	14%
Trust	3	7%
Service Level Agreement	2	5%
Other	3	7%

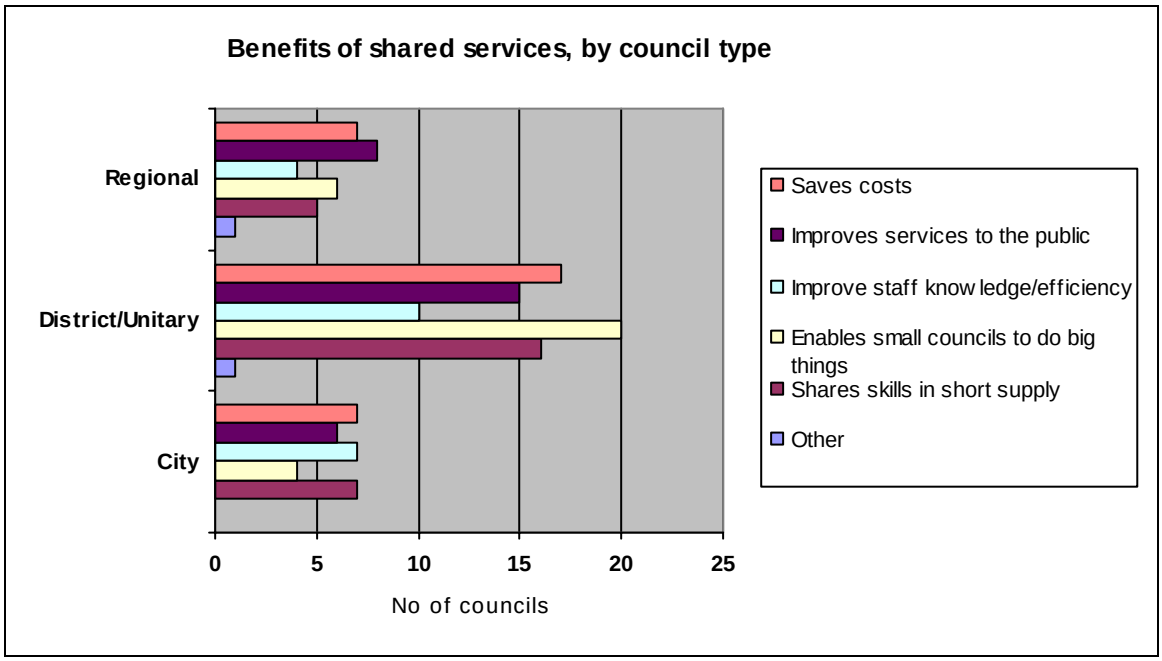
Funding models for ICT shared services

With one exception, all funding is sought as contributions from participating councils. The mechanism to determine allocations across councils varies widely:

- the majority tend to use a rating base – such as rates take, number of ratepayers and rateable properties to calculate contributions
- four councils use an equal share basis
- a smaller number (three or four councils) base proportion on an outcome measure – some instances are an estimate of benefits, usage, number of users.

Benefits of working with shared services

Smaller councils selected a greater number of benefits on average than larger councils, indicating that they gain more business benefits by pooling resources with others.

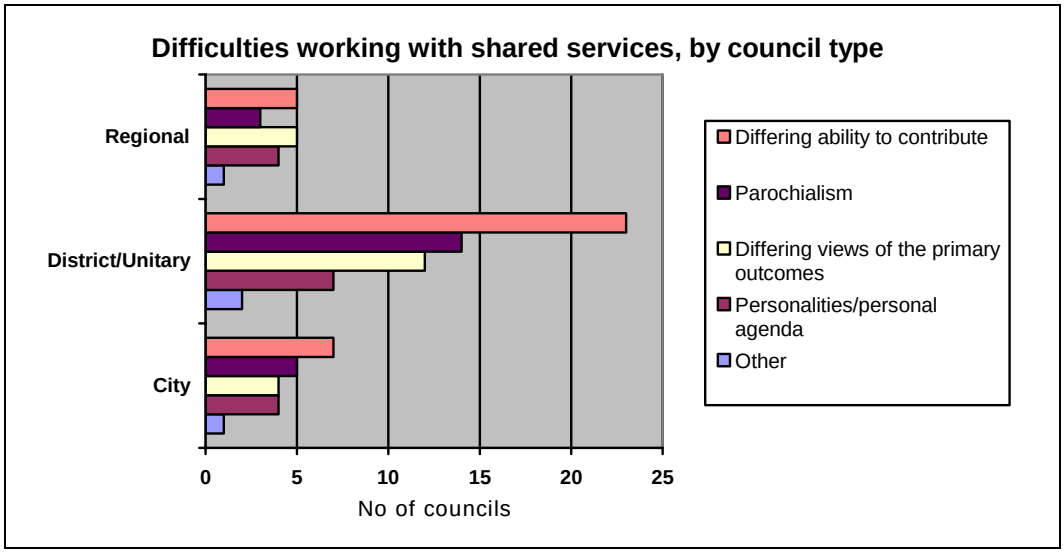


District and unitary councils rate "Enables small councils to do big things" ahead of other benefits. Regional councils mostly selected "Improves services to the public".

Across the regions:

- "improves services to the public" is most rated by councils in Hawke's Bay
- "saves costs" selected most by councils in the Bay of Plenty and in Southland
- "enables small councils to do big things" – selected most by West Coast councils.

Difficulties experienced working with shared services



"Differing ability to contribute" was highly selected across all council groups. It was most selected by:

- medium-sized district and unitary councils (population 20,000 to 100,000)
- councils in the Bay of Plenty.

Parochialism was highly selected by councils in the Auckland and West Coast regions.

9. Providing collaborative tools

Collaborative tools provided to staff facilitate enhanced communication and professional development, and allow them to work and share in cross-agency projects and activities.

Shared workspaces used by councils

Workspaces used most are:
- local or regional listservs (28%)
- LGOL listserv (21%)
- SSC Shared Workspace (10%)
- Sharepoint (10%)
- Wiki (7%)

Others provided in the survey include online groups, Origenusers, NCS usergroups, other usergroups.

Use of the SSC Shared Workspace

Councils using the State Services Commission Shared Workspace:
- a majority of unitary councils responding to this section use the SSC Shared Workspace (three of four)
- very few district councils use the SSC Shared Workspace (two of 35).

Councils using the SSC Shared Workspace rate this well. Some comments are:
- no issues, can be delays in getting responses to changes from the Administrator
- provides the basics, but would like more sophisticated layered access and searching
- good for browsing documents and sharing information
- shared workspace is very useful and could be used for collaboration in other contexts.

Services hosted across councils

Twenty one councils (34%) have services hosted by other councils. More city and district councils have set up these arrangements, with six of 13 city councils, and 12 of 37 district councils having services hosted.

Services most hosted are:
- library systems (eight)
- out of hours contact centre (three)
- civil defence (three)

10. Fostering innovation and the use of technology

Public servants know how technology can help them deliver better outcomes for local government services and contribute to a dynamic work environment.

Funding initiatives in use of technology to provide services

Councils fund innovation initiatives to research how technology can be used to provide services.

Councils responding: 62

Councils fund initiatives	No.	%	Notes
Yes	8	13%	Highest: five of 12 city councils (42%)
No	47	76%	34 of 38 district councils (89%) and 100% of unitary councils
Not sure	7	11%	

The funding tends to be in the form of allocating staff research and development time to participate in internal projects, rather than funding external research initiatives. One council uses a consultant company to assist in identifying how technology can assist users.

Publishing case studies

Innovation can be fostered by publishing case studies outlining how use of ICT improves services to the public.

Councils responding: 63

- seven councils publish case studies
- five councils are considering doing so
- 51 councils do not publish and do not plan to.

Of the seven councils that regularly publish, six are larger sized councils located in the north island.

Business case guidelines

Thirty councils provided information about business case guidelines used for developing
e-government initiatives:

- eleven councils use their standard business case methodology, no distinction for an e-government project
- one regional council follows State Services Commission guidelines
- one small district council uses the ALGIM information management toolkit.

Further to standard templates and methodologies, some councils specified criteria primarily used in their guidelines:

- cost/benefit, efficiency – nine councils
- prioritisation depends on the nature of the service – seven councils
- social/customer returns – seven councils
- aligns with city vision/values/the LTCCP – three councils.

One large regional council states that “e-government is a required standard for new initiatives”.

e-learning tools for in-house training

Thirty-three of 66 councils submitted information about the nature of in-house training provided to staff.

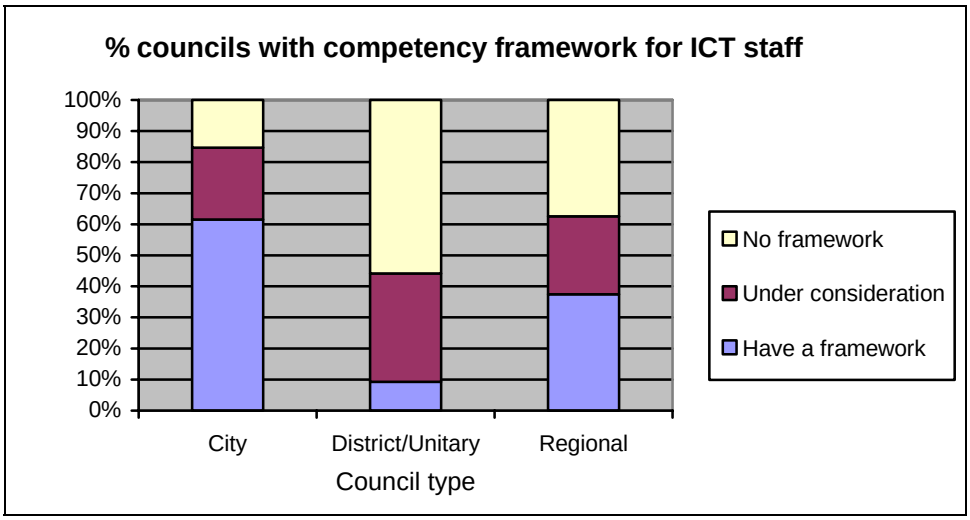
Key findings:

- 13 of the 33 councils have no online training, some having reviewed a number of options but not yet found suitable products
- six councils use Microsoft-based online or e-learning products
- four councils use various other e-learning and online tools.

11. Building ICT professionalism

Foster the development of a competency and skills framework and culture for government ICT professionals.

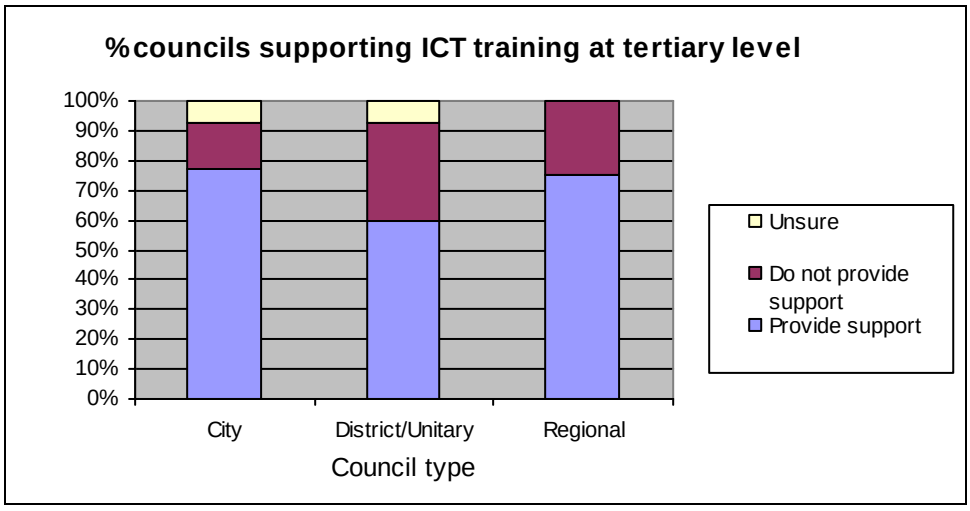
Competency framework or professional plans in place



Councils with a competency framework:

- 8% of smaller councils (population less than 50,000)
- 48% of larger councils (population greater than 50,000).

Council support for formal staff training in ICT at tertiary level



Councils providing support for formal training:

- 53% of smaller councils (population less than 50,000)
- 88% of larger councils (population greater than 50,000).

Aligning training with organisational needs

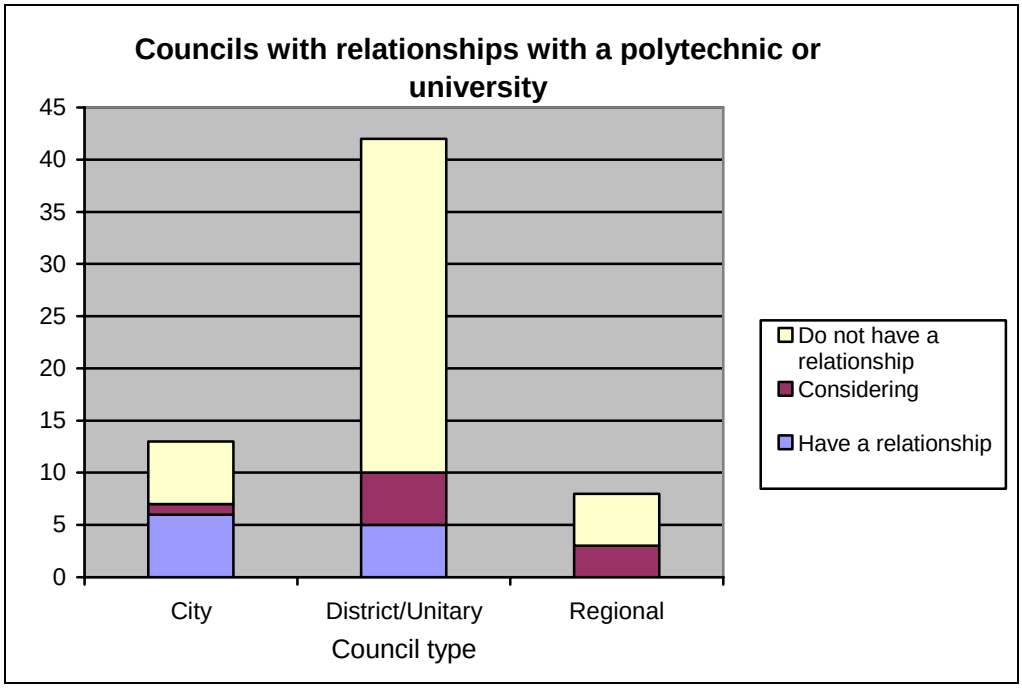
Most councils have methodologies for assessing staff competencies, though these do not necessarily translate directly into training. Most reported are:

- annual performance reviews and performance development processes - used by a majority of councils
- a flexible approach of determining training needs in an informal way, for example, assessing requests from management to remedy skills gaps.

Other councils have adopted a matrix system of linking training needs through to the organisation's strategic plan, or business plan outcomes.

Association with tertiary providers

Relationships with a local university or polytechnic may enable councils to participate in the development of ICT-oriented courses. Currently this is not prevalent except in the case of larger city councils. A number of councils are considering looking into setting up such a relationship.

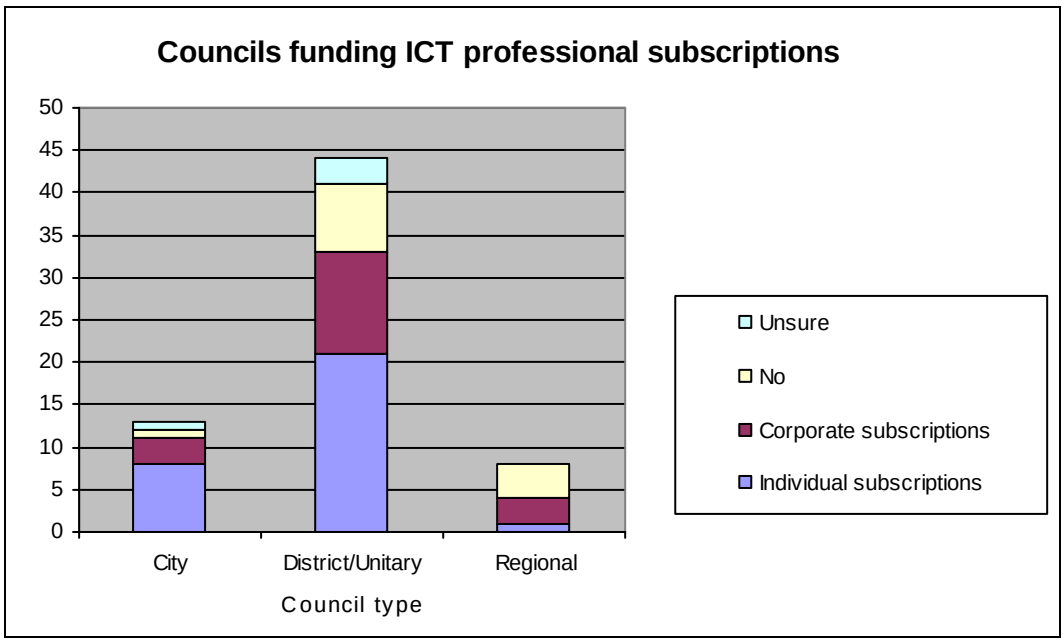


Funding subscriptions for staff to join professional associations

Councils may provide financial support for staff to subscribe to professional organisations relevant to their role at an individual or corporate level.

Councils responding: 65

The survey data shows:



Subscriptions funding by council type:

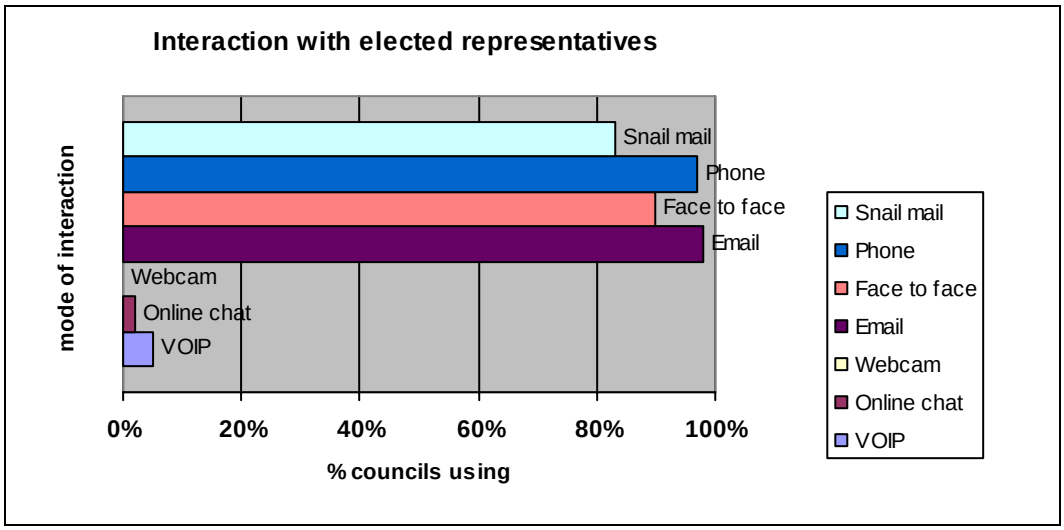
Council type	No.	Individual subscription	Corporate subscription	None or not sure
City councils	13	8 (62%)	3 (23%)	2 (15%)
District/Unitary	44	22 (27%)	12 (27%)	10 (27%)
Regional	8	13%	38%	50%

TRUST AND PARTICIPATION

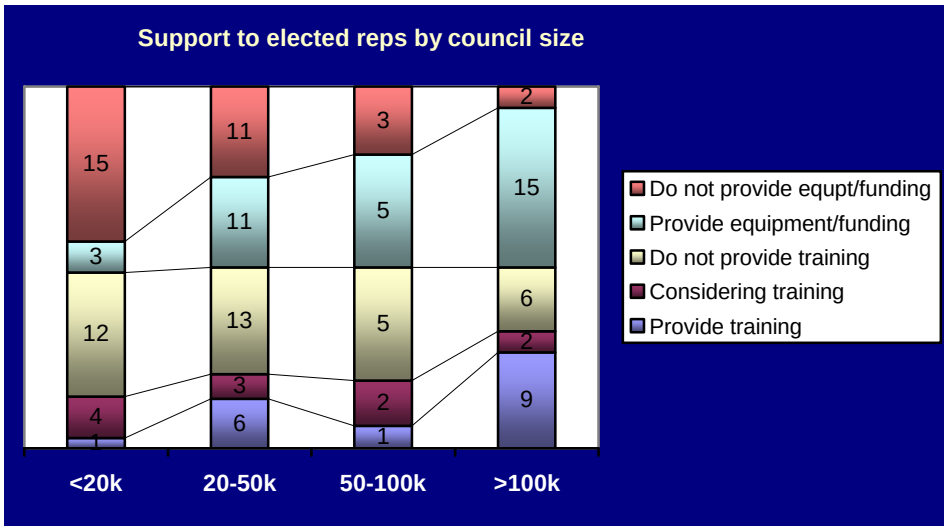
12. Enhancing public engagement

People are able to contribute online to government policy and service design, development and delivery and interact with government.

Communication with elected representatives



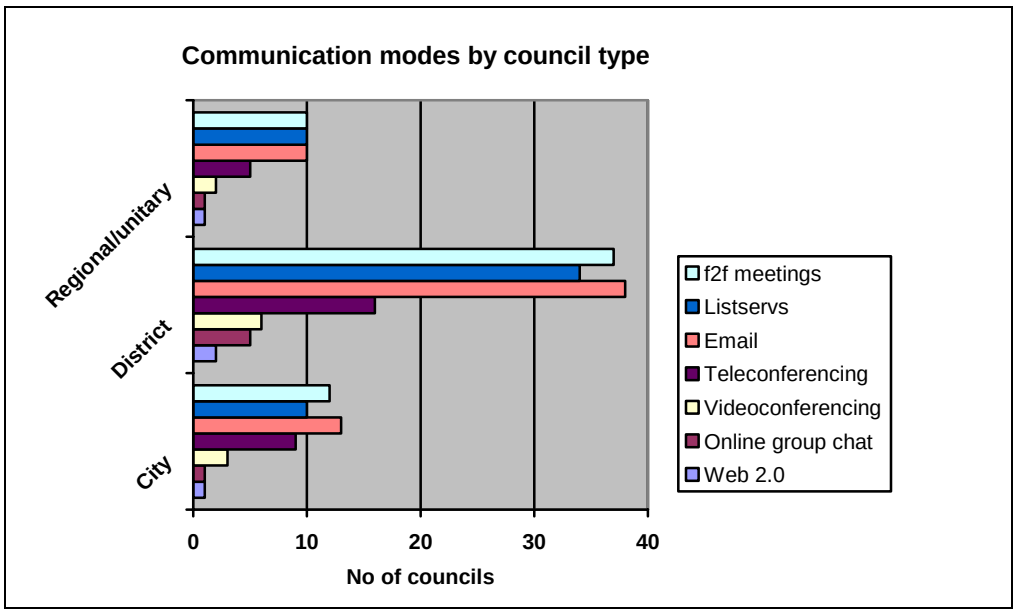
Council policy for resourcing elected representatives to use technology for communication varies considerably.



- 48% of councils provide equipment e.g. laptop, cellphone or a funding equivalent, which may include connectivity costs
- 22% of councils require the elected representatives to have an email address
- some councils provide assistance to the Mayor only
- more than 50% of councils do not provide or offer ICT training, though a majority of city councils do offer this
- smaller councils tend to provide less assistance in both equipment and training provision.

Provision of ICT equipment and training would enable elected representatives to engage with council and constituents in a variety of ways and enhance online participation. Interaction is largely traditional - snail mail, telephone, email and face to face being by far the most-used modes of communicating. Other modes barely register.

Cross-council communication



- listservs, email and face to face meetings are most used across all councils
- 50% of councils use teleconferencing

- videoconferencing used by a majority of councils in Otago only, less in all other regions
- online chat reported by seven councils, three of these in the Auckland region.

13. Strengthening trust and security

People are confident that accessing government channels online is secure and trust that government-held information is protected from security threats.

Strategies to manage security risk

The following table summarises the current status across councils of various risk management plans and strategies. It can be seen that in each case, the majority status is either "Exists" or "Do not have".

Strategy/Process	Do not have	Exists	Regularly reviewed	Adhered to	Formally monitored
Information Strategic plan	16%	***40%***	28%	8%	8%
Information Security strategy	***39%***	25%	16%	9%	11%
Information Management standards	31%	***35%***	18%	13%	3%
Incident Response plan	***42%***	28%	11%	8%	11%
Business Continuity plan	26%	***38%***	26%	5%	5%
Risk Management strategy	***40%***	26%	13%	13%	8%

On average:
- 64% of councils either do not have the strategies, or they exist but are not adhered to, reviewed or monitored
- 17% of councils have the strategies, and they are formally monitored or adhered to.

In addition:
- 34% of councils have their system access points stress tested by a reputable Internet security firm
- a further 22% of councils are considering having this done
- all councils take ongoing action against spam.

14. Managing the .govt.nz space

People have ready access to reliable, authoritative, and trusted government information and services across the Internet.

Access to trusted government information

Thirty five percent of councils have developed gateways or links to the central government site newzealand.govt.nz:
- a majority of city councils (60%) and unitary councils (67%) have developed gateways
- fewer district councils (21%) and regional councils (38%) have done so.

CONCLUSION

As a part of government, local government will continue to be benchmarked against the 14 workstreams of the E-government Strategy. This initial exercise was designed to understand the degree of uptake and e-applications within the council environment. With this first survey as a basis, future trends can be charted over time.

There are challenges ahead for local government in adapting information systems to a more integrated environment, increasing community expectations of online services, increasing use of geospatial applications and facilitating local online access to ICT services.

Results from this survey can be used as a basis for the exemplar councils to share practices and learnings.